

Minister Alan Dillon
Department of Enterprise,
Tourism and Employment
23 Kildare Street
Dublin 2
D02 TD30

6 August 2026

Dear Minister,

Protect migrant workers from exploitation

The undersigned write in support of the call on the Irish government should grant all employment permit holders the freedom to work in any job after 2 years (instead of 5 years) as a means to help them stand up for their rights.

We wish to show appreciation for your commitment to look at options to bring about this freedom and understand you will be selecting an option to fulfil the Programme for Government commitment to "Examine ways to facilitate people who are on work permits to move jobs more easily and legally, while protecting the integrity of the immigration' system."

The [*Tied to Exploitation: The Experience of Migrant Workers in Ireland*](#) report reveals that the exploitation of migrant workers is at staggering levels. It is systemic, routine and the majority of general employment permit holders experience exploitation. 71% of migrant workers on general employment permits are exploited and 61% are severely exploited in work.

The survey findings demonstrate that employment permit holders are routinely exploited in the employment permit system. It is clear that migrant workers face significant exploitation due to their employment permit status. The nature of the employment permit system means that it very difficult to escape exploitative situations. The scale of exploitation indicates that it is a systemic issue and clearly needs to be addressed urgently.

It also shows they are fearful of reporting employment issues, they normally just put up with it, because their options are limited and they do not feel they have a choice.

Given the systemic level of exploitation of general employment permit holders, we urge you to take urgent action.

We urge you to bring the greatest flexibility possible and become a leader in the international context in addressing exploitation in the employment permit system and protecting worker's rights and human rights of migrant workers.

The undersigned:

- Lassane Ouedraogo, Africa Solidarity Centre Ireland
- Dr Salome Mbugua, AkiDwA
- Tomás Sercovich, Business in the Community
- Ian McArdle, Communications Workers' Union
- Richard King, Crosscare
- Tinu Achioya, Cultúr Migrant Centre
- John Lannon, Doras
- Des Derwin, Dublin Council of Trade Unions
- Teresa Buczkowska, Immigrant Council of Ireland
- Alexander Homits, Independent Workers' Union
- Joe O'Brien, Irish Council for Civil Liberties
- Rebecca Gorman, Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed
- Neil McDonnell, Irish SME Association
- Nelia Rareza, The Great Care Cop
- Annie Rozario, Gort Resource Centre
- Jim Fuery, Mandate Trade Union
- Dr Clíodhna Murphy, School of Law and Criminology, Maynooth University
- Dr Rhiannon Bandiera, School of Law and Criminology, Maynooth University
- Varghese Joy, Migrant Nurses Ireland
- Doireann Crosson, National Women's Council
- Ciara Fitzgibbon and Kostas Kapantais, Nasc, the Migrant and Refugee Rights Centre
- Cherif Labreche, New Communities Partnership
- Ethel Buckley, SIPTU
- Michael O'Brien, Unite the Union