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INFO – POW

Assessment of the channels of information and their use in the posting of workers

SURVEY MANUAL

OF THE SURVEY ON POSTING AND RECEIVING COMPANIES IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

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1 Introduction

This survey manual is developed in the context of the INFO-POW project,[1] which aims to assess the channels of information and their use in the posting of workers. As part of the project's objective to understand the existing challenges and experiences with respect to the information available for posting, companies in the construction sector involved in posting activity were surveyed. To do so, the research team set up a 15-minute online survey targeted at construction companies (comprising both enterprises and self-employed persons) that post workers abroad (posting companies) or receive posted workers from abroad (receiving companies). The online survey was conducted in five EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Italy, Slovakia, and Slovenia) as case countries. Data collection took place between March and August 2023. The survey instrument was designed by the INFO-POW project team and is, to the best of our knowledge, the first data collection effort that attempts to evaluate the needs of posting and receiving companies when it comes to information on posting rules and regulations as well as their views of the availability, accessibility, and quality of the current state of information provision by different public and private actors on the posting of workers. As such, the survey also has limitations. Although many steps were taken to ensure the quality of the survey, our sample is not representative of posting and receiving companies active in the construction sector in the five countries. This has implications for the generalisability of our findings. Despite the limitations, the survey provides valuable insights that can inform future surveys and contributes to the limited literature on this topic.

The INFO-POW project's survey ultimately aims to serve as a steppingstone for a pan-EU survey that can be used by policymakers, public authorities, and social partners at the EU- and national level to better assess the remaining challenges in accessing information for companies that post workers or make use of posted workers' services. Therefore, the current survey is also understood as a pilot survey to have a better understanding of the response rates when it comes to collecting data from companies and developing the question items. In this respect, the survey manual presents the details of the rationale of the decisions which were taken in the preparation and implementation of the survey.

The survey manual is structured as follows: Chapter 2 provides information on the target population and the survey sample. Chapter 3 describes the questionnaire development process, the questionnaire content and translation. Chapter 4 presents the setup of the survey. Chapter 5 covers the dissemination of the survey, including the dissemination strategies utilised and the design of email invitations. In Chapter 6, the data collection phase and fieldwork outcomes are described. Finally, Chapter 7 offers an overview of the processing of the collected data and reporting of the survey results. The survey manual is also accompanied by the full survey questionnaire in English, provided in *Annex I*.

[1] See the project website here: https://www.euro.centre.org/projects/detail/4442

2 Target population and sample

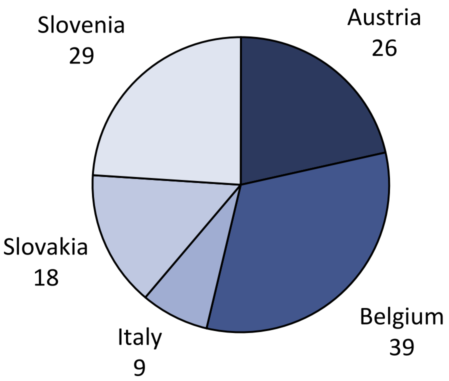
The target population of the survey are posting companies (i.e., companies posting workers abroad) and receiving companies (i.e., companies making use of posted workers from abroad) active in the construction sector.[2] The target population includes both enterprises and self-employed persons in the five EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Italy, Slovakia, and Slovenia) covered in the survey. These five countries represent diverse posting profiles. Two of the countries are considered as predominantly receiving countries (Austria and Belgium), one as both sending and receiving (Italy), while the other two are considered as sending countries (Slovakia and Slovenia).

To reach the target population, potential respondents (i.e., representatives of construction companies and self-employed persons active in the construction sector) were approached in each of the five countries. The dissemination of the survey included distributing the survey to construction companies using email addresses obtained from the Orbis database[3], as well as through employers' organisations, public authorities, online platforms, and private actors among others (for more detailed information see Chapter 5 and *Annex II*). In Slovenia, a list of posting companies in the country was available, however, further investigations showed that their contact details could not be provided. Such list for the target audience of our population of the survey was not available in the other four countries.

Given that a representative sampling strategy was unfeasible within the scope of our project, we underline that the survey data collected do not constitute a representative sample in either of the five countries. Our use of a convenience sampling, while fitting the purpose of the project survey as a pilot survey, also limits the generalisability of findings regarding the state of posting and receiving companies, and, therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution.

In our sample, collected from the online survey, 121 companies are located in one of the five survey countries. Among these 121 companies in the sample, 82 are posting companies and 39 are receiving companies. *Figure 1* presents the number of respondents by country.

Figure 1: Respondents by country (N=121)



[2] Companies whose economic activities concern construction (Category F in NACE rev. 2 classification).

[3] Orbis is a database from Bureau van Dijk which contains (non-)financial information from private companies across the world, currently close to 400 million companies and entities (Bureau van Dijk, 2022). Data are collected from over 170 providers and own sources which are then treated, appended, and standardised to ensure comparability.

3 Design of the survey instrument

3.1 Questionnaire development

The questionnaire development followed several steps beginning with a review of existing company and employer surveys, which served as the starting point for the design of the questionnaire. For this, several established and validated company surveys in the field were consulted, and wherever relevant and applicable, we have used comparable questions, definitions, and formulation of items.

The European Company Surveys from Eurofound (Eurofound, 2022), particularly the online questionnaire for Management respondents[4], were an important source in the design of our questionnaire. For instance, the formulation used in the question asking about the number of persons working in the company was adapted from their questionnaire. Another important source was the 2021 online survey conducted in the context of the Mobilive project[5], which aimed to map high mobility in the live performance sector (De Wispelaere et al., 2021). A number of questions from this survey (e.g., the question about the different channels used to get information concerning the applicable wages and working conditions, about the awareness of the revised Posting of Workers Directive, etc.) were replicated in our questionnaire. Other European and international surveys consulted included the business and consumer surveys from Eurostat, and a list of 'best practices' for conducting these business and consumer surveys (European Commission Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2014); the employer survey on skill needs developed by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP, 2013); the European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER) (EU-OSHA, 2022); and the AARP Global Employer Survey covering OECD countries (Perron, 2020). Finally, a number of surveys from outside Europe that were specifically targeted at construction companies were also reviewed, namely the BC construction industry survey in Canada (BCCA, 2021) and the BDO's construction well-being survey in Australia (Rothwell, 2022).

Based on the review of the above surveys, a first draft of the questionnaire was prepared, and the questionnaire content was internally reviewed by the research team. After the internal review, the draft questionnaire was revised, for instance, questions were rephrased, scales were amended to improve clarity, and the number of questions was reduced. An important next step in the questionnaire development was the stakeholder workshop, in which feedback was collected on the draft questionnaire. The workshop took place online on 19 January 2023 and was attended by several stakeholders in the field as well as by survey experts. Based on the feedback from the stakeholder consultation (for a more detailed discussion on this see section 3.4), the questionnaire was updated. Further amendments to the questionnaire were made after the cognitive testing exercises were completed (see section 3.4). This resulted in the final English source questionnaire which was ready for translation into the national languages of the five countries where the survey was fielded (see section 3.5). Once the

[4] See "ECS 2019 – Questionnaire": https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/surveys/european-company-surveys/european-company-survey-2019/ecs-2019-questionnaire

[5] See "Cross-border employment in the live performance sector": https://hiva.kuleuven.be/en/news/newsitems/Cross-border-employment-in-the-live-performance-sector

translations were completed, all language versions of the questionnaire were transferred to the survey platform, where a final, technical testing of the survey was conducted (see section 4.3).

3.2 Content of the questionnaire

The questionnaire begins with an introductory text and ends with a closing text. In terms of the substantive contents, the questionnaire was designed in three modules, corresponding to the objectives of the project and the data collection strategy. The English source questionnaire, including introductory text, all scales, routings, instructions as well as category labels, is provided in *Annex I*.

The first module of the questionnaire on posting information (section A) is about the availability, accessibility, and quality of information on the posting of workers. In this core module of the questionnaire, the following topics are covered:

a) types and quality of information used/accessed,
b) types of information needed/preferred to have access to,
c) modes and channels of seeking and receiving information on posting rules and obligations,
d) single national website of posting,
e) outsourcing of activities related to posting (only asked from posting companies),
f) awareness of applicable conditions and information,
g) challenges to accessing information on posting rules,
h) best practices and suggestions for the types of information and ways of accessing it.

Before the core module's substantive questions were presented, there were two filter questions: the first one asked whether the company identifies as a posting or receiving company or both, and the second question asked those which indicated being both whether they identify mainly as a posting or receiving company (in case the company is neither a posting nor a receiving company, the survey was terminated). We used these two questions as routing questions, because a few of the questions were asked only to one of these company types and in many questions the wording of the questions was specific to one of the two types of companies.

After the filter questions on the type of company – the type being either a posting or receiving company – we asked about the types of posting information looked up by the companies and their information preferences. This was then followed by questions on the information sources and channels consulted as well as on their assessment. Next, the questionnaire went deeper into one important source of information on posting, namely the single national website on posting. The theme of the outsourcing of certain activities related to postings was only aimed at posting companies (i.e., asking whether the listed components were taken care of by the company itself or were these outsourced). Adding this question was considered important in order to know whether the posting company itself had to deal with searching for information on the posting of workers. For instance, a number of companies may outsource activities related to posting to consultancies, and consequently, these might be less aware of all the information channels/sources available. The next set of questions inquired about the awareness of applicable conditions and information, as well as the challenges companies might face when accessing information on posting. Finally, the questionnaire focused on the link between information and compliance to the posting rules.

The second module (section B) contained questions about the posting profile of the companies, namely the last year in which posted workers were sent or received, the number of posted workers it concerned, the frequency of posting/receiving the workers, and to/from which countries they were sent/received.

Finally, in the third module of the questionnaire on the company profile (section C), some general information questions were posed about the company, such as its country of establishment, the number of its active employees, and its main economic activities within the construction sector.

3.3 Type and formulation of questions

Considering the challenges of response rates with company surveys and to have a wider coverage of the topics of interest to our project's research questions, our survey questionnaire was mainly comprised of closed-ended questions (i.e., it provided a question prompt and asked respondents to choose from a list of possible responses). In some cases, open-ended questions with a space where respondents could construct their own response were included to elicit further information. Such open-ended questions were especially useful in order to ask for best practices or suggestions on how to improve the (access to) information provided to companies.

Almost all questions were compulsory questions, i.e., forced responses, meaning that respondents could not move forward to the next question before providing a response. This was not the case for open-ended questions and questions asking for more information when the category '*other*' was selected, in which case no response was required to move on to the next question. This approach has both disadvantages and advantages. On the one hand, forcing respondents to answer might risk respondents dropping out of the survey. On the other hand, the accuracy of the responses will be higher. For this reason, the answer option '*I don't know*' was added to several questions enabling respondents who may not know the answer or wish not to answer the question to select this option and move on to the next question. If a response was not compulsory and the question was left blank, we would not know whether the person did, in fact, not know the response or did not read the questions and just moved on.

When designing the questionnaire, we aimed at precision, clarity as well as the use of a simple, neutral language, based on common conventions of survey design and the company survey examples from previous research. To further ensure the consistency of the survey, consistency checks were conducted, where the following key issues were considered before finalising the questionnaire:

- Are all questions suitable for the online method?
- Are the questions and answer scales/categories formulated in a comprehensible, unambiguous, and non-overlapping manner?
- Does the order of the questions correspond to a conscious design of the survey dramaturgy?
- Are the succession of questions and the dramaturgy of the survey designed in the sense of the respondent?
- Is the presentation of the questions appropriate and intuitively understandable?

When designing the questionnaire, attention was also paid to formulate sensitive questions in a subtle and non-threatening way. This concerned one survey item asking about the link between information and compliance to the posting rules which was seen as a potentially threatening question for company representatives to respond to (Pacolet & De Wispelaere, 2012). Previous surveys dealt with this issue in different ways, for instance by using indirect questions such as asking companies to estimate the share of companies in their sector not following the wage and working conditions applicable (Pacolet

& Baeyens, 2007). Another example is the SUBLEC questionnaire on undeclared work in Belgium (Pacolet et al., 2010), where persons were asked to make an estimate of the share of persons working undeclared or the share of income not taxed, whether they personally know persons not declaring income and labour, and whether they believe the risk of getting caught is high or low. For our purposes, it was decided to pose the question in an even more positive way, namely by asking to select three elements which would help companies to better comply with the applicable rules for wage and working conditions for posted workers.

To facilitate the assessment of the proposed items, the draft questionnaire contained a separate box for each question with the rationale of each item, the rationale of the measurements and scales used, as well as any relevant links with other existing surveys (e.g., whether the same question was used in other surveys). This version of the questionnaire containing the above information is available from the authors.

The questionnaire was designed for a 15-minute-long online survey. It is known that shorter surveys, in general, have higher completion rates and lower attrition rates, namely when people do not complete the survey. The general advice is that an online survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete (Story & Tait, 2019), so we strived for a shorter rather than a longer survey.

3.4 Revisions to the questionnaire

Before it was finalised, a number of revisions were made to the questionnaire based on feedback from the stakeholder consultation and results from the cognitive testing of the questionnaire. They are discussed in more detail below.

The workshop had two sessions dedicated to the questionnaire content and design, but for a different target audience, namely stakeholders in the field and survey experts. Below, some of the main remarks on the content and design of the questionnaire are considered, as well as how the research team dealt with them. Although the survey is mostly about the state-of-the-art, we received a suggestion that it might be good to ask for more policy recommendations in terms of what companies might need in the future. Furthermore, questions about the information on the topic of health and safety seemed to be missing and were thus added. Other comments, while useful, were not feasible to implement. For instance, there was a recommendation to have a specific survey on intra-group posting and a recommendation to ask about the nationality of the received posted workers in addition to their sending country. However, these recommendations were not deemed achievable or valuable in the scope of this project. A recommendation to develop two distinct surveys for posting and receiving companies was likewise unfeasible, and the decision was taken to create two survey paths instead, one for posting and one for receiving companies, based on the answers given to the first two filtering questions, as explained above.

A main issue appeared to be the clarity of the survey. Although the formulation of the questions was good, workshop participants highlighted that terminology needed to be kept as simple as possible. For instance, following the stakeholder workshop, the terminology was changed from ‘posting and user undertaking’ to ‘posting and receiving company’ as this was considered easier for the respondents to understand. Furthermore, a suggestion was made to use pop-ups to provide an explanation on the more difficult terms. Throughout the survey a few words were therefore underlined where more information about the definition of the word or further explanation could be needed from the side of the respondents. When hovering over these words, a pop-up window appeared with a more elaborate explanation. In this way, in order to reduce measurement errors, we aimed at ensuring that all respondents understood key terms correctly in giving their answers.

The structure of the questionnaire was changed after the stakeholder workshop following participants' suggestions. While the previous draft of the questionnaire started with the company profile and posting profile, and ended with the section on posting information, the final version of the questionnaire started with the section on posting information, followed by the posting profile and the company profile. This was done because participants noted that responses might be maximised when shifting the more general questions to the end of the survey. Moving the questions on company profile meant that companies not registered in one of the five countries or companies not active in the construction sector could also be included in the data collection. At the same time, the introductory text to the questionnaire as well as the accompanying email to invite respondents to complete the survey clearly stated the target group of the survey (i.e., posting and receiving companies in the construction sector), thus minimising the number of 'unwanted' responses.

Opinions were mixed on the duration of the survey. On the one hand, some believed the survey might take too long and suggestions were made to drop certain questions. For this reason, questions on the topic of compliance with the posting rules were excluded from the survey, as this was also not its main aim. Additionally, the introduction to the survey was kept as short as possible, and both the question and the response categories were simplified. On the other hand, participants felt that all questions posed were useful and should not be shortened too much.

Finally, an important general suggestion made by several participants concerned the importance of testing the survey. Indeed, both the content-related testing and the technical testing provided the research team with important insights and revealed what changes had to be made (see section 4.3).

After the stakeholder consultation, participants were invited to send any additional remarks on the content and design of the survey. These remarks highlighted the importance of using simple and clear language, for instance, by avoiding the use of policy language, which might not work well in a questionnaire for the given target audience. Additionally, the shortening of a few of the questions and the use of a similar scale throughout the questionnaire was pointed out, as well as ensuring that the survey is readable on a smaller screen, for instance, on the display of a smartphone.

The questionnaire was further improved following cognitive testing which was carried out by colleagues at the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research and at HIVA-KU Leuven in February 2023. The cognitive test was based on the English master questionnaire and aimed to assess the degree of difficulty respondents experience when they engage with the survey and try to formulate accurate responses. The test relied on four stages in the question-response process (comprehension, retrieval, judgment, response) (Tourangeau, 1984) using a set of questions/probes for eliciting feedback. Results from this test were then compared to identify patterns of error and interpretation. Questions where multiple testers indicated an issue were adapted as best as possible.

The most common issues flagged related to the comprehension of questions and to the response options. For example, the question asking about the frequency of posted workers sent/received seemed to cause difficulties, so an additional explanation was added to clarify what the question was meant to capture (i.e., the number of instances workers (any number) were sent/received by the company). Furthermore, a few examples were added in response categories to make them more understandable to respondents, for instance 'EU institution (e.g., European Commission)'. Other comments were noted, but not implemented. For example, the two questions asking about the sources of information consulted and the information channels used seemed to overlap. Thus, the suggestion was made to combine these questions to reduce respondent burden. However, the research team felt that it was important to differentiate between the two concepts (sources as the origin of information vs. channels through which the information is transmitted) and it was, therefore, decided to keep the two questions separate as they were.

3.5 Questionnaire translation

The questionnaire was translated to all national languages of the five countries covered by the survey, which means the questionnaire was ultimately available in seven different languages (Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Slovak, and Slovenian). The translation took place once the master survey questionnaire in English had been finalised (i.e., after revisions based on feedback from the stakeholder consultation and cognitive testing had been implemented). The translation into the respective national language followed a single stage approach with proofreading included and was carried out internally by native speakers of the national project partners. During the translation of the questionnaire, specific attention was paid to ensure consistency and semantic equivalence, in particular, across all the target languages. In terms of conceptual equivalence, the concepts and definitions used were the same across the different languages. The guiding principle of the translation was that the questionnaires needed to maintain comparability and consistency across the countries, and ultimately to be easily understandable for the target audience. The full questionnaires in the six national languages are available from the authors on request.

4 Setting up the survey

4.1 Survey mode and setup

After all language versions of the questionnaire were finalised, it was transferred to the online platform LimeSurvey (Cloud Version 5.6.48), a paid survey software tool.[6] LimeSurvey is a widely used online survey tool that offers comprehensive ranges of question types and answer options and supports multilingual surveys. The survey was set up by the research team at HIVA-KU Leuven and was hosted on a secure server.

The picture below shows what the survey looked like online. *Figure 2* displays the welcome screen to the online survey, where respondents were able to select their preferred language to fill out the survey. This was possible not only on this initial page, but the language could be changed throughout the survey in the right-hand upper corner. The survey was available in seven languages: Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Slovak, and Slovenian. Furthermore, a progress bar indicated to the participants how far they were in the survey.

Figure 2: Welcome screen to the online survey

Although a 'help'-button was not available in the survey itself, contact details were provided on several occasions if the respondent had any additional questions about the survey. First, the email addresses of the respective researchers of the national teams were added in the email invitation to the survey (see *Annex III*). Second, both at the beginning of the survey (Welcome screen, see *Figure 2*) and at the end of the survey (see *Annex I*), the link to the INFO-POW project website was provided, where respondents could find further contact details of the researchers. Third, on the page specifying 'information on the processing of your personal data' (see *Annex I* and section 4.2), contact details of the

[6] See "LimeSurvey": https://www.limesurvey.org/en/

HIVA-KU Leuven research team were provided for questions about the survey. The details of a KU Leuven contact person responsible for any further questions and concerns regarding the processing of personal data were also provided.

A screen which was shown at the beginning of the survey (after the welcome screen in *Figure 2*) contained information on how to complete the questionnaire (see *Annex I*).

Only in two instances was the survey terminated before full completion: 1) when the respondent did not agree to participate and did not agree with the collection of the data in all the communicated conditions; and 2) when the company identified itself as neither a posting nor a receiving company. Both questions were placed at the beginning of the survey.

The survey was set up and scripted in a way that it could be filled out on any electronic device (e.g., desktop, laptop, tablet, or smartphone). This was important in order to avoid the decision against filling out the survey by respondents who use certain devices, such as smartphones, or by participants, who would drop out of the survey because it was not set up in a mobile-friendly way, for instance.

4.2 Privacy policy

Before starting the survey, the respondents were explicitly asked if they consented to data collection by either clicking '*Yes, I agree*' or '*No, I don't agree*' in which case the survey was terminated. Only when the respondents agreed to the data collection could they proceed to fill out the survey. In addition to asking for direct consent, a hyperlinked text '*click here for more information'* led to a page on '*information on the processing of your personal data*' where respondents were informed about the use of their personal data and their rights as well as contact information was provided in case of questions about these (see *Annex I* for the full text). This, combined with the information provided in the email invitation, as already described, contained the necessary information so that the consent could be considered 'informed'.

The survey was anonymous, meaning that no data based on which the company can be identified were collected. Only the last question asked respondents whether they wanted to stay up to date on the project's results and if they did, they could provide their email addresses. However, these data were treated confidentially and were never linked to the responses given to the survey. This set of information was downloaded in a separate file and was not shared between the project partners. In the company profile section, only the country in which the company is registered as a legal entity, the number of employees, and the main economic activities were requested. Respondents were not asked to identify themselves by giving a name, address, etc. This ensured conformity to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)[7] and might have enticed respondents to share their experience more honestly.

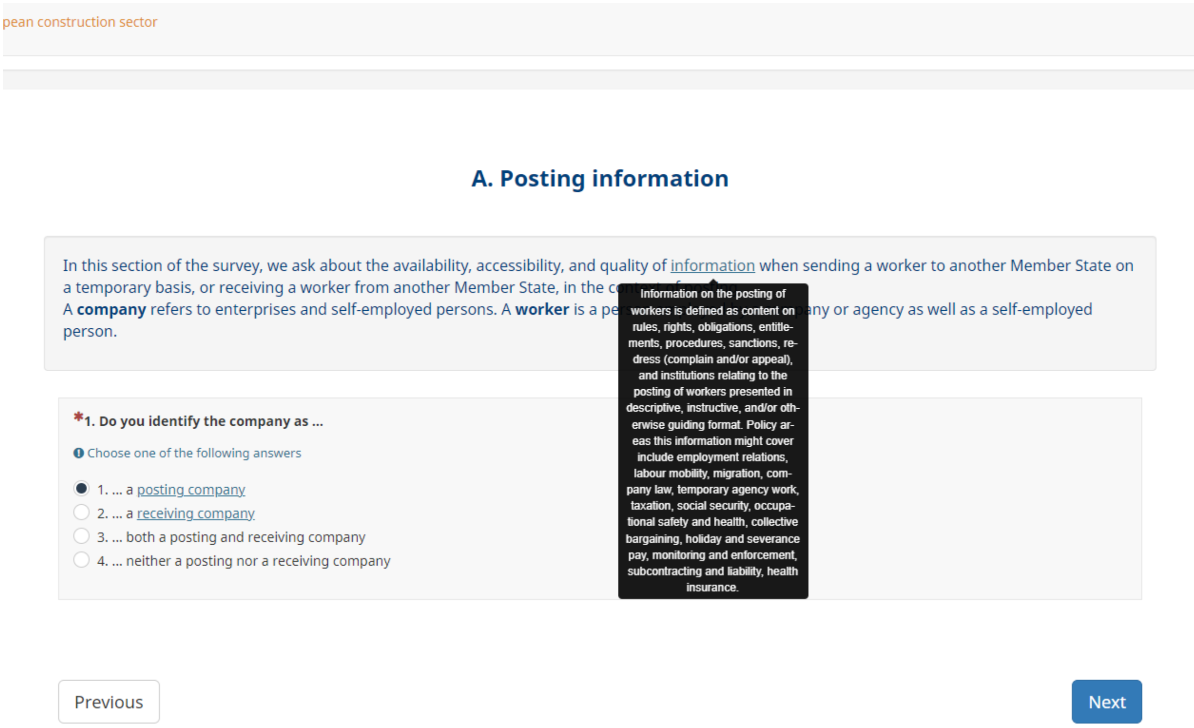
4.3 Testing of the survey

After the survey was set up online in all languages, the technical testing of the survey was carried out. For this, a test link was sent to the project partners. Project partners and other stakeholders could then fill out the survey and check whether there were any remaining inconsistencies or errors that

[7] General Data Protection Regulation: https://gdpr.eu/

should be corrected (e.g., they checked whether the click led to the right follow-up question, whether the text on the screen was readable, whether there were any grammatical errors, etc.). The testing of the survey in all seven languages took place in March 2023. Based on this testing, some issues regarding the lay-out and grammatical mistakes were flagged and subsequently fixed. For instance, it was suggested to reduce the number of questions on some pages to make it more user-friendly when filling out the survey on a mobile phone. Some reformulations were suggested by all project partners, as well as a few spaces, dots, and commas. More impactful changes implemented based on the technical testing concerned the pop-ups. At first, when clicking on a term with more information available, a new screen popped open, but this was considered burdensome, particularly on the mobile version of the survey. Therefore, this was changed to pop-ups which appear when respondents hover over the word. *Figure 3* shows a screenshot of the survey with a pop-up to illustrate what this looked like online. When respondents hovered over a word which was underlined, a pop-up appeared with more information for clarification.

Figure 3: Page on posting information in the online survey with pop-up



Finally, a specific concern was how to make sure that each respondent filled out the survey only once. This issue was discussed at the stakeholder consultation, where experts foresaw a low probability of receiving duplicate responses (i.e., more than one person from the same entity filling out the survey). It was also mentioned that this issue can be managed when the survey is set up by collecting data on IP addresses and afterwards being able to see which IP addresses were used multiple times. However, since there are important anonymity/privacy issues when one is recording IP-addresses, this option was not utilised. Instead, the decision was to use LimeSurvey's function which makes it impossible for the survey to be filled out multiple times on the same device.

5 Dissemination of the survey

5.1 Dissemination strategy

In disseminating the survey, the aim was to use different points of entry to get the highest response possible. The dissemination strategy was, therefore, to utilise a combination of different participant recruitment measures and make use of multiple dissemination channels including emails, online newsletters, social media, online portals, and other potentially useful channels. The importance of utilising multiple dissemination channels was also emphasised by participants at the online stakeholder consultation, which had a session dedicated to the dissemination of the survey and provided many useful and specific suggestions which were taken on board when disseminating the survey.

In line with the dissemination strategy, the project team reached out to several national stakeholders in the five countries, such as chambers of commerce, employers' organisations, industry federations, national labour inspectorates, as well as to EU-level stakeholders asking them to help disseminate the survey or provide any useful contacts. Finally, construction companies were also directly contacted using email addresses extracted from the Orbis database. The various dissemination channels used are described in more detail in the text below as well as in *Annex II* on the national dissemination strategies.

The dissemination of the survey was not identical among the five countries. For example, in Slovenia, posting companies could potentially be targeted specifically based on a list provided by the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia, which was not possible in the other four countries. As part of the dissemination strategy, each national team prepared a dissemination plan for distributing the survey. To this end, a form was forwarded to each INFO-POW project partner to provide information on their dissemination plans. This form was sent twice: once in December 2022 and once in March 2023 asking for updates or a confirmation that the dissemination strategy remained unchanged. Based on these forms and a consecutive online meeting to discuss the different strategies, best practices and ideas could also be exchanged between the partners. *Annex II* provides an overview of the planned and implemented dissemination of the survey in each of the five countries.

In addition to nationally targeting construction companies, it was planned to disseminate the survey through bodies on a supranational level. Emails were, therefore, sent to the European Construction Industry Federation (FIEC), the European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW), and the European Builders Confederation (EBC) asking them to distribute the survey to their members.

Using email addresses found in the Orbis database was an additional channel considered to disseminate the survey, in case the response rate was low. As this was the case, the research team decided to use this option as well. First, the research team from HIVA-KU Leuven, who has access to the Orbis database, applied for an ethical review (PRET - PRivacy and EThics) at HIVA-KU Leuven. As a result, the right procedures could be followed in terms of providing survey respondents with information on the processing of their personal data, and the team was sure that the email addresses which were found in the Orbis database could be used to circulate the survey. After the approval of the ethical review, the HIVA-team distributed the survey to more than 15 000 email addresses from the email address INFO-POW@kuleuven.be.

The email addresses retrieved from Orbis were from companies active in the construction sector (NACE 41 Construction of buildings, NACE 42 Civil engineering, and NACE 43 Specialised construction activities), and located in Austria, Belgium, Italy, Slovenia, and Slovakia. Furthermore, only companies with five employees or more were considered as these 'bigger' companies most likely have more resources to respond to the questionnaire. Moreover, it is more probable they are involved in posting compared to companies with less than five employees or self-employed persons. The only exception was Belgium, for which only the email addresses of companies based in Wallonia with 0 to 20 employees were used, as this is the group which was not yet addressed by the employers' organisations.

The number of email addresses which could be found in the Orbis database differed remarkably between countries, and also in comparison to the total number of construction companies found in the database. *Table 1* shows that more than 580 000 construction companies located in Italy could be found in the Orbis database, but only 149 had an email address. Also, in Slovakia, less than 1.5% of companies listed in Orbis had an email address in the database. The rather low number of emails sent to Belgian companies was due to the diverging tactics, as explained above (only including Walloon companies with 0-20 employees). Moreover, when the emails were sent, a number of them bounced back immediately due to an erroneous email address. This share was especially high for Belgian companies, where almost half of the emails never reached a recipient. Given that the Orbis database is updated annually, this was not expected.

Table 1: Number of construction companies in the Orbis database and number of emails sent

Country	Number of construction companies	Number of emails sent	Share of emails which bounced back
AT	61 926	10 758	4%
BE	235 268	675	45%
IT	586 166	149	11%
SI	26 180	2 051	9%
SK	128 351	1 740	8%

Source: Orbis database [last update 28/05/2023]

Around two weeks after the first round of emails were sent, a reminder email was circulated to all email addresses which did not bounce back the first time, namely to 14 250 addresses.

5.2 Email invitation and reminders

The survey was disseminated with an accompanying email prepared by the project team and translated into all relevant national languages (for the English version of the email invitation see *Annex III*). The email invitations were structured in the same way and had the same content. The first paragraph of the email provided information about the purpose of the survey, the use of the data, and included a sentence about the INFO-POW project (with a link to the project website). The next paragraph specified who the survey was targeted at (i.e., posting and receiving companies). Furthermore, a sentence was added indicating who at the company would be best suited to fill out the survey (i.e., a person in charge of personnel who is aware of the posting situation at the company, for example HR personnel). This specification aimed to ensure that the survey reached the right respondent at the company given that most company email addresses to where the emails were sent were general email addresses. In addition to providing the survey link, the email informed potential respondents about the duration of the survey. The email stressed the confidential nature of the survey as well as the importance of the study to incentivise companies to fill out the survey. Finally, email contacts for questions and further information about the survey as well as the study were given. The email invitations could be personalised according to the characteristics of each country, for example, when sending it to national employer organisations. The email invitations were sent following the launch of the online survey. To increase response to the survey, email reminders to complete the online questionnaire were circulated during the fieldwork period both directly to companies identified via Orbis and to national stakeholders involved in disseminating the survey in the five countries.

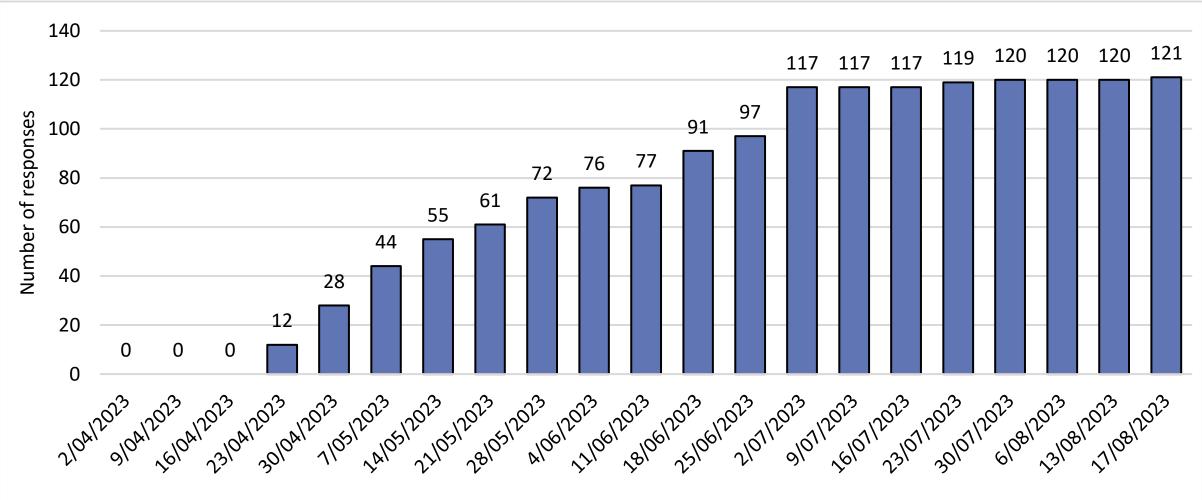
6 Fieldwork/Data collection

On 30 March 2023, the survey was launched, and the research teams began the dissemination of the survey. As discussed before, the dissemination happened through multiple channels, and multiple reminders were sent to possible participants throughout the period the survey was running. On 17 August 2023 the survey was closed, and the responses were downloaded from LimeSurvey.

Initially, the data collection period was planned to span over three months; however, to increase the number of responses it was decided to keep the survey open and extend the fieldwork period by another month. In the end, the data collection spanned over a period of four and a half months. During the entire fieldwork period, the field work performance including the number of responses were closely monitored and feedback on these were provided to the project partners by the team at HIVA-KU Leuven on a weekly basis.

The evolution of the number of responses received over the course of the survey is presented in *Figure 4.* It concerns the number of respondents who agreed to the data collection, are a posting or receiving company or both, and are located in one of the five countries of interest. The number of responses increased especially from mid-April until the end of April, namely from zero to 28. Furthermore, from mid-June until the beginning of July there was another important growth, from 77 responses to 117 responses. It is not a coincidence that these are the periods in which project partners put most efforts in their dissemination strategies. For instance, several partners decided to only start disseminating the survey after the Easter period/holiday[8], so that emails with the survey invitations were not lost in a mailbox. Furthermore, the growth in June indicates the increased efforts of the survey (reminders) being sent before the summer holiday.

Figure 4: Evolution of the number of responses received, 2 April 2023 – 17 August 2023



[8] Easter fell on 9 April 2023. In Belgium, for instance, the Easter holiday took place from 3 April 2023 until 16 April 2023.

7 Data processing and reporting

7.1 Preparing and delivering the dataset

The raw dataset was downloaded to a secure directory that only the research team at HIVA-KU Leuven had access to. The raw dataset contained 329 survey responses received. This number refers to those who consented to the survey and answered the first eligibility questions about the company being a posting or receiving company. Of these 329 respondents, 259 identified the company as either a posting or a receiving company (*Figure 5*). However, 33% of these respondents did not continue with the remainder of the questionnaire. Finally, 121 respondents were companies located in the five case countries (43 did not provide information on the country of establishment, while six indicated a country other than the five countries).

Figure 5: Number of responses received

Agree to data collection or not?		Total
Does not agree to data collection	12	409
Agrees to data collection	**397**	

Posting or receiving company?		Total
Neither a posting nor receiving company	70	329
Posting or receiving company	**259**	

Replied to the next question?		Total
No	89	259
Yes	**170**	

Country where the company is registered as a legal entity?		Total
Blank	43	170
Austria	26	
Belgium	39	
Italy	9	
Slovakia	18	
Slovenia	29	
Other	6	
Located in the 5 case countries		**121**

The replies given to the final question, asking respondents to leave their contact details if they would like to stay up to date on the project's results, were removed from the main dataset. As such, all responses remained anonymous and could not be linked to a specific company through the email addresses provided. The replies to this question were treated confidentially and were not shared with project partners.

The anonymised dataset was shared with the project partners in their preferred file format (e.g., excel, CSV). Project partners could also choose whether they wanted to receive a file containing the full text answers or a file with only the question-and-answer codes. *Table 2* illustrates the difference between both files. While in the dataset containing full answers, the questions as well as the answers are written out completely, both are replaced by codes in the dataset containing the answer codes. To guide project partners with the analysis of the dataset, a codebook was created by the HIVA-KU Leuven research team matching all full questions and their responses with the corresponding question code and answer code.

Table 2: Example of dataset with full answers vs with answer codes

Full answers		Answer codes	
qz1. The data in the survey is treated confidentially and the survey is conducted under data protection laws1 (click here for more information). Do you agree to participate and for us to collect this data in all the communicated conditions?	Qa1. 1. Do you identify the company as …	**qz1**	**qa1**
1. Yes, I agree	2. … a receiving company	1	2
1. Yes, I agree	1. … a posting company	1	1
1. Yes, I agree	1. … a posting company	1	1
1. Yes, I agree	3. … both a posting and receiving company	1	3

Furthermore, project partners had the opportunity to receive the dataset in English or in their national language(s). This is to say, the questions and standard response options could be provided in one of the six other languages in which the survey was set up; the replies to the open questions remained in the language in which they were provided. Both the Slovak and Slovenian research teams requested the dataset (both in full answers and answer codes) in their national language.

It is important to bear in mind that no weighting of the survey sample was carried out. Before data collection, project partners, which are country experts of the topic, were asked to fill out a form asking general information such as the total number of companies under NACE-codes in the construction sector, and then specifically the number of posting and receiving companies under each of these NACE-codes. However, based on the forms and discussions with the research partners, it became clear that no data are available about the population of posting and receiving companies in the five countries. While in Slovenia there exists information about the total number of posting companies, there are no data available specifically for the construction sector. Given the lack of information about the population in question, it was, therefore, not possible to apply weights to the data gathered by our survey.

7.2 Reporting of the results

Analyses of the data were carried out by the project partners and entailed a country-level analysis as well as a comparative analysis of the full dataset. The results were presented in the form of descriptive statistics with the caveat regarding the non-generalisability. No inferential statistics were used in our analysis of the survey data. Findings from the country-level analyses are reported in five country reports while results from the analysis of the full dataset are available in a comparative report.[9]

[9] All reports are available on the project website: https://www.euro.centre.org/projects/detail/4442

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Annex I Questionnaire

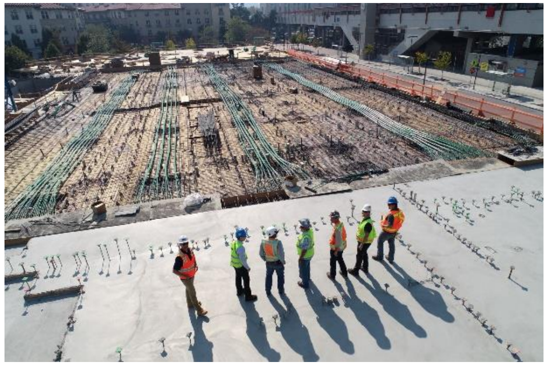
Introductory text

Please select your language: Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Slovak, or Slovenian.

How to complete the questionnaire?

- For most questions it is sufficient to click on the answer of your choice. For other questions you will have the necessary space to type in your answer. When you have answered all the questions, click on « Next ».
- **ATTENTION**: you must complete the questionnaire in one sitting. It is NOT possible to interrupt the completion of the questionnaire and complete it at a later time.
- By clicking on «Submit» when you answered the last question, your answers will be registered definitively.
- For some of the underlined words, more information is available on their meaning. Hover over the underlined word for a pop-up with a more elaborate explanation.

The online survey is part of an EU funded research project entitled INFO-POW, which focuses on the **availability, accessibility, and quality of information about the posting of workers, which means sending them to carry out work in another EU Member State**.



This survey is aimed at **companies and self-employed active in the construction sector,** which **have posted workers abroad** or **have received posted workers** from abroad. **The most appropriate respondent** would be a person in charge of personnel in your company, who is aware of the overall (posting) situation, for example an HR employee.

The survey can be answered in less than **15 minutes**.

We would highly appreciate it if you could complete the survey and contribute to this research project.

The data in the survey is treated **confidentially** and the survey is conducted under data protection laws[10] (click here for more information[11]). Do you agree to participate and for us to collect this data in all the communicated conditions?

1. Yes, I agree
0. No, I do not agree *[Terminate] [When answered No: Then the survey is terminated here for you. Thank you for your time.]*

This survey is part of the INFO-POW project. This project has received funding by the European Commission, DG Employment, European Social Fund+ (ESF+) Social Prerogatives and Specific Competencies Lines (SocPL), Call ESF-2021-POW.

Information sheet on the processing of your personal data

As a result of your participation in the Survey on the posting of workers in the European construction sector, personal data relating to you might be collected and processed. These data will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). With this information sheet, we would like to inform you about the use and storage of your data.

In the participant information sheet, you will find further details about the categories of data that will be collected about you during this study. These include personal data such as your email address. If you want to stay up to date on the survey result, you can leave your email address at the end of the survey. However, this is not compulsory.

Use of your personal data

Only personal data required for the purposes of this study will be collected and processed. More specifically, the study aims to keep you up to date of the survey results. The collected data may possibly be re-used in future studies.

Data collected for this study will be pseudonymised. This means that data that might identify you, such as your email address will be separated from the other data in the study. In this way, the data can no longer easily be attributed to a specific data subject. Only the researcher can link the data to

[10] The survey is compliant with the general rules and principles of [Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2018/1725](#).
[11] Link to the information sheet, see the next page.

a specific individual. However, this will only happen in exceptional cases, for example if you wish to exercise your right to access, rectify or erase your data. You will also not be identified in publications arising from the research.

The data will be processed on the basis of public interest. This means that the research will lead to advances in knowledge and generate insights that (directly or indirectly) benefit society.

Your data will be stored by the researchFers for 10 years after the end of the study at a secure storage location at KU Leuven. After this period, your personal data will be permanently deleted if they are no longer needed for the purposes of the research.

Your rights

You have the right to request more information about the use of your data. In addition, you have the right to access, rectify or erase your data unless exercising these rights would render impossible or seriously impair the achievement of the research objectives.

If you wish to exercise one of these rights, please contact the researchers using the contact details at the bottom of this information sheet.

Contact details

For the purposes of this research, KU Leuven is the data controller. More specifically, only the researchers involved Lynn De Smedt, Frederic De Faere, and Yo Gazia will have access to your personal data. Should you have any specific questions about this study, including the processing of your personal data, please feel free to contact them (lynn.desmedt@kuleuven.be, frederic.dewispelaere@kuleuven.be, yo.gazia@kuleuven.be).

For any further questions and concerns regarding the processing of your personal data, please contact Toon Boon, KU Leuven's data protection officer for research (dpo@kuleuven.be). Please specify the study concerned by mentioning the title as well as the names of the researchers involved.

If, after contacting the data protection officer, you would still like to lodge a complaint about the use of your personal data, you can contact the Belgian Data Protection Authority (www.gegevensbeschermingsautoriteit.be).

Source questionnaire

Section A: Posting information

In this section of the survey, we ask about the availability, accessibility, and quality of information when sending a worker to another Member State on a temporary basis, or receiving a worker from another Member State, in the context of posting. *[Pop-up information: Information on the posting of workers is defined as content on rules, rights, obligations, entitlements, procedures, sanctions, redress (complain and/or appeal), and institutions relating to the posting of workers presented in descriptive, instructive, and/or otherwise guiding format. Policy areas this information might cover include employment relations, labour mobility, migration, company law, temporary agency work, taxation, social security, occupational safety and health, collective bargaining, holiday and severance pay, monitoring and enforcement, subcontracting and liability, health insurance.]*
A **company** refers to enterprises and self-employed persons. A **worker** is a person employed by a company or agency as well as a self-employed person.

ASK ALL

QA1. Do you identify the company as… *(only one option possible)*	
A posting company *[Pop-up posting company: A company which posts workers abroad is considered a posting company. A self-employed person who posts him/herself abroad is also considered a posting company.]*	1
A receiving company *[Pop-up receiving company: A company which makes use of services/work provided by posted workers from abroad is considered a receiving company]*	2
Both a posting and receiving company	3
Neither a posting nor a receiving company *[Terminate] [When answered neither posting nor receiving: This survey is aimed at posting and receiving companies, so the survey is terminated here for you. Thank you for your time.]*	0

ASK IF QA1 = 3 (BOTH A POSTING AND RECEIVING COMPANY)

QA2. Which do you consider the company to mainly be? *(only one option possible)*	
A posting company	1
A receiving company	2

INFO-POW

Theme: type of information

QA3. <u>(IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 1 (POSTING COMPANY))</u> What type of information <u>did you look for</u> regarding posting workers abroad?/ <u>(IF QA1 = 2 OR QA2 = 2 (RECEIVING COMPANY))</u> What type of information <u>was requested</u> by (sub)contractors regarding the received posted workers? *(multiple options possible)*	
Information regarding wages	1
Information regarding additional allowances (for instance overtime rates, allowance for working at night, allowance for working on Sundays, or on public holidays)	2
Information regarding reimbursement for travel and accommodation	3
Information regarding working conditions (for example working time, holidays, etc.)	4
Information regarding health and safety of workers	5
Information regarding the payment of social security contributions	6
Information regarding the payment of personal income taxes	7
Information regarding the request of a Portable Document A1 *[Pop-up Portable Document A1: A Portable Document A1 is a statement of applicable legislation. It is useful to prove that you pay social contributions in another EU country – if you are a posted worker or work in several countries at the same time.]*	8
Information regarding making a notification in the prior declaration tool of the receiving Member State *[Pop-up making a notification in the prior declaration tool: Directive 2014/67/EU (the 'Enforcement Directive') allows Member States to require a service provider established in another Member State to make a 'simple declaration' containing the relevant information necessary in order to allow factual controls at the workplace. This simple declaration happens in the national declaration tool.]*	9
Information regarding postings exceeding 12 months	10
Other information	11
I was not looking for any information **<u>(IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 1 (POSTING COMPANY))</u>**	0
I did not receive any requests for information from (sub)contractors **<u>(IF QA1 = 2 OR QA2 = 2 (RECEIVING COMPANY))</u>**	0

ASK IF QA3 = 11 (OTHER INFORMATION)

QA4. If 'Other', please specify

ASK ALL

QA5. <u>(IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 1 (POSTING COMPANY))</u> Which of the below would you <u>need to have additional information</u> on in order to correctly post workers abroad?/ (<u>IF QA1 = 2 OR QA2 = 2 (RECEIVING COMPANY))</u> Which of the below would you <u>need to have additional information</u> on in order to correctly reply to questions from foreign service providers? *(multiple options possible)*	
Information regarding wages	1
Information regarding additional allowances (for instance overtime rates, allowance for working at night, allowance for working on Sundays, or on public holidays)	2
Information regarding reimbursement for travel and accommodation	3
Information regarding working conditions (for example working time, holidays, etc.)	4
Information regarding health and safety of workers	5
Information regarding the payment of social security contributions	6
Information regarding the payment of personal income taxes	7
Information regarding the request of a Portable Document A1	8
Information regarding making a notification in the prior declaration tool of the receiving Member State	9
Information regarding postings exceeding 12 months	10
Other information	11
I do not need any additional information	0

ASK IF QA5 = 11 (OTHER INFORMATION REQUESTED)

QA6. If 'Other', please specify

ASK ALL

QA7. How important would you say the following aspects are when seeking posting-related information? *(per line only one option possible)*					
	Not at all important	Not very important	Fairly important	Very important	No opinion
A7.1 The information is available in different languages	1	2	3	4	0
A7.2 The information is up to date	1	2	3	4	0
A7.3 The information is easy to understand	1	2	3	4	0

A7.4 The information is sufficiently detailed, i.e., there is no need to search for additional information	1	2	3	4	0
A7.5 The information is available in one single place	1	2	3	4	0
A7.6 Having an office or person to contact (call or visit) for all my questions	1	2	3	4	0

Theme: information sources used

ASK ALL

QA8. How often did you use the following sources for information on posting? (*only one option possible per line*)

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
A8.1 EU institution (e.g., European Commission)	1	2	3	4
A8.2 Public authority (e.g., public administration/labour inspectorate/ social security institution/financial police)	1	2	3	4
A8.3 NGO	1	2	3	4
A8.4 Trade union	1	2	3	4
A8.5 Employers' organisation	1	2	3	4
A8.6 Consulting company/Legal firm	1	2	3	4
A8.7 Other companies established in your country	1	2	3	4
A8.8 Receiving company (i.e., client) **(IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 1 (POSTING COMPANY))**	1	2	3	4
A8.9 Other	1	2	3	4

ASK IF A8.9 = 2, 3 OR 4 (OTHER SOURCES WERE USED SOMETIMES, OFTEN, OR ALWAYS)

QA9. If 'Other', please specify

ASK ALL

QA10. How often did you use the following channels for information on posting? (*only one option possible per line*)

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
A10.1 Single national website on posting *[Pop-up single national website on posting: Every Member State is obliged to have a special website on posting. On this website, you can learn more about concrete terms and conditions of employment applicable to posted workers as well as employers obligations in the receiving Member State.]*	1	2	3	4
A10.2 Other public authorities' websites	1	2	3	4
A10.3 Employer organisations/associations websites	1	2	3	4
A10.4 Trade unions websites	1	2	3	4
A10.5 NGO websites	1	2	3	4
A10.6 Consulting company/private sector website	1	2	3	4
A10.7 Social media platforms	1	2	3	4
A10.8 National contact points on posting	1	2	3	4
A10.9 Attending information sessions/trainings/workshops	1	2	3	4
A10.10 Information guide/manual/leaflet	1	2	3	4
A10.11 Newspapers, specialized magazines, publications	1	2	3	4
A10.12 Business partners/business contacts	1	2	3	4
A10.13 Other	1	2	3	4

ASK IF A10.13 = 2, 3, OR 4 (OTHER CHANNELS WERE USED SOMETIMES, OFTEN, OR ALWAYS)

QA11. If 'Other', please specify

ASK BASED ON REPLIES TO QA10 ONLY FOR CHANNELS WITH VALUE 2, 3, OR 4 (USED SOMETIMES, OFTEN, OR ALWAYS)

QA12. Thinking about the channels that you used, how useful was their information on posting? (*per line only one option possible*)

	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Very useful
A12.1 Single national website on posting	1	2	3	4
A12.2 Other public authorities' websites	1	2	3	4
A12.3 Employer organisations/associations websites	1	2	3	4
A12.4 Trade unions websites	1	2	3	4
A12.5 NGO websites	1	2	3	4

A12.6 Consulting company/private sector website	1	2	3	4
A12.7 Social media platforms	1	2	3	4
A12.8 National contact points on posting	1	2	3	4
A12.9 Attending information sessions/trainings/workshops	1	2	3	4
A12.10 Information guide/manual/leaflet	1	2	3	4
A12.11 Newspapers, specialized magazines, publications	1	2	3	4
A12.12 Business partners/business contacts	1	2	3	4
A12.13 Other	1	2	3	4

ASK ALL

QA13. Through which channels would you like to get information on posting in the future? *(multiple options possible)*	
Institutional website (e.g., European Commission, national government)	1
Employers' organisations/Trade unions website	2
Social media platforms	3
Events (e.g., information sessions/trainings/workshops)	4
Audio-visual channels (e.g., videos/podcasts/infographics)	5
Printed materials (e.g., information guides/manuals/leaflets)	6
In person (e.g., hotlines/office hours/contact person/chats)	7
Media (e.g., newspapers/specialised magazines/publications)	8
Other	9

ASK IF QA13 = 9 (OTHER CHANNELS ARE PREFERRED)

QA14. If 'Other', please specify

ASK ALL

QA15. Do you have examples of best practices in terms of availability, accessibility, and quality of information on posting?

Theme: single national website on posting

ASK ALL

QA16. (IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2= 1 (POSTING COMPANY)) Before answering this survey, were you aware of the single national websites on posting of the countries the company posted workers to?/(IF QA1 = 2 OR QA2 = 2 (RECEIVING COMPANY)) Before answering this survey, were you aware of the single national website on posting of your country? *(only one option possible)*	
Yes	1
No	0

ASK IF QA16 = 1 (AWARE OF WEBSITE)

QA17. Which single national website(s) on posting have you consulted? Please check all that apply. *(multiple options possible).*	
Austria	1
Belgium	2
Bulgaria	3
Croatia	4
Cyprus	5
Czechia	6
Denmark	7
Estonia	8
Finland	9
France	10
Germany	11
Greece	12
Hungary	13
Ireland	14
Italy	15
Latvia	16
Lithuania	17
Luxembourg	18
Malta	19

The Netherlands	20
Poland	21
Portugal	22
Romania	23
Slovakia	24
Slovenia	25
Spain	26
Sweden	27
I have not consulted any single national website on posting	0

ASK WHEN A COUNTRY IS SELECTED IN QA17 (THIS QUESTIONS IMMEDIATELY POPS UP WHEN A COUNTRY IS SELECTED IN QA17)

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
QA18. Your overall assessment of the single national website on posting *(only one option possible)*	1	2	3	4	5

Theme: outsourced or not

ASK IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 1 (POSTING COMPANY)

QA19. Does the company, when posting workers abroad, take care of the following components itself or does the company outsource, i.e., contract an external private company or individual? *(only one option possible per line)*			
	Company itself	Outsourced	I don't know
A19.1 Calculation of the gross wage to be paid to the posted worker(s)	1	2	98
A19.2 Calculation of the additional allowances to be paid to the posted worker(s) (for instance over-time rates, allowance for working at night, allowance for working on Sundays, or on public holidays)	1	2	98
A19.3 Calculation of reimbursement for travel and accommodation to be paid to the posted worker(s)	1	2	98
A19.4 Calculation of the social security contributions to be paid for the posted worker(s) during their posting	1	2	98
A19.5 Requesting a Portable Document A1	1	2	98
A19.6 Making a notification in the national declaration tool of the receiving Member State	1	2	98
A19.7 Providing workers' accommodation	1	2	98

Theme: awareness on applicable conditions and information

ASK IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 1 (POSTING COMPANY)

QA20. How difficult do you find it to determine the applicable wage and working conditions for posted workers? *(only one option possible)*	
Not at all difficult	1
Not very difficult	2
Fairly difficult	3
Very difficult	4
I don't know	98

ASK IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 1 (POSTING COMPANY)

QA21. In your opinion, does the difficulty of determining the applicable wage and working conditions for posted workers depend on the country to which posted workers are sent? *(only one option possible)*	
Yes	1
No	0
I don't know	98

ASK IF QA21 = 1 (YES IT DEPENDS ON THE COUNTRY)

QA22. Why do you think it is more difficult to determine the applicable wage and working conditions for posted workers in some countries than in others?

Theme: challenges

ASK ALL

QA23. In your opinion, is access to information regarding the posting of workers a challenge for your company to participate in posting?	
Yes	1
No	0
I don't know	98

ASK ALL

QA24. How relevant are the following factors in creating challenges for your company to access information on posting? *(only one option per line possible)*					
	Not at all relevant	Not very relevant	Fairly relevant	Very relevant	I don't know
A24.1 Language	1	2	3	4	98
A24.2 Digital skills	1	2	3	4	98
A24.3 Time and effort required	1	2	3	4	98
A24.4 Understanding of the information provided	1	2	3	4	98
A24.5 Cost of retrieving information	1	2	3	4	98
A24.6 Other	1	2	3	4	98

ASK IF A24.6 = 2, 3, OR 4 (OTHER FACTORS EXIST AND ARE RELEVANT)

QA25. If 'Other', please specify

Theme: link information and compliance to the posting rules

ASK ALL

QA26. Among those listed, which are the <u>three main elements</u> that you think would help companies to better comply to the applicable wage and working conditions for posted workers?" *(three options possible)*	
Clearer description of what should be understood under 'remuneration'	1
Improved support and guidance in determining the wage and working conditions that should be respected (for example by means of a template or wage calculator)	2
Improved availability and accessibility of information	3
Improved clarity and quality of information	4
Increased number of inspections on the applicable wage and working conditions	5
Increased penalties in case of not following the applicable wage and working conditions	6
Other	7

ASK IF QA26 = 7 (OTHER ELEMENTS WHICH HELP COMPANIES TO COMPLY)

QA27. If ‘Other’, please specify.

Section B: Posting profile

This section asks about the **posting activity** in the company.

ASK IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 1 (POSTING COMPANY)

QB1. Which was the last calendar year the company posted workers abroad? *(only one option possible)*	
2022	1
2021	2
2020	3
2019	4
2018	5
2017 or earlier	6
I don’t know	98

ASK IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 2 (POSTING COMPANY)

QB2. How many workers were posted abroad by the company in [Year]? Your best estimate is good enough. ([YEAR] IS BASED ON RESPONSE TO QB1)
I don’t know

ASK IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 1 (POSTING COMPANY)

QB3. How often did the company post workers abroad in [Year]? We ask about the number of instances in which posted workers (any number) were posted. *(only one option possible)* **([YEAR] IS BASED ON RESPONSE TO QB1)**	
1 time	1
2-5 times	2
6-10 times	3
More than 10 times	4
I don’t know	98

ASK IF QA1 = 1 OR QA2 = 1 (POSTING COMPANY)

QB4. To which countries were workers posted by the company in [Year]? *(multiple options possible)* **([YEAR] IS BASED ON RESPONSE TO QB1)**	
Austria	1
Belgium	2
Bulgaria	3
Croatia	4
Cyprus	5
Czechia	6
Denmark	7
Estonia	8
Finland	9
France	10
Germany	11
Greece	12
Hungary	13
Ireland	14
Italy	15
Latvia	16
Lithuania	17
Luxembourg	18
Malta	19
The Netherlands	20
Poland	21
Portugal	22
Romania	23
Slovakia	24
Slovenia	25
Spain	26
Sweden	27

The United Kingdom	28
Iceland	29
Liechtenstein	30
Norway	31
Switzerland	32
Other countries	33

ASK IF QA1 = 2 OR QA2 = 2 (RECEIVING COMPANY)

QB5. Which was the last calendar year the company received posted workers? *(only one option possible)*	
2022	1
2021	2
2020	3
2019	4
2018	5
2017 or earlier	6
I don't know	98

ASK IF QA1 = 2 OR QA2 = 2 (RECEIVING COMPANY)

QB6. How many posted workers were received by the company in [Year]? Your best estimate is good enough. ([YEAR] IS BASED ON RESPONSE TO QB5)
I don't know

ASK IF QA1 = 2 OR QA2 = 2 (RECEIVING COMPANY)

QB7. How often did the company receive posted workers in [Year]? We ask about the number of instances in which posted workers (any number) were received. *(only one option possible)* **([YEAR] IS BASED ON RESPONSE TO QB5)**	
1 time	1
2-5 times	2
6-10 times	3
More than 10 times	4
I don't know	98

ASK IF QA1 = 2 OR QA2 = 2 (RECEIVING COMPANY)

QB8. Which countries did the posted workers received by the company in [Year] come from? We ask for the *sending country* of the posted workers, *not the nationality* of the workers. *(multiple options possible).* **([YEAR] IS BASED ON RESPONSE TO QB5)**	
Austria	1
Belgium	2
Bulgaria	3
Croatia	4
Cyprus	5
Czechia	6
Denmark	7
Estonia	8
Finland	9
France	10
Germany	11
Greece	12
Hungary	13
Ireland	14
Italy	15
Latvia	16
Lithuania	17
Luxembourg	18
Malta	19
The Netherlands	20
Poland	21
Portugal	22
Romania	23
Slovakia	24
Slovenia	25
Spain	26

Sweden	27
The United Kingdom	28
Iceland	29
Liechtenstein	30
Norway	31
Switzerland	32
Other countries	33

Section C: Company profile

In this section, we ask some general information about the company you are active in. We do not ask for any personal data, so the survey remains anonymous.

ASK ALL

QC1. In which country is the company registered as a legal entity? *(only one option possible)*	
Austria	1
Belgium	2
Italy	3
Slovakia	4
Slovenia	5
Other	0

ASK IF QC1 = 0 (OTHER COUNTRY THAN 5 MEMBER STATES)

QC2. If 'Other', please specify.

ASK ALL

QC3. How many employees are active in the company? Please include all employees that are formally based in this establishment, regardless of whether they are physically present or carry out their work outside of the premises. Each employee is counted as one person, regardless of whether they are working full-time or part-time (= headcount). *(only one option possible)*

I am self-employed	1
1-9	2
10-49	3
50-249	4
250-499	5
500 or more employees	6
I don’t know	98

ASK ALL

QC4. What are the main economic activities of the company within the construction sector? *(multiple options possible)*	
Construction of buildings (NACE F41)	1
Civil engineering (NACE F42)	2
Specialised construction activities (NACE F43)	3
Other construction activities	4
The company is not active in the construction sector	0
I don’t know	98

ASK IF QC4 = 4 (OTHER CONSTRUCTION) OR QC4 = 0 (NOT ACTIVE IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR)

QC5. If ‘Other’, please specify.

Ending text of the survey

We thank you for your cooperation to this online survey. Your reply is of great value to us. If you have any more comments you would like to provide, you can do so below.

If you want to stay up to date on the results, you can consult the INFO-POW project website. The first results of the project are expected by November 2023. If you would like to be notified when results are available, please leave your email-address below.

Annex II National dissemination strategies

Country	Dissemination strategies
Austria	In Austria, the survey was disseminated through a range of different channels. In a first instance, the Chamber of Commerce (WKO) was used as a channel. Afterwards, other possible channels were to be contacted including other employer organisations (Federation of Austrian Industries IV), trade unions (Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB)), the Chamber of Labour (Arbeiterkammer), public administrations (incl. inspectorates), namely Construction Workers' Holiday and Severance Pay Fund (Bauarbeiter-Urlaubs- und Abfertigungskasse, BUAK), Federal Ministry for Digital, Business and Enterprise (Bundesministerium für Digitalisierung und Wirtschaftsstandort), Ministry of Finance and the Financial Police. In the end, the main dissemination occurred through the WKO, as planned, both on the national level and in several regions. They distributed the survey mainly through their newsletter. In addition, the national research team prepared a list of 50 large construction companies whose email addresses could be found online and sent an email in German asking them to complete the survey. They also asked some of the experts interviewed, e.g. the private consultancy representative, to distribute the survey among their clients. The national WKO contact was asked to make a second round of dissemination of the survey. Finally, the survey was also disseminated via the institutional social media accounts in the platform X and LinkedIN.
Belgium	The Belgian partners contacted two different employer organisations in the construction sector to help disseminate the survey, namely Embuild (national, for larger construction companies) and Bouwunie (Flemish, for self-employed persons and SMEs). Furthermore, depending on the response rate, Constructive, the welfare fund of the blue-collar workers in the building sector was planned to be contacted, or the email addresses found in the Orbis database to be utilised. In the end, Embuild and Bouwunie both sent an email to their members to ask them to fill out the survey. Embuild sent it to construction companies with 20 employees or more, both Dutch-speaking (4 013 companies) and French-speaking companies (1 033). Furthermore, Embuild also sent a reminder email after a few weeks. Bouwunie sent the email to 6 282 email addresses, all construction companies based in Flanders. They could report to the researchers that the email was opened by 2 604 persons, and 106 actually clicked on the link to the survey. Finally, Constructiv was not contacted, whereas emails were sent to Walloon companies with 0-20 employees using the Orbis email addresses found, as this was the group of companies not yet reached by Embuild and Bouwunie.
Italy	In Italy, the survey was disseminated using employer organisations, namely Confindustria (Industry - large companies); ANCE (Construction sector - large companies); Confartigianato (Industry - small and medium companies); ANAEPA Confartigianato Edilizia (Construction sector - small and me-

	dium companies); CNA (Industry - small and medium companies); CNA Costruzioni (Construction sector - small and medium companies); and Confapi (Industry - small and medium companies). These employer organisations are the first channels that were contacted. As a second step, the National Labour Inspectorate (INL) was contacted, and they were willing to disseminate the survey through the newsletter. Furthermore, the National Construction Fund (CNCE) was willing to help disseminating the survey, but there was an overlap with dissemination by employer organisations, seeing that employer organisations are also a part of the CNCE. In the end, invitations were sent to the main business associations (ANCE, CNA, Anaepa) asking them to forward the email to the provincial offices and then from there to the associated companies at a territorial level. After little change in the response rate, the national research team adopted new strategies, namely, to reach out to the provincial offices directly which, however, did not result in a great level of success.
Slovakia	The Slovakian partners planned to use all the available channels to disseminate the survey: through the email addresses provided through Orbis, employer organisation (Zväz stavebných podnikateľov Slovenska - Association of Construction Entrepreneurs of Slovakia), trade union (KOZ SR -Confederation of Unions, Integrovaný odborový zväz), chamber of commerce (AMCHAM (American Cham. of Commerce), German Chamber of Commerce, Slovensko – rakúska obchodná komora (Slovak – Austrian Chamber of Commerce)), Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, National Labour Inspectorate, and Social Insurance Agency. Furthermore, they planned to put a link to the survey on the online job portal Profesia. The first dissemination strategy that was used is the online job portal Profesia. This is a general job portal, not only focused on jobs in construction, but it covers around 80% of the Slovakian job market. There is an open 'front website' and also a closed 'behind the scenes website' which is only accessible for companies behind a paywall. In addition, the project team also planned to organise meetings with representatives of Profesia to see if it was possible to directly send emails to construction companies specifically. Seeing that HR people primarily visit this website for companies (behind the paywall) they would be ideal to fill out our survey. Next, the Slovakian partners started approaching public administrations, social partners, and the Chamber of Commerce. Finally, as a last resort, they could turn to the email addresses collected through the Orbis database. In the end, the job portal Profesia agreed to send personalised emails to companies in the construction sector, and later also sent a reminder email. Next, the Slovak Craft Industry Federation advertised the survey in their newsletter, and the survey was distributed by the Association of Construction Entrepreneurs in Slovakia. Furthermore, the National Labour Inspectorate shared the survey on Facebook, and the national research team distributed the survey through their social media profiles. Finally, the national research team created a list of 70 construction companies based on the top

	50 in revenue, added those in the top 50 in number of employees, which were not included already, and included a few companies based on a LinkedIn search as well. After checking whether the email addresses were relevant and up to date, a list of 38 additional email addresses was constructed, to which an email about the survey was sent. Moreover, the national research team made use of a premium LinkedIn account and searched for HR managers (or similar positions) in each company and sent out 55 InMails through LinkedIn.
Slovenia	They Slovenian partners planned to send the survey directly to the posting companies based on the list of companies provided by the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia. In case of low response rate, they planned to contact chambers of commerce (The Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia, The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia) and employers' associations (The Association of Employers of Slovenia) for assistance. However, when receiving this list of companies, it appeared that it did not provide any information on the sector of activity or any contact information. Therefore, the Slovenian team decided to start with contacting employers' associations and chambers of commerce to help disseminate the survey. In the second step, the Slovenian team used company register data from Slovenia to match the information from the list of companies provided by the Ministry of Labour. In the end, the survey was sent to over 500 construction companies that post workers abroad, based the matched data. After sending the emails, around 50 emails bounced back immediately due to the address no longer being valid. Furthermore, some replies were received from contacted company owners of Bosnian and Albanian descend regarding difficulties with accessing the survey in the Slovenian language (or any other language in which the survey was provided). Next, the national research team sent out another round of emails to construction companies that are advertising/offering their services abroad (based on a public database) and, in addition, asked employers' associations for assistance with distribution. Finally, the national research team sent 19 messages on LinkedIn to the HR managers of the top 20 companies in the construction sector (based on sales).

Annex III Accompanying email to the online survey

To whom it may concern

We kindly invite you to take part in a survey on the **availability, accessibility, and quality of information about the posting of workers, which means sending them to carry out a service in another EU Member State**. This online survey is part of an EU-funded research project entitled INFO-POW. The results of the survey will be used to formulate policy recommendations at EU and national levels.

The survey **supported by [name employer organisations]** (see attached) is aimed at **companies and self-employed persons in [name of country] active in the construction sector,** which **have posted workers abroad** or **have received posted workers** from abroad. **The most appropriate respondent** would be a person in charge of personnel in your company, who is aware of the overall (posting) situation, for example an HR employee.

The survey offers an important tool for the assessment of the need for accessible information on the posting rules, the **identification of challenges and the provision of recommendations to policymakers**. Therefore, we would highly appreciate it if you can take **15 minutes** of your time to complete the survey.

[link to the survey]

Participation in the survey is anonymous and is conducted under data protection laws. Most of the questions are closed questions, and a few open-ended questions allow you to provide additional information.

If you have any questions, please contact the project Coordinator Sonila Danaj (European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research) at danaj@euro.centre.org, or one of the designers of the survey Lynn De Smedt (HIVA – KU Leuven) at lynn.desmedt@kuleuven.be. In case of questions, you can also contact **[**name of employer organisations and project partners of the respective country**]**.

INFO-POW

Co-funded by the European Union

COORDINATOR

European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research

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UNIVE – Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Italy)

CSPV SAV – Slovak Academy of Sciences (Slovakia)

ZRC SAZU – Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Slovenia)

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS:

EBC - The European Builders Confederation (Belgium) • FIEC - The European Construction Industry Federation (Belgium) • EFBWW - The European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (Belgium) • Bouwunie - The Union of the SME construction companies (Belgium) • Confindustria Vicenza - Italian Association of Enterprises (Italy) • SOPK - The Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Slovakia) • KOZ SR - The Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic (Slovakia) • NLI RS - National Labour Inspectorate (Slovakia) • ESS - Employment Service of Slovenia (Slovenia)