

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0012/06

pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure

by István Szent-Iványi, Graham Watson and Ignasi Guardans Cambó, on behalf of the ALDE Group to the Council

Subject: Freedom of movement of workers and transition periods

The Accession Treaty provides for a transitional period whereby Community law on free movement of workers may be deferred for a maximum period of 7 years in the enlarged EU. The first phase of the transitional arrangements started on 1 May, the day on which 10 new countries were welcomed into the European Union, and will end on 30 April 2006.

According to the Commission's evaluation, based on data provided by the Member States, there is no direct link between mobility flows from the new Member States and the transition rules in force. Flows into the Member States without restrictions are comparable if not lower to those into Member States that apply restrictions.

The EU15 must soon notify the Commission if they intend to continue with the restrictions for another period of 3 years.

1. Does the Council have a clear picture of which of the Member States will continue their restrictions for the period 2006-2009?
2. What are the main arguments for continuing the transition period?
3. How does the Council see the relation between restriction of the labour market and undeclared work? Has the Council taken any precautionary actions in order to prevent an increase in undeclared workers from the new Member States coming to work in EU15 with no social or pension rights?
4. Does the Council see any additional non-economic value for European citizens in establishing free movement for workers from all the current Member States?

Tabled: 09.02.2006

Forwarded: 10.02.2006

Deadline for reply: 03.03.2006