



**Asia-Europe Meeting**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE CIRCULAR**

### **The 5th ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers' Conference "Towards Sustainable Social Development in Asia and Europe: A Joint Vision for Decent Work and Social Protection"**

*3-4 December 2015, Sofia, Bulgaria*

Within the framework of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the Republic of Bulgaria has the honour to host the 5th ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers' Conference "Towards Sustainable Social Development in Asia and Europe: A Joint Vision for Decent Work and Social Protection", which will take place on 3-4 December 2015, in Sofia, Bulgaria.

This event is expected to be attended by 200 participants – delegations from 51 ASEM member states /*Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brunei, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Croatia, Cyprus, The Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, The Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, The United Kingdom, Vietnam*/, the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat, as well as representatives from international organizations.

We welcome you to Sofia and hope you will enjoy our hospitality. We believe this Administrative circular will facilitate your stay.

**TENTATIVE PROGRAMME**  
**VENUE: Hotel Marinela,**  
**Address : 100, James Bourchier Boulevard, 1407 Sofia, Bulgaria**

**Wednesday, 2 December 2015**

- Arrival of Participants**
- 16.30 - 19.00**      **Meeting of ASEM Senior officials**  
**Welcome Reception**

**Thursday, 3 December 2015**

- 08.00 - 09.00**      **Registration of ASEM Employers and Workers Representatives**
- 09.00 - 10.00**      **ASEM Employers and Workers Group meeting**
- 10.00 - 10.30**      **Coffee/tea break**
- 10.30 - 12.00**      **ASEM Employers and Workers Group meeting continues**
- 12.00 - 13.00**      **Lunch**
- 13.00 - 14.00**      **Opening Session of the Labour and Employment Ministers' Conference**
- 14.00 - 14.15**      **Coffee/tea break**
- 14.15 - 16.15**      **PLENARY SESSION I**  
*Challenges and opportunities to improve youth labour market outcomes in Asia and Europe*
- 16.15 - 16:45**      **Coffee/tea break**
- 16.45 - 18.45**      **PLENARY SESSION II**  
*Towards decent work and safer workplaces in global supply chains: promoting higher labour and social standards in the ASEM context*
- 20.00 - 22.00**      **Conference Dinner**

**Friday, 4 December 2015**

- 09.00 - 11.00**      **PLENARY SESSION III**  
*Investing in social protection to promote inclusive growth and sustainable social development for all in Europe and Asia*
- 11.00 - 11.30**      **Coffee/tea break**
- 11.30 - 12.30**      **Closing Session**
- 12.30 - 13.30**      **Lunch**
- Working visit (afternoon)**

## 1. OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF ASEM LEMC 5:

The official website for the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers' Conference (ASEM LEMC) is <http://asiaeuropemeeting.com>. This website will be regularly updated with information about the Forum, ASEM LEMC and related activities until the end of the Conference.

Delegations are kindly advised to visit this website regularly for updated information about logistics, agenda, side-events and for online registration of their participation.

## 2. VENUE

The event will take place at **Hotel Marinela \*\*\*\*\***  
100, James Bourchier Boulevard,  
Lozenetz,  
1407 Sofia,  
Bulgaria

For information in relation to **Hotel Marinela** you can visit:  
<http://hotel-marinela.com/j/index.php/en/>



The hotel is located at 15 minutes drive from Sofia International Airport and around 20-minutes walk from the city centre. There is metro station near the hotel called: "James Bourchier/Джеймс Баучър" (blue metro line).

### 3. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

Delegations are expected to arrange their own travel and accommodation and cover costs.

**All participants are encouraged to stay at Hotel Marinela** (i.e. at the Hotel which will provide the venue of the LEMC).

For your convenience, a limited number of hotel rooms at special rates (single room for EUR 85,00, deluxe room for EUR 95,00 VAT included) have been reserved in Hotel Marinela on 2 - 4 December 2015. To benefit from the special rate, please book your room **before 15 November 2015** by contacting Hotel Marinela and quote the reference "ASEM SOFIA". A valid credit card will be required for the booking.

Contact point for booking:

Ms. Ilka KUTEVA,  
Marinela Hotel:  
E-mail: [sales@victoriaholidays.eu](mailto:sales@victoriaholidays.eu)  
Tel: + 359 879 55 95 90

The European Commission can arrange travel and accommodation for participants from some Asian developing countries, as well as the ASEAN Secretariat, and cover their travel and accommodation costs if requested.

The Asian developing countries entitled for sponsorship for travel and accommodation expenses for up to 2 persons are: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

As regards EU Member States, the European Commission can also arrange the travel and accommodation for up to 2 persons accompanying a Minister, and can cover their travel and accommodation costs if requested.

The European Commission will inform shortly the eligible delegations of the relevant procedures and conditions.

(Sponsored participants do not need to book their hotel rooms via this above contact point; their reservations will be taken care of by the organisers.)

During their stay delegates are responsible for all costs incurred.

#### 4. TRANSPORTATION

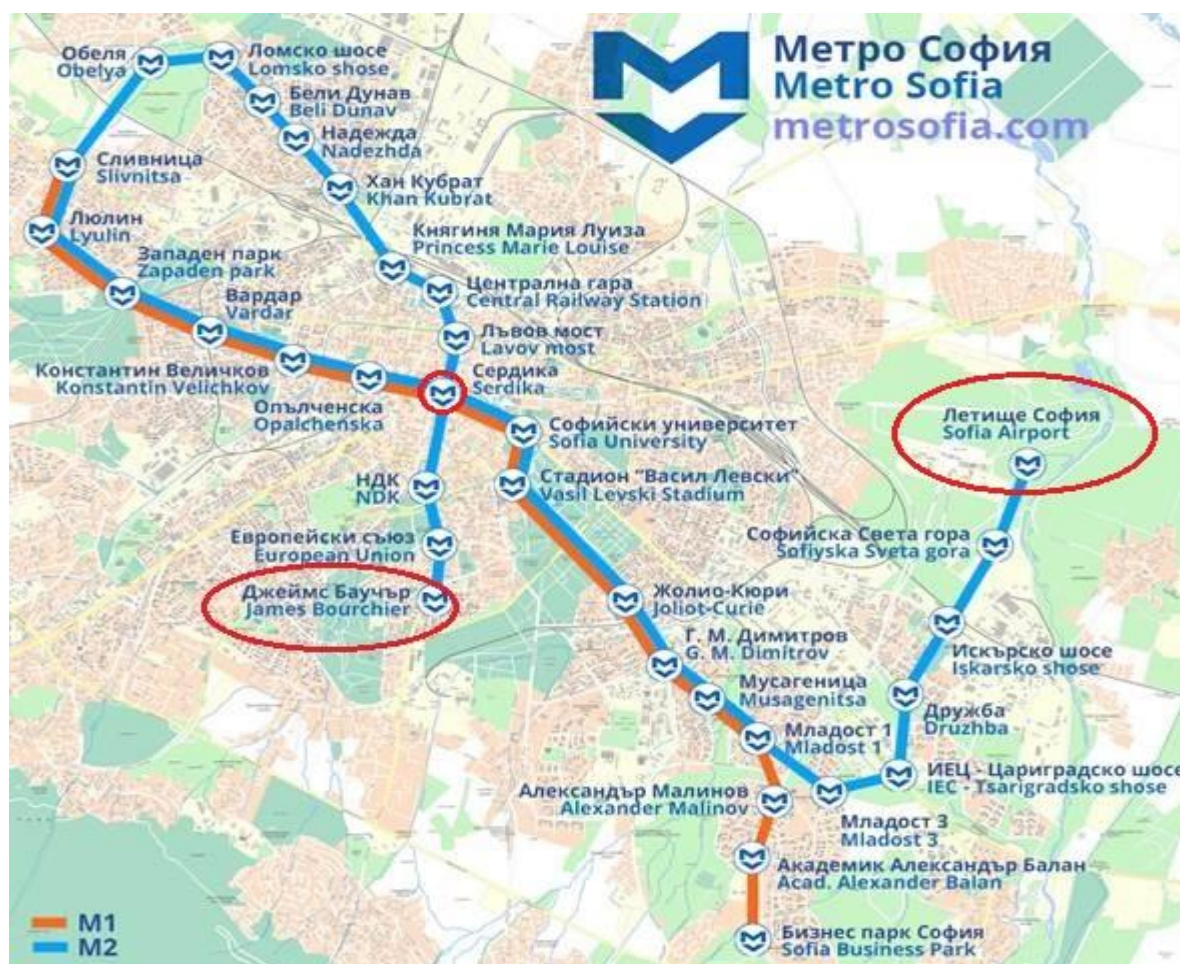
The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy will provide buses for transportation for delegations for all the transfers referred to in the programme between different locations during the event.

The Minister / Head of delegation will be offered a chauffeur-driven limousine for the arrival and departure, accompanied by a maximum of one person.

Delegation members arriving/leaving separately from the Minister/Head of delegation are kindly requested to make their own travel arrangements.

Sofia airport /SOF/ is the main airport of Bulgaria. The airport is located 5 km (3.1 miles) east of the city centre of Sofia. For more information please see <https://www.sofia-airport.bg/en>

#### Metro



Getting from the airport to Hotel Marinela takes approximately 30-35 minutes. You should take blue line M2 and go to Serdika Station where you change to the blue line to James Bourchier (Джеймс Баучър) station where you get off. Metro ticket costs 1 BGN (approximately 0,57 USD) and can be purchased at the entrance to the metro station.

## 5. REGISTRATION

### 5. 1. Participants' registration

Online accreditation is open via <http://asiaeuropemeeting.com/> until **6 November 2015**.

Participants requiring a visa are kindly requested to complete their registration forms **by 25 October 2015** at the latest, which would enable the Bulgarian side to ensure timely preparation of individual invitations and their submission to the Bulgarian Embassies in the respective countries. (See point 6)

Each ASEM country should appoint one Contact Point (if not yet done so) who will be in contact with: [EMPL-ASEM-MINISTERIAL@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-ASEM-MINISTERIAL@ec.europa.eu).

As a general rule the format is 1+2 for all delegations i.e. each delegation consists of 1 Head of delegation and up to 2 delegates including the Senior official. In case a delegation would consist of more persons, then it should inform the organisers via a notice sent to: [EMPL-ASEM-MINISTERIAL@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-ASEM-MINISTERIAL@ec.europa.eu). Security staff or interpreter is not considered part of the 1+2 but should register via online registration system.

If security officers intend to carry firearms during their stay in Bulgaria, delegations should ask their Embassies in Sofia or accredited to Bulgaria to send note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs not later than 14 days before their arrival.

The accreditation badges will be supplied by each delegation's Liaison officer upon arrival:

- 1 red badge/pin for Minister/Head of delegation and 2 blue badges for the members of each delegation;

These are personal and non-transferable, and should be worn visibly during the entire programme as participants will otherwise not be able to access the venue or use the transfers provided between locations. In case of loss of a registration badge, the organizers need to be informed immediately as such changes require a special accreditation procedure.

- 2 additional badges - transferable white floater badges.

Participants are encouraged to register as soon as possible to make sure there is enough time for all necessary visa and travel arrangements.

## 5. 2. Late registraion

After the online registration system closes on **6 November 2015**, participants should directly contact: [EMPL-ASEM-MINISTERIAL@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-ASEM-MINISTERIAL@ec.europa.eu).

On-site registration at the LEMC Venue (Hotel Marinela) may be available for late registration. However, please be advised that due to security reasons, on-site registration might be limited and all participants are requested to register online prior to the Forum.

*All delegates are kindly requested to notify the organizers for any specific needs of people with disabilities.*

## 6. VISA

Information on how to obtain a visa for Bulgaria can be found on the following website: <http://www.mfa.bg/en/pages/109/index.html>

Participants requiring a visa are kindly requested to complete their registration forms **by 25 October 2015**.

Delegates are required to ensure their passports have at least 6 months' validity on the day they are departing to Bulgaria and, if applicable, need to apply for the visa form the nearest Bulgarian Diplomatic Mission before departure to Sofia.

In case you need to consult the Consular Authorities please contact the Consular Relations Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria: [Consular@mfa.bg](mailto:Consular@mfa.bg)

## 7. MEETING VENUE FACILITIES AND SERVICES

### **Conference room:**

The access to the conference room is limited to 1+2 per country. For additional delegates a listening room will be provided.

### **Conference secretariat:**

A room will be available at Hotel Marinela for use by all conference participants during the period of 2-4 December 2015. The room will be provided with 5 computers, internet, printer, photocopier, telephone and fax machine.

**Bilateral meeting rooms:**

Bilateral meetings between delegations are facilitated and hosted in Hotel Marinela. 5 rooms will be provided each with a table, 10 chairs and mineral water.

Requests for bilateral meeting rooms will be accepted on “first asked first served basis” and should be addressed not later than 30 November 2015 at 13.00 (GMT+2) to:

Mr. Georgi BALTCHEV  
e-mail: [Baltchev@mlsp.government.bg.p](mailto:Baltchev@mlsp.government.bg.p)  
phone: 00359 2 8119 670

Bookings can only be finalized after both Delegations have confirmed the appointment with their respective Liaison Officer.

No interpretation is provided by the ASEM LEMC5 host country for bilateral meetings.

**Prayer/meditation room:**

A prayer/meditation room will be provided at the hotel from 2 to 5 December 2015.

<b>8. INTERPRETATION</b>
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The working documents of the ASEM LEMC5 will be in English. During the Conference interpretation will be available from and into Bulgarian, English, French, German, Japanese and Chinese.

Should a Minister need interpretation into another language, this has to be notified **by 6 November 2015** to the organisers to the below e-mail address:

[EMPL-ASEM-MINISTERIAL@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-ASEM-MINISTERIAL@ec.europa.eu) so that the possibilities can be further discussed.



## 9. LIAISON OFFICERS

A Liaison Officer will be assigned to assist each Minister/Head of delegation for the duration of their stay, i.e. from arrival at the airport to departure.

The Liaison Officer will be available to answer questions regarding the programme and address any logistical challenges that may arise.

For any enquiries please contact:

Mrs. Nevena MILENCHEVA-BABEVA  
e-mail: [nbabeva@mlsp.government.bg](mailto:nbabeva@mlsp.government.bg)  
phone: 00359 2 8119 670.

## 10. LIABILITY

The organizers shall not be liable for personal accidents, losses or damages to personal property of the delegates/participants of the LEMC.

Delegates/participants should make arrangements for their own travel and medical insurance.

## 11. GENERAL INFORMATION

**11. 1. Information about Sofia** can be found on the Official website of the Sofia Municipality (<http://www.sofia.bg/en/>) or the Official Tourism Portal of Bulgaria (<http://bulgariatravel.org/en/object/234/sofia>)

### 11.2. Useful information

**Language:** Bulgarian is the official language, but it should not be very difficult to seek information in English.

**Time zone:** Bulgaria is located in the Eastern European Time Zone, which is GMT (Greenwich Mean Time) +2 hours.

**Climate:** The climate in the country is temperate continental, with Mediterranean influence in the southern parts. The Black Sea influences the climate in the eastern part of the country. There are about 2,000 sunny hours from May to October. During the winter, the mountains are particularly suitable for winter sports. The approximate temperature in December is around 5°C.

**Electric voltage:** 220 V, 50 Hz.

**Emergency number:** 112

**International dial code for Sofia:** + 3592

**Currency:** The monetary unit in the Republic of Bulgaria is the lev (BGN), which is equal to 100 stotinki (st.). The value of the lev has been pegged to the Euro, at a fixed rate of 1 EUR = 1.95 BGN; (1 USD ~ 1.75 BGN).

You can find current currency information on the site of the Bulgarian National Bank: [http://www.bnb.bg/?toLang=\\_EN/](http://www.bnb.bg/?toLang=_EN/).

Currency can be exchanged in banks or in any of the country's many currency exchange offices. Some of these exchange offices also work on holidays. Euro-cheques can be exchanged in banks.

**Credit cards:** Most Bulgarian hotels and big stores accept VISA, MasterCard, American Express, and Diners Club credit cards.

**Smoking:** Smoking is prohibited in all indoor public places. The law makes smoke free all workplaces, restaurants, bars, public transportation, cinemas, movie theatres, all hotels, near administrative buildings, in the yards or nearby day care centres and schools, on playgrounds, at outdoors children events, open air performance venues and sports facilities.

**Shop opening hours:** Most shops in Sofia close at 19.00 h.

**Communications:** Three mobile service operators provide Bulgaria with almost 100% 2G and 3G network coverage both on its territory and on territorial waters.

There is also internet coverage almost everywhere in the country. In the larger towns and cities, there are Wi-Fi spots with free Internet access. These are located mainly in the trade centres, railway stations and bus stations.

Communication operators in Bulgaria are the following:

- Vivacom – stationary and mobile telephone services ([www.vivacom.bg](http://www.vivacom.bg))
- Mtel – stationary and mobile telephone services ([www.mtel.bg](http://www.mtel.bg))
- Telenor – stationary and mobile telephone services (<http://www.telenor.bg>)

National and international calls can also be placed at many Bulgarian post offices ([www.bgpost.bg](http://www.bgpost.bg)).

## 12. SENIOR OFFICIAL ASEM - LEMC

### **Bulgarian Senior official ASEM - EMC:**

Mrs. Ivanka HRISTOVA  
Director for European Affairs and  
International Cooperation  
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy  
2, Triaditsa Str., BG-1051 Sofia  
phone: +359/2/981 25 88; fax:  
+359/2/988 23 13  
e-mail:  
[ivanka.hristova@mlsp.government.bg](mailto:ivanka.hristova@mlsp.government.bg)

### **Alternative Bulgarian Senior Official ASEM - LEMC:**

Mr. Alexander EVTIMOV  
Head of Unit, International  
Organisations and International  
Cooperation  
Directorate for European Affairs and  
International Cooperation  
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy  
2, Triaditsa Str., BG-1051 Sofia  
phone/fax: +359/2/981 53 76  
e-mail:  
[alexander.evtimov@mlsp.government.bg](mailto:alexander.evtimov@mlsp.government.bg)

### **European Commission Senior official ASEM - LEMC:**

Mr. Thomas BENDER  
Head of Unit  
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG  
Directorate A: Analysis, Evaluation, External  
Relations  
Unit A4: External Relations, Neighbourhood  
Policy, Enlargement, IPA  
Spa-3 01/52A,B-1049 Brussels  
Tel. +32/2/29 53159  
[EMPL-A4-UNIT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-A4-UNIT@ec.europa.eu)

### **Alternative European Commission Senior official ASEM - LEMC**

Mr Rudi DELARUE  
Deputy Head of Unit  
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG  
Directorate A: Analysis, Evaluation, External  
Relations  
Unit A4: External Relations, Neighbourhood  
Policy, Enlargement, IPA  
Spa-3 01/52A, B-1049 Brussels  
Tel. +32/2/29 53159  
[EMPL-A4-UNIT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-A4-UNIT@ec.europa.eu)

## 13. CONTACT PERSONS

For general queries pertaining to organizational matters, please contact:

### 1. Accreditation:

Mrs. Hajnalka KOHARI

Assistant

European Commission - DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion  
Unit A.4 - External Relations, Neighbourhood Policy, Enlargement, IPA.

Phone: 0032 2 29 86091

e-mail: [EMPL-ASEM-MINISTERIAL@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-ASEM-MINISTERIAL@ec.europa.eu)

### 2. Logistical matters:

Mrs. Elena VELKOVA

State Expert, International Organisations and International Cooperation Unit  
Directorate for European Affairs and International Cooperation

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

2, Triaditza Street, Sofia 1051 - Bulgaria

Phone: 00359 2 8119 522

Fax: 00359 2 988 23 13

e-mail: [Elena.VELKOVA@mlsp.government.bg](mailto:Elena.VELKOVA@mlsp.government.bg)

### 3. Airport and transportation

Ms. Evgenia STANKEVA

Chief expert, Unit for International Organisations and International Cooperation  
Directorate for European Affairs and International Cooperation

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

2, Triaditsa Str., BG-1051 Sofia

Tel./fax: 00 359 2 988 23 13

E-mail: [jeni@mlsp.government.bg](mailto:jeni@mlsp.government.bg)

### 4. Accommodation:

Mrs. Boriana FERMANDJIEVA

Chief Expert

European Affairs and International Cooperation Directorate

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