

Europe continues to look for ways to embrace globalisation without undermining its own citizens

Voice-over 1:

I've been working in Greek companies for nine years, at Chariessa for five. There are more jobs with the Greeks. Without them we'd all be out of work. Thanks to them we earn a living, not only in Sandanski but also in Blagoevgrad and Petrich. We thank God for Greek enterprise. Thanks to them we can work.

Voice-over 2:

Greek textiles set up in Bulgaria because the workers are not unionised, they work more flexible hours, they never go on strike and accept far lower salaries.

Voice-over 3:

The base salary for workers here in Bulgaria since January is more or less 120 euros a month. In Greece it's 600 or 650 if I'm not mistaken. Competition in our sector is really tough. There's China, and other countries in the east, such as Turkey, which manages to pull prices even lower. The simple reason that lets us stay in the market is the quality of products from Greek companies, even those in Bulgaria and Romania...whatever country Greek entrepreneurs are established in.

Voice-over 2:

Eastward delocalisation is not considered likely to be temporary, as competition pressure from Asia is constant. The perspective from a Bulgarian member of the European Parliament:

Nickolay Mladenov:

As it is happening in the south, Bulgarian companies are losing contracts to Chinese suppliers or having to relocate to China in order to use the benefit of lower labour cost there. The basic challenge we face in Europe is how to invest in a more competitive economy of the future in order to be competitive as a European Union against global players including China, India, Brazil, Russia and the others. So Bulgaria is a very small bit of the bigger challenge that we face in Europe.

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