



## European Platform Undeclared Work

### Bilateral Cooperation Agreement with Lithuania to tackle undeclared work

Norway

	<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The Bilateral Cooperation Agreement with Lithuania to tackle undeclared work aims to strengthen bilateral cooperation between the labour inspectorates, involving joint inspections, sharing good practice, information exchange, and dissemination of information.</p>
<p><b>Name(s) of authorities/bodies/organisations involved</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority (<i>Arbeidstilsynet</i>);</li> <li>State Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Lithuania (<i>Valstybinė darbo inspekcija</i>).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sectors</b></p>	<p>Public sector</p>
<p><b>Target groups</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Labour inspectors (directly targeted);</li> <li>Employers (directly targeted);</li> <li>Workers involved in undeclared work (indirectly targeted).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Purpose of measure</b></p>	<p>Deterrence: improve detection</p>

	<p><b>Aims and objectives</b></p> <p>The Bilateral Cooperation Agreement supports the Norwegian Strategy for combatting work-related crime and aims to strengthen bilateral cooperation between the two inspectorates. The total cost of the activities over 2017-18 was EUR 20 000.</p>
<p><b>Background context</b></p>	<p>The Norwegian strategy for combatting work-related crime<sup>i</sup>, published in 2015, notes that work-related crime is an increasing challenge. International cooperation is a key area outlined in the strategy to improve detection.</p> <p>During the past few years a high number of Lithuanian enterprises have relocated their business to Norway, bringing new challenges in respect to ensuring legal employment contracts, requisite working conditions, and occupational health and safety for Lithuanian workers. This has led to the need for strengthened bilateral cooperation and the signature of a new bilateral agreement between the Norwegian and Lithuanian labour inspectorates on 30</p>



## European Platform Undeclared Work

	<p>May 2017, which superseded a prior agreement in 2007. The programme of activities for 2017-18 followed a pilot project which took place in 2016-17.</p> <p>The agreement covers cooperation in relation to labour conditions (occupational health and safety, remuneration, working time etc.), and the rights of workers. In the context of undeclared work, it covers checking that workers have the necessary work permits and registrations.</p> <p>Norway also has similar agreements with Bulgaria, Estonia, Poland, Latvia and Romania.</p>
<b>Key objectives of the measure</b>	<p>General objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To develop bilateral cooperation between the Norwegian and Lithuanian labour inspectorates.</li></ul> <p>Specific objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To update the pre-existing 2007 agreement between the inspectorates;</li><li>• To strengthen bilateral cooperation between the inspectorates to tackle undeclared work;</li><li>• To promote cross border cooperation, information activities (rights and obligations), and the sharing of best practices.</li></ul>
<b>Main activities</b>	<p>During the period 2017-18 the Labour Inspectorates of Lithuania and Norway performed the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The carrying out of joint inspections in enterprises in the two countries, involving the checking of relevant permits and registrations of workers from the other country, and also labour conditions. Some inspections involved not only labour inspectors, but also police officers, tax inspectors and migration officers;</li><li>• The sharing of good practice in relation to control measures;</li><li>• The organisation of information campaigns to prevent undeclared work, as well as information days/seminars with social partners about rights and obligations of enterprises/workers regarding employment in the other country;</li><li>• Meetings between the general directors of the two inspectorates in order to exchange relevant information and good practices and find common solutions;</li><li>• The exchange of information about posting of workers and irregularities identified during inspections;</li><li>• The building of an internet portal with Lithuanian, Norwegian and English language versions, to provide information about the rights of workers posted to the other country, obligations of</li></ul>



## European Platform Undeclared Work

	<p>employers in these cases, and the powers of inspection bodies;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a contact point in both countries for continuous communication between the two inspection bodies;</li> <li>• Increasing the use of Internal Market Information System (IMI) for the exchange of information on national laws and regulations, and on enterprises and workers.</li> </ul>
<b>Funding/organisational resources</b>	The total cost of the activities over 2017-18 was EUR 20 000, with half of this coming from Norway/EEA Grants and half from the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority.

	<p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <p>Ten violations of labour law were identified, which resulted from four joint inspections as well as information exchange and joint meetings. Based on the success of the Bilateral cooperation in 2017-18, a new project has been agreed for 2019-22.</p>
<b>Achievement of objectives</b>	<p>The 10 violations of labour law which were identified resulted from four joint inspections undertaken, 10 instances of bilateral information exchange, and via information shared at four joint meetings.</p> <p>Based on the success of the practice in 2017-18, a new project has been agreed for 2019-22 called 'Cooperation for Decent Work', which will involve a joint information campaign, annual learning seminars, a tripartite seminar, staff exchange for learning, and staff exchange for assistance.</p>
<b>Lessons learnt and success factors</b>	<p>Lessons learnt and success factors include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognising the need to cooperate at a practical and strategic level;</li> <li>• Commitment at all levels, from bottom-up to the very top;</li> <li>• Having a formal agreement to specify activities and responsibilities;</li> <li>• Developing dialogue and mutual trust at the level of inspectorates and individual staff;</li> <li>• Effectively communicating through meetings, phone calls and email between the designated contact points in the two inspection bodies, and the IMI system, with quick clarifications being given when needed.</li> </ul>



<b>Transferability</b>	<p>To be effectively implemented in other contexts, bilateral cooperation requires an allocation of funding to cover the extra costs of joint inspections (e.g. travel), meetings and sharing information.</p> <p>The respective authorities in different countries must have the capacity and commitment to work together at a high-level and implement a formal agreement.</p>
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<b>Further information</b>	
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<sup>i</sup> Updated strategy is available at : <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/strategi-mot-arbeidslivskriminalitet-2019/id2628152/>