

Second International Technical Forum of Senior Officials of Labour Inspectorates:

Working Together for Social Justice Through Labour Inspection

Trondheim, Norway, 24-25 September 2024

Final Report

Executive summary

Introduction

The world of work is becoming increasingly complex in the face of multiple crises, requiring institutions to anticipate, learn, and adapt to change continuously. Labour inspection, a vital public function, promotes compliance with and enforces labour legislation, often encompassing the entire scope of labour rights.

In many Member States, labour inspectorates are recognized as agents of change, significantly contributing to Decent Work. However, their importance is sometimes underappreciated or misunderstood, leading to policies that hinder their effectiveness and demand urgent action. Labour inspectorates operate within a complex legislative framework, necessitating coordinated actions and collaborative approaches. This dynamic is highlighted in the ILO's Guidelines on General Principles of Labour Inspection, endorsed by the ILO Governing Body in March 2022.

Building on the success of the first International Forum held in Valencia, Spain, in November 2022, the ILO, in partnership with Norway's Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, organized the Second International Technical Forum of Senior Officials of Labour Inspectorates on 24-25 September 2024 in Trondheim, Norway. This forum focused on fostering collaboration among labour inspectorates, social partners, public authorities, and private stakeholders to develop strategic and impactful interventions.

Summary

The forum featured plenary sessions where representatives from labour inspectorates, social partners, and other institutions addressed critical issues and shared strategies to advance social justice and Decent Work.

High-level Roundtable: Enhancing Workplace Compliance Amid Crises

The roundtable explored the challenges and opportunities labour inspectorates face in an evolving world of work. Key speakers emphasized the critical role of labour inspectorates in ensuring compliance with labour standards, especially in relation to challenging issues such as informality, worker misclassification, and wage payments.

Ms. Manuela Tomei, the ILO Assistant Director-General for Governance, Rights and Dialogue, highlighted the importance of adequately resourcing inspectorates, collaborating between inspection services, and leveraging technology to address compliance challenges effectively. Workers' and employers' representatives underscored the need to protect vulnerable groups, such as migrant workers, and foster partnerships to promote decent work.

Session 1: Labour Inspection in the Face of Emerging Hazards

This session addressed challenges posed by climate change, technological advancements, and evolving occupational hazards. Panellists identified risks such as heat stress, new infections, and workplace disruptions due to pandemics. Recommendations included revising legislation, strengthening institutions, leveraging technology, and fostering international cooperation to mitigate emerging risks effectively.

Session 2: Transformations in the World of Work

This session explored the impact of digital platforms, telework, and diverse employment forms on labour inspection. Representatives from Portugal, Finland, Namibia, and Chile shared their experiences in addressing challenges such as worker classification, compliance in platform work, and adapting inspection methods. Key insights included the importance of strategic planning, international collaboration, and upskilling inspectors to handle new work dynamics.

Session 3: Collaboration for Effective Labour Inspection

Session three focused on fostering partnerships between labour inspectorates, social partners, and enforcement agencies. Examples from Norway, Australia, Algeria, and Costa Rica highlighted the benefits of formal and informal collaborations, emphasizing trust, openness, and mutual respect as essential elements for success.

Session 4: Evaluating the Impact of Labour Inspection

In this session, discussions on improving the relevance and impact of labour inspection activities were held. Panellists from Spain, Tunisia, the Philippines, and Norway shared strategies for planning and evaluating inspections, using data-driven approaches, and engaging stakeholders to achieve and sustain compliance. The importance of strategic planning, performance indicators, and continuous learning emerged as central themes.

Session 5: Knowledge Transfer and Global Collaboration

This session highlighted the importance of international networks and initiatives in strengthening labour inspection systems. Panellists from the European Commission, ASEAN, and REDIBIT discussed strategies for capacity building, sharing best practices, and addressing cross-border compliance issues. The session underscored the value of regional and international cooperation in promoting effective enforcement of labour standards.

Special Session: Nordic Approaches to Labour Inspection

Participants gained insights into the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority's (NLIA) structure, planning processes, and risk-based inspections. Presenters emphasized the importance of collaboration, data-driven decision-making, and addressing emerging challenges such as climate change and technological advancements. Nordic cooperation and lessons from regional initiatives provided valuable examples of effective labour inspection strategies.

Conclusions

The key takeaways of the forum were:

1. Collaborating for Impact: Labour inspection requires partnerships with social partners, enforcement agencies, and stakeholders to achieve greater compliance and sustainable solutions.

2. Adapting to Change: Labour inspectors must remain flexible, strategic, and data-driven to address challenges such as climate change, digitalization, and new forms of work.
3. Empowering Inspectorates: Investment in technology, training, and human resources is essential to strengthen labour inspection systems.

Acknowledgements highlighted the forum's success in fostering dialogue, sharing insights, and promoting global cooperation. Participants, speakers, and organizers were commended for their contributions to advancing social justice through effective labour inspection.

The forum demonstrated the importance of global collaboration, innovation, and strategic planning in strengthening labour inspection systems. By addressing emerging challenges and fostering partnerships, labour inspectors play a crucial role in promoting Decent Work and protecting workers worldwide.

SUMMARY REPORT

Introduction

The world of work is becoming increasingly challenging in the context of multiple crises, requiring institutions to constantly anticipate, learn, and adapt to change. Labour inspection is a crucial public function responsible for promoting compliance with and enforcing labour legislation, often covering the full scope of labour rights.

Labour inspectorates in many Member States are renowned agents of change, significantly contributing to the realization of Decent Work. However, in some cases, their importance is not fully recognized and even misperceived, leading to policy and legislative options that hinder their effectiveness and require urgent action. At the same time, labour inspectorates everywhere continue to operate in a complex legislative context that calls for coordinated action and combined approaches in the implementation of national laws and regulations, in consultation and collaboration with social partners and a diversity of public and private actors, as highlighted by the ILO's Guidelines on General Principles of Labour Inspection, endorsed by the ILO Governing Body in March 2022.

Building on the success of the first International Forum of Senior Officials of Labour Inspectorates, held in November 2022 in Valencia, Spain, and with the aim of continuing to promote high-level exchanges between labour inspectorates, the ILO, jointly with the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion of Norway, organized the Second International Technical Forum of Senior Officials of Labour Inspectorates in Trondheim, Norway, on 24-25 September 2024. This second forum specifically focused on collaboration between labour inspectorates, social partners, other public authorities, and relevant public and private stakeholders, as well as processes for more strategic and impactful interventions.

In a video speech at the opening of the forum, Mr. Gilbert Houngbo, Director-General of the ILO, stated, "The Forum will reinforce alliances and allow the participants to share innovative labour inspection practices. Such discussions help to achieve, maintain, and sustain compliance with core labour standards. At a time when the world of work is going through a period of great change, the work of labour inspectors is essential if we are to make progress towards decent work for all."

Ms. Tonje Brenna, Minister of Labour and Social Inclusion of Norway, welcomed participants to the Forum, highlighting the forum as a valuable platform for collaboration, bringing together experts from around the world to exchange ideas, share best practices, and develop strategies to tackle both emerging and traditional labour market challenges. She expressed confidence that the discussions would shape the future of labour inspection, reinforcing its role as a vital tool for fostering equity and social justice.

The Forum was organized into plenary sessions where representatives from Labour Inspectorates worldwide, their networks, social partners, and other institutions involved in the world of work discussed pressing topics and shared insights on labour inspection policies, strategies, and methodologies to advance social justice and promote decent work.

High-level Roundtable: The Role of Labour Inspection in Enhancing Workplace Compliance: Challenges and Opportunities in a Context of Multiple Crises

The Roundtable was chaired by Ms. Vera Paquete-Perdigao, Director of the Governance and Tripartism Department of the ILO. In her introductory remarks, Ms. Paquete-Perdigao emphasized that the world of work is in constant flux, with new trends related to climate and technology creating both opportunities and challenges. These trends, along with long-standing labour market issues such as informality, abuses of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, worker misclassification, wage payment problems, and lack of access to social protection, necessitate effective institutions capable of making evidence-based decisions for strategically driven social policies and ensuring that labour legislation is applied equally and fairly to all.

Ms. Manuela Tomei, Assistant Director-General for Governance, Rights and Dialogue at the ILO, was the first speaker of the Roundtable. She highlighted that during the 2024 International Labour Conference, Member States approved the conclusions of the General Survey on Labour Administration in a Changing World of Work (ILC.112/Report III(B)). The survey underscored the importance of labour inspection in ensuring social peace, good governance of labour matters, and contributing to economic and social progress. It urged all governments to ensure that adequate human and financial resources and material means are allocated to labour inspectorates, even in times of crisis.

However, many ILO member states have adopted laws and policies that hinder the effectiveness of labour inspectorates, as noted by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR). These include moratoria on labour inspections, restrictions on unannounced inspections, limits on the frequency, duration, and scope of inspections, exemptions from inspections for a significant portion of enterprises, substantial cuts in the number of labour inspectors and resources allocated to them, and the assignment of additional tasks to labour inspectors that prevent them from focusing on their primary duties, thereby damaging their authority and impartiality.

Ms. Tonje Brenna, Minister of Labour and Social Inclusion of Norway, outlined their overarching goal of ensuring a healthy working environment, safe and secure employment conditions, and meaningful work for individuals. Ms. Brenna emphasized that the foundation of their approach, as well as that of the broader Nordic region, lies in tripartism—a collaborative framework involving government, employers, and workers. This model, built on mutual trust and respect, has fostered a resilient and adaptive labour market that balances the interests of all parties. Trust, she noted, is central to the Nordic social model, underpinning effective labour inspection systems and safeguarding workers' rights.

Mr. Kris de Meester from the Belgian Federation of Enterprises, representing the IOE, emphasized the urgency of formalizing the informal sector to strengthen worker protection. He stated that employers' organizations are willing to partner with labour inspectorates to implement the right policies and launch campaigns, stressing the importance of shaping the future of labour inspection through collaboration and participation of social partners. Meanwhile, the Workers' representative, Ms. Mikyung Ryu from the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), representing the International Trade Union Confederation, referred to a deadly fire explosion at a lithium battery factory in June 2024 in South Korea, which killed 23 workers, 18 of whom were migrant workers. She stressed the importance of protecting migrant workers' rights and achieving decent work for all. Migrant workers should receive safety training equivalent to that of nationals, and labour inspection should be strengthened in sectors with a high concentration of migrant workers.

Finally, Ms. Paquete-Perdigao invited Ms. Tomei to conclude the roundtable. Ms. Tomei firstly outlined the importance of effective cooperation between inspection services and collaboration with social partners to build trust, identify joint actions, and organize inspection campaigns together. She cited a case where forced labour in the fishing sector was addressed through a partnership among various governmental inspectors, including the labour inspectorate, maritime inspectors, and the fishing authority. She also highlighted the importance of using technological devices to detect and collect evidence during inspections.

Secondly, M. Tomei stressed that all labour inspectorates need to be sufficiently resourced in terms of staff, access to expertise, technology, and other material means such as vehicles.

Finally, in line with the theme of the event, she emphasized that labour inspectorates must engage with a multitude of institutions to be part of the solution, especially if we want to tackle the underlying causes of non-compliance and take preventative measures. Employers and workers are critical partners in this effort.

Session 1: Labour Inspection in the Face of Climate Change and Other Emerging and Re-emerging Occupational Hazards

According to the most recent International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates, 2.93 million workers die every year due to work-related accidents and diseases. Workers continue to face the persistent threat of traditional hazards and risks. At the same time, the ever-evolving work landscape is causing multiple challenges to the effective prevention of work-related accidents and diseases. This includes climate change and technological advancements related to the rapid progress in the use of AI, automation, nanotechnologies, and new chemical substances and raw materials in manufacturing, agriculture, and construction, to name a few.

The evolving nature of occupational hazards requires a proactive and adaptive approach to labour inspection, including adapting policies, increasing research, training inspectors, enhancing surveillance, and leveraging technology for evidence-based and targeted inspections. The session heard from inspectorates on how they have adapted their approaches and work methods to address changes from an Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) perspective, with a particular focus on climate change and biological hazards.

The session was chaired by Mr. Joaquim Pintado Nunes, Chief of the Occupational Safety and Health and the Working Environment Branch of the ILO.

Six panellists, selected from national labour inspectorates from different regions and the European Commission, identified several risks and hazards that we are all facing today.

First, climate change challenges are already here, and it is clear that the weather has a significant impact on working conditions. Some industries where workers are more exposed than others include agriculture (dry weather or floods), firefighting, fisheries, forestry, emergency services, offshore and onshore operations, platform workers (delivery services), and construction. Working outdoors during high temperatures affects the human body and can cause multiple effects, such as heat stress. Additionally, new infections are spreading due to insects and warmer climates. COVID-19 was an example of how a biological hazard could have a significant impact on the labour market and workforce. The consequences of the pandemic are still present, such as disruptions in supply chains, delays in construction projects, and the

rise of online business. We need to be able to adapt the workforce in times of crisis (such as pandemics).

The third challenge is technological adaptation. New technical solutions provide new opportunities, but users need to understand and be aware of the associated risks.

The panel discussed what labour inspectorates can do to minimize work-related risks associated with new emerging risks. Several solutions were proposed:

1. **Legislation:** It may be necessary to evaluate legislation to see how it can be adapted to societal changes. It is important to bear in mind that it can take many years to change a law and develop new rules. Additionally, it takes time for people to adjust to new rules. The political situation in a country can also impact the implementation of new regulations due to changes in administration.
2. **Adaptation in Workforce:** To better face challenges and periods with high risks, shocks can be addressed during heightened safety periods. For example, it is possible to uplift standards and practices, empower workers, and heighten enforcement for safety lapses. Another key is to conduct targeted inspections on workplaces with high heat stress risk.
3. **Strategies and Tools:** Implementing policies and legislation by making tools user-friendly and adaptable (not “one size fits all”). If tools are flexible and easy to understand, different sectors can apply them (such as industry, construction, maritime, agriculture, etc.). The geographical location of a country is also significant, as there can be differences in climate.
4. **Strengthening institutions:** the role of institutions, such as OSH committees and other working groups, is very important. Both already established committees play an important role and other new working groups that are formed according to the emerging risks.
5. **Social dialogue:** Just like institutions, social dialogue plays a pivotal role in addressing climate change and emerging occupational hazards. It serves as a platform for governments, employers, and workers to collaboratively shape policies and practices that promote sustainable and safe working environments. Through inclusive dialogue, stakeholders can anticipate risks, adapt workplace standards, and ensure that climate-related transitions are just and equitable, fostering trust and transparency.
6. **International cooperation:** working closely with other countries and international institutional partners is a success factor. It can be added that having clear roles between different institutions and countries is beneficial for a well-functioning collaboration.

The session was concluded with these few key words: the work landscape is evolving, and labour inspectors must act and adapt to it. Resilience is the key to the change.

Session 2: Labour Inspection and the Transforming World of Work

The world of work has experienced rapid changes driven by advancements in technology, climate transitions, and other transformative forces, reshaping labour markets. These changes present both opportunities and unique challenges for labour inspection and enforcement. One key issue is the classification of workers, particularly in distinguishing between employment relationships and self-employment. Additionally, the diversity of contractual arrangements—

such as temporary work, on-call work, multi-employer relationships, and others—has complicated enforcement. The rise of telework and platform work has also raised significant concerns regarding occupational safety and health (OSH) protections.

This session focused on how labour inspectorates are addressing the diverse range of workplaces, workers, and employment forms, including those shaped by technology, such as telework, artificial intelligence (AI), and robotics.

The session was chaired by Mr. Yogindra Samant of the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority.

Insights from the Portugal experience were shared on addressing digital platform work and enforcing new national regulations that presume workers' status for individuals working for digital platforms. Efforts included conducting seminars, webinars, and information sessions to spread awareness about the new regulations, ensuring workers are recognized with rights and social protections. Engaging with delivery companies was critical to conveying that not all workers are self-employed or independent contractors. Consultations with over 2,000 delivery riders and the issuance of more than 1,000 notices of non-compliance were highlighted. Numerous court cases are currently underway to recognize worker contracts, and over 1,000 reports have been filed with public prosecutor's offices.

Challenges with the new legislation included the lack of a compulsory register for digital platforms and difficulties in addressing cases where riders worked for multiple companies. Additionally, communication was hindered by a lack of direct contacts, as many riders were not members of worker organizations. Cultural and language barriers further complicated enforcement efforts.

Ongoing Nordic cooperation within a dedicated group aims to help national labour inspectorates tackle OSH challenges in the future of work. Topics such as digitalization, platform work, and climate change were addressed. The group has made several recommendations, including informing inspectors about the complexities of platform work, facilitating information exchange between inspectors and platform workers through various channels, and collaborating with international institutions and social partners to develop guidelines and recommendations. The upcoming EU directive on platform work and AI regulations is expected to provide more clarity on how to engage with platform companies.

The evolving OSH challenges in various sectors of Namibia, including temporary work in fisheries, on-call work, multi-employer relationships, hired labour, and self-employment in the farming sector, were presented. The rise of online services like home delivery and taxi services was also noted. The pandemic led to significant shifts in working life, driven by technological advancements and a growing desire among young people for more flexibility. The labour inspectorate has adapted to these changes by educating staff and exploring new inspection methods, including digital inspections to reach domestic workers. Key challenges include distinguishing between employees and self-employed workers, managing diverse contracts, and classifying workers accurately. The use of digital tools is essential, as is upskilling inspectors to better understand the needs of the evolving workforce.

The discussion highlighted the significant changes to work in Chile following the pandemic, including a dramatic increase in teleworking and the closure of many businesses. To adapt to these changes, new inspection methods were necessary. Despite having a labour inspectorate that is over 100 years old, many traditional inspection methods were still in use. Another

challenge in Chile is the country's vast desert regions, high altitudes, and varying climate zones, which complicate labour inspections.

Labor inspectors in Chile primarily respond to complaints, including those related to labour law conflicts, such as wrongful dismissals. Currently, the inspectorate lacks access to information about individuals working for platform companies. However, efforts are underway to develop software that will improve access to information, including linking to tax databases to track the number of workers employed by platform companies.

Session 3: Collaboration with Social Partners and Other Institutions as a Driver for the Effectiveness of the Labour Inspection System

Convention No. 81 mandates the promotion and institutionalization of regular cooperation between labour inspectors, employers, and workers, as well as with public or private institutions engaged in similar activities. In practice, collaboration between labour inspectorates and other public institutions, such as enforcement agencies, is essential to avoid duplicating inspections, collect relevant data, and ensure effective coordination. This approach can also enhance the capacity of the labour inspectorate by providing logistical support, such as transport, that may otherwise be unavailable.

Engagement with social partners is equally important. While it is crucial for labour inspectorates to work with employers' and workers' organizations at all territorial levels to develop, adopt, and revise inspection policies and strategies through regular consultations, the most direct and impactful collaboration occurs at the enterprise level, particularly during inspection visits.

The session was chaired by Javier Barbero, Team Lead on Labour Administration/Labour Inspection of the Social Dialogue, Labour Relations, and Governance of Work Branch of the ILO, and was attended by representatives from both the labour inspectorate and the social partners. Panellists from Norway, Australia, Algeria, and Costa Rica shared their experiences.

A key consensus from the discussion was that cooperation with social partners is essential at all levels. It was emphasized that all parties share an interest in promoting good working conditions in workplaces through inspection services.

Panellists provided examples of both formal and informal collaborations. At the formal level, they discussed how to achieve productive tripartite cooperation at various levels, typically through regular consultations and exchanges. These dialogues allow the parties to contribute to planning inspection activities and to jointly conduct effective campaigns. Informal collaboration, such as information exchanges, was also highlighted as a valuable aspect of cooperation.

For collaboration to be most effective, it should occur both at the sectoral and appropriate regional levels and include all relevant parties specific to the supervision in question.

When it comes to inter-authority cooperation, it is crucial for the effectiveness of supervision. This cooperation involves sharing information about conditions in specific enterprises and the respective authorities' planned supervisory activities. Such cooperation must be supported by legislation that ensures public access to information, facilitating the exchange of relevant data.

Trust, openness, and mutual respect were emphasized as fundamental elements for successful collaboration.

Session 4: Improving the Impact of Labour Inspection Actions on Compliance: From Planning to Evaluation of Inspection Activities

Although there is general agreement on the benefits of labour inspection, the actual impact of labour inspectors' activities is often unclear. Measuring this impact is undeniably challenging, partly because the necessary data may not be readily available and partly because the causal link between inspection interventions and observed changes may not be sufficiently clear or strong. This difficulty explains why it is hard to establish common indicators of efficiency, effectiveness, and impact for labour inspections within the compliance process.

In 2022, the ILO published a study on the impact of labour inspection actions, outlining current practices related to the use of effectiveness, efficiency, and impact indicators. The study also suggested actions to improve the collection and analysis of data that inspectorates could use to enhance their mission. The objective of this session was to discuss the ILO's recommended actions and to learn from national experiences about how labour inspectorates plan, implement, and evaluate their activities, not only to achieve but also to sustain compliance.

Mr. Arto Teronen from the Finnish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs chaired the session, which included panellists from Spain, Tunisia, the Philippines, and Norway. The chair opened the session by posing the question: "How can the relevance of labour inspectors' work be improved?" because even if inspection data is readily available, it is essential to demonstrate its meaningful impact. The results of inspections must be clearly shown.

The discussion emphasized the importance of proactive measures in labour inspection, given the limited resources available to national labour inspectorates (NLIs). Effective labour inspection begins with strategic planning. In Spain, the annual planning process focuses on four main areas: occupational safety and health (OSH), labour relations, social security, and undeclared work. Specific issues within each area, such as working conditions and accident investigations, are addressed. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are established to track progress, measure effects, and evaluate activities, ensuring the effective implementation of the annual plan.

In Tunisia, the impact of labour inspection activities has been enhanced through optimized strategic planning and the establishment of indicators to track results. Outcomes are analysed, and lessons learned are used to identify future challenges and implement preventive measures. The strategic planning process begins by setting labour inspection priorities, followed by awareness and inspection campaigns that influence activities and address the accessibility and inclusion needs of a diverse workforce across sectors. Cooperation with social partners is crucial for the effectiveness of the planning process.

Improving communication and inspection methods is another way Tunisia's NLI has streamlined its tasks. This includes providing training for inspectors in the use of IT and new technologies. International cooperation has also been vital in adopting a multi-dimensional approach to improve the NLI. Labor inspection plays a critical role in ensuring social justice, aiming to foster a culture that respects the law and compliance, as sanctions alone are not seen as a sustainable solution.

In the Philippines, the NLI faces challenges due to rapid societal changes, including a shortage of labour inspectors, limited resources for inspector training, geographical challenges posed by the country's numerous islands, varying levels of expertise among inspectors, and low compliance in large informal sectors and SMEs. The strategic plan for 2023-2028 focuses on human-centred transitions for a just and sustainable workplace, based on three pillars: support for healthy, sustainable organizations; respect for fundamental rights at work; and inclusion in the prevention of work-related accidents and diseases. The plan adopts a bottom-up approach, with regional managers analysing compliance gaps, identifying root causes, and addressing the drivers of non-compliance. A wide range of interventions are planned and closely monitored for continuous improvement. Evaluation includes monitoring compliance rates, conducting labour inspection audits, strengthening inspectorate capacity, and engaging stakeholders through tripartite councils.

In Norway, labour inspection objectives are revised annually, and results and effects are tracked and analysed. Follow-up actions from stakeholders after inspections and enterprise surveys assess OSH knowledge and compliance. A collaborative research project with the National Institute of Occupational Health (STAMI) was conducted to examine the effects of various inspection interventions. Each report highlights lessons learned and areas for improvement, which inform future planning activities.

Session 5: Labour Inspection Networks and Other Initiatives for Knowledge Transfer and Collaboration Across the Globe

Effective labour inspection systems rely on strong networks and initiatives that facilitate knowledge transfer and collaboration among countries and organizations. These networks help share best practices, strengthen capacities, support the creation and implementation of effective labour policies, and address cross-border issues. This session provided an update on existing collaborations between Member States through labour inspection networks, highlighting successes, lessons learned, and the importance of continuing exchanges between countries and regions.

The session was chaired by Mr. Changyou Zhu from the Social Dialogue, Labour Relations, and the Governance of Work Branch of the ILO. The panellists included representatives from the European Commission; the European Labour Authority (ELA); the International Association of Labour Inspectors (IALI); the Ibero-American Network of Labour Inspections (REDIBIT) and the ASEAN Labour Inspection Committee (ALICOM).

In response to a question about how the IALI could help its members improve labour inspection effectiveness and impact, the importance of international forums was highlighted. These platforms allow National Labour Inspectorates (NLIs) to share best practices and strengthen national labour inspection systems. Several inspection tools and service products developed by the IALI were introduced to enhance the capacity of national labour inspectorates and inspectors. These resources are widely available through the IALI's website. With over 70 years of experience, the IALI is confident in its continued role in strengthening labour inspection systems and protecting workers globally.

The Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee (SLIC) at the European Commission was also presented, including its history and role in monitoring the enforcement of EU legislation at the national level. Established in 1995, SLIC provides opinions on the enforcement of EU health and

safety at work legislation by Member States, either at the Commission's request or on its own initiative. SLIC plenary meetings are held every six months in the EU Member State holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU, where resolutions and opinions are endorsed. SLIC has developed numerous technical tools to help NLI improve the efficiency and effectiveness of labour inspections and has established working groups on various topics with specific mandates, drawing on members' expertise.

The European Labour Authority (ELA) was established in 2019. Its mission is to ensure EU rules on labour mobility and social security are enforced fairly, simply, and effectively, making it easier for individuals and businesses to benefit from the single market. The ELA also facilitates collaboration between national authorities to ensure effective enforcement of these rules. The importance of launching joint research projects on emerging compliance risks, improving inspection planning and targeting, assessing inspection impacts, studying new forms of employment, and addressing cross-border compliance issues was emphasized.

The recent development of the Regional Inter-American Network of Labour Inspectorates (REDIBIT) was also discussed. The NLIs of 17 countries from Central and South America, as well as Portugal and Spain, would meet in October 2024 in Santiago, Chile, to adopt the "Declaration of Santiago" and approve their Action Plan. The REDIBIT aims to enhance cooperation and information exchange among its members in three key areas: strengthening institutional capacity, sharing best practices, and organizing regular meetings. One of the greatest challenges for the REDIBIT is capacity building, as the NLIs require skilled inspectors. A working group would be established to organize training for labour inspectors, with Spain and Portugal expected to play active roles. The REDIBIT also plans to learn from the ELA and SLIC by launching occupational safety and health (OSH) campaigns in which social partners can participate.

The ASEAN Labour Inspection Committee (ALICOM) outlined its objectives, which include sharing knowledge, best practices, and innovations; promoting regional cooperation and cross-sectoral coordination; and providing technical information and advice to regional workers' and employers' organizations; increasing the capacity and professionalism of labour inspectors in ASEAN; and promoting collaboration on cross-border labour-related issues.

ALICOM meets annually, alongside the ASEAN Labour Conference (ALIC), and adopts a consultative, consensus-based approach to decision-making. Potential participants include Labour Inspectorate Focal Points, representatives of labour inspectors, ILO, ASEAN Secretariat, social partners, civil society organizations, and ASEAN Dialogue Partners.

This session stressed the importance of global and regional collaboration in strengthening labour inspection systems, enhancing knowledge sharing, and promoting the effective enforcement of labour standards worldwide.

Special Session: Local to Global: Nordic Approaches for Strengthening the Institution of Labour Inspection

This session provided participants with an in-depth overview of the Norwegian labour inspection system, focusing specifically on its structure, planning processes, risk-based inspections, and collaboration with social partners.

The session was chaired by Mr. Javier Barbero from the ILO's Social Dialogue, Labour Relations, and Governance of Work Branch.

The Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority (NLIA) outlined its three strategic priorities: ensuring enterprises systematically maintain a safe work environment, securing decent working conditions, and combating workplace crimes. Norway, with a population of 5.5 million and a workforce of 2.6 million, has 250,000 businesses, all subject to NLIA inspections. Headquartered in Trondheim, the NLIA employs approximately 400 labour inspectors among its 750 staff members.

Preventive inspections are conducted based on a risk assessment system, targeting high-risk sectors at the national level and enterprises likely to breach regulations at the local level. This approach combines knowledge-based sector selection with extensive data analysis, utilizing machine learning technology.

Joint efforts against workplace crimes involve collaboration between the NLIA, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), the police, and the Norwegian Tax Administration. A National Interagency Analysis and Intelligence Center supports decision-making regarding workplace crimes through national analyses and intelligence products. Shared offices across various cities facilitate collaboration, information sharing, and targeting of criminal activities.

In addition to inspection and enforcement tasks, the NLIA invests significantly in communication and informational activities. Employers are encouraged to understand legal requirements and access relevant guidance to implement preventive measures, conduct risk assessments, and adopt systematic approaches to prevent occupational diseases and accidents.

The NLIA also addresses rapid changes in the world of work driven by climate change, technological innovation, migration, and shifting labour market dynamics. These changes make the work of labour inspectors increasingly critical and demanding. The NLIA tackles traditional occupational safety and health (OSH) issues as well as emerging challenges such as climate change, social dumping, and undeclared work.

A Nordic study on work-related deaths highlighted that the cost of work-related diseases far exceeds that of accidents, yet these diseases receive less attention due to their gradual development. Diseases caused by asbestos, carcinogens, and work-related stress account for significantly more fatalities than sudden accidents.

New technologies, including the platform economy, robotics, and new chemicals in industries like agriculture and construction, pose additional risks. Inspectors require new skills and tools to regulate industries involving artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and algorithms.

Climate change introduces new occupational hazards, particularly in sectors like agriculture and construction. Labor inspection must adapt to these evolving risks, especially concerning heat stress, extreme weather events, and environmentally hazardous materials. In Nordic countries, extreme weather events like cyclones, avalanches, and floods are significant concerns.

Lessons learned from the NLIA's experiences are:

1. **Building trust through dialogue:** Establishing trust between government bodies, workers, and employers is essential. Building trust takes time and requires persistent effort.
2. **A dialogue-based approach:** Norway's approach, characterized by strong engagement between social partners (trade unions and employers' organizations), serves as a model for fostering trust in countries with limited resources for labour inspection.
3. **Regulatory forums:** Establishing forums for dialogue and problem-solving can encourage compliance through collaboration rather than conflict.
4. **Data-driven, risk-based inspections:** The NLIA's data collection and analysis system helps prioritize sectors with the highest risks, such as informal sectors with high accident rates, even with limited resources. Technology, including mobile applications and social media, is increasingly accessible, offering cost-effective tools for inspection reporting, communication, and data collection.

Nordic Work-Related Deaths Report and Labour Inspection Strategies

Durin this short sub-session, the findings of recent studies on Nordic work-related deaths were summarized:

- The societal cost of poor working conditions is immense, equivalent to 3-4% of GDP. Occupational accidents account for just 12% of this cost, while diseases such as cancer, musculoskeletal disorders, cardiovascular diseases, and psychosocial issues make up the majority of the costs.
- Despite this, the focus in Nordic countries (and most other countries) remains primarily on preventing occupational accidents through promotion, training, risk assessments, control, and inspections. Work-related diseases, however, receive less attention.
- There is a need to balance resource allocation between preventing occupational accidents and addressing work-related diseases.

Nordic Cooperation on OSH and Labour Inspection

A short session highlighted Nordic cooperation on occupational safety and health (OSH) and labour inspection, showcasing how Nordic countries have supported labour inspectorates through development cooperation and twinning programmes. Key initiatives included:

- The **Strategic Sector Cooperation Project in Bangladesh**, funded by Denmark,
- The **NORED-funded Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on Occupational Health in Developing Countries**,
- The **Project on Promoting Decent Work through Strengthening OSH Management**, funded by SIDA.

Nordic DG Roundtable

The three Directors-General of Iceland, Denmark and Sweeden stressed the importance of social dialogue and tripartite consultation in shaping labour inspection policies and actions at all levels. They agreed that such an approach would help optimize limited resources for labour

inspection, build trust between labour inspectorates and social partners, and promote workplace compliance in a unified manner.

They also agreed on the need to strengthen regional and international cooperation in labour inspection to share good practices and learn from each other globally.

Conclusions

Ms. Paquete-Perdigao concluded the Forum by offering three key takeaways for reflection:

1. **Collaborating for Impact:** Labour inspection cannot operate in isolation. It requires collaboration with social partners, enforcement agencies, and all stakeholders. A unified approach leads to greater compliance, stronger trust, and more sustainable solutions. To achieve this, continuous efforts are needed to strengthen partnerships, making collaboration a routine practice.
2. **Adapting to a Transforming World:** The world of work faces numerous challenges, including gender disparities, informality, and gaps in fair and productive working environments (FPRW), alongside emerging issues like climate change, digitalization, and artificial intelligence. Labour inspectors must remain adaptable, strategic, and data-driven in their approach to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in addressing these challenges proactively.
3. **Empowering Labour Inspectorates:** More investment is needed in digital tools, the training of labour inspectors, and additional human resources where necessary to strengthen labour inspection systems.

Ms. Paquete-Perdigao also expressed her appreciation to the 130 participants from 60 member states for attending the forum in Trondheim.

She extended her special thanks to the Mayor of the City, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion of Norway, the NLIA, and other Nordic labour inspectorates for their full support and cooperation.

Ms. Mona Næss, Director of the Department of Labour and Social Affairs in Norway, expressed her gratitude on behalf of the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion of Norway. She thanked all the speakers for their valuable insights, the participants for their engagement, and the organizers for their dedication and hard work. She emphasized that the theme of the Forum, *"Working Together for Social Justice Through Labour Inspection"*, was not just a slogan but a call to action for addressing future challenges. She noted that the Nordic approach to labour inspection, as well as experiences from other regions, demonstrated that collective efforts from enforcement authorities, social partners, and other stakeholders are essential for success. Labour inspection is not just about policies and procedures, but also about the well-being of workers. Through collaboration, sharing insights, and mutual support, labour inspectors can make a significant contribution to promoting social justice and protecting workers.

Ms. Næss also expressed her appreciation to the ILO for its cooperation and to the NLIA for its dedication and hard work in preparing the forum.

The Second International Technical Forum of Senior Officials of Labour Inspectorates successfully achieved the following objectives:

1. **Role of Labour Inspection in Enhancing Workplace Compliance:** Challenges and opportunities in the context of multiple crises were debated and discussed during the Forum's inaugural High-level Roundtable.
2. **Sharing Good Practices and Experiences:** Experiences from 20 countries and 5 regional and international labour inspection networks were shared, highlighting the implementation of ILO Conventions and Guidelines.
3. **Strengthening Labour Inspection Networks:** International (IALI) and regional networks (SLIC, ELA, ALICOM, and REDIBIT) were reinforced. As remarked during several sessions of the Forum, cross-border collaboration is essential. Countries with limited resources can leverage regional networks (e.g., the African Union, ASEAN, and REDIBIT) to pool expertise, training resources, and technological tools.
4. **Technical Sessions on Various Topics:** Five technical sessions explored diverse issues in labour inspection, including climate change, transformation in the world of work, social dialogue, the impact of labour inspection actions, partnerships, and networks.

In conclusion, labour inspection is a global challenge that must adhere to international standards and guidelines while adapting solutions to local contexts and cultures. The Forum demonstrated that through dialogue, trust, data, technology, and collaboration, even countries with limited resources can strengthen their labour inspection systems. By building trust, utilizing available technologies, and implementing targeted, risk-based inspections, labour inspectors can be more effective in protecting workers and promoting social justice.