

Text 6. Brain drain feared as german jobs lure southern europeans

Facts and figures

The international job market is very decentralized, fragmented, and unstructured.

- ◆ Some countries are especially hungry for more workers
 - Canada needs laborers to extract potash and uranium in remote areas and demand for executives is particularly high in Calgary.
 - In Denmark, businesses are understaffed and fill up positions with commuting Swedes and temporary Polish workers.
 - As Japan's economic growth is picking up but the population ageing, employers are looking for sales representatives, technicians and engineers.
 - Romanian engineers are in high demand. An estimated two million Romanians live outside their native country and foreign companies have absorbed most of the skilled labour. More than 73% of Romanian employers now have trouble filling positions.
 - Australia is crying out for everything from bus drivers to doctors. There are 190,000 immigrants a year – a 25% increase from the current immigration quota.
- ◆ Figures
 - There are 215m first-generation migrants around the world – 3% of the world's population.
 - There are more Chinese people living outside China than there are French people in France.
 - Some 22m Indians are scattered all over the globe.
 - Polish is now the second language in Britain, at a par with Welsh.
- ◆ The advantages
 - They make it easier to do business across borders as they speed the flow of information.
 - They help spread ideas.
 - They spread money.
 - They bring youth to ageing countries.

◆ The danger

The brain drain strips the poorest nations of their most valuable assets. For instance, in more than 10 African countries over 40% of highly qualified personnel work abroad. That proportion rises to 53% for Sierra Leone, 63% for Gambia and 67% for Cape Verde. Half of the continent's researchers live in Europe.

Words you might need

Working conditions : les conditions de travail

work : le travail
a job : un travail, un emploi
the work week : la semaine de travail
to commute : faire le trajet maison travail
a commuter : un banlieusard
to work full-time : travailler à plein temps
to work part-time : travailler à temps partiel
contracting employment : le travail en CDD
the employment agency : Pôle-emploi
to work overtime : faire des heures sup.
temp work : l'intérim
a temp : un intérimaire
the 35-hour working week : les 35 heures
job mobility : la mobilité de l'emploi
the rat race : le système métro-boulot-dodo
ou : la force d'empoigne
a training session : un stage
a trainee : un stagiaire
odd jobs : des petits boulots
a pay rise : une augmentation de salaire
perks : des avantages en nature
a premium, a bonus : une prime
a reward : une récompense
the minimum wage : le SMIC
rest : le repos
the annual leave : les congés annuels
a day off : un jour de congé
a sick leave : un congé maladie
a maternity leave : un congé de maternité
to earn a living : gagner sa vie

Industrial relations : les conflits du travail

to lay off/to dismiss : licencier
to fire/to sack : virer
a cut back : une réduction d'effectifs
job flexibility : la flexibilité de l'emploi

to streamline/to trim the fat : dégraisser
redundancy : le chômage technique
to slash : réduire radicalement
underpaid : sous-payé
to be made redundant : être mis en chômage technique
to be at the end of one's tether : être au bout du rouleau
long-term unemployment : le chômage de longue durée
pay cuts : des réductions de salaire
to reduce hours : réduire le temps de travail
severance pay : l'indemnité de licenciement
industrial action : des actions revendicatives
social unrest/strife : des conflits sociaux
to go on strike : faire la grève
to make ends meet : joindre les deux bouts
the dole : les allocations chômage
to be on the dole : toucher le chômage
moonlighting : le travail au noir
to resign : démissionner
resignation : la démission
a shop steward : un délégué syndical
a trade union : un syndicat
a union leader : un dirigeant syndical
the grassroot : la base

Corporate life : la vie de l'entreprise

an employee : un employé
an executive : un cadre
a white collar worker/a clerk : un col blanc
a blue collar worker : un ouvrier
a skilled worker : un ouvrier qualifié
the workforce (GB) : la main-d'œuvre
the labour force (US) : la main-d'œuvre
the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) : le PDG
a top-/chief executive : un cadre dirigeant
a manager : un dirigeant

a consultant : un conseiller
a firm : une entreprise
a partner : un associé
an occupation : une profession
the professions : les professions libérales
to be self-employed : être son propre patron
the staff (GB) : le personnel
the personnel (US) : le personnel
Upward mobility : la mobilité sociale
to appoint : nommer
an appointment : une nomination
an advancement : une promotion
availability : la disponibilité
commitment : l'engagement
drive : l'énergie
pep : le dynamisme
eagerness : le vif intérêt
team spirit : l'esprit d'équipe
a challenge : un défi
a pay-off : une retombée
to rely on : compter sur, s'appuyer sur
a workaholic : un bourreau de travail

Immigration : l'immigration

poverty : la misère
misery : le malheur
a pension fund : une caisse de retraite
ageing : vieillissant
to enforce/Implement a policy : mettre en œuvre une politique
the standard of living : le niveau de vie
understaffed : manquant de personnel
abroad/overseas : à l'étranger
a foreign country : un pays étranger
the home country : le pays natal
the fatherland : la (mère) patrie
stateless : apatride

indigenous people/natives : les autochtones
the locals : les habitants du cru
the soil : le territoire
the roots : les racines
to strike roots into : s'implanter dans
to settle : s'installer
to apply for a visa : demander un visa
a passport : un passeport
a work permit : un permis de travail
the Green Card (US) : le permis de travail
a detention centre : un centre de rétention
an illegal immigrant, an undocumented immigrant (US) : un sans-papiers
free circulation : la libre circulation
to cross the border : passer la frontière
to adjust/fit into society : s'adapter à la société
forged documents : de faux documents
an illegal alien : un immigré clandestin
undocumented (US) : sans-papiers
a stowaway : un passager clandestin
to move : déménager
a removal : un déménagement
to be deported : être reconduit à la frontière
a pioneer : un pionnier
a settler : un colon
immigration quotas : les quotas d'immigration
the mainstream society : la classe moyenne
to shelter : abriter
a shelter : un abri
to seek asylum : demander l'asile politique
the social background : le milieu social
to welcome : accueillir
welcome : bienvenu
the fraying of the social fabric : l'effilochement du tissu social
unqualified : sans qualification professionnelle

Exercises

1. Fill in the blanks using a noun based on « employ »

- a. Last December, the boss gave all his... a bonus.
- b. I must find work soon. I've been... since June.
- c. Her... was so angry at her that he fired her.
- d. He hoped the... agency would find him a position.

2. Form nouns from the following, adding: *-dom, -ity, -ment, -ness, -ry, -th, -ty*

- | | | | |
|----------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| a. competitive | b. announce | c. free | d. diverse |
| e. friendly | f. flexible | g. appear | h. certain |
| i. happy | j. warm | k. secure | l. champion |

3. Form nouns from the following verbs by adding suffixes

- | | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| a. advance | b. commute | c. contract | d. destroy |
| e. succeed | f. fail | g. lead | h. manage |
| i. produce | | | |

4. Form nouns using *-fulness* or *-lessness*

- a. The new recruit is appreciated by everyone for her help.....
- b. In a spacecraft, astronauts have got to get used to weight...
- c. Juan left for Germany out of hope...
- d. Many businessmen have laptop computers because of their use...
- e. He endangered the company's safety by his care...
- f. The world can no longer afford high levels of waste...

5. Exploring the text

1. What has changed on the job market in the European Union these last months?
2. List the causes for such a change.
3. Explain in your own words how the migrations benefit both the original and the receiving countries.
4. Say what the advantages are for Spanish immigrants.
5. What fears for the future can one have in this respect?

6. Essay (+ ou - 10%)

1. Explain in your own words why a brain drain can harm a poor country.
2. What do you think of the fears at the back of the campaigns against "the Polish plumber" in France or against Bulgarian and Romanian workers in the UK?

7. Translate the text into French

From: "Right now, the migration benefits both countries..." down to : "... though taxes are higher in Germany."

Brain Drain feared as German jobs lure Southern Europeans

While much of southern Europe is struggling with soaring unemployment rates, a robust Germany is desperate for educated workers. In the last 18 months, it has recruited thousands of the Continent's highly qualified young job-seekers.

The free movement of labor was one of the founding principles of the European Union, a central part of the effort to create a single, unified market. But in more prosperous times, few workers outside of Eastern Europe felt compelled to leave home. That is changing under the pressures of the euro crisis and a harsh recession, and employers, governments and the migrants themselves are discovering that immigration, even when legal and nominally accepted, can raise tensions in ways that Europe's founders may never have anticipated. Who wins and who loses is a matter of growing debate.

Right now, the migration benefits both countries. It confers yet another advantage on Europe's most powerful economy. German exporters have benefited from a euro dragged down in value by the struggling southern countries, and they are able to borrow money at r-bottom rates as investors seek safe havens.

For Spain it relieves pressure on the overstretched welfare state and gives job opportunities to what has quickly become known as the lost generation. To the unemployed masses in the south, Germany's needs are a relief. The country seems like "El Dorado": for the most part, engineers are being offered twice the salaries they could make in Spain, though taxes are higher in Germany.

The conflict will begin when Spain eventually recovers and wants its engineers back. As the southern countries watch their young people move north, some are grumbling of a brain drain. "This generation of young people who are leaving are our best qualified ever," said César Castel, the director of operations of Adecco, a Swiss headhunting firm. "It is a huge loss of investment for Spain. On average it cost us 60,000 euros to train each engineer, and they are leaving." If the recession holds on longer, the workers will marry and have children abroad. He fears a situation where the northern economies retain industry and the southern ones are left with agriculture and tourism.

Adapted from *The New York Times*, April 30th, 2012