

Question for written answer E-001815/2021
to the Commission
Rule 138
Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)

Subject: Need for health protection measures at the workplace

The death from coronavirus of two workers employed by large supermarket chains, coupled with complaints from the unions, tragically highlights the situation in large food stores governed by 'flexible work protocols'.

The Government bears an enormous degree of responsibility, since it is leaving workers unprotected from the arbitrary and intimidating demands of employers. Nothing is being done to ensure social distancing or provide personal protection for the many people involved in production in particular. The EU also bears a part of the responsibility, since guidelines issued by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control leave safety and health at work in the hands of the employers, so as to ensure that production can continue unhindered. These are the guidelines also being followed by the European Labour Authority concerning the rationalisation of national agencies.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say how regularly workplace inspections are carried out by labour inspectorates in the Member States and the consequences thereof (number of companies fined and amount of the fines)?
2. What measures have been taken and what penalties imposed on employers in breach of their obligation to protect the life and health of their workers?
3. How many coronavirus infections originate at the workplace and how many workers have lost their lives owing to failure to take adequate precautions in the EU Member States?