

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002478/26
to the Commission**

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(16 June 2026)

Subject: Implementation of the Forced Labour Regulation and risks related to DPRK-linked products

The Democratic People's Republic of North Korea (DPRK) ⁽¹⁾ operates a system of state-imposed forced labour that is well documented. Reports ⁽²⁾ have found forced labour institutionalised across multiple sectors. Estimates ⁽³⁾ indicate that over 100 000 North Korean nationals work overseas under state control. Investigations have traced the products of this labour into global supply chains, many relabeled as Chinese-made products before export and processed in facilities supplying EU markets, including the European Parliament's cafeteria.

The Commission is due to finalise the implementation guidelines for the Forced Labour Regulation ⁽⁴⁾ and a forced labour risk database by the end of June 2026. State-imposed forced labour in the DPRK presents distinct due diligence challenges, as the coercive mechanism is the state itself. This raises questions as to whether the implementation of the regulation adequately addresses the risks.

In this context:

1. How will the Commission reflect the documented risk profile of the DPRK in the forced labour risk database in the light of the fact that related products are entering EU supply chains?
2. How will the Commission ensure that evidence on forced labour supply chains not covered by the regulation's specified sources can be considered, including where such findings are validated by eligible bodies?
3. How can the Commission financially support non-governmental organisations documenting the situation of forced labour in the DPRK?

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Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(19 August 2026)

As recognised in recent UN General Assembly ⁽¹⁾ and UN Human Rights Council ⁽²⁾ resolutions, the use of forced labour in and by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has become institutionalised and includes the exploitation of workers sent abroad, often for the purpose of generating income for the DPRK government.

The database of forced labour risks established under Article 8 of the Forced Labour Regulation ⁽³⁾ will include an indicative and non-exhaustive list of forced labour risks and products in specific geographic areas.

If eligible sources confirm the existence of forced labour risks connected to overseas workers from a particular country, the database will take into account the specific country or region where the products are produced or made. The Commission is responsible for establishing, maintaining and updating the risk database.

In line with the requirements of the regulation, the risk database will rely exclusively on evidence-based, verifiable and independent information that has been made publicly available by international organisations, institutional organisations or research and academic organisations. The Commission will assess and decide on a case-by-case basis inclusion of specific sources taking into account those eligibility criteria.

As part of the implementation of the regulation, the Commission and Member States may consider the development of cooperation initiatives and accompanying measures to support the efforts of relevant stakeholders, including civil society organisations, to tackle forced labour.

¹ <https://www.hrw.org/asia/north-korea>.

² <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/forced-labour-democratic-peoples-republic-korea>.

³ <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2024/215>.

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2024/3015 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2024 on prohibiting products made with forced labour on the Union market and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937 (OJ L, 2024/3015, 12.12.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/3015/oj>).

⁽¹⁾ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4098513?v=pdf#files>.

⁽²⁾ Human Rights Council Resolution on the situation of human rights in the DPRK adopted on 3 April 2025 (A/HRC/RES/58/17); <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/RES/58/17>.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/3015/oj>.

However, under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument — Global Europe, the EU is not financing actions in the DPRK and no other actions are envisaged to be supported by the Commission for the time being.
