

Other Nations Experience Worker Woes

It might be a refreshing change of pace to take a few minutes to read the following: A short recitation of some other countries that are experiencing labor shortages and are using migrant labor to maintain their economies.

First, there is Scotland which has an aging citizenry and has lost, according to most estimates, tens of thousands of its native population—most moving out of the country to get better-paying jobs elsewhere. From the article, “*Why Scotland Needs 25,000 Immigrants A Year,*” comes this:

“SCOTLAND must attract 25,000 immigrants every year or face going under.

That's the St Andrew's Day warning to the nation from one of our top academics.

Since the 1950s, more than 800,000 people have left Scotland.

With a low birth rate and an ageing population, we desperately need to attract more immigrants to maintain our standards of living.

Economics professor Robert Wright, who is the country's top expert on economic migration, said we had to face some hard facts.

He added: "I spoke at a conference recently and a person stood up and said immigration will change the character of Scotland.

"I said it certainly will but you have a choice. You either have the same character of Scotland and a lower standard of living, or a changed character and a higher standard of living." ¹

In the Middle East and Asia, Indians are illegally spreading out into the surrounding countries, seeking work. This next report comes from Bahrain:

“Manama, Bahrain (AHN) - Indians working illegally in Bahrain who could not afford a ticket back home will be given free rides by Indian Ambassador Balkrishna Shetty. However, not all requests for free tickets will be accommodated. The envoy will select the most deserving cases.

"Monu Mathew, director of the Indian Institute for Performing Arts, which donated some of the tickets, said, "This does not mean that we want them to leave, but we are only trying to help them not get arrested or used."

"A number of Middle Eastern nations had implemented amnesty programs for Asian migrant workings illegally employed in the region. While a large number have availed of the program, many foreign workers who came bearing visit visas only still do not possess proper documentation that would allow them to work legally in the region. The bulk of the migrant workers are from India, Indonesia and the Philippines employed as construction hands or domestic helpers.

"According to the Bahrain Tribune, more than 81,000 Indians have been deported in 2007 for various visa and work offenses. Around 40,000 came from the United Arab Emirates, another 29,000 from Saudi Arabia and 8,000 from Kuwait."²

And in the old Eastern European block countries—formerly ruled by the Soviet Union—a new source of labor is being sought to meet the demands of industry; from the website, VietNamNet Bridge, this report:

"Viet Nam now can export workers to two new labor markets, the Czech Republic and Poland, said Nguyen Ngoc Quynh, Director of the Department for Management of Vietnamese Labors Working Abroad under the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Welfare.

"The two markets now desperately need foreign workers, especially Poland, which is to host the upcoming European Football Championships 2012.

"Quynh revealed the two markets offer the lowest monthly salary grade, by Viet Nam's classes, around US\$660 for each worker.

"For overtime, workers are to get around US\$3.30 for each extra hour. Foreign workers are provided with free boarding, means of transport and a one-way air ticket equivalent to US\$850.

"According to Tourism and Labor Export Company (TLEC) Deputy-Director Hoang Van Hung, the Czech Republic and Poland need hundreds of thousands more foreign workers each year."³

¹Tom Hamilton, “*Why Scotland Needs 25,000 Immigrants A Year,*” from DailyRecord.co.uk, Nov 30 2007, <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/editors-choice/2007/11/30/why-scotland-needs-25-000-immigrants-a-year-86908-20183236/>, (accessed 11-30-07)

²Vittorio Hernandez, “*Indian Ambassador Offers Free Tickets To Bahrain Deportees,*” from allheadlinenews.com, November 30, 2007, <http://www.allheadlinenews.com/articles/7009317664>, (accessed 11-30-07)

³“*Czech Republic and Poland open to Vietnamese workers,*” (Initial Source: <http://www.sggp.org.vn/>), 11/29/07, VietNamNet Bridge, at: <http://english.vietnamnet.vn/social/2007/11/757324/>, (accessed 11-30-07)