

14 June 2017

To: Lead MEPs working on the 'Blue Card' Report in LIBE Committee

Dear MEP,

Entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly skilled employment

On behalf of Permits Foundation, I write regarding the LIBE Committee Report tabled by MEP Claude Moraes and due for a vote in Committee tomorrow, with respect to the proposals for a new 'Blue Card' Directive. **In particular, we support the Rapporteur's compromise proposals relating to Article 16.**

Permits Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation. We campaign globally to improve work permit regulations for partners of highly skilled employees who want to work during an assignment abroad. We are supported by [40 international companies and organisations](#). We previously cooperated with the EU Parliament and LIBE Committee during negotiations on the Directive on intra-corporate transfers.

Our extensive research shows that access to employment for partners has a very positive impact on highly-skilled employees' willingness to accept, complete and extend an international relocation, as well as on health, well-being and integration of the family members into the host country.

Given the Commission's aim to make the Blue Card more attractive, we find the possibility of a labour market check for family members to be at odds with this objective. Employees increasingly want certainty that their partner can work abroad before accepting a job offer. Neither the current Blue Card Directive nor the Directive on intra-corporate transfers subject family members to a labour market test.

We urge MEPs of the LIBE Committee to adopt the Article 16 compromise amendment proposed by the Rapporteur to ensure that:

- in Art 16.6, the labour market test for family members is deleted.
- In Art 16.4, the time period for granting a residence permit to family members who apply to join the Blue Card holder at a later date is reduced to 30 days, in line with your parallel amendment to reduce the application time for Blue Card employees (Art 10), which we also support.

Supporting evidence from our international surveys shows that:

- 70% of partners said that their own employment was important in the decision to relocate and 60% said that they would be unlikely to move to a country where it is difficult for a partner to get a work permit.
- 80-90% of partners of highly qualified employee are also graduates, including around half with a master's degree or higher.
- 51% of employers reported that employees have turned down international assignments due to partner employment concerns.
- 21% of employers reported that assignees returned home early for the same reasons.

Yours sincerely,

K. van der Wilk.

K. van der Wilk-Carlton,
Director Permits Foundation

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