

PROBLEMS FOR THE IRISH

When nearly 100,000 people took to the streets of Ireland to protest the hiring of cheap East European labour for Irish Ferries, they voiced old familiar fears about job security that many thought had been forgotten.

The last time that similar crowds demonstrated in Ireland over industrial issues was 1979, when young people left the country to find work and the unemployment rate was around 20 percent.

Today, the Irish economy is no longer expanding as fast as it was in the 1990s, but it is still the fastest-growing in Western Europe and enjoys nearly full employment.

But the emotional outpouring of support for the more than 500 unionized workers of Irish Ferries, who will be replaced by new workers earning less than half Ireland's minimum wage, is raising questions about whether the tolerance for globalization that helped to strengthen the Irish economy is about to disappear.

When the European Union expanded last year to include 10 new countries, mostly from the former Soviet bloc, Ireland, along with Britain, proudly kept its doors open to immigrants, unlike France. Of the 96,000 people who entered the Irish work force last year, 40,000 were migrants, mostly from Eastern Europe, according to the government statistics office. Young East Europeans, most of whom are well educated, work on construction sites, in restaurants and shops across the country.

Text adapted from an article by Brian Lavery, *The International Herald Tribune*,
Dec. 13, 2005 (223 words)

Després de llegir el text, contesteu les preguntes tot seguint les instruccions que es donen en cada cas. Totes les preguntes valen un punt.

Después de leer el texto, responda a las preguntas siguiendo las instrucciones que se dan en cada caso. Cada pregunta vale un punto.

1. Irish Ferries

- a) is hiring 500 unionized workers
- b) is located in France
- c) has hired non-Irish workers

2. Currently, the unemployment rate in Ireland is

- a) negligible
- b) 20 percent
- c) 10 percent

3. How many people protested the hiring of foreign workers?
- a) 500
 - b) 46,000
 - c) 100,000
4. How much will the newly hired workers earn?
- a) The salary set by the union
 - b) Half the minimum wage set by the Irish government
 - c) The salary set by the Irish government
5. Where are most of the newly hired workers from?
- a) Britain
 - b) Ireland
 - c) Eastern Europe
6. Where do many of Ireland's new immigrants work?
- a) In restaurants
 - b) In offices
 - c) In factories
7. Which of the following words is a synonym for the word **nearly** in «When **nearly** 100,000 people took to the streets of Ireland to protest the hiring of cheap East European labour for Irish Ferries...»?
- a) closely
 - b) almost
 - c) perhaps
8. Change the sentence «They voiced old familiar fears about job security that many thought had been forgotten» to begin with «**Many thought that...**».
- Many thought that _____
- _____
9. According to the article, how was Ireland's policy towards immigration different from France's?
10. Why are so many people protesting the hiring of Eastern European workers at Irish Ferries?