

External contribution

Explanation of the statistical data relating to the investigations into human trafficking conducted by the NSSO inspection services' ECOSOC teams in 2023

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Introduction

This report concerns the NSSO inspection services (Thematic Directorate for Trafficking in Human Beings and ECOSOC teams).

Besides the purely statistical data, this contribution aims to provide qualitative information on the investigations conducted by the NSSO inspection service's ECOSOC teams in 2023.

The data included in this report stem from several sources:

1. ARTEMIS, the internal case management system, from which the data, relating to the investigations closed in 2023, were extracted. In 2023, 204 investigations into 'trafficking in human beings' (hereafter THB) were finalised, with a total of 299 presumed victims. Some did not meet our definition of the THB investigation or were duplicates. Hence, after verification, the number of **181 closed THB** investigations was retained.
2. The analysis of the checklists drawn up by the social inspectors in 2023 in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Joint Circular of the Minister of Justice, the Minister for Employment, the Minister for Security and the Interior, Secretary of State for the fight against social fraud, and the College of Prosecutors General on the policy of investigation and prosecution regarding trafficking in human beings (COL 01/2015). NSSO inspectors draw up a checklist, as soon as possible, following findings and as long as there are sufficiently precise indications of a potential situation of trafficking in human beings. In 2023, 116 checklists were drawn up, which means that the situation of **116 presumed victims** was examined as part of our checks.

The reason for the difference between the 299 potential victims stemming from the ARTEMIS investigation management program is because the checklists are drawn up, in principle, as soon as there are sufficient indicators of labour exploitation. This is done regardless of the investigation's state of progress (when it is opened, during the investigation or when it is closed), whereas the figures from our ARTEMIS program concern investigations that closed in 2023 but which began in 2023 or earlier. Subsequently, the data relating to the checklists is more representative of 2023.

A specific analysis report based on these checklists is submitted annually by our Thematic Directorate to the Criminal Policy Department, FPS Justice.

Another source of qualitative information is the information-sharing relating to investigations into the trafficking of human beings set up with the ECOSOC team leaders.

1. Statistics relating to the police reports and criminal reports (ARTEMIS)⁴⁹⁷

The NSSO inspection services' ECOSOC investigations are processed in an investigation management tool called ARTEMIS. Statistics relating to **investigations closed in 2023** therefore stem exclusively from this program. This management tool is constantly evolving. It has already been adapted several times since its launch, in order to best meet our needs in terms of statistics.

⁴⁹⁷ These statistics are based on closed investigations.

In the course of 2023, as part of the **181 THB investigations processed**, the NSSO compiled **56 initial police reports (PR) and/or criminal reports (CR), 31 supplementary criminal reports and 48 information reports** concerning labour exploitation (Art. 433quinquies of the Criminal Code).

These reports concern 299 presumed victims. In addition, following investigations carried out with other inspection services or the police, the *Pro Justitia* (PJ) or criminal report on THB may have been drawn up by another service (generally by the police). Seven reports or PJ were written by other services as part of a collaboration with the NSSO.

A supplementary criminal report is drawn up when the magistrate requests additional actions for a situation of exploitation that has already been reported through a *Pro Justitia* or an initial criminal report, as long as it concerns the same victim or victims. This distinction between the initial criminal report and a supplementary criminal report prevents the same situation of exploitation or the same presumed victims from being counted several times in the results.

As for the 'information report' result, it is used to support the reports intended for the judicial authorities, either to expose limited evidence of labour exploitation (e.g. with no presumed victim), or to convey the results of research, information gathering, and data analysis when an investigation into THB has not yet been initiated or begun.

It should also be noted that the inspectors of the ECOSOC teams deal with investigations other than those concerning trafficking in human beings. Hence, ECOSOC is responsible for investigations into trafficking in human beings (labour exploitation), foreign labour and sectors at risk. In total, 3,782 ECOSOC investigations were processed in 2023, including 181 investigations into THB.

Results of the THB investigations:

Provincial departments	PJ/CR compiled by NSSO	Supplementary criminal reports	Information reports	PJ/CR compiled by another service ⁴⁹⁸	Presumed victims
West Flanders	3	0	3	3	24
East Flanders	12	2	1	2	184
Antwerp	6	0	12	0	19
Limburg	2	0	1	0	4
Hainaut	6	0	8	0	13
Namur-Luxembourg	8	18	5	0	8
Liège	4	3	9	0	4
Flemish Brabant	6	2	1	1	9
Brussels	6	3	4	0	13
Walloon Brabant	3	3	4	1	21
Total	56	31	48	7	299

Note also that in 2023:

- **299** presumed victims of THB were referred to the judicial authorities by the NSSO inspection services based on criminal reports or *Pro Justitia*.
- The most frequent nationalities are: Turks (36), Filipinos (61), Bangladeshis (30), Moroccans (27) and

Ukrainians (18). Also note that among these 299 presumed victims, 15 were EU nationals, including 8 Belgians. In terms of gender, 14 of the presumed victims were women and 285 were men.

⁴⁹⁸ In the context of an investigation carried out in collaboration with the NSSO. It should be noted that when the PJ or CR is drawn up by another service, we do not count the victims in our management program.

- The most represented sectors of activity were construction, the retail trade and garages (car washes).
- The three provincial departments with the most presumed victims, according to figures from investigations closed in 2023, are East Flanders, West Flanders and Walloon Brabant. During 2023, these teams processed and closed high-profile cases that began in late 2021 and during 2022.

In total, 116 checklists were drawn up (1 checklist per presumed victim; therefore several checklists may concern the same employer/exploiter). The breakdown is as follows:

Provincial departments	No. of checklists drawn up
West Flanders	25
East Flanders	26
Antwerp	21
Limburg	1
Hainaut	8
Namur-Luxembourg	3
Liège	4
Flemish Brabant	12
Brussels	14
Walloon Brabant	2
Total	116

2. Analysis of the checklists

Introduction

In accordance with the stipulations of COL 01/15, a checklist was completed in 2023 as soon as there were sufficiently precise indications of a potential situation of human trafficking, whether the investigation was in progress or at the time it was closed.

2.1. Geographic breakdown per sector of activity (2023)

	Namur-Luxembourg	Brussels	Liège	Hainaut	Limbourg	Walloon Brabant	Flemish Brabant	Antwerp	East Flanders	West Flanders	Total
Agriculture/horticulture			1				1			4	6
Bakery		1						14			15
Car-wash & truck-wash							6	2	2	1	11
Hairdressing & beauty	1	1									2
Retail trade			1	2		1			2		6
Wholesale trade						1					1
Construction	1	1	1	4	1			2	5	20	35
Distribution ads/post		9							14		23
Hospitality		1					1	2	1		5
Logistics								1			1
Riding school				2							2
Cleaning											1
Transport	1										3
Domestic work/home help			1						2		4
Sorting/recycling		1					3				4
Sorting/recycling							1				1
Total	3	14	4	8	1	2	12	21	26	25	116

2.2. Breakdown according to age, gender and nationality of the presumed victims 2023

Nationality	Men	Women
Afghanistan	13	
Algeria	1	
Belgium	8	1
Brazil	0	2
Bulgaria	2	
Cameroon	1	
Colombia	4	1
Congo	0	1
El Salvador	4	
Spain	2	
Ghana	6	
Guinea-Bissau	3	
India	2	
Macedonia	2	
Morocco	17	4
Moldavia	3	
Nicaragua	0	1
Niger	1	
Netherlands	1	
Philippines	21	
Portugal	1	
Romania	2	1
United Kingdom	1	
Russia	1	
Rwanda	1	
Senegal	1	
Slovakia	0	1
Sudan	1	
Tajikistan	1	
Tunisia	1	
Turkey	2	
Vietnam	1	
Total	104	12

Age	Men	Women
Minors (-18 years old)	0	0
Between 18 to 30 years old	32	5
Between 30 to 40 years old	32	3
Between 40 to 50 years old	27	2
Over 50 years old	13	2
Total	104	12

A quick analysis of the table above leads to the conclusion that 90% of the presumed victims of labour exploitation are men (104/116). Regarding age, 32% of the presumed victims are between 18 and 30, 30% are between 30 and 40, 25% are between 40 and 50 and 13% are over 50. Among the male presumed victims, the oldest one was 70 years old. As for the female presumed victims, the oldest one was 66 years old at the time of the acts. It should be noted that the women are mainly active in the sectors of home help, hospitality and cleaning (private or professional).

In 2023, no child victims were the subject of a checklist.

Regarding the nationality of the victims, 97 are from third countries (non-EU). Among the 19 EU nationals, there are 9 Belgians, 3 Romanians, 2 Bulgarians, 2 Spaniards, 1 Portuguese, 1 Dutch and 1 Slovak.

2.3. Identified indicators of human trafficking and aggravating circumstances

Several indicators of human trafficking are included on the checklist. The analysis of those received in 2023 results in the following findings:

Identity documents

Approximately 90% of third-country nationals were staying illegally in Belgium. Either they had no identity or travel documents, or they had a national passport or a residence permit for another EU country. Among the non-Belgian Europeans, only a few were settled in Belgium and had a Belgian residence permit. The others were generally in possession of their national identity document.

Several presumed victims did not have their own identity documents, but sometimes they had copies of them.

Financial aspect – social security – social documents

In terms of income: in almost all the situations encountered, wages were insufficient, low, very low, or even non-existent. Sometimes, wages were promised but only paid in part or not at all, or they were reduced over time. Among the 116 presumed victims, some were not paid at all. Some victims had to hand over part of their wages. Others had to reimburse the cost of their journey to Belgium, pay rent for accommodation provided by the employer or even pay fines addressed to the latter.

In addition, some victims stated that they were only paid if there were clients.

In some cases, the most recent services were not paid at all, despite the fact that the pay was already low.

Lastly, some workers stated that the employer deducted the cost of their journey to Belgium from their salary.

Here are several concrete examples encountered in 2023, insofar as wages were paid: EUR 20, 30 or 50 per night of work; EUR 50 to 60 per 10- to 12-hour day; EUR 3,000 for 8 months work involving 10 to 12 hours work per day (6 days a week); EUR 3.7 to 5.5 per hour.

In terms of social security and social documents: as regards potential victims, less than 15% were informed about Dimona or Limosa. As for the presumed victims reported as being posted in the context of the free movement of services, this often involved proven or presumed bogus posting. Only a few workers were registered with the social security office and were authorised to work in Belgium, if at all. Moreover, these workers generally worked more than the number of hours stated in their employment contract or as declared to the social security office.

Circumstances of the exploitation

Among the indicators of exploitation, some are recurring, such as squalid housing conditions or excessive working hours. Details and examples are provided below of some of these indicators.

■ The victim has no appropriate equipment/ work clothes, works in dangerous squalid conditions

Indicators relating to occupational safety (health and safety of workers: hygiene measures, clothing and workplaces, etc.) concern were observed for around 40% of the presumed victims.

■ The victim has no freedom of contact with the outside world or has limited freedom of movement

Approximately 30% of the presumed victims encountered had little or no contact at all with the outside world and their freedom of movement was restricted.

■ The victim lives in squalid conditions

In many potential situations of human trafficking, the victims are housed in substandard or insanitary accommodation. This accommodation is often provided by the perpetrator/employer. In 2023, this indicator was reported for almost half of the presumed victims.

■ The victim is deprived of medical care

A few presumed victims were deprived of medical care when they needed it.

■ The victim works for long periods

Approximately 60% of the presumed victims encountered worked for abnormally long periods. Some of them had to work between 45 and 60 hours a week, with one or two days of rest during the week, which is already excessive. Nevertheless, for 40% of the potential victims, the working hours were extreme. For instance, some victims stated that they had to be permanently available to the perpetrator, while others worked between 12 and 17 hours a day, 7 days a week, or 10 to 12 hours a day, 6 or 7 days a week.

Aggravating circumstances

Several aggravating circumstances were reported in the cases encountered in 2023:

■ Relating to the perpetrator

In the majority of cases, the perpetrator abused the victim's vulnerable situation, had authority over them or abused their position.

None of the checklists mention a perpetrator being a police officer exercising their duties.

■ Relating to the victims' situation

There were no minors among the checklists drawn up in 2023.

As mentioned above, many of the presumed victims, who came from third countries, were particularly vulnerable mainly due to their illegal or precarious administrative situation.

Of the 116 victims included on the checklists drawn up in 2023, 28 said they had been threatened, subjected to violence or coerced by the perpetrator. One victim received a death threat, two others were stabbed, and another two said they had been raped.

2.4. Referral of victims to a specialised reception centre in 2023

Among the 116 checklists recorded, 65 concerned presumed victims who were put in contact with a specialised reception centre (Sūrya, Payoke or Pag-Asa).

Some had already had contact with these centres before the intervention of the NSSO's social inspectors. In such cases, the NSSO intervenes, in particular to hear the presumed victim and/or to conduct an investigation into labour exploitation in collaboration with the reception centre, the magistrate and, if necessary, the police or other services.

It should be noted that there were no minors among these 116 presumed victims of THB.

It should also be noted that some of them did not wish to be put in contact with a reception centre.

This is often the case for workers employed within the context of a bogus posting, who prefer to return to their country of origin, or people who are not aware that they are being exploited, or who fear reprisals from the perpetrators.

The breakdown per provincial department is as follows:

Provincial departments	No. of presumed victims referred	Nationality & gender
Brussels	14	1 Algeria (H) 4 El Salvador (H) 5 Colombia (4 H - 1 F) 1 Congo (F) 2 Morocco (1 H - 1 F) 1 Vietnam (H)
Liège	3	1 Afghanistan (H) 1 Tajikistan (H) 1 Belgium (H)
Hainaut	4	2 Guinea-Bissau (H) 1 Portugal (H) 1 Afghanistan (H)
Walloon Brabant	1	1 Russia (1H)
Antwerp	3	1 Cameroon (H) 1 Ghana (H) 1 India (H)
Flemish Brabant	6	3 Afghanistan (H) 2 Morocco (1 H - 1F) 1 Niger (1H)
East Flanders	9	2 Macedonia (H) 3 Moldavia (H) 2 Turkey (H) 1 India (H) 1 Sudan (H)
West Flanders	24	2 Bulgaria (H) 20 Philippines (H) 2 Romania (1 H - 1F)
Limburg	1	1 Philippines (H)
Total	65	

3. Impact Action Days

In 2023, the NSSO inspection services participated for the seventh consecutive year in the **Impact Action Days**, a European initiative supported by Europol, also called Joint Action Days (JAD). This EU initiative is part of the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats project (EMPACT), in which the fight against human trafficking is one of the priority criminal phenomena. The EMPACT project is part of the EU Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings.

During the week of **8 to 14 May 2023**, the ECOSOC teams took part in the **Global Chain** actions under the direction of the federal police (DJSOC). These actions were focused on the detection of sexual exploitation, begging and forced criminality.

As for the EAD labour exploitation actions organised from **10 to 27 June 2023**, they aimed to detect labour exploitation in exotic restaurants, in the free-floating sector (transport sharing systems such as car sharing, electric scooters, electric bikes, etc.) and in the context of identity fraud.

Coordination was provided by our ECOSOC Thematic Directorate.

It should be noted that this action made it possible to simultaneously inspect restaurants in several countries that are linked to the same international group.

ECOSOC teams took part in the EAD labour exploitation actions in the agriculture sector from **13 to 22 September 2023**. The exchange of inspectors facilitated by the European Labour Authority (ELA) enabled Bulgarian and Romanian labour inspectors to participate in certain checks.

Finally, some ECOSOC teams were asked to take part in a number of initiatives organised as part of the **JAD HORSE SHOE**, orchestrated by the FJP of Liège, which took place from 13 to 23 December 2023. The checks targeted criminal organisations from certain third countries.

4. Highlights in 2023

In previous years, the work of the ECOSOC teams was impacted by the health crisis, the armed conflict between Ukraine and Russia and a number of high-profile cases.

In 2023, the work of our ECOSOC teams was not particularly marked by any significant events.

The war in Ukraine is dragging on and continues to cause its residents to flee, particularly to Belgium, but without much impact on our inspection service. In fact, most of these migrants are eligible for temporary protection, allowing them to reside and work legally in Belgium.

This being the case, our teams were able to focus on tackling major investigations that had begun in 2022 and to return to a calmer work environment.

As regards the **results in figures**, in 2023, the ECOSOC teams closed 204 investigations labelled 'trafficking in human beings' in our investigation management program, ARTEMIS. However, some did not meet our definition of a THB investigation or were duplicates. Therefore, after verification, the thematic directorate retained the number of **181 THB investigations closed**.

An ECOSOC investigation is labelled 'THB' as soon as serious indicators are found during an inspection or as soon as an investigation into this matter is explicitly requested by a third party (magistrate, complainant, etc.).

As at 31 December 2023, 113 THB investigations had been opened, i.e. they were in progress.

In just under 50% of the THB investigations processed and closed by the specialised ECOSOC teams, it is not possible to conclude that exploitation is taking place, in particular because the elements of the investigation are not relevant or the evidence of exploitation is too weak, with the elements being more akin to illegal work than labour exploitation.

It is also important to emphasise that around 17% of closed investigations are follow-ups to investigations into acts previously detected and reported to the judicial authorities. Indications of human trafficking leading to the conclusion of a 'new' potential human trafficking situation were identified in almost 35% of investigations.

It should also be noted that, **in terms of staff numbers, our ECOSOC teams** finally saw a significant increase in 2023.

Following the government decision to **boost the inspection services** by recruiting 10 social inspectors for the ECOSOC teams, the workforce as of 31 December 2023 increased to 43.10 FTE (i.e. +7.55 FTE compared with 31 December 2022). In addition, 4 inspectors are expected to join the ECOSOC teams in 2024.

The inspectors who joined these teams had to familiarise themselves with the subjects and working procedures relating to the specificities of ECOSOC, i.e. foreign labour, human trafficking and checks in so-called risk sectors. They were able to benefit from the experience of their more seasoned colleagues in putting into practice the training they had received when they started work.

Just like every year, the thematic directorate, assisted by the NSSO's data mining department and, where necessary, by other departments, chooses a specific annual project (focus).

In 2023, we chose cleaning as the focus. Every ECOSOC team carried out investigations on this sector, taking into account its investigative capabilities and its staff numbers.

In total, 65 employers, 138 workers and 28 self-employed workers were checked. Numerous offences under the Social Criminal Code were found (Dimona, part-time work, social security, foreign labour, etc.).

In 2023, our teams continued the investigations that had been opened as part of the 2021 and 2022 annual focus, i.e. the monitoring of companies selected by a tool developed by the data mining department. This department studied the data from the THB investigations that had been closed in order to establish a model for identifying employers who present an increased risk of resorting to labour exploitation, based on some 50 parameters.

In total, 11 investigations of this type were closed in 2023. They resulted in the detection of offences that fall under the competence of the NSSO (Dimona, foreign labour, part-time work, social security, etc.).

It should be noted that investigations initiated as part of the 'annual focus' only become 'THB investigations' if sufficient evidence of exploitation is detected during the check.

Also in 2023, the ECOSOC teams processed the reports of cases of labour exploitation (THB) reported to the point of contact for fair competition at SIRS (social information and research service). It is possible to report certain alleged acts of fraud through this point of contact, and since the end of 2022, it has been possible to report labour exploitation. In total, in 2023, SIRS forwarded 37 reports to our thematic department. After examination, 23 cases were investigated and entrusted to our specialised inspectors.

On the 31st of December, thirteen of these investigations had been closed. Several offences punishable under the Social Criminal Code were identified. In addition, indicators of human trafficking were detected for two workers.

As in previous years, the social inspectors of the ECOSOC teams used tools and specific investigation techniques such as:

- phone investigations;
- use of video surveillance images;
- use of mobile phones;
- open-source intelligence searches (internet, social media, etc.).

These investigation techniques are carried out with the specialised services of the federal police, most often at the request of the labour prosecutor. Such techniques can lead to identifying and hearing presumed victims, identifying potential witnesses and corroborating the statements of victims without having to involve them further or make them bear the burden of proof. They also make it possible to ascertain the employment status of other workers/victims, identify perpetrators and reveal links between individuals or companies.

The use of social media and the internet is increasingly essential to conduct research and thoroughly investigate human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation. However, in order for our social inspectors to make the best use of these sources, it is necessary to examine the existing technical and legal possibilities.

Finally, with regard to emerging or growing phenomena, the trend of previous years continued in 2023. Identity fraud cases seem to be intensifying in various sectors of activity. These cases rarely allow for the detection of potential labour exploitation.

The sectors of activity most affected by labour exploitation in recent years continue to account for most of our investigations and retain our full attention. Nail bars, domestic staff, construction, hospitality, car washes, newspaper distribution, etc., are all easily accessible sectors of activity that do not require lengthy training and in which it is easy to resort to using under-qualified labour in precarious situations.

In addition, there is growing evidence of exploitation within the same ethnic or cultural communities, which contributes to making potential victims even more dependent.

It should also be noted that our inspectors are increasingly confronted with complex cases, where certain elements of the investigation would suggest that the situation is in order. Employers and exploiters learn from previous inspections and adapt to better circumvent the legislation. For instance, workers may be registered with the social security office or posted, but the investigation will reveal that little of the work is declared, that the wages actually paid are well below legal standards, that the posting is bogus or that the worker is working under a false identity, etc.

It is not always possible to identify sufficient indicators through these investigations to determine a potential situation of human trafficking. However, they are important signals in the monitoring of the phenomenon and should encourage frontline services to be vigilant, to conduct investigations more thoroughly and to devote the necessary time to them.

Conclusion

2023 continues the trend of previous years. No current event has had a particular impact on the work of our ECOSOC teams, when compared to previous years, which suffered the consequences of the pandemic and the start of the war in Ukraine.

Our ECOSOC teams have resumed a 'normal' work pace, which has nevertheless been enhanced by the training and induction of new inspectors.

This report includes the figures from two different channels:

- the case management program that concerns the investigations closed in 2023, with 299 presumed victims;
- the analysis of the checklists drawn up in 2023, as soon as the investigation in progress or closed presents sufficiently precise indications of a potential situation of human trafficking; this concerns 116 presumed victims. Subsequently, this data is the most representative of 2023.

If we compare the figures for 2023 with previous years, we can see a slight variation in the number of potential victims recorded on the basis of the checklists. However, this number is relatively constant, apart from 2022 when 159 victims were detected in the context of a single major case.

The number of THB investigations processed in 2023 is the same as in 2022: 181. As for the number of 'ECOSOC' investigations processed in 2023, they amount to 3,782.

These factors tend to confirm a certain return to normality, both in terms of the activities of the ECOSOC teams and in terms of their staff.

	2021	2022	2023
No. of potential victims mentioned in the closed investigations	147	110	299
No. of potential victims according to the checklists	86	280	116
No. of victims for whom the reception centres intervened (based on the checklists)	42	188	65
No. of THB investigations (labour exploitation)	235	181	181
No. of ECOSOC investigations (including THB investigations)	3.661	3.154	3.782

The analysis of the checklists shows that potential situations of labour exploitation occur in both urban and rural areas and mainly concern men.

The majority of our investigations into THB involve one, two, three or four potential victims. However, in 2023, several cases involved a larger number of presumed victims employed by the same employer. One investigation targeted 20 people in West Flanders; another, 14 people in East Flanders; one case related to 12 people in the province of Antwerp and another involved 9 people in the Brussels region.

According to the checklists drawn up in 2023, the sectors of activity most affected were construction, newspaper distribution, bakeries and car washes.

The most common practices were undeclared work (no Dimona declaration), the irregular employment of foreign workers staying illegally and bogus postings (to a lesser extent).

Among the indicators of human trafficking, the most frequently encountered were:

- Little or no pay
- Abnormally long working hours
- Accommodation in squalid conditions
- Abuse of a position of vulnerability
- Use of threats/violence
- Restriction of freedom of movement and contact with the outside world

It should be noted that some presumed victims, found working in conditions contrary to human dignity, did not contact a specialised reception centre, in particular because they refused any form of support. This is often the case for workers employed in Belgium by foreign companies whose wish, above all, is to be paid so that they can return to their country of origin.

It should also be pointed out that in some cases, our teams met with presumed victims after they had approached such a reception centre, either at the request of the centre itself, or at the request of the labour prosecutor.

As mentioned above, the most revealing figures on the situation of labour exploitation are those relating to the checklists, which are drawn up as soon as a presumed victim is found.

Other data, such as Pro Justitia, criminal reports or other information reports, record the number of victims included in investigations closed in 2023 (even if the investigation began earlier).

As part of their 'ECOSOC' investigations, our specialised inspectors pay particular attention to the working, living and housing conditions and the attitude of the workers they encounter, in order to detect indicators of human trafficking and to remove the presumed victims from the grip of their exploiters.

To conclude, and as the players in the field keep repeating, labour exploitation is a hidden phenomenon that is often difficult to detect. In addition to the information or reports received by our services, proactive checks and an increased presence on the ground of social inspectors specialised in or aware of THB enable exploitative situations to be uncovered. The more human resources there are, and the more awareness-raising and training there is for frontline inspection services, the stronger and more effective the fight against this phenomenon can be.