

**Question for oral answer O-000018/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 136

Bernd Lange

on behalf of the Committee on International Trade

Subject: A new trade instrument to ban products made by forced labour

1. Can the Commission elaborate on the design of the recently announced legislative instrument to ban products made by forced labour and its legal basis, and provide a definition of forced labour?
2. Which commissioners will lead the project and which directorates-general are involved in it, and will there be a public consultation and/or impact assessment?
3. What is the planned scope of the instrument?
4. How will the Commission help small and medium-sized enterprises to implement the instrument?
5. How will it tackle circumvention to ensure goods are not rerouted to non-EU countries after forced labour has been identified in a supply chain?
6. What lessons has it learned from other similar systems (notably those of the US and Canada) that can be applied to the design of the instrument, and how will interoperability with them be factored into the design?
7. Will it ensure that the instrument requires companies to provide remediation to affected workers and communities prior to the lifting of import restrictions, and how will it do so?
8. How will it ensure alignment with other instruments (e.g. on corporate sustainability and due diligence)?
9. Which enforcement options is it considering? How will the EU system ensure sufficient transparency for companies and civil society regarding enforcement?
10. How will it ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to ensure the implementation is effective?
11. Who will be responsible for investigations and how will coordination be ensured between the Member States? Is the Commission considering establishing an EU body to facilitate investigation and coordinate input from authorities working in different sectors across the EU?
12. Who is permitted to present evidence of forced labour in order to request an investigation is opened and will it be possible to lodge anonymous complaints?
13. Can the Commission confirm that risk analysis will not rely on audits or certification?
14. What will happen with products that have already been distributed in the EU by a producer later identified as using forced labour and who will bear responsibility for this?
15. How will the Commission ensure that products made or transported using forced labour (from the extraction of raw materials to the production of the final product) are traceable? Is it considering initiatives such as digital traceability systems?
16. In cases of state-imposed forced labour, will it impose regional or country-wide import controls to ensure their impact is systemic?

Submitted: 19.5.2022

Lapses: 20.8.2022