



EXAMPLES OF OBSTACLES PEOPLE ENCOUNTER IN THE SINGLE MARKET

Healthcare

Stamatis, a Greek national had to be hospitalised when travelling in the Czech Republic. One year later he received an invoice from the hospital concerned for several hundred euros – even though he had presented his European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). The hospital claimed that neither the name nor the gender of the citizen were the same as those indicated on the EHIC.

The discrepancy resulted from the translation from Greek into Czech. In addition, the citizen who was originally named after a Greek god of mythology had changed his name.

Recognition of diplomas (to take up work)

The Austrian physiotherapist Sebastian wanted to work in Portugal and therefore applied to have his professional diplomas recognised. One year later he still had not had a response from the Portuguese authorities. When enquired how things were progressing, he was asked to wait until they called back. This delay was jeopardizing his chances of working in Portugal. He had been offered a job, but couldn't take it without having his professional qualifications recognised.

Discriminatory fees (tourism)

The French tourist Serge complained about discriminatory entry fees for tourists to Romanian monasteries. The ticket price for non-Romanians was twice as high as for Romanians, a policy contrary to EU principles.

Unemployment benefits

Lilja from Estonia had worked in Cyprus for 2 years but during that time she went regularly back to Estonia where she lived. When her contract in Cyprus ended, she decided to apply for unemployment benefits in Estonia.

Before leaving Cyprus, she asked the Cypriot authorities to issue the document stating the periods when she'd contributed to unemployment insurance there, so her entitlement to Cypriot benefits could be calculated. Four months after her application, the Cypriot authorities had still not replied and she was not getting any unemployment benefits.

Equal access for doing business

Several rafting companies from Hungary and Slovakia complained that Slovenian companies enjoyed cheaper and longer access rights to a river in Slovenia. Not only were foreign companies charged more but they also had to buy daily permits to provide their services there.

Access to single market to sell products

The Swedish manufacturer 'Clean All' of mobile cleaning pumps for swimming pools could not sell his products in France. The machines complied with European standards but French rules imposed a maximum voltage of 12V (AC) when people are in the pool. For this reason 'Clean All' was refused access to the French market. It turned out that the French rules applied to fixed cleaning pumps but not to mobile ones for use only when there was no one in the pool.