



RP-SPAIN MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT ALLOWS FILIPINOS TO WORK IN SPAIN

On June 30, 2006, Philippine Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas and Spanish Labor Minister Jesus Caldera signed the Memorandum of Agreement on Cooperation for the Management of Migratory Flows that will pave the entry of Filipino healthcare workers, on a pilot basis, and other skilled workers in the future.

Under the labor agreement, a Joint Pilot Committee will be created to develop training and selection procedures to ensure that only qualified workers are deployed to Spain. The agreement also includes provisions on cooperative efforts to address human trafficking and fraudulent documentation of Filipino workers.

The Pilot Project arrangement is a four-year marketing program approved by the Immigration Director-General Maria Rodriguez Tarduchy-Diez focusing on specific categories of workers to be deployed to Spain in succeeding years such as the *hotel/restaurant industry, the construction, and metal industry*. The employers are large private companies, primary hospitals, and 5-star homes for the aged, and not individual employers. The health care sector alone is estimated to need 1million foreign workers within the next five years.

In 2005, Spain waived the major requirement of obtaining a certification that no Spanish national, or no legal foreign workers in Spain are interested for the specific occupation being sought. It has identified 2,268 occupations based on the labor market experiences for the past several years. Among the major categories which appear to have increased demand across the autonomous regions/provinces in Spain are: *caregivers/household workers, industrial and automotive mechanics, hotel and restaurant workers, aircon, heater, and industrial refrigeration technicians, building and car painters, welders (electro gas, electrical, structural, heavy metal, high pressure pipes, construction), heavy equipment operators (bulldozers, excavators, and other earth moving equipment), building and*

industrial plumbers, car building and industrial electricians, construction workers (general carpenters, aluminum, brick layers, marble installation), scaffolding fitters and lifeguards.

Spain is a preferred country of destination because it has one of the highest pay scale for workers in the European Union. The starting monthly salary of welders, scaffolding fitters, and plumbers is £1,800.00 or US\$2,200.00. A Filipino welder for subway projects is reported to earn a monthly gross salary of £6,000.00 or US\$7,320.00. For nurses, the monthly salary is pegged at £ 1,173 and for caregivers, the starting salary is £977 per month. Foreign workers also enjoy equal treatment and benefits such as annual wage increments in accordance with industry Collective Bargaining Agreements, 14th month bonuses, paid vacation leaves, and other benefits.

Source: POLO Spain
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