

## Press release

### The Czech Republic Attracts Foreigners; Immigration Procedure May Be Completed within 2 Months

**Brussels/Prague, 15 May 2014 – Due to low costs and accessible conditions for obtaining a work permit, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, Sweden, Germany and Portugal are the most attractive EU countries for highly-skilled foreigners. The immigration procedure, including the preparation and gathering of all necessary documents, may be completed in these countries within four to eight weeks. On the other hand, the immigration procedure is the longest in Italy, Spain, Malta and Austria. These are the results of the latest 2013-2014 comparative immigration study of Deloitte.**

*“Sweden and Portugal are the only countries that can issue a visa for foreigners within a month. In more than half of the countries, the immigration procedure may be completed within two months. Nevertheless, moving to Austria or Malta requires planning in advance as issuing a visa takes there on average 24 and 16 weeks, respectively,”* said LaDana Edwards, Partner at Deloitte responsible for global services in the CE region with respect to the international assignment of employees.

*“If we have a look at the total period of time that is necessary to process an application for a visa or work permit, including the time spent on gathering information, translations and verifying the required documents, we will find out that the entire procedure may be twice or three times longer in the end. Despite that, the deadline is still acceptable in most situations,”* added Miroslav Mejstský, Manager in the Immigration department of Deloitte.

*“An advantage of the Czech Republic is the fact that the so-called ‘fast track’ procedure, which means an accelerated procedure for internally-transferred employees of foreign investors, is effective. Such permit applies to intra-corporate transferees who are non-EU nationals and have been transferred from a foreign organisation to the relevant Czech branch. The entire process related to gaining a work permit and long-term visa should not take more than 30 days from the date of filing the application,”* added Miroslav Mejstský.

The principal criteria specifying whether the relevant company may request the “fast track” procedure include:

- The company should employ a minimum of 1,000 employees worldwide, of which at least 250 in the Czech Republic;
- The company should have settled all payables to the Czech Republic (it must not have tax arrears or debts arising from social security and health insurance); and
- The annual turnover rate of the company must exceed CZK 250 million.

*“Other specific requirements apply to individual business activities and it is necessary to address them on an individual basis,”* concluded Miroslav Mejstský.

For the first time, the current comparative immigration study includes information on the impact of regulations of the EU on national legislation in the area of knowledge migration. Since last year, the so-called “Blue Card” has been introduced in most European countries following the implementation of a European directive. Nevertheless, the impact of this card has proven to be very limited.

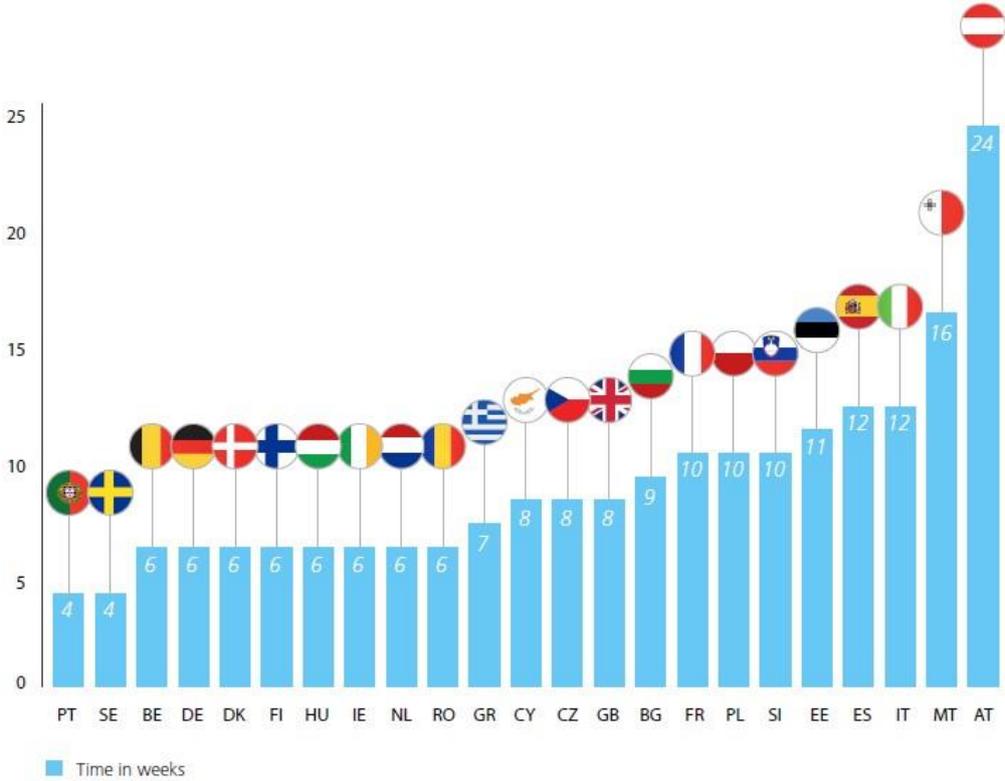
*“The European Blue Card, launched as an answer to the American Green Card, has had no significant success with international companies. It usually takes longer to acquire a Blue Card, and an employee can only work in one country with it, even if the name suggests otherwise. Nevertheless, along with the*

directives on Single Permits and Intra-Corporate Transferees, the Blue Card is a step towards a more harmonised European migration policy,” added Tomáš Petyovský, Manager in the Immigration department of Deloitte.

**Awaiting a coordinated immigration policy**

So far, a comprehensive immigration policy on a coordinated European level has been absent. Countries such as Australia and Canada have flexible, fast immigration systems which are attractive to international knowledge workers from Brazil, Russia, India and China (the “BRIC countries”). Europe is losing the fight for these highly-educated job seekers partly because each country has its own migration laws. “A Japanese citizen who is allowed to work in Belgium, for example, cannot simply find work in the Netherlands or France,” added Miroslav Mejtský.

**Time necessary for issuing a work permit (including the preparation and gathering of required documents)**



Source: 2013-2014 comparative immigration study of Deloitte

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