

**Question for written answer E-004394/2021
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Traian Băsescu (PPE)

Subject: EU strategy on combating trafficking in human beings 2021-2025

Over 14 000 victims of trafficking in human being were registered in the EU in the period 2017 to 2018. The economic cost of trafficking in human beings in the EU is estimated to be EUR 2.7 billion per year.

One of the main drivers of this trafficking is that of finding work in the EU without having the required legal status. Labour exploitation concerns 15% of all victims of trafficking within the European Union, with an increasing number of cases remaining undetected. Early identification of victims is crucial and should be followed by the prompt provision of assistance, support and protection for victims of trafficking in human beings, thus enabling police and prosecution authorities to better investigate and punish traffickers. In view of this:

1. What steps will the Commission take to support Member States in their efforts to improve the early identification of victims and the provision of assistance?
2. What steps does the Commission plan to take to strengthen Member States' capacities and cooperation in combating the risk of fictitious job agencies or intermediaries trafficking human beings for labour exploitation, and of this crime being perpetrated outside the EU?