

Labor Issues Arising from the Recent Eastward Enlargement of the European Union

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to offer a general overview of labor issues arising from the recent eastward enlargement of the European Union (EU). The contents of the paper are divided into four main sections. Section One discusses how the EU has negotiated labor-related issues with those candidate member states and what kinds of agreements were attained. Section Two explores how the EU has reached various compromises with these candidate member states over the sensitive issue on the freedom of movement of persons. Section Three categorizes these new member states into five groups and describes various recent labor reform measures they have adopted. Section Four evaluates numerous positive aspects of reforms for workers of these new member states. It critiques the limitations imposed by the old member states on the freedom of movement of persons and also discusses several developments the Union will face in the future.

Key Words: eastward enlargement of the European Union, candidate member states, free movement for workers, transitional measures, reform of labor law and practice