

A stop to immigration

Due to the economic difficulties facing certain industries that used foreign labour, and the resulting increase in unemployment, the government toughened its migration policies. On 1 August 1974, a simple decision by the Council of Ministers strictly limited new entries to migrants holding qualifications that were not available in the country.

This government decision officially put a stop to labour immigration to Belgium. At the same time, the government decided to impose sanctions on employers who hired new immigrant workers and to regularise immigrant workers who were living in Belgium without a residence permit. Following strong mobilisation by immigrant workers and trade unions, 9,000 foreign nationals, including many Moroccans, benefited from this policy and were issued with residence permits in 1975.