

**Question for written answer E-004518/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Employing non-EU nationals in sectors that do not require higher qualifications

Two phenomena are occurring on the European labour market. On the one hand, double-digit unemployment is crippling the labour market in Spain and Greece. Meanwhile, employers in Eastern Europe face an entirely different problem. In countries where unemployment has dropped below 5% in recent years, as is the case in Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany, and Hungary, workers are beginning to be in short supply. This mainly concerns manual workers and specialists. As regards the second group, the EU has introduced the so-called Blue Card, which aims to facilitate the residency of third-country citizens for the purpose of highly qualified employment. However, there are no systemic measures to facilitate the residency of non-EU citizens who could fill the gap in the labour market caused by a shortage of workers in sectors such as construction. Investors increasingly often also consider the possibility of transferring production further east, to countries with lower labour costs, which will cause an outflow of capital and could lead to another surge in unemployment.

- 1) During the revision of the EU Blue Card Directive, qualifications and experience were regarded as equivalent so that people with specific professional experience and skills, but without a certain level of education, would be able to find employment. Does this provision also concern low-skilled workers?
- 2) If not, will the Commission prepare a proposal containing provisions that would allow non-EU citizens to become residents, but with specific regard to low-skilled workers?
- 3) What specific measures will the Commission take to avoid an outflow of capital linked to workforce shortages?