

**Question for written answer E-004181/2025/rev.1
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Anthony Smith (The Left)

Subject: Labour arrangements for prison inmates

In 2023, there were 500 000 inmates in the EU's prisons. Most prisons do not offer any professional activities, even though work is a major factor in rehabilitation. When jobs are offered, they are mostly linked to the running of the prison. Some prison boards, however, make prisoners available to private companies. These underpaid jobs allow the companies concerned to boost their profits at the expense of any genuine rehabilitation schemes.

This is particularly the case in Spain, where piecework – which has been banned in France since 2009 – is legal in prisons. French companies are exporting their production to Spain. Veripack Embalajes, for example, is a Spanish subsidiary of the GUILLIN Group, a French packaging company that takes advantage of the infrastructure put in place by the prison authorities in Catalonia. In Europe, almost 300 companies are registered in Spanish prisons.

In addition to the social dumping that this produces, prison labour does not allow for inmates who work to be properly medically monitored, nor does it guarantee satisfactory conditions for labour inspectorates.

In light of the above, does the Commission intend to:

1. take action to ensure fundamental and individual freedoms are upheld in EU prisons?
2. bring in EU rules on work for prisoners, the main objective of which would be rehabilitation?
3. abolish piecework and guarantee a minimum wage throughout the EU?

Submitted: 23.10.2025