



Title: Working in the EU
Duration: 4'38''
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Jozef Olszynski (Polish) - Ambassador, Polish Embassy

Helmut Hoffmann (German) - UESA Ltd. Übigau

Sebastian Pypec (Polish) - „Cezex Papier“ (Cezex Paper)

Jozef Olszynski (Polish) - Ambassador, Polish Embassy

Music

CD = Situation of Life

Track = Git it up

Composer = Osvaldo Porrini Montes (SACEM)

Publishers =Intermede Communications (SOCAN) 1999

LC = 6621

Duration = 00:40

Content:

England, Holland and Norway announced that as of May first, 2004, their job markets will be open for Polish workers. But shortly before the entry these countries backed down. Even Hungary is considering very specific conditions under which Polish workers can come into the country.

Text:



After the referendum in June last year, Warschau was delighted: Poland is joining the EU and will then really belong to Europe. A lot of hope and expectations were linked to this change. Meanwhile, disillusionment happened. A growing number of people in the old EU countries is critical of the eastern enlargement. The old member states fear even more unemployment when workers from the joining countries set off to the West. That's why interim arrangements regarding the "Free Movement of Workers in the Context of Enlargement" were agreed upon.

O Tone Jozef Olszynski (Polish)

Ambassador, Polish Embassy

A lot of people are very disappointed. Poland as well as the other joining countries don't understand why Europe isn't as solidary as it was a few years ago.

To protect themselves against the new countries, Germany, Austria and Switzerland fixed a transitional time period of seven years. It means that employment is only possible in seven years, even though German firms try to get skilled workers from Poland, for example this company in Brandenburg building switch- and controlgear. But that's only possible by way of exception and it's very difficult. So far the firm couldn't obtain an exceptional permit.

O Tone Helmut Hoffmann (German)

UESA Ltd. Übigau

All these are permit applications and papers to temporary train and employ a graduate engineer from Poland here in Übigau

For Polish entrepreneurs it's less difficult to set up their own companies in Germany. Six months ago, the Polish paper wholesaler Cezex openend a branch in Berlin. But the Polish boss is only allowed to hire Germans.

O Tone Sebastian Pypec (Polish)

„Cezex Papier“ (Cezex Paper)

In our Berlin branch we are not allowed to employ a single Polish worker. German employees are protected by law.

The only loophole for Polish workers is a so-called job order, for example painting a ship. If a project like this is limited in time and place, Poles get a work permit for it. Germany's fears to be overrun by Poles infected many countries – a domino effect. By now, almost all of the old EU countries installed temporary time limits. For example, the Netherlands: at first open for workers from the East, the country meanwhile has set up restrictions. The actual state of



affairs after heated debates in parliament: only in certain sectors the job market will be open, otherwise Holland is closing up. Also England backed down. People wanting to work have to register. If too many new EU citizens come, the law will be changed and work possibilities restricted. People are entitled to social security and unemployment benefits only after having worked for one year. Ireland is the only country keeping its word without restrictions. Here, skilled workers from the new joining countries are still sought after, in all areas, but specially in the health sector. Doctors and nurses get employed immediately. That, on the other hand, is also a problem for Poland.

O Tone Jozef Olszynski (Polish)

Ambassador, Polish Embassy

An exodus of highly qualified specialists would inflict irreparable damage to our economy. That's why it is not in our interest that emigration assumes bigger proportions. Still, the Hungarian behavior was a big disappointment in Poland. Because – being a joining country itself, with an unemployment rate of only five per cent – Hungary thinks about temporary time limits for Polish workers, just like the West.

O Tone Jozef Olszynski (Polish)

Economic expert, Polish Embassy, Berlin

My personal prognosis is that everything will calm down again. Many countries will quickly realise that there is less danger than they thought. I believe that one country after the other will take back the temporary time limits.

Surveys about this issue have contradictory results. Leading economic institutes, however, give more all-clear signals. Nobody knows yet how many Poles will, in fact, pack their bags and move to the West. But one thing is certain: Europe is growing together.
