

**Question for written answer E-000157/2023
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Ignazio Corrao (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Discrimination in Italy against vulnerable workers with jobs incompatible with 'smart working' and infringement of their right to health

Vulnerable workers are people who are immunosuppressed, have cancer or are undergoing life-saving treatments such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy or haemodialysis. During the COVID-19 crisis, the status of these workers was therefore protected by Italian legislation¹.

Up until 30 June 2022, it provided two forms of protection: 'smart working' for compatible jobs (office workers, telephone operators, etc.) or absences from work being considered equal to hospitalisation (without impinging on the standard grace period) for jobs incompatible with smart working (shop assistants, cashiers, nurses, teachers, etc.).

However, only the option of 'smart working' for compatible jobs has been extended – until 31 March 2023 – by the Draghi and Meloni governments.

This extension shows that the government is aware of the high risk posed to vulnerable workers and is choosing to discriminate against them.

In view the above:

1. Is this measure compatible with EU rules on discrimination with regard to working conditions (Directive 2000/78/EC) and vulnerable workers' right to health (Directive 2011/24/EU)?
2. Will the Commission seek harmonisation and call on the Member States to adopt structural legislation to protect vulnerable EU workers from health risks, including by means of state aid?

Submitted: 18.1.2023

¹ Article 26 (2) of Legislative Decree No 18 of 17 March 2020