Question for written answer E-002248/2024
to the Commission
Rule 144
Valentina Palmisano (The Left)

Subject: Urgent measures to prevent the exploitation of non-European transport workers and to protect European road hauliers

The exploitation of non-European – and especially Asian – workers employed in inhuman conditions in the transport sector is beginning to emerge as a serious phenomenon across Europe.[1] These workers, who are recruited via international agencies, receive their European documentation thanks to shady practices and are employed by big companies on very low wages, without having any rights and without being insured. This system not only violates EU legislation, such as Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 and Directive 2009/52/EC, but also creates unfair competition that is damaging to European hauliers.

European hauliers, who are subject to strict rules on safety and wages, cannot compete with a system that is harnessing an underpaid and exploited labour force. This imbalance is liable to jeopardise not only the sector's future but also road safety in Europe.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state:

1. What steps it will take to ensure rigorous application of Directive 2009/52/EC and to prevent the exploitation of non-European workers, which distorts the labour market and is damaging to European road hauliers?

2. How it plans to tighten up transnational and internal checks (especially in respect of the Member States most ‘active’ in the issuing of/conversion to European driving licences) so as to prevent the use of an irregular labour force and to ensure a level playing field?

3. What measures it envisages to safeguard the rights of European hauliers affected by unfair competition, which is jeopardising their livelihoods and working conditions?

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[1] https://www.labournet.de/interventionen/solidaritaet/mind-55-lkw-fahrer-aus-georgien-und-usbekistan-streiken-auf-der-autobahnraststaette-bei-darmstadt-fuer-ihren-lohn-von-der-polnischen-firmengruppe-mazur/.