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Course: Introduction to the EU (European Union) Law

## **[6] Free Movement of Individuals**

### **Residence rights**

Free movement of individuals is basic economic and political freedom of the European Community. It is *unique* for this European project of integration. There are far reaching liberalizations of trade in goods in other parts of the World. Nevertheless, there is no comparable integration anywhere else.

There is **no** free movement of individuals at universal level. International law - particular treaties can provide for other solution - creates no duty of any state to admit foreigners to their territory. Only citizens and refugees (according to special convention) cannot be barred to enter.

States can freely decide the amount of foreigners they admit to their territory. They can select them according to expected time of stay and purpose of it.

States usually open their borders to and even attract – especially rich – tourists a businessmen for temporary stay. Their money will be spent there. New businesses can be launched for it. .

All states of the World, however, restrict or prohibit at all long-term or permanent immigration. Especially immigration of workers and their families is controlled. There is a big „surplus of people“ in the World. All rich states would face immense immigration if they relax their immigration policy.

Several countries with authoritarian government or dictatorship control or exclude emigration of their own citizens too. Democratic countries do not it.

Illegal immigration is induced by extreme social differences among countries of contemporary world. It gradually becomes big problem for all rich countries. States have traditional instrument (since 19th century) of control of immigration – requirement of visa. Only comparable countries which do not fear immigration agree or grant visa-free regime. Visa-free regimes are limited to short term immigration of tourists. Labour, establishment and studies and long-term stay is to be allowed. Especially, access to labour market is usually severely restricted. Asylum procedures are often misused by contemporary immigrants.

Therefore, far-reaching liberalization of movement of individuals within the European Community is an extraordinary freedom.

**Citizens of member states** are entitled to move freely within the European Community. Since 1993 all citizens of member states are *ipso facto* citizens of the European Union! European Union **citizenship** is secondary citizenship. The Member States continue to determine in their own legislation and administrative practice who is their national (citizen). The legislation is similar, but not identical (*ius sanguinis* and *ius soli* are combined, different practices of naturalization are applied).

Since the beginning of the European Community EC Treaty guarantees free movement of economically active persons, i.e. workers and self-employed persons and their family members.

**Short-term movement** remains almost unrestricted. Tourists are generally welcomed, their stay is subject only to simple evidence in hotels, camping places etc.

**Long-term immigrants** (workers/self-employed and their families) enjoy right for long-term residence. However, for maintaining public order the permission is issued

for every immigrant for five-year term. Renewal of permit can be refused if the immigrant is dependent on social aid. Permanent residence right is introduced now in by the EC law after five year of continuous legal residence. All social benefits will be available for individual with this title. Many national laws, nevertheless, already grant it for decades.

EC law defines **family members** (spouse, children, parents etc) which enjoy right to residence (and economic activity) in other Member States. Even citizens of non-member states can be covered by these rules. Host states can admit other relatives.

**Other categories** of citizens of other member states have been gradually covered by EC law: (1) retired persons (firstly in the Member States they had previously worked, later in all Member States), (2) students – without any rights to social benefits, (3) persons with sufficient resources for coverage of their subsistence and healthcare (rich people).

**Public order and security restrictions of immigration and residence** No group restrictions are allowed. All countries punish foreigners with expulsion and prohibition of residence, they can do it freely in general. However, the residence or entry ban on nationals of other Member States of the European Community is allowed only if serious crime is committed by that national. National authorities need to have reasonable fears (expectations) of recidivism. Otherwise, expulsion and prohibition of residence is contrary to free movement of individuals.

**Public health restrictions** Only seriously ill immigrants (TBC, serious contagious diseases and mental disorders) can be banned to entry. The Member States, in reality, do not control immigrants. Nevertheless, they can introduce restrictions of movement or quarantine regardless of nationality in cases of emergency.

### **Economic and social rights of migrants**

Position of migrant workers / self-employed persons and their family members: **equal treatment** (national treatment, non-discrimination) if compared with nationals (i.e. citizens of host state).

#### **Workers**

Various aspects of labour touched by equal treatment principle: access to jobs, wages, work conditions, duration + vacation, security at workplace. If necessary for real use of the freedom, preferential treatment can be required.

Possibility of temporary exclusion of the freedom for seven years after the Accession for nationals of new member states including Czechs. Nevertheless, all other new Member States and several elder Member States declined to introduce these exclusion or allow employment in many professions.

Equal treatment requirement has not been imposed on state legislators only, but also on the Member States acting as employers and even on private parties: both corporate and individual employers and trade-unions. There is no far reaching freedom of contract for employers in general. Even other criteria for selection of workers are prohibited by EC law. No discrimination based on sex, age, race or religion is permitted. .

#### **Self-employed:**

Various aspects of individual business touched by equal treatment: same conditions for launch of the business (equal distribution of licences). Legal framework

for business must be equally demanding. Only same controls and sanctions are permitted.

Only professions (both professions of employees and self-employed which are an exercise of **public powers** can be reserved for nationals of host state (deputies, judges, officers of state administration, policemen, professional soldiers etc.). The Member States cannot reserve for their nationals many jobs in public sphere (healthcare, education, social services, transportation).

**Language** requirements cannot be regarded as discrimination of foreign workers and self-employed persons – citizens of other Member States if the knowledge of local language is necessary for proper exercise of the profession.

**Qualification** Extremely important problem for migrant workers and self-employed individuals are qualification requirements. Nobody would move if obliged to pass all exams. Recognition of diplomas/certificates eased by EC law. For several professions, qualification requirements are harmonized or unified. Therefore, automatic recognition is possible. For many other professions, EC law expects easy recognition procedures.

**Tax equality** Equal treatment of both workers / self-employed businessmen is required. Same taxes, fees and parafiscal charges (contribution to social security, healthcare etc.). Double taxation treaties contribute to elimination of obstacles. The Court of Justice sometimes intervenes in taxation issue relating to migrant workers, self-employed persons or their family members.

**Social security and welfare of migrants** Economically active migrant (worker, self-employed individual) and his or her family members enjoy equal access to social security (parent support, child benefits, sickness compensation etc.), healthcare services (both in kind and reimbursement according to organisation of host state) and education. Migrants have restricted access to social aid. Special EC regulation for coordination of pension schemes (all types: retirement, disabled and widows/orphans): periods acquired in other Member states shall be taken into consideration if certain period of coverage necessary, partial pensions paid from all relevant Member States.

### **Reality of migration in the EC/EU**

There is high proportion of foreigners in several Member States. However, vast majority of them are third country nationals. There is only limited intrastate migration. There are many grounds of it. Language, cultural, climatic barriers are important. Wage/profit differences are significant, but not sufficient to force individuals (with exception of nationals of new Member States) to move to another Member State.

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Homework: read judgement Calfa (C-348/96) and judgement Commission v. Belgium ( 149/79)