
Trafficking in human beings: major operation coordinated by Europol in 23 EU countries; 73 arrests and 630 possible victims identified

A major operation in Europe has led to the arrest of 73 suspected human traffickers and the identification of 630 possible victims of exploitation. For seven days, from 31 May to 6 June 2021, Europol supported “coordinated action days” which it announced today. The operation was led by the Netherlands and involved institutions from 23 countries, including Italy. “Authorities carried out inspections in labour-intensive sectors, which require low-skilled workers”, Europol explained in a statement, such as transport, logistics and construction. 229 arrests were made, including 73 directly related to trafficking. Over 4,890 locations, 16,530 vehicles and 56,250 people were checked and 750 new investigations were initiated, 150 related to human trafficking. The inspections also targeted the exploitation of domestic workers employed as 24/7 caregivers for humans and animals, and nail salons linked to the exploitation of victims of Vietnamese origin, whose vulnerability is increased by debt bondage related to their travel to the EU. Easy prey to trafficking are also migrants applying for refugee status during their asylum procedures.

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