

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1434/03

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to the Council

Subject: European driver attestation and suspected improper use of ECMT permits in road transport

On 26 March 2003 the German authorities raided branches of the Willi Betz transport company on the grounds of suspected misuse of ECMT permits and the inadmissible employment of drivers from third countries.

Does the Council agree that companies and drivers from third countries that use the ECMT permits for transport within the EU, in which they are operating virtually without restriction (in terms of time) throughout the EU's territory, are making improper use of the permit?

Is the Council prepared to place the problem of improper use of the permits on the agenda for the next meeting of ECMT ministers? And is the Council further prepared to make proposals for putting an end to this distortion of competitive relations that is undermining employment conditions in the EU and also creating a road safety risk?

Does the Council agree that it is undesirable for drivers from 'third countries' to hire themselves out to European transport companies as 'independent drivers', thus evading the requirement to hold a European driver attestation? What steps can and will the Council take to put an end to such practices?