

**Question for written answer P-006432/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D)

Subject: Agricultural migrant workers in Israel

In Israel today thousands of migrant workers are employed in agriculture. Many of them come from Thailand, following a bilateral agreement between the two countries. The experience amassed by KavLaOved, an Israeli human rights group, and Human Rights Watch has shown that this sector is prone to severe violations of workers' rights. Violations most commonly encountered include the exploitation of migrant workers through long workdays, withholding breaks for rest, eating and drinking during the day, low wages, almost no possibility to change employer, falsified documentation of work hours, wages being paid indirectly, often with illegal salary deductions, uninhabitable housing, and various safety hazards, such as the dangerous use of pesticides, with a lack of effective enforcement by the responsible government authorities.

Given the above, can the Commission state:

- whether the situation of migrant workers in Israel has been part of the EU's bilateral political and economic dialogue with that country;
- what position has been expressed by the EU, which primary concerns have been shared by the EU with the Israeli authorities in this context, and what was the Israeli position and response;
- what further steps the Commission plans to take in order to ensure respect for the basic rights of migrant workers in the Israeli agricultural sector?