

First informal thematic session on “Human rights of all migrants, social inclusion, cohesion, and all forms of discrimination, including racism, xenophobia and intolerance

Statement by the Republic of Bulgaria on Social Inclusion and Cohesion – Panel 2

Thank you Mr. Moderator

Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and its member states.

The admission of third country nationals to the labor market of the Republic of Bulgaria is a particularly important aspect of the overall management of labor migration. In this context, we put into effect a targeted policy, consistent with our national interest and in the benefit of the economy, through achieving a balanced access of the third country nationals to the Bulgarian labor market.

Bulgaria's labor migration policy pursues the following objectives: the development of regulated forms of short-term external labor migration; effective protection of the labor market; creating favorable conditions for the integration of labor force in the country; implementation of bilateral and multilateral agreements in the field of labor migration.

In 2016, the Labor Migration and Labor Mobility Act (the Act) and its Implementation Rules were adopted. The Act synchronizes the Bulgarian legislation with the EU legislation in the field of labor migration for the purpose of employment of foreign nationals – third country nationals and the free movement of workers within the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. The Act guarantees the equal treatment of foreigners with Bulgarian citizens, with particular attention paid to third-country nationals and to some specifics regarding the requirements of the relevant EU directives concerning the categories of foreigners with the right of residence and work on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

By the transposition of the "EU Blue Card" in the Bulgarian legislation the possibility of attracting highly qualified migrant specialists has increased significantly - identified as a specific target group, while taking into account the needs of the labor market.

The application of the Act's provisions in the field of labor mobility and free movement of workers guarantees the protection of the rights of workers from other EU Member States, the EEA and the Swiss Confederation and their family members working on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

In accordance with the relevant regulations, the Bulgarian Employment Agency offers its intermediary services to provide employment and training to all jobseekers, including foreign nationals registered with the Labor Office Directorates. All registered persons have equal access to the services, and direct or indirect discrimination, privileges or restrictions based on nationality, gender, race, etc. are not allowed.

Our national legislation provides measures, which guarantee the rights of social assistance, social services and family benefits - both to Bulgarian and foreign citizens, who are not able to cover their basic needs or raise their children in a family environment without the assistance of someone else.

In cases where foreign citizens are disabled persons, their rights are being ensured by the Act on Integration of persons with disabilities and the Regulations for its implementation after the acquisition of the /humanitarian or refugee/ status.

The Bulgarian Ministry of Labor and Social Policy is committed to the issues of unaccompanied migrant children as part of the overall child support policy and works to provide them with appropriate assistance and protection.

I thank you.