

**Question for written answer E-004328/2026
to the Commission**
Rule 144
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Subject: Costs incurred by employers when recruiting workers from third countries

Directive (EU) 2024/1233 allows single permit holders to change employers, although Member States may restrict this option during the first six months of employment.

However, employers, particularly in the agricultural sector, often incur significant initial costs when recruiting workers from third countries, including costs associated with travel, relocation and initial accommodation. If a worker changes employer shortly after taking up employment, these costs can place a considerable burden on small businesses in particular. Whilst Article 10 of the Directive explicitly regulates application processing fees, the issue of other costs actually incurred is not clarified in the same way. In view of the need for legal certainty for both employers and workers, we would appreciate specific answers from the Commission to the following questions:

1. Does the Commission consider it compatible with the Directive for a reasonable and proportionate reimbursement, in the event of a worker's early voluntary departure, of the actual costs associated with travel, relocation or initial accommodation to be agreed in advance?
2. What criteria, in the Commission's view, would distinguish such legitimate reimbursement of costs from an impermissible obstacle to a worker's right to change employer?
3. Does the Commission intend to assess the impact of this rule on sectors with high recruitment costs, in particular the agricultural sector and small businesses?

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