

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3561/03
by Jan Andersson (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: 'Parasubordinated' workers and social dumping

A problem which has arisen within the Swedish labour market over the past few years, mainly in the construction sector, is that workers from the candidate countries are working for pay and under working conditions far inferior to those offered by Swedish collective agreements. These workers, from Poland and elsewhere, are able to evade the existing regulations by being given the status of self-employed workers, in spite of the fact that they should to all intents and purposes be regarded as employees. Behind this arrangement is often a kind of hiring firm which acts as an agency supplying the services of the foreign workers to the Swedish contractors, and helps them to obtain the 'F tax certificates' and other required documentation. The hiring firms in these cases should clearly be regarded as employers, but they act on the basis that they are merely an agency for services carried out by self-employed workers.

If this practice increases in extent, it will lead to widespread social dumping. The situation is surely not unique to Sweden.

1. What is the Commission's view of this situation?
2. Does the Commission propose to take any measures with a view to dealing with this problem?