

Study Tour on Pension Provision for Migrant Workers for MoHRSS officials and Directors from 8 Provincial Social Security Bureaux to Romania and Spain

This study tour, which took place between 10th and 21st November 2008 visited Romania and Spain to study pension provision in both countries for migrant workers. Mr Yin Zhiyuan, the Deputy Director-General of the Pension Insurance Department of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, as leader of the tour party, and the participants were very interested in the topics covered, although in some issues relating to the operation of IT arrangements were very technical.

The specific objective of the study tour was to study arrangements in the European Union, specifically in Romania and Spain in the field of pension provision for migrant workers in the following areas:

- The operation of social security and pension provision for migrant workers
- Policy considerations for the operation of a uniform pension insurance scheme for migrant workers
- Arrangements for transfer of accrued rights on moving working locations, whether between rural and urban, or inter- or intra-provincial for urban workers
- Arrangements for financial transfer arrangements in respect of migrant workers
- Social security administration in relation to pension payments to retired migrant workers
- The application of EU Regulations on the aggregation and apportionment provisions for cross-frontier workers

The majority of these objectives were fully met.

The visit to Bucharest began with meetings at the Ministry of Labour, Families and Equal Opportunities. Romanian Ministry officials described in detail the pension system and the social assistance scheme currently operative in Romania. In particular, officials described the pension system applicable to farmers. The following day the study tour party visited the Romanian House of Pensions, which is responsible for the administration of Romanian pensions. Officials outlined the administration of the system, the organisation of the administration throughout the country and the problems which the pension system faced.

On the third day officials of the Ministry described how EU Regulations on social security for migrant workers operate and subsequently how those Regulations apply in relation to entitlement under the Romanian pension system for migrant workers who move for work purposes between Romania and other EU Member States or other countries. On the final day in Romania, the tour party visited a local social security office in the outskirts of Bucharest, which was responsible for pension arrangements for rural workers in the county outside Bucharest.

The study tour party then transferred to Madrid. At the office of the Central Services of the National Institute for Social Security, officials described in detail the social insurance pension

arrangements as currently applicable in Spain, including both the General and Special Schemes and their application to internal migrants. Subsequently officials described how the EU Regulations on migrant workers were applied under the Spanish pension schemes. On the following day officials of General Treasury described the registration and affiliation process and legal requirements for participants in the Spanish social insurance schemes, the contribution collection arrangements for all social insurance schemes and the computer procedure for management of the contribution collection.

On the third day the tour party visited the Spanish Social Security Computer Management Centre. The officials described in detail the application of IT to Spanish social insurance and the links between the Centre and local social security offices throughout Spain. They explained how the IT system was managed and the security arrangements for the protection of data. Before visiting the IT installation, officials described how members of the public could obtain information about their own pension rights through the application of the IT system. On the final day the party visited the office of the General Workers Union, who described how they assisted their members on pensions-related issues. Finally a small group of the party visited FREMAP, an organisation which provides rehabilitation for persons who have suffered work or other injury.