



LABOUR MOBILITY SCHEME FOR SLOVAKIA SUMMARY OF THE MEASURES



The Labour Mobility Scheme for Slovakia (hereinafter only referred to as the “Scheme”) **contains proposals for ten key legislative and technical measures and proposals for incentive measures in 15 areas, focused on the flexible management of labour mobility into Slovakia.**

The aim of the measures proposed under the Scheme is to:

- Reduce the administrative burden on government authorities, foreign workers from non-EU/EEA countries, and employers;
- Speed up processes and faster entry of foreign workers to the labour market;
- Facilitate systematic, transparent and predictable decision-making by government authorities;
- Simplify and centralize the system to gather all procedures harmoniously;
- Promote the active engagement of social partners.

At the same time, the document offers **several recommendations on bilateral cooperation with countries of origin of foreign workers, as well as on the collection of data necessary to assess labour mobility measures and instruments.**

KEY LEGISLATIVE MEASURES



Technical measures

- **Introducing a single identifier** (personal number) for foreign workers upon their first contact with public authorities;
- Transforming the system of granting consent to fill in a job vacancy by a foreign worker to a system that will permit employers to employ foreign workers from non-EU/EEA countries **without the need for an assessment of the particular employee by a labour office (the consent granted to the employer refers to job position not to a concrete foreign employee);**
- Replacing **the labour market test with an appropriately set salary threshold** through which the state specifies the minimum income for foreigner workers in a given profession which they have to achieve in order to be permitted to enter the Slovak labour market;
- Undertaking a labour market survey and the **creation of representative List of occupations with a shortage of workforce** using less detailed categories of occupation by combining several indicators into a synthetic indicator that will give a more comprehensive picture of labour market needs both at the national and regional level;
- **Digitalizing the system** of granting visas and residence permits to foreigners, streamlining the input of all relevant institutions in the process and assuring inter-operability with other related systems. Digitalisation of all processes enhances access to information, user-friendliness and effectiveness. Administrations concerned, employers and foreign workers will gain online access to information on the status of their application, ability to make changes in the application and possibility to add required documents.





Measures to accelerate labour market entry

- **For foreign workers in shortage occupations:**

The system consists of two mechanisms. **The first one is the single permit for residence and work, an instrument based on the representative List of occupations with a shortage of workforce** which is created by analysing multiple indicators. Employers get the consent to filling in a job position in advance, employees are permitted to start working upon submission of a complete application for residence, i.e., prior to granting a residence permit..

The second mechanism is a national (working) visa for in-demand occupations linked to a special list of in-demand occupations prepared by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic which will provide an accelerated access to the labour market.

- **For high-skilled foreign workers**

The **EU Blue Card** will remain a primary instrument to attract these workers once the shortcomings in its functioning are removed (e.g., separation of the system for the granting of work and residence permits, reducing the current salary threshold level to 1.2 times the wage in national economy for foreign workers in shortage occupations, removing the duplicity of undergoing a labour market test and salary threshold assessment, etc.).

- **For talent and experts in strategic sectors**

The system will provide the selected categories of the most talented and most in-demand foreign workers (e.g., TOP 500 university graduates, PhD graduates, medical doctors and other qualified medical professionals, IT experts, foreign graduates of Slovak universities within 12 months of their graduation, etc.) **with an accelerated access to the Slovak labour market based on a national visa (for job seekers)** without the need to present a proof of guaranteed job position with a specific employer in advance.

- **For low-skilled foreign workers and seasonal workers**

An instrument that provides unskilled and low-skilled workers in SK-ISCO 8 and 9 categories – which have been assessed to be in workforce shortage – with an accelerated entry to the Slovak labour market under national visas, and guarantees their humane and managed return to the country of origin.

The proposed legislative measures support the creation of a system that prioritises **the existing labour market needs in real time, while opening the door to the most talented foreign workers in shortage occupations.**

INCENTIVE MEASURES

The system of incentive measures proposed under the Scheme consists of measures targeting all categories of foreigners, as well as those specifically targeted on special categories of foreign workers from non-EU/EEA countries.



Structural measures

Structural measures are mostly passive measures the implementation of which will contribute to the attractiveness of Slovakia in terms of labour mobility. All foreign workers benefit from these measures irrespective of their country of origin or qualification, but some of the measures may be directly targeted at foreign workers in shortage occupations.

Information

- Improving access to information (e.g., developing an online platform that will provide for comprehensive updated official legal, social and residence-related information and information about the structure of individual migration and integration authorities and agencies in Slovakia, etc.);

- Targeting PR campaigning (e.g., a campaign to build Slovakia's international image as a country of destination for foreign workers, etc.);
- Reshaping the public narrative on labour mobility (more details in the Communication Strategy for the Labour Mobility Scheme for Slovakia).

Slovak foreign service offices abroad

- Reinforcing the Slovak foreign service offices (e.g., enhancing and expanding activities of Slovak institutions, including so-called "Slovak houses", in identified foreign workers' countries of origin, etc.).

Entry to Slovakia

- Making the process of granting temporary residence – a single permit for residence and work and the EU Blue Card – more effective, flexible and transparent);
- Introducing the necessary types of national (working) visas.

Residence in Slovakia

- Linking national programmes for attracting the most-skilled employees with the possibility to obtain permanent residence under national rules („in Slovakia's interest") faster;
- Considering the differences between temporary residence of foreigners and temporary residence of Slovak citizens in policy-making.

Administrative burden

- Reducing administrative burden and simplifying administrative procedures when applying for a residence/work permit.

Integration services for foreign workers

- Institutionally arranging the integration services and cooperation e.g., setting up contact points for foreigners in municipalities with a higher percentage of foreigners.

Funding of integration measures

- Taking into account the presence of foreigners with temporary residence at the territory of the city/village in allocation of personal income tax revenues. The EU funds for support of the integration of foreigners in Slovakia shall be used strategically.



Economic measures

The measures are more targeted, designed to motivate foreign workers through benefits in the area of social security and health insurance, protection of the rights of employees, and contain several measures providing economic benefits.

Attractive tax environment

- Considering tax breaks (may encourage foreigner workers to arrive in Slovakia by reducing their high relocation costs);
- Concluding agreements on prevention of double taxation (e.g., with the countries on which Slovakia will focus its labour mobility policy, etc.).

Attractive working environment

- Implementing wage guarantees under work contracts (cooperation by the Social Insurance Agency to labour offices and labour inspectorates, interconnecting information systems);
- Ensuring the compliance with legal employment requirements and ensuring the protection of rights of foreign workers;
- Permitting all foreigners with temporary residence and holders of "working visas" to change their employer.

Social security and health insurance

- Permitting access to social benefits e.g. increasing the number of categories of foreigners who may register as job seekers and receive an unemployment benefit;

- Concluding new bilateral social security agreements, especially with the countries on which Slovakia will focus its labour mobility policy;
- Permitting access to health insurance e.g., extending the public health insurance system to cover dependent children of a foreign worker who are university students and to a spouse of a foreign national who has been granted the EU Blue Card, etc.



Personal integration measures

The measures create attractive, supportive conditions for retaining foreigners in Slovakia, for their family life, education and housing.

Education

- Developing a language teaching concept of Slovak language courses for foreigners targeting adult foreigners;
- Facilitating recognition of education and professional qualifications (e.g., preparing intensive and standardised preparatory courses for complementary examination of foreign medical doctors, etc.);
- Providing support for retraining (e.g., by means of up-skilling and re-skilling of foreign workers).

Culture and society

- Developing a system of early socio-cultural orientation.

Family reunification

- Accelerating permit obtention for labour market entry for family members without separate permits.

Housing

- Promoting more commercial rental housing for foreign workers (e.g., creating a list/platform of ethical landlords, etc.)
- Establishing or improving accommodation facilities for foreign workers (e.g., transparent communication with local authorities and communities, etc.)

Health care

- Improving access to health care by raising the awareness of general practitioners about the provision of healthcare services to foreigners.



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