

EUROPE WATCH

◆ U.K.

Business Groups Blast Minister on Immigration

LONDON—U.K. business organizations have criticized a senior government minister for telling them to employ more British people rather than hiring "labor from abroad," a call they say stops British companies from recruiting the best people for jobs.

Work and Pension Secretary Iain Duncan Smith, a former leader of the Conservative Party, also risked further inflaming tensions with coalition partners the Liberal Democrats over immigration policy—a subject that has been one of the most contentious areas for the one-year-old government.

The probusiness Conservatives have to balance private-sector demands for open markets with party promises to clamp down on immigration after a decade of record new arrivals inspired increased complaints by voters.

In a speech Friday at the Spanish Foundation for Analysis and Social Studies in Madrid, Mr. Duncan Smith said if the immigration system wasn't more strictly controlled, an increasing number of U.K. citizens would be left out of work, in particular young people.

Youth unemployment is an issue that has dogged successive U.K. government, however the problem has become acute since the recession with one in five people in the 16-to-24 age group unemployed. In comparison, the overall unemployment rate in the U.K. is 7.7%.

The government has attempted to tackle the problem by promoting apprenticeships and internships for young people but to date its policies have had limited impact.

Ainsley Thomson



Il mondo delle imprese critica il ministro sull'immigrazione (ac)

