Exploitation of Pakistani truck drivers in Romania

Two Pakistani men came to Bucharest to work as professional drivers for a cargo transport company. They worked in this company for six months. Both men were not paid according to their contract; were forced to work overtime, and were refused rest breaks. Moreover, they were forced to use the tachograph cards of other employees to make as many trips as possible. The two Pakistani men did not receive their salary for two months. When they requested their employer to stop violating their rights and requested the payment of their salary and overtime hours, they were physically abused by their employer. Intervention by the police and medical assistance was necessary. After this, the employer terminated their working contracts for disciplinary reasons – leading to lasting negative effects for the two employees.

ADPARE provided direct support, covering their immediate needs, as well as legal assistance for their representation in both the criminal and civil cases. In the criminal case against the employer, not all required elements of human trafficking could be proven to prosecute the employer for this crime. The prosecutor decided to only prosecute the employer for minor criminal offences. In the civil case, the court decided in November 2023 that the company must pay (a part of) the back wages and overtime hours for the two Pakistani employees.

GOOD PRACTICE

Through legal support by ADPARE, the two men received (part) of the salaries they were entitled to through a civil procedure.

BOTTLENECK

The fact that their former exploitative employer terminated their contracts ‘for disciplinary reasons’, made it very difficult for the two men to find a new job.