

**Question for written answer E-012741/2013  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: EU citizens subject to slavery within the EU

A few days ago, the Portuguese press reported on workers being recruited in Portugal for what might be termed 'slave labour' in southern France. We are talking about workers who work an excessive number of hours and are paid for far fewer hours than they have worked, in flagrant cases of deception.

Our office received a request to intervene in a similar situation from a Portuguese citizen, a victim of another deceptive offer of work, this time in southern Belgium. In this particular case, on which we have detailed information, the worker complained of the atrocious health and safety conditions at work, which forced several workers to quit without ever receiving payment of any kind.

In another complaint we received in our office, Romanian citizens were recruited in 2012 in their country to work picking olives in Alentejo and were promised wages of EUR 800. Instead they are exploited, subjected to physical abuse and left hungry, and they return to their country without receiving a cent. This situation has been repeated year after year. A week or so ago, the Portuguese press reported on various Romanian citizens in the same situation: deplorable working conditions and earning less than a euro a day.

Unhappily, cases such as these are repeated every day. Today, an increasing number of citizens are obliged to seek opportunities abroad, or are lured there with misleading offers of work, just so they can support their families.

We ask the Commission if it is aware of this reality and in what way it is acting to combat such situations. We also ask the Commission to comment in particular on the status of mobile workers in the EU, based on the reality described above.

It is clear to us that whatever is being done is not producing results and that countless citizens are paying dearly for this poor policy every day.