

## Self-assessment online tool focused on tackling undeclared work 'Check if you are undeclared'

### Bulgaria

| GENERAL INFORMATION        |  |
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| Name of the organisation   | GENERAL LABOUR INSPECTORATE EXECUTIVE AGENCY OF BULGARIA (GLI-EA-BG)   |
| Type of organisation       | Labour Inspectorate  |
| Address                    | 1000 SOFIA   |
| Web page                   | <a href="https://www.gli.government.bg/en">https://www.gli.government.bg/en</a>  |
| Contact person             | Name and surname: Denitsa Nikolova<br>Job position: CHIEF LABOUR MOBILITY INSPECTOR<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:denitsa.nikolova@gli.government.bg">denitsa.nikolova@gli.government.bg</a>  |
| Topic of the good practice | Undeclared work  |
| Geographical focus         | <p>Cross-country (please specify)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The tool is available in Bulgarian and English language, which makes it available for English speaking users such as foreign workers in Bulgaria;</li> <li>2. The questionnaire form of the self-assessment tool explicitly asks "In which region do you work?", which means that the tool collects information on geographical principle that would be used to target information campaigns to regions with more workers at high risk of undeclared work;</li> <li>3. By asking "In which economic sector do you work?" the Bulgarian Labour Inspectorate collects valuable information about economic sectors with high risk of undeclared work which would be used in inspection or information activities;</li> <li>4. The self assessment tool asks about when the work occurred ("Have you been engaged in work or other activity for pay in the last 30 days, even for 1 hour (including in a farm or family business)?"). Through this question, the tool seeks to identify cases of undeclared work among workers who do not have information that</li> </ol> |

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|                                     | even short-term employment for a few days may be undeclared.   |
| <b>Duration</b>                     | 1/3/2023 - ongoing   |
| <b>Summary of the good practice</b> | <p>The main objective of the tool is to help workers check for themselves whether their work or part of it is undeclared and to receive guidance on how to react if they find that there is a risk to their labour and social rights. Employers can also check whether they are correctly applying labour legislation and eliminate non-compliances before they are inspected. The questions assess the risk of undeclared work in its various aspects - work without an employment contract or under fictitious conditions, unregulated payments, whether the life and health of workers are at risk and etc. The questionnaire is freely available to workers and employers at: <a href="https://gli.government.bg/udw/">https://gli.government.bg/udw/</a>. All data collected when filling the questionnaire is only for the purpose of better informing workers about the degree of individual risk of performing undeclared work. Personal details are not requested, and people cannot be identified through the collected information. The data, in a processed form serves to improve the information and control functions of the General Labour Inspectorate (GLI-EA). Through the tool, employers can also assess whether they are applying labour legislation in a way that guarantees their employees full declaration of their employment status.</p> <p>The limitation of undeclared work is among the main priorities in the activities of the Bulgarian General Labor Inspectorate. Priority sectors of control are construction, agriculture, HORECA industry, because the analyses of the results of the control activity, as well as other studies and analyses, show that they are risky in terms of the use of undeclared work. In these sectors, the Labor Inspectorate annually plans special measures and campaigns that guarantee enhanced control there.</p> <p>The benefits of applying the tool are mainly related to the social and economic aspects of the undeclared work as declaration of the employment will guarantee the labor and social rights of workers, bring benefits to the state budget, and help employers improve working conditions, thereby attracting qualified and loyal workers and employees. The practice is fully digitalized. In order to perform the self-assessment, the questionnaire must be completed, which</p> |

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|   | <p>contains questions regarding general demographic information and assessed risks. It is possible to review the entered answers and then save them by pressing the "Save" button. Depending on the respondent's answers, recommendations are given on what to do to ensure that he/she is working as declared. Guidelines are given for contacting the General Labor Inspectorate, the National Revenue Agency, and the National Social Security Institute.</p> <p>The assessment page is activated after saving. At the bottom of the page, the general assessment and the recommendations for it are shown (with a "traffic light" background). Specific individuals cannot be identified through the information collected. Fully digitalized processes allow the questionnaire to be completed at any time of the day, including outside of the General Labor Inspectorate's working hours. The implementation of the practice complements the information activity of the General Labor Inspectorate, aimed at improving the awareness of workers about their labor rights and promoting intolerance towards the gray economy and labor exploitation. This activity also complements the intensified control activity carried out by labor inspectors in connection with the identification of the various manifestations of undeclared work. The Agency's data show a limitation of the most severe forms of such, as for the seven months of 2024, the number of workers without an employment contract was 1914 compared to the same period of the previous year 2023, when there were 2102.</p> |
| <b>OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES</b>  |   |
| <p><b>Background/context</b></p> <p>What challenge, need or gap were you trying to solve or respond to?</p> <p>Why was this issue relevant or urgent in your context (sector, region, country)?</p> | <p>► The idea for developing the tool belongs to the team of the Bulgarian Labor Inspectorate, and it was coordinated and approved by the Norwegian partners. The incentive for its development is the data from the Agency's control activities, as well as the data from various studies, such as those that undeclared work in our country is about 30%. It has been established that undeclared work is increasingly rare in its purest form - work without any contract. Most often, forms of contracts with so-called fictitious clauses are now used - shorter working hours than actually worked or lower</p>   |

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|  | <p>remuneration than actually received are agreed in writing. Thus, part of the money is given in hand, without taxes and social security contributions being paid on them. Secondly, the practice of not paying overtime work, as well as using disguised employment contracts - that is, a civil contract is concluded in the presence of employment relationships, which also reduces the costs for both parties for taxes and social security contributions.</p>   |
| <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <p>What were the main goals of this practice (e.g. better compliance, faster processing, improved worker protection)? (Please limit to three)</p> <p>Who or what were these goals intended to help or change? (Please limit to three)</p> | <p>► The purpose of the self-assessment tool is to assess the risk of undeclared work. The tool helps workers and employees, employers and other interested parties to assess to what extent the labour legislation applicable in Bulgaria is observed and whether labour rights are violated. The tool helps workers to check for themselves whether their work or part of it is undeclared and to receive guidance on how to react if they find that there is a risk to their labour and social rights. After each question, recommendation is shown depending on the answer. Employers can also check whether they are correctly implementing labour legislation and eliminating non-compliances before being inspected. The questions assess the risk of undeclared work in its various aspects - work without an employment contract or under fictitious conditions, irregular payments, whether the life and health of workers are at risk, etc.</p> |
| <p><b>Main activities</b></p> <p>What were the main steps or actions you carried out to put the practice into effect?</p> <p>Were any tools, materials, partnerships, or processes created?</p>  | <p>► For the implementation of the practice, a study of good practices of risk assessment tools was conducted by a joint working group of the project team and Norwegian experts. Several meetings were held with participants from Bulgaria and Norwegian experts on the most common violations committed against Bulgarian workers. The technical specifications of the risk assessment tool were developed by the project team. The development of the tool was carried out by an external supplier in accordance with the Public Procurement Act. A full English version of the tool is also available.</p>  |

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| <b>Funding/organisational resources</b>  | <p>The tool was financed under the Fund for Bilateral Relations at National Level within the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area and Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021r.the tool was financed under the Fund for Bilateral Relations at National Level within the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area and Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021r.</p>   |
| <b>PARTICIPATION</b>   |   |
| <b>Stakeholders involved</b><br><br>Organisations or entities actively contributing to the design, implementation, monitoring, or support of the good practice (e.g. labour inspectorates, social security institutions, trade unions, employers' associations, or other).   | <p>► Organisations and entities actively contributing to the design, implementation, monitoring, or support of the good practice (e.g. labour inspectorates, social security institutions).Stakeholders involved: organisations and entities actively contributing to the design, implementation, monitoring, or support of the good practice (e.g. labour inspectorates, social security institutions). The self-assessment tool was developed within the project DFPO-1.002 "Cooperation for Decent Work" and the Fund for Bilateral Relations between the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014 - 2021 and Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014 - 2021.</p> |
| <b>Target groups</b><br><br>Main groups or categories that the practice is directly aimed at, who should receive its services or who engage with it (e.g. employers, mobile or posted workers, labour inspectors and social security officers, or other).  | <p>► Main groups or categories that the practice is directly aimed at, who should receive its services or who engage with it (e.g. workers or people who seek to work, employers, mobile or posted workers, labour inspectors and social security officers, or other).</p>  |
| <b>Final beneficiaries</b><br><br>Individuals or groups that ultimately benefit from the outcomes of the practice, even if they are not the direct target or user (e.g. mobile or posted workers, vulnerable workers at risk of exploitation, employers benefiting from clearer rules or reduced admin burdens, or other). | <p>► Individuals or groups that ultimately benefit from the outcomes of the practice, even if they are not the direct target or user (e.g. mobile or posted workers, vulnerable workers at risk of exploitation, employers benefiting from clearer rules or reduced admin burdens, or other).</p>   |
| <b>GOOD PRACTICE CRITERIA</b>  |   |
| <b>Achievements and outcomes</b><br><br>What specific results did the practice achieve? (e.g. How many workers or  | <p>1. The benefits of implementing the instrument are mainly related to the social and economic aspects of undeclared work, as declaring employment will guarantee the labor and social rights of workers, will bring benefits to the state</p>   |

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| <p>employers were reached, number of publications created? What processes became faster?)</p> <p>What kind of broader benefits did it bring? (e.g. Did it improve understanding of rights and obligations, enhance cooperation between authorities, or reduce legal uncertainty and inconsistent application of rules?)</p>                      | <p>budget and will help employers improve working conditions, thus attracting qualified and loyal workers and employees. To date, around 900 assessments have been made using the tool;</p> <p>2. The implementation of the practice complements the information activity of the General Labor Inspectorate, aimed at improving workers' awareness of their labor rights and promoting intolerance towards the shadow economy and labor exploitation. This activity also complements the intensified control activity carried out by labor inspectors in connection with the identification of the various manifestations of undeclared work. The Agency's data show a reduction in the most severe forms of such, as for the seven months of 2024 the number of workers without an employment contract was 1914 compared to the same period of the previous year 2023, when they were 2022.</p>   |
| <p><b>Cost effectiveness</b></p> <p>How did you keep costs low while still achieving results? (e.g. Did you reuse existing tools, automate processes, or share resources across teams?)</p> <p>Can you show that the outcomes were worth the investment? (e.g. Did small changes lead to big improvements, or were expensive tools avoided?)</p> | <p>► The fact that the tool is freely accessible means that its “cost per user” can decline as more people use it, improving the value of the investment. Given the modest nature of the investment (a web-based questionnaire embedded into existing agency infrastructure, grant-funded) and the large size of the problem (undeclared work imposing multi-billion BGN losses annually), the tool appears worthwhile from a value-for-money perspective. The logic is: minimal incremental cost, marginal additional delivery (free user access), and the potential to improve awareness, self-monitoring and eventual formalisation. Moreover, by feeding user responses into planning, the tool enhances targeting of inspection and enforcement – thus amplifying impact beyond the tool itself. In essence: small &amp; smart change (online self-check) contributes to larger improvement (better awareness, targeted inspections). Expensive tools (e.g., big enforcement ICT systems) were avoided or deferred.</p> |
| <p><b>Transferability</b></p> <p>What are the key features that make this practice work well? (e.g. a digital platform,</p>  | <p>► The practice is freely available to everyone working in Bulgaria. Each administration could promote it through its public relations channels and among its employees.</p>   |

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| <p>clear guidelines, a joint inspection process, or strong coordination)</p> <p>What would another country or organisation need to make this work for them? (e.g. certain laws, IT systems, or staff training)</p>   | <p>For now, it is promoted mainly through the information activities of the General Labor Inspectorate.</p>   |
| <p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p>How is the practice sustainable from a social, financial or environmental perspective?</p> <p>What makes this practice able to continue over time? (e.g. It is now part of regular work or has been built into law or procedures?) and how are you making sure it lasts beyond the pilot or project phase?</p> | <p><b>1. Embedded in the State Labour Inspectorate</b></p> <p>The tool is not an external project, limited to a period of time – it is accessible through the GLI EA website and part of its work. This implies that its maintenance, updates and use as part of standard activities are possible;</p> <p><b>2. Adaptability and feedback</b></p> <p>The online tool allowed for data storage and analysis of trends that could introduce adjustments and improvements – for example, to add new questions, update the guidelines, identify new forms of non-declaration that may have arisen. This gives it the potential to develop, not to become obsolete;</p> <p><b>3. Legislative and regulatory support</b></p> <p>To make it more sustainable, it would be useful (and is already happening in part) for the tool to be recognized in regulatory documents — e.g. to be required by employers or to be used within the framework of GLI-EA control plans, or as part of the conditions of subsidies or European programs. If the law or bylaws oblige employers to react when violations are shown through self-assessment or to respond to recommendations, this increases sustainability.</p> <p><b>4. Information and promotion</b></p> <p>To be truly widely used — campaign work, information campaigns, partnerships with civil society organizations, unions, media should be done. The more people know, the more often it will be used, the greater the public support and pressure for support. This helps it not to be forgotten, not to stop simply because the project ends.</p> |



## Innovativeness

What makes this practice new or different in your field or country? (e.g. Is it the first of its kind, or does it combine actors who don't usually work together, or activities not performed before?)

How does it improve older or less effective approaches? (e.g. By reaching more people, using data better, or simplifying complex procedures)

**1. Early warning**, i.e. prevention instead of just control after the violation has occurred. The old approaches are mostly related to on-site inspections based on received signals. The online tool allows workers and employers to “see” risks earlier and take corrections before serious consequences or sanctions occur. This can reduce the number of violations and the need for reactive measures;

**2. Wider scope and scale** - the tool is fully digitalized and accessible online, at any time, to anyone interested. It is possible to make a preliminary self-assessment of the situation in which the specific addressee is, then, based on the information received during the filling in of the questionnaire and at the very end, if necessary, then to submit a signal to the competent control body and have a detailed check of the case carried out. This increases the potential number of people reached by prevention and raises their awareness;

**3. Using data to improve control practice** - the collected (anonymized) information can be aggregated and analyzed by the GLI EA to see which sectors, regions, groups (e.g. by company size) are at higher risk, and to focus control efforts and information activities where it is most needed;

**4. Simplified self-assessment procedures** - the questionnaire, guidelines and recommendations are accessible, clearly structured, with a visual “traffic light” system for risks. This reduces the information barrier and complicated bureaucratic procedures.


## Digitalisation

What kind of digital tools or platforms were used in this practice? (e.g. online portals, automated case tracking, data sharing, digital databases or other)

How did these tools help in reaching your goals? (e.g. Did they save time, facilitate access to data in real time, reduce errors, help detect fraud, or improve coordination between authorities?)

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Agency, and the National Social Security Institute. The assessment page is activated after saving. At the bottom of the page, the general assessment and the recommendations for it are shown (with a "traffic light" background). Specific individuals cannot be identified through the information collected. Fully digitalized processes allow the questionnaire to be completed at any time of the day, including outside of the General Labor Inspectorate's working hours.