



Republic of Bulgaria
ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

OPINION
OF
THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
ON
“NATIONAL STRATEGY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA
ON MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION 2008 – 2015”

(developed on its own initiative)

With a decision of the Presidents Board the Economic and Social Council of the Republic of Bulgaria apprised itself on developing an opinion on the adopted by the Council of Ministers on 05.06.2008

“National strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria on migration and integration 2008 – 2015”

The Presidents Board assigned the development of a draft of the opinion to the Standing Commission on labour, incomes, living standard and industrial relations.

Mr Plamen Dimitrov – member of the ESC from group II – trade unions, President of the Commission on labour, incomes, living standard and industrial relations - was appointed rapporteur.

The Commission developed and proposed for adoption by the Plenary session the draft of the opinion.

At its Plenary Session of 18.07.2008 the Economic and Social Council adopted the following Opinion.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. One of the main causes of the demographic crisis in Bulgaria is the large-scale emigration over the past two decades.

Despite leading to depletion of the demographic potential, emigration which involves mainly young, qualified and educated people, caused shortage of labour force in some regions and sectors of the economy, and worsened its labour potential

The lack of policies and regulations which could prevent migration posed serious difficulties in front of Bulgaria.

The Economic and Social Council has repeatedly paid attention to the migration problems. In a opinion on demographic development and demographic policy it points out that “the problems of the emigration of young generations is not the subject of any one strategy, programme or policy and it proposes the setting up of an institution, which will conduct migration policy”.

Assessing the risks ensuing from this situation the social partners have made a proposal to the National Council for tripartite cooperation on developing a National policy on migration /December 2006/ and it was accepted.

- 1.2. By an ordinance of the Prime Minister an intrainstitutional working group was set up, consisting of representatives of ministries which are strongly involved – MFA; MJ; MIA,MES,MF etc as well as representatives of those who initiated the programme – the social partners.

At the end of September 2007 the group presented “**General trends in the migration policy of the Republic of Bulgaria**”. This document envisaged the development of **National strategy on migration and integration in the Republic of Bulgaria** which is to be based upon new tendencies.

- 1.3. An intrainstitutional working group with broad representation and participation of the social partners developed a strategy and a yearly plan for its application, which were approved by the Council of Ministers on 05.06.2008.

The underlying principle of the migration policy of the strategy when considering global and regional tendencies in the migration movement, is primarily the observation of the national interest and commitments to the European Union.

2. Conclusions and basic recommendations

- 2.1. The National strategy on migration and integration is the first document of its type which deals with issues relating to migration policy which are extremely important to the development and security of Bulgaria.

The Economic and Social Council rated positively the developed National strategy on migration and integration. The Strategy has provided adequate solutions to important issues relating to the development of the labour market and overcoming the demographic crisis.

- 2.2. The low degree of forecast of migration processes, however, the new ideas for changes in legislature of EU migration policy, as well as the fact that the strategy was drawn up in a situation of information and research deficit calls for its **bringing up-to-date.**

The Strategy needs to be updated because important proposals made by the social partners were not included.

The Economic and Social Council finds it reasonable to point out its faults and propose policies for solving the problems, which should be included in an updated version of the Strategy and respectively in the annual plans for its fulfillment.

- 2.3. The Strategy does not consider equally the emigration and immigration processes.

Disproportionately more attention has been paid to immigration.

Emigration has been neglected and it is the main cause of the demographic crisis in Bulgaria and for the insufficiency of qualified labour force.

It is necessary to formulate an aim and policies for limiting the emigration flows.

Emigration, although not as active as it was in the 90s of the last century, still entails high risk and danger in demographic and economic respect. It has turned into a matter of structural importance, strongly affecting individual sectors and jobs on the labour market, depletes the remaining demographic and labour potential of small villages and municipalities.

- 2.4. **The problem related to preserving the identity of Bulgarian self-awareness of the millions of Bulgarian emigrants has not been considered in depth and in all parts of the Strategy.**

A goal to preserve the emigrants' identity has not been set forth, which could result in policies encompassing their great diversity. Necessary, though not sufficient condition for the permanent return of at least part of the emigrants is the preservation of their identity.

A major reason for preserving emigrants' identity is the conservation of their mother tongue. This to a very high extent holds true for emigrants' children. According to experts' assessments after the latest emigration outflow this number has reached 200 thousand.

This problem is not considered in depth in the Strategy. It should be emphasized that the integration of Bulgarian emigrants in the reception country does not eliminate the preservation of their identity. On the contrary – this should be a compulsory component, the lack of which means assimilation.

- 2.5. **The problems of internal migration have not been considered in the Strategy.** Jointly external and internal migration have lead to depopulation of most small villages and municipalities, entire regions have been depopulated.

The analysis of internal migration is a necessary prerequisite for defining effective policies for using the demographic and labour potential of the country, of the internal reserves of labour force.

The national and regional insufficiency of demographic and labour potential can be set off to a certain extent through the implementation of appropriate policies for increasing the regional mobility of people.

Creating conditions for seasonal migration, for everyday commuting within an accessible area can solve many of the problems concerning

the shortage of labour force, to restrict the negative internal migration towards urban centers.

- 2.6. The body formulating and implementing the migration policy is constituted of many entities, it is composed of many administrative bodies with unclear functions, of non-governmental organizations.

For the time being this structure has unclear subordination and complex coordination

The establishment of one open body is required, which can coordinate and integrate the functions of all other involved in specific activities related to migration policy.

The setting up of a Migration Agency with the Council of Ministers, using the existing institutions, without enlarging administration, is an appropriate solution after having clearly defined the functions and responsibilities of the institutions concerning migration.

- 2.7. The target group of migration policy involves emigrants, immigrants and potential emigrants with different problems, different motives and migration behaviour.

The complex and composite structure of the target group requires an analysis in order to define detailed target groups and aims – all that has not been included in the strategy. It is impossible to develop adequate migration and integration policies without defining these target groups and aims. Priority and selectively directed measures should be attributed to those target groups who have clearly defined goals and could contribute to the development of our country. These, of course, are the young and well educated people, university students, talented people in different fields, successful business people, well-known public personalities and finally, of very great importance are the children of emigrants.

The aims in this strategy are broadly defined and there is no subordination between them. It is necessary that a system of criteria be developed, which will be used to assess the degree to which these aims were achieved, to gauge results.

- 2.8. Local authority is an agent taking part in creating and implementing migration policy.

The role of local authority in this Strategy has not been specified. There is no mention of the possibilities it has at its disposal to influence the migration processes through the policies and the resources for regional development.

The measures, outlined in an operational programme ‘Regional development’, in the strategies for regional and demographic development, in the regional plans for development are only part of the entire set of measures, which the local authority can use to influence the migration processes.

- 2.9. **The Strategy does not determine its interrelation with other national strategic documents related to migration**, some of which are ‘The Strategy for demographic development of the Republic of Bulgaria /2006 – 2020/. ‘The National Strategic Reference Framework’, ‘The National Strategy for Regional Development’, the regional plans for development.

It is necessary to outline the common sectors of interrelation between the migration and integration strategy and the other strategic documents. It is necessary to define their content and to locate the vulnerable and catalytic point in them, the ones that bring maximum synergy with minimum resource spending.

- 2.10. **It is of very high importance that an evaluation system of all possible risks that immigration involves be developed by highly qualified experts using modern scientific and information tools.**

The broad range of risks related to immigration encompasses terrorist threats, pandemics of the modern world , organized crime and traffic of people, the risk of changing the genetic structure of the nation. This extremely important and up-to-date activity should be given priority when implementing the strategy.

- 2.11. The annual plans for fulfilling the strategy are of high importance to implementing the migration policy.

The idea itself and the first steps in this respect are positive. However, there are serious mistakes in the development and the structure of the plans which should be eliminated.

The current annual plan does not point out the functions and responsibilities of the individual institutions as well as their share

in financing. There are no exact accountability indicators. The activities have not been prioritized.

- 2.12. There is information and research deficit in the strategy, there are no reliable statistical data and no studies of migration in the country have been carried out.**

In order to wipe out the deficit, a plan for the necessary research should be developed and added to the annual plan for strategy implementation.

Institutes of higher education could be of great help in this respect by including in their curricula migration problems and at the same time developing programmes for their study.

In this way there will be first hand research results and specialists who will work in the sphere of migration problems. There will be an ongoing dispute between university students and lecturers and the public.

- 2.13. The special part the social partners have is gaining greater importance and it should be given special attention in the strategy.** Their preventive, protective functions in the implementation of the migration policy should be defined. The tools they have at their disposal to influence and regulate the migration processes by participating in international structures for social partnership have not been set out.

The strategy does not point out the need for their participation at parity principle in “The National Council for coordination of migration policy issues” and “The National Council of Labour Migration”, i.e. equal participation with equal number of representatives on the part of administration and on the part of the social partners.

With regard to this it is unacceptable to deprive the social partners of their right to participate in the development of projects for new legal framework on migration as it is specified in the current annual plan for implementing the strategy.

- 2.14. Migration under certain circumstances can and should be used as an instrument for development.** There are opportunities to use the intellectual and financial potential of migrants to transfer knowledge and technology, to carry out social and cultural transfers.

A study into the experience of countries with active emigration, with similar culture and history to Bulgaria's, where migration is used as an instrument of development and effective remigration takes place, can spare the country many efforts and funds. Policies which have already been tried out could be adapted to our conditions.

2.15. When issuing "a green card" in order to attract immigrants with Bulgarian origin, the strategy focuses on improving the demographic situation.

Accepting immigrants from third countries is subject to regulations by setting annual sector quotas, however, accepting immigrants with "green cards" is not dependent on specific regulations referring to employment and can lead to disproportions on the labour market.

Accepting immigrants with "green cards" should be in accordance with the peculiarities of the national labour market.

2.16. **Having considered the extreme importance of "The National strategy on migration and integration in the Republic of Bulgaria", the Economic and Social Council considers it necessary and proposes that its results be published in the annual government reports.**

The Economic and Social Council will proceed with its efforts to organize scientists and experts by holding consultative forums on migration problems and declares its readiness to provide assessment and make proposals on the implementation of the Strategy in statements of its own.

3. *Strategy analysis*

The National strategy on migration and integration is the first document of its kind dealing with issues of migration policy, which are of extremely high importance to the development and security of Bulgaria.

That is why its positive importance cannot be denied especially under the conditions of globalization and accelerating of the migration processes. Its importance is also determined by the fact that Bulgaria is a member and an external border of the EU, which entrusts it with the function of stopping illegal immigration towards the Union.

Involving a vast range of institutions, related to the problems of migration, as well as the social partners in the development of the Strategy, has contributed to the comprehensive covering of the problems and is one of its indisputable merits.

The understanding of the strategy correctly states that “creating and implementing an immigration policy in the Republic of Bulgaria should be in compliance with the national interest of the country and should take into consideration both the obligations in this area resulting from our full membership in the EU and the new global and regional tendencies and the established international standards”.

The strategic goals encompass the main problems related to migration and provide the most important tendencies in the migration policy.

Of great positive importance are the priorities and the orientation laid down in strategic goal N1 – “attracting people with and without Bulgarian citizenship for permanent return to Bulgaria”, to the return of young, highly qualified Bulgarian emigrants.

Considering the national interest and the risks to the Bulgarian labour market, strategic goal N2 – “conducting adequate policy referring to accepting and integrating foreigners”, correctly sets out that the acceptance of citizens from third countries should be carefully balanced, in accordance with the real demands in the country.

The strategy encompasses the greater part of the migration problems, affecting our country and undoubtedly its application will lead to restricting negative demographic processes and adverse tendencies on the labour market. It proposes a number of important and specific solutions to migration policy problems in Bulgaria.

The strategy has been developed under conditions of information and research deficit, which has led to incompleteness and certain mistakes in it. These mistakes and possible solutions are considered in the analysis, which aims at enriching and enhancing it in the process of updating it and fulfilling the annual plans.

3.1. Emigration and integration problems

3.1.1. The population of Bulgaria is one of the most quickly diminishing in the world. The fact that there are approximately 1 million, mainly young, well educated and qualified people out of the

country with their over 200 thousand children who are also emigrants, is highly disturbing and distressful.

This youthful nature of emigration threatens the future of the nation, its reproduction. Fertile individuals leave the country and this changes the genetic structure in the country. Almost all Bulgarian villages are undergoing a process of depopulation.

The strategy focuses on the immigration process. It does not pay enough attention to the significant human and labour potential the huge number of emigrants possesses.

Emigration continues. Although smaller in quantity, it is especially dangerous because it involves mainly young people and affects the economy of the country.

3.1.2. The strategy does not deal with losses of people in terms of human resource resulting from emigration.

The losses resulting from emigration are usually seen as expenses on education and qualification of emigrants, i.e. seen as labour force. The fact that investments into human resources are made from birth to the end of one's life is ignored.

The losses from emigration in terms of human resources are incomparably bigger than in terms of quality of labour force.

What is more, pointing out the benefits from transfers of emigration is usually one-sided and the value added from the work of emigrants, which remains in the accepting country is not considered.

Transfers of emigrants' remuneration do not set off the losses from emigration neither in terms of labour force, nor in terms of human resources.

3.1.3. There is positive interrelation between the demographic aims and those directed at the labour force, which are part of the migration policy. Attaining the first group of goals influences positively the others.

The demographic processes, however, are extremely inert and the aims which are directed at them, are achieved slowly and involve more costs than the aims directed at the labour force.

This peculiarity of achieving the both types of aims, respectively policies, can give rise to certain contradiction when defining priorities over time and the distribution of the migration policy resources. The strategy should try and find balance when defining priorities over time and the distribution of resources between the two types of aims.

3.1.3. The strategy does not consider in depth the purely humane problems of emigration, human dramas, which it often leads to.

In its opinion "Health and Immigration" the European Economic and Social Council on the grounds of its own observations and research points out that immigrants (this refers to Bulgarian emigrants, too) have more health problems than the population of the accepting country.

They suffer because of the separation with their families and children, they are homesick and troubled, suffer from isolation and lack of integration, from cultural shock.

Many of them are victims of labour and sexual exploitation, work in dangerous working conditions, and become victims of workplace accidents more often than natives.

3.1.4. An important issue was omitted in the analysis and development of the integration policy – the problem about integration of Bulgarian emigrants both in third countries and in countries, members of the EU.

Bulgarians working in the EU are its citizens and do not see themselves as emigrants, but rather as 'mobile workers'. For Bulgaria, however, they are actually emigrants, especially when they settle there or stay there longer. All or part of the humanitarian problems, listed in 3.1.3. are valid for them, which requires thorough research and analysis of the situation.

3.1.5. The integration of Bulgarian workers does not eliminate the preservation of their identity. On the contrary, it is its compulsory element.

In order to preserve their identity, Bulgarian emigrants have to conserve the Bulgarian language and their national culture. In this respect the children of emigrants are the most vulnerable. According to an expert evaluation there are more than 200 thousand solely during the latest emigration outflow.

The strategy quotes approximately 100 Bulgarian schools abroad but this is not the real situation. There are only 3 true Bulgarian schools – in Prague, Bratislava and Budapest. The remaining so called schools have a different degree of completeness and have school units with limited capacity /some of them are in fact just courses/. They need both methodological and financial help, which for the time being they do not receive in the appropriate amount. It is necessary to educate some teachers in Bulgarian language for some emigration communities from the Diaspora. They will be sent by the community, but the expenses will be covered by the Bulgarian government.

It is also very important to support the activity of the Bulgarian church abroad as it is a very strong spiritual factor for preserving the identity of Bulgarians.

Regulation 1612 in article 12 provides and stimulates general and professional education of children of citizens of EU member states, but the study of the mother tongue is left to their personal choice, which serves as a prerequisite for the loss of identity of next generations of emigrants.

This problem has not been considered in depth in the strategy. However, without finding a solution to this problem we could not expect with high probability the return to Bulgaria of those emigrants whose children do not speak their mother tongue.

3.1.6. It is necessary to analyze the problems of the so called “accompanying migration” – the accompanying family members of working emigrants.

Attention should be paid to families who are separated for administrative or other reasons and try to find respective solutions for defending their rights and integration.

3.1.7. Not exception, but rather a common practice are the cases when Bulgarian emigrants are hired to do jobs with lower qualification than the one they have. In other case the qualification corresponds to the work done, but the payment is less and/or the working conditions are bad.

These cases require special consideration and analysis since they present a form of discrimination based on the fact that the Bulgarian documents for education and qualification have not been recognized.

3.1.8. The chapter on factors for emigration and remigration of Bulgarian citizens has not been developed comprehensively.

Major factors, generating emigration are: not observing the supremacy of law, lack of punishment, corrupt environment, lack of security, low standard of living, the problem of creating conditions for and guaranteeing professional development.

A factor for remigration is the preservation of Bulgarian citizenship of the emigrants, which can be facilitated by providing the necessary administrative and other services to issue and prolong the validity of identity documents, reinstating Bulgarian citizenship, giving double citizenship. The services provided at present are not at the required level.

Respecting the Bulgarian emigrants' rights of ownership, safeguarding their property in Bulgaria are additional factors for remigration.

3.1.9. The strategy does not envisage an exhaustive study into the way how the rights of Bulgarian emigrants are respected or violated in accordance with the negotiated conventions, international contracts, agreements, regulations, EU directives.

3.1.10. The ongoing drain of labour force threatens the entire investment process, including the absorption of European funds, which we were warned about by the European Commission.

3.1.11. Universities could be of very great importance by including in their curricula migration problems and at the same time drawing up programmes for their study.

Thus there will be direct research results and qualified people for future work in the field of migration problems. There will be a discussion between the students and lecturers on the one hand and the society on the other.

3.2. Internal migration

3.2.1. The strategy does not consider the issue of internal migration. There is no analysis of the internal migration processes.

The migration movement towards big urban centers and tourist villages led to depopulation of entire regions in the country. The quality of the labour force in these regions has decreased because the young and educated people have left the regions and this drives back potential investors and leads to inability to use local resources. There are signs of panicky emigration in some of these regions. According to the Economic Institute at BAS 80% of the country's territory is undergoing a process of depopulation.

The national and regional insufficiency of demographic and labour potential can be leveled off through conducting appropriate policies for improving people mobility in terms of territory.

Through providing conditions for seasonal migration, everyday commuting within an accessible area many of the problems related to shortage of labour force can be solved, the negative internal migration towards urban centers can be restricted. After all this can affect positively to hold back the emigration outflow as well as softening the gypsy expansion towards big towns and in particular towards the capital.

The creation of additional stimuli on the part of employers is needed, such as covering transport expenses or paying the rent when people commute and seasonal migration of labour force. The state should try and find all possible ways to improve infrastructure.

A new investment policy should be developed, directed towards the peripheral parts of certain regions, to small municipalities and villages which will balance the expected effects of the adoption of the OP "Regional development". The programme's concept envisages the development of urban centers in Bulgaria. More than half a billion euro which is 60% of the programme's resources will be channeled to the 7 big towns in Bulgaria. This investment resource can 'drain away' the remaining demographic and labour resources from the vulnerable peripheral regions, from the small municipalities and villages. This is why overlapping policies should be looked for, offering investment resources to the periphery. They can be looked for in the regional plans for development and the other operational programmes.

The analysis of internal migration is a necessary prerequisite for determining the national and regional shortages of labour force, for defining efficient policies for utilizing the labour potential of the country, the internal resources of labour force.

3.2.2. The movement of the population and the labour force from the periphery of the regions to the urban centers overloads their technical and social infrastructure, increases the crime rate, and leads to social alienation.

3.3. Immigration in Bulgaria

3.3.1. The strong focus on emigration in this strategy might feed up ungrounded expectations in the society that the problems related to shortages of labour force might be solved solely through “importing” workers

3.3.2. The strategy does not determine the actual nature of immigration in Bulgaria.

Our country is still mainly a transit country, not accepting immigrants, even for some part of the people who acquire Bulgarian citizenship.

This characteristic becomes even stronger after Bulgaria’s acceptance in the EU.

The low standard of living and the low remuneration are reasons why our country is used by immigrants as a transitory stop on their way to and in their desire to get to the richer western countries with higher standard of living.

A significant part of them, about 1/3 according to some research, are illegal immigrants, victims of or belonging to organized crime.

3.3.3. The strategy lacks a clearly formulated instruction about the development of a system for determining the demand for labour force which can organize the internal reserve of labour force, of the labour potential of the country.

This system presents an alternative to labour immigration and acts as a stop.

3.3.4. There is no opinion expressed in the strategy about the ideas in “The European Pact for Immigration and Political Asylum”.

The complicated and contradictory interests of the countries donating and accepting emigrants caused serious debates among the world community on some of the proposed ideas on the Pact. The idea about “immigrants integration contract” was rejected. It obliged citizens of third countries to take into consideration “the national identity” of the accepting country.

Bulgaria is a country donating many emigrants and it is a border country of the EU. It has specific interest regarding immigration.

EU’s directive on “circulating migration” is of very great importance to our country. There are approximately 50 thousand university students outside our country, tens of thousands of specialists and scientific workers emigrants. This intellectual capital has to be utilized. One of the opportunities to accomplish this is through “circulating migration”.

Tens of thousands are the illegal immigrants in our country. The EC is discussing a new version of the directive on sanctioning employers of illegal immigrants, which gives us the chance to propose more restrictive measures in certain areas.

3.3.5. Providing “green card” to immigrants of Bulgarian origin should be accompanied with a risk assessment, transparency and publicity, guaranteeing control over the process.

People violating the laws of the country of origin or of Bulgaria will try to take advantage of “green card”.

3.3.6. The strategy does not determine how immigrants with “green card” will integrate on the Bulgarian labour market, how they will get employed.

For immigrants from third parties the strategy provides for regulation through sector employment quotas. There are no regulative mechanisms for Bulgarian immigrants in terms of involving them on the Bulgarian labour market, which might lead to disproportions in the construction and tourism sectors.

3.4. Migration as a development instrument

3.4.1. In a statement EESC considers migration as a development instrument while observing certain conditions.

If the developing countries follow strict principles and rules, they will be able to set off the negative migration and turn it into a development instrument.

Bulgaria is definitely not a developing country, but the long-lasting transition to market economy added certain negative characteristics to its social and economic status.

In the index of the so called “failed countries” of the “Carnegy Peace Foundation” it ranks 128 out of the 177 countries, which is a relatively unstable position.

The decreasing population, the chronic brain drain, the inconsistent development of the urban and rural areas, corruption, isolation of minority groups are those destabilizing factors which place it at this unenviable position.

We have to add to these factors the huge gap between GDP per capita in Bulgaria in comparison with the average values in EU. This difference points to 7.12 times higher GDP on parity value. /Source: World Bank/.

3.4.2. EESC’s opinion stipulates a possibility for positive regulation of emigration flows of working emigrants – preferential quotas for certain strata of population with low incomes, which will greatly benefit gypsies and people in certain regions in economic depression.

The social and economic status of the country gives grounds for making attempts to use this opportunity before the EU.

Setting preferential quotas for low income population strata will actually be interpreted as regulation against illegal emigration of the same strata and the problems related to their deportation.

3.4.3. Another possibility to use migration as a development instrument is the organization of the Diaspora to organize the human resources and/or finance for foreign direct investment, transfer of knowledge and technology, cultural and social transfers

3.4.4. The strategy does not contain data for or analysis of the educational structure of our emigration communities, the highly educated and highly qualified, the experts, scientists, talented people and students outside the country.

Study and monitoring of these structures of Bulgarian emigrants is considered necessary in order to organize the utilization of their intellectual and professional potential.

Bulgarian emigration organizations should be studied and monitored in order to help them establish capacity and support the network of connections with the help of the state.

3.5. Methodological mistakes

3.5.1. From methodological point of view the implementation of the system analysis would significantly ease the elimination of a number of mistakes in the strategy while updating and applying it.

It is necessary to consider the migration policy as a system with clearly defined target and organization structure, functions and environment, as a system composed of aims and criteria to measure their fulfillment, with an information system.

The organization and target of the strategy have not been clearly defined. They comprise a number of components and require accurate classification.

The organization responsible for implementing the strategy involves a number of institutions, which should get clear instructions about their functions supplied through a structural and functional analysis.

It is necessary to set up a coordinating body, which should secure the achievement of synergy in the activities of these institutions.

The target of the strategy involves different groups of migrants, each with its peculiarities.

The main groups – emigrants, immigrants and potential emigrants are divided into a great number of subgroups depending on their location, demographic specifications, professional and educational structures, actual and declared reasons for migration, degree of integration, economic state and a number of other criteria. The lack of detailed classification and analysis of target groups renders impossible the full scope and subordination of the strategy's goals.

The detailed defining of the target groups would allow the development of adequate migration policies and selecting the most important ones among them.

The strategy does not define a system of criteria and indicators which can be used to assess the degree of achieving the set objectives.

3.5.2. The National strategic documents, such as “Strategy for demographic development of the Republic of Bulgaria /2006 – 2020/, “National strategic reference framework”, the regional plans for development are directly related to the migration policy.

The policies, specified in these strategies, have common sectors of interrelation with the migration and integration strategies.

It does not analyze and does not define the possibilities for achieving synergy of the measures, outlined in these strategic documents.

The operational programme “Development of human resources”, The National programme on development of rural regions and “Regional development” operational programme provide additional resource for attaining the goals set in the migration and integration strategy. The development of human capital and the regions for purposeful impact are deterring factors for unwanted migration.

3.5.3. It does not outline the need for research, comparison of expenses and efficiency evaluation with reference to:

- the Bulgarian emigrant as a value of human resource from birth to the moment when they emigrate and the resulting cost value and economic contribution of the immigrant-settler in Bulgaria, either Bulgarian or from other nationality;
- the Bulgarian emigrant as a value of human resource from birth to the moment they emigrate and the resulting cost value and economic contribution of the temporary immigrant acting as a provisional replacement as part of the labour force in Bulgaria;
- the resulting cost value and economic contribution of the temporary immigrant as part of the labour force in Bulgaria and the educational expenses for the long-term unemployed or inactive person for finding a job.

3.5.4. The strategy does not specify the big range of risks which the country faces as a result of immigration.

Health risks, with a view to the pandemics in the modern world, terrorist threats, organized crime, cultural and religious differences, risks for the national labour market, for the social system, risks resulting from changes in the genetic structure of the nation and many others.

It is necessary to create an assessment system of the risks resulting from immigration in Bulgaria.

3.6. The role the social partners play in creating and implementing the migration policy

3.6.1. The role of the social partners is not clearly defined in the strategy.

It does not specify the possibilities they have to participate in establishing and implementing the migration policy. Their functions in terms of strategy implementation have not been completely defined.

The social partners initiated the strategy development and took active part in the inter-institutional working groups for its development, which presupposes their participation in the “National coordination council on migration policy issues” and the “National council on labour migration”.

Their participation, however, on a parity principle in the two newly founded national councils on migration policy, i.e. participation with equal number of representatives on the part of administration and on their part, is not guaranteed. The equal participation of the social partners in the national councils is a necessary condition in order to improve the process of strategy implementation.

It is necessary to underline the fact that by participating in international structures and networks, social partners can influence positively the migration processes.

3.6.2. The shortage of labour force leads to strong interest on the part of employers organizations in the efficiency of migration policy.

They conduct their own research into the situation on the labour market and “import” of labour force, build network of business contacts which can be utilized when implementing the strategy.

3.6.3. The Trade Unions have preventive, informative, signaling and protective function as regards labour force and these functions spread over those who take part in the migration processes. They constantly keep an eye on the market and conduct their own research into its condition as well as into the problems, related to migration.

The European Trade Union Confederation, of which the Bulgarian trade unions are members, conducts research into migration and labour mobility in the world and in the European Union. It has established a network of 42 regional international councils in border regions and with their help protects the rights of labour emigrants and their families.

This network is to be used when implementing our migration policy.

The trade unions are actively working for the mutual recognition of trade union membership of Bulgarians working abroad by local trade unions, which guarantees their rights and employment.

4. *Concrete proposals*

- 4.1. To conduct a study into the structure, functions and responsibilities, the information generated and received by institutions, which build up the body implementing the migration policy in terms of their efficiency.

To develop a project to establish a Migration Agency with the Council of Ministers, which will coordinate and be responsible for the formation and implementation of the migration policy. This project should be given priority in the annual plan for implementing the strategy in 2009.

- 4.2. To secure transparency and publicity, which can guarantee control over the process of giving “green card” to emigrants with Bulgarian origin, through providing access to information on the Internet and informing the media.

- 4.3. To guarantee participation of social partners at parity principle in the two national councils on migration policy, which are being newly found.
- 4.4. Social partners should take part in the activity on developing the project on the new legal framework, which is outlined in the current annual plan for strategy implementation as well as in the management of the funds, financing the migration policy.
- 4.5. To create registers of well-educated and highly qualified emigrants, of scientists-emigrants and talented people, and students abroad.

To create conditions for using their intellectual and professional capacity by their home country through “virtual” and “circulating migration”, funds for which should be provided from the resources set aside for strategy implementation.
- 4.6. To develop a system of tax incentives and preferences for employers who cover the expenses for improving labour mobility of workers in regions with labour shortage.
- 4.7. To create registers of emigrant cultural centers and organizations and to provide funds for keeping in touch with them and assisting them should the need arise.
- 4.8. To create register of the Bulgarian educational units, to help them improve their capacity – methodologically, with teachers and finance.

To grant school status to those units which meet the requirements.

To provide funds for the education of teachers from and for the Diaspora in Bulgarian language, history and culture.
- 4.9. To organize Internet courses for studying Bulgarian language, history and culture, considering the specifics of different Bulgarian emigration communities. To this aim the necessary activities should be assigned to the respective institutions in the annual plan for strategy implementation.
- 4.10. To develop and add to the annual plan for strategy implementation in 2009 a plan for the necessary research to develop and secure the migration policy.

- 4.11. To develop measures for giving double citizenship to those Bulgarian emigrants who have foreign citizenship and want to receive Bulgarian one especially for the second and third generation emigrants.
- 4.12. To analyze and facilitate as much as possible the administrative services for issuing and maintaining personal documents of Bulgarian emigrants, some of which have restricted access for a number of objective reasons.
- 4.13. To conduct research into setting the common sectors for synergy activities in the National strategic documents for implementing the migration policy, which should be given priority in the annual plan for strategy implementation.
- 4.14. The studies carried out into the migration processes and the problems related to them by the organizations of the social partners should be used and included in the annual plans for strategy implementation.

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