



# Information campaign to prevent labour exploitation of Bulgarian citizens

## Czechia

	<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The information campaign, which ran from 2014 to 2015, was part of the project “Innovations for the Prevention of Labour Exploitation of EU Citizens.” It aimed to address the increasing labour migration from new EU Member States, particularly from Bulgaria, by finding innovative prevention solutions. The project involved international partners from Austria and Bulgaria.</p>
<p><b>Title of the practice in original language</b></p>	<p><i>Informační kampaň k prevenci pracovního vykořisťování občanů Bulharska v ČR</i></p>
<p><b>Name(s) of authorities/bodies/organisations involved</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, MPSV (<i>Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí ČR</i>);</li> <li>▶ Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (<i>Bundesministerium für Soziales, Gesundheit, Pflege und Konsumentenschutz</i>);</li> <li>▶ International Organisation for Migration (regional office in Sofia, Bulgaria);</li> <li>▶ Diaconia of the Czechoslovak Evangelical Church (ČCE Diaconia - Centre of National Programmes and Services) (<i>Diakonie Československá Církev Evangelická – Středisko celostátních programů a služeb</i>).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sectors</b></p>	<p>All</p>
<p><b>Target groups</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Bulgarian migrants working in Czechia, or who intend to come to Czechia (directly targeted);</li> <li>▶ Government authorities and representatives of non-profit organisations i.e. representatives of relevant institutions who have the ability to influence the labour market situation in relation to Bulgarian citizens (directly targeted);<sup>i</sup></li> <li>▶ General public (raising awareness about the issue of labour exploitation of Bulgarian workers in the Czech labour market) (directly targeted).</li> </ul>

**Purpose of measure**

Prevention



**Aims and objectives**

In partnership with Bulgaria and Austria, the information campaign in Czechia was carried out as part of the project “Innovations for the Prevention of Labour Exploitation of EU Citizens”, to address the problem of the exploitation of Bulgarian workers in the context of the labour market in Czechia.

**Background context**

- ▶ The campaign was a part of the project “Innovations for the Prevention of Labour Exploitation of EU Citizens” which addressed the increasing labour migration from the so-called new EU member states (especially Bulgaria) by striving to find innovative solutions in the field of prevention;
- ▶ The project involved international partners from Austria (Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection) and Bulgaria (International Organisation for Migration (regional office in Sofia, Bulgaria));
- ▶ The collaboration with the Austrian partner aimed to identify best practices for preventing labour exploitation that could be applied in the labour market context of Czechia;
- ▶ The Bulgarian partner played a significant role in formulating a prevention proposal and conducting an information campaign to prevent the labour exploitation of Bulgarian citizens in Czechia;
- ▶ At the time of the project launch, about 15 000 Bulgarian migrants were registered with the Czech foreign police. Due to the seasonal nature of Bulgarian labour, at the high season the number of Bulgarian migrant workers further increased to 18 000 workers, i.e. the total target population for the project;
- ▶ The project started on 1 January 2014 and was completed in November 2015.

**Key objectives of the measure**

**General objective:**

- ▶ To implement innovative measures to prevent labour exploitation and human trafficking of citizens from the new EU Member States. Available sources indicated that these negative phenomena primarily affected Bulgarian citizens.<sup>ii</sup>

**Specific objectives:**

- ▶ To identify effective tools and mechanisms for preventing labour exploitation in another Member State (Austria) that could offer good practice;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ To systematically implement and apply the Austrian mechanisms and best practices to the situation of Bulgarian workers in Czechia, in cooperation with the Bulgarian partner;</li> <li>▶ To increase awareness among Bulgarian workers in Czechia about their rights and obligations (including the information campaign and e-learning course).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Main activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ From March to August 2015 Diakonie ČCE conducted an information campaign for the MPSV with the slogan “Informed Migration – Safe Migration”. The campaign was aimed at Bulgarian workers in Czechia, learning about their rights and obligations, types of employment, requirements of employment contracts, insurance, and more through the flyers, posters, and video produced;<sup>iii</sup></li> <li>▶ Adjacent to the campaign, Diakonie also launched an e-learning course, targeting Bulgarian and Romanian citizens who were provided with relevant information about the Czech labour market. The e-learning course was available until 2018;</li> <li>▶ The e-learning course contained the following elements:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Starting work in the Czech Republic;</li> <li>- Employment through a job agency;</li> <li>- Wages in the Czech Republic;</li> <li>- Health and social insurance;</li> <li>- Workplace injury;</li> <li>- Termination of employment;</li> <li>- Contacts for support organisations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ During the project, Czech experts and professionals were informed about the fact that workers from the EU (mainly Bulgarian and Romanian citizens) often encounter labour exploitation in Czechia, due in part to a lack of relevant information;<sup>iv</sup></li> <li>▶ In the course of the initiative, two international conferences and an expert roundtable were organised, attended by representatives of the state administration, academia, and the non-profit sector.<sup>v</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Funding/organisational resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The information campaign was a part of the project financed by the European Social Fund in Czechia, “Innovations for the Prevention of Labour Exploitation of EU Citizens”, project no. CZ.1.04/5.1.00/81.00010;</li> </ul>

- ▶ The information campaign and e-learning course were subcontracted to NGO Diakonie ČCE. The NGO works with migrants and won the contract to provide this service;
- ▶ The overall budget for the project was CZK 4 million (EUR 160 000) - campaign costs comprised 25 % of the overall budget.<sup>vi</sup>



### Outcomes

According to evaluation findings, the information campaign was successful in improving the living and working conditions of Bulgarian migrants in Czechia. However, the evaluation report suggests that the number of Bulgarian migrants reached was low. Cooperation of the various countries involved as well as cooperation between enforcement authorities and NGOs was crucial to the success of the project.

### Achievement of objectives

- ▶ After the campaign was concluded, a subsequent survey among Bulgarian workers in Czechia revealed that the information provided during the campaign helped about half of the respondents to improve both their working and living conditions;<sup>vii</sup>
- ▶ Insights and information gathered during the two-year project enabled the formulation of a concept proposal for preventing the exploitation of EU citizens at work and suggesting systemic changes leading to more effective prevention in Czechia;<sup>viii</sup>
- ▶ Several specific recommendations were proposed, such as enhancing pre-departure (from country of origin) awareness, implementing targeted inspections in sectors where labour exploitation occur most often (e.g. manufacturing, or agriculture), establishing crisis centres with continuous operation, improving monitoring of employment agencies who hire and place Bulgarian workers in Czechia and revoking their licences in cases of unfair practices, establishing a financial police, increasing awareness among both professionals and the general public about the issue of labour exploitation, and others;<sup>ix</sup>
- ▶ The evaluation of the campaign activities and the project itself suggest a positive assessment. However, the evaluation report suggested low outreach numbers among target groups.<sup>x</sup>

### Lessons learnt and success factors

Success factors:

- ▶ Cooperation of various stakeholders including the ministries of the two countries (Czechia and Austria), and the



	<p>involvement of the institution from the sending country (IOM Sofia);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The fact that the project focused on a specific target group (Bulgarian workers) from among the migrants coming to Czechia;</li> <li>▶ Establishing a functioning project-based cooperation between enforcement authorities and NGOs.</li> </ul> <p>Lessons learnt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The involvement of the relevant interested institutions (e.g. the labour inspectorate, labour offices, Ministry of Interior) is important for scaling and sustainability of the practice in the receiving country.</li> </ul>
<b>Transferability</b>	<p>This practice is replicable in other Member States and among other target groups who are vulnerable to exploitation in the labour market. Cooperation between institutions of sending and receiving countries might help to better target the specific needs of the target group. Involvement of stakeholders (state offices, Ministries, social partners, and NGOs) can help to attain wider outreach and sustain the practice of providing migrants with relevant information about the labour market in the receiving country.</p>

### Further information

#### Contact

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#### Useful sources and resources

**Project: Innovations for the Prevention of Labour Exploitation of EU Citizens website:**

<https://www.mpsv.cz/inovacemi-k-prevenci-pracovniho-vykoristovani>

**Information on the number of labour migrants (per month) in Czechia since 2015 :**

<https://data.mpsv.cz/web/data/vizualizace9?mesic=1&rok=2024&typPohledu=STATY>

<sup>i</sup> See <https://www.mpsv.cz/inovacemi-k-prevenci-pracovniho-vykoristovani>



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ii See [https://www.esfcr.cz/projekty-oplzz/-/asset\\_publisher/0vxsQYRpZsom/content/inovacemi-k-prevenci-pracovniho-vykoristovani-eu-obcanu?inheritRedirect=false](https://www.esfcr.cz/projekty-oplzz/-/asset_publisher/0vxsQYRpZsom/content/inovacemi-k-prevenci-pracovniho-vykoristovani-eu-obcanu?inheritRedirect=false)

iii Video spot available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tS\\_tSlogZO4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tS_tSlogZO4)

iv See <https://scps.diakonie.cz/o-nas2/realizovane-projekty-strediska/diakonie-scps-realizuje-pro-mpsv-informacni-kampan/>

v See <https://www.odbory.info/obsah/5/pracovni-vykoristovani-cizincu-nelze-tolerovat/14575>

vi See [https://www.suip.cz/documents/20142/60383/tz\\_bulhari\\_06.pdf/4e3997ee-5568-4219-780a-aed03ddb28cf](https://www.suip.cz/documents/20142/60383/tz_bulhari_06.pdf/4e3997ee-5568-4219-780a-aed03ddb28cf)

vii See [https://www.mpsv.cz/documents/20142/846918/analyza\\_dopadu\\_30.9.2015.pdf/dae15995-87ca-0fea-0d4f-7096e2a2b913](https://www.mpsv.cz/documents/20142/846918/analyza_dopadu_30.9.2015.pdf/dae15995-87ca-0fea-0d4f-7096e2a2b913)

viii See <https://www.mpsv.cz/documents/20142/846918/koncepce.pdf/01269e21-00d6-ee1f-93e6-e74b66b95567>

ix See <https://www.odbory.info/obsah/5/pracovni-vykoristovani-cizincu-nelze-tolerovat/14575>

x See [https://www.mpsv.cz/documents/20142/846918/analyza\\_dopadu\\_30.9.2015.pdf/dae15995-87ca-0fea-0d4f-7096e2a2b913](https://www.mpsv.cz/documents/20142/846918/analyza_dopadu_30.9.2015.pdf/dae15995-87ca-0fea-0d4f-7096e2a2b913)