

**Question for written answer E-001002/2020
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Cindy Franssen (PPE)

Subject: Fighting child labour in cobalt mines and battery production

The EU imports cobalt from the Democratic Republic of the Congo on a large scale. This raw material is used in batteries for electric cars, the production of which is rapidly increasing and is being further encouraged as part of the European Green Deal. By 2025, the production of electric cars in Europe is expected to grow sixfold to more than 4 million vehicles.

In the cobalt mines in Congo, child labour unfortunately remains a common problem. According to studies by the Catholic University of Louvain and the University of Lubumbashi, children from mining districts have ten times more cobalt in their urine than other children, which greatly increases their risk of developing cancer. European companies are among those that trade in cobalt from mines in Congo.

Since 2017, the EU has participated in the Extractives Global Programmatic Support Programme. What is the concrete result of this in relation to child labour in the Congolese mines?

How does the Commission ensure compliance with the ILO Core Convention on Child Labour (No 182), the prohibition of child labour in Article 32 of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and the provisions against child labour in the cobalt chain in the OECD Due Diligence Guidance?

What concrete action against child labour is the Commission planning in the context of the initiative for a safe, circular and sustainable battery value chain announced as part of the Green Deal?