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## BULGARIAN DIVERSITY CHARTER LAUNCH

A joint initiative of the Bulgarian Business Leaders Forum and the Centre for the Study of Democracy



This project was funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020).



### PRESS RELEASE

#### Bulgarian Diversity Charter Launched

Sofia, 18 September 2020

The **Bulgarian Diversity Charter**, a joint initiative of the Bulgarian Business Leaders Forum (BBLF) and the Centre for the Study of Democracy (CSD) was **launched** at a **high-profile event** in Sofia on 18 September 2020.

The launch was attended by **Denitsa Sacheva, Minister of Labour and Social Policy**, and **Elena Cherneva, Deputy Ombudsman of Bulgaria**, among others.

**Jana Kukuckova, Coordinator of the EU Platform of Diversity Charters**, European Commission, DG Justice and Consumers joined the event online to say Bulgaria was now the 25<sup>th</sup> member of the European platform of Diversity Charters which means signatories will be able to exchange experience and best practices with their peers in 24 EU countries that have adopted a Diversity Charter.

Business community members and NGO sector representatives also attended the event. **BBLF Chairman Levon Hampartzoumian, Deputy Chairman Iravan Hira** and **Dimitar Markov, Law Programme Director at CSD** briefed guests on the joint initiative.

The **CEOs of the 10 founding members of the Bulgarian Diversity Charter: AstraZeneca Bulgaria, Alaric Securities, Japan Tobacco International, Ecopharm, M3 Communications Group, CEZ Bulgaria, Siemens Bulgaria, Unique Estates, Hewlett Packard Enterprise operated by Selectium, and Shell Bulgaria** took the floor to share their motivation to sign the Charter and received their membership certificates. Being among the most active member companies of BBLF, they have now sent a **clear message to encourage companies and other organisations to recognise and use diversity** among their employees, customers and partners as a driver of development and success and a way to building a more tolerant and inclusive society.

The launch event was the final outcome of the **special DIVERSE.BG project**, a joint initiative of BBLF and the Centre for the Study of Democracy to draft, implement and promote a Bulgarian Diversity Charter. It was funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020).

**The Charter** is a document that is voluntarily signed by a company or organisation committing to undertake steps to implement policies on diversity and equal opportunities to people regardless of gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, age, religion, ethnic origin, etc. The Charter aims to **encourage companies to recognise and use diversity** among their employees, customers and partners as a **driver of development and success** ([full text](#)).

**Membership** in the **Charter is open** to commercial companies, public institutions and civil society organisations in confirmation of their commitment to promote diversity in the labour market and to value diversity among their employees. For **details on why and how to sign the Charter** please visit [www.diverse-bg.eu](http://www.diverse-bg.eu).

All members of the Charter can use its **online platform** for updates on the latest trends and ideas related to diversity in a corporate environment, as well as to tap on the experience of their colleagues from other companies, including those operating in EU member countries. This international exchange of good practices encourages existing corporate initiatives and the development of new projects and programmes.

The event was hosted by **Radinela Buserska**, a **Bulgaria ON AIR TV** anchor, and was **streamed live** for viewers on Facebook.

The launch was widely covered by the **media**: [BTA](#), [BNR](#), [Manager](#), [Economy.bg](#), [Tvoyat biznes](#), [DevStyler.io](#), [Actualno](#), [24\\_chasa](#), [Trud](#), [Dnevnik](#), [Mediapool](#), [novini.g](#), [ClubZ](#), etc. (Bulgarian only).