



NEW LABOR MIGRATION POLICY IN SWEDEN PROPOSED

The Philippine Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden has reported on the new labor and migration policy of Sweden following its meeting with Minister Tobias Billstrom of the Migration and Asylum Policy Office and other officials of the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The proposed labor migration policy seeks to create a more effective and flexible migration system which will make it easier for people to come to Sweden to work and for companies to recruit labor from outside the European Union.

The salient provisions of the new policy are the following:

- The Public Employment Agency of Sweden will no longer be required to determine whether the workers with the right qualifications are available in Sweden. The employer's assessment of the recruitment needs of his company will be the deciding factor.
- An employer who has advertised for the position in the EU, but has not found a qualified applicant within a given period of time may extend the invitation outside the EU.
- Labor conditions, compensation, and benefits extended to a worker from outside the EU shall be equal to those of workers from Sweden.
- Work permits may immediately be extended to the applicants in Sweden upon acceptance by the employer. A temporary permit can be granted for the duration of the employment or for a maximum of two years. If the person is still working after this period, it is possible that the permit will be extended once or several

times. The total permit period to be granted will not exceed four years. After four years, a permanent residence permit will be granted.

Minister Billstrom noted that few countries can match the major changes of Sweden's labor migration policy and viewed it as a pilot project for EU countries. The proposed policy is currently awaiting approval of the Swedish Parliament and is expected to be enforced on 15 December 2008.

*Source: Philippine Embassy Stockholm, Sweden
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