

## **BARMIG**

project website: <http://barmig.umcs.eu/>

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### **Policy Brief**

The Bargaining for Working Conditions and Social Rights of Migrant Workers in Central East European Countries (BARMIG) project assesses the role of established industrial relations institutions in addressing the effects of migration on changing labour markets. The project also examines how trade unions and employer organisations in Czechia, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland respond to these changes

Slovakia is not one of the traditional destination countries for migrants, yet the number of employees from third countries is growing every year. Migration policy forms an important part of the national social dialogue. Employers analyse and discuss the legislative and procedural aspects of the migration process. Trade unions focus more on the social aspect and working conditions of these workers. Social partners do not collect their own analytical data. Legal regulation is rigid. Employment process of third country nationals considered administratively burdensome, lengthy and significantly protective of the labour market. It constitutes an obstacle to addressing labour shortages, creating room for illegal and unregulated employment of foreigners. Employer pressure to liberalise migration policy points to deeper systemic problems in the labour market and education. The data available on migration is not comprehensive, sufficiently analysed and lacks the character of an information system. There is a lack of legislation, appropriate instruments and structure in the area of integration of foreigners.

Employment contracts are the typical form of employment. They are mainly prevalent in unskilled and low-skilled positions. In highly skilled professions, recognition of education is problematic and “brain waste” occurs. Employers, intermediaries or non-profit organisations take on an integrating role.

The professional capacities of the social partners are modest. The sectoral social partners do not have experts and specialists in the field. The national (tripartite) social partners are better off. The social partners lack a long-term strategic and common approach to strategy formulation. The legal form of employment of foreigners ensures that they are protected by law, but also by collective agreements, where they exist.

### **Recommendations**

- A complete overhaul of the legal framework, a streamlining of the conditions for granting employment permits, the introduction of labour market forecasts by sector and region, thereby preventing illegal and unregulated employment.
- Actively involve and take into account the views of the social partners in the development of legislation instruments, to make the decision of the state and the authorities more transparent and use only standard legislative processes.
- Adopt integration tools and an integration policy to raise the awareness of foreign workers about illegal practices.
- Ensure continued support for the professional capacities of the social partners through state or national projects.

*The project is supported by the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission.*