

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3951/08
by Marco Rizzo (GUE/NGL)
to the Commission

Subject: Application of the law on safety standards in the workplace

According to official estimates, Italy is one of the countries recording the highest number of workplace accidents in the European Union. In 2006 almost a million accidents occurred, resulting in 1 302 deaths. During the first nine months of 2007 the number of accident victims was 774. To these must be added the nearly 200 000 accidents that happen every year without being declared, because they involve illegal workers. Another alarming piece of information is the fact that workers who report failures to comply with safety standards to the authorities are often subjected to harassment and risk being dismissed by their employers. This situation gives rise to a dangerous conspiracy of silence, with damaging consequences.

1. Does Community legislation provide for measures to defend workers who report the shortcomings of safety systems in their place of work?
2. Does the Commission not take the view that it should look at a package of appropriate measures designed to protect workers who report failures to meet safety standards?
3. Does it not take the view that guaranteeing job security for five years for legal workers who report violations of workplace safety legislation, and granting employment for five years and a residence permit to illegal workers from third countries could represent an important step towards ensuring workplace safety and combating illegal working?