Press release | 16.01.2014

Free movement

Knee-jerk populism cannot be allowed to dominate debate on fundamental EU principle

The European Parliament today adopted a resolution in the context of the current debate on the free movement of workers, following the end of temporary restrictions on free movement from 1 January. Commenting after the vote, Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms** said:

"Free movement is a fundamental principle on which the European Union is based and which all European politicians and institutions should be defending. The current rhetoric from politicians across the political spectrum is irresponsible. Instead of clearly presenting the facts and explaining the benefits of free movement to their electorate, these politicians are pandering to populist whims, notably those calling for new restrictions. The end of temporary restrictions on free movement from 1 January should have been a cause for celebration but the debate in certain member states has had the opposite effect."

UK Green MEP and employment and social affairs spokesperson **Jean Lambert** added:

"Talk of 'benefit tourism' ignores the reality and is grossly insulting to the overwhelming majority of EU economic migrants who move around the internal market to work. This internal migration of workers in the EU has been demonstrated to benefit the economies and public coffers of the member states where they work, apart from the obvious social and cultural benefits. As the Commission has made clear, mobile workers pay more into host country budgets in taxes and social security than they receive in benefits, while healthcare spending on non-active EU mobile citizens is miniscule relative to total health spending and to the economies of the host countries."

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Responsible MEPs



Rebecca Harms

Member



Jean Lambert

Member

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