



Forced labour: a legislative initiative announced in the Commission's Communication on Decent Work Worldwide

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2 June 2022

What is Forced Labour?

Definition according to ILO:

“All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily”.

Situation:

People in forced labour suffer a variety of forms of coercion, such as (threat of) violence, withholding of wages, or threats against family. About 25m people are in forced labour across the globe (ILO estimate).



Forced Labour – ILO Indicators

- Abuse of vulnerability
- Deception
- Restriction of movement
- Isolation
- Physical and sexual violence
- Intimidation and threats
- Retention of identity documents
- Withholding of wages
- Debt bondage
- Abusive working and living conditions
- Excessive overtime

State of the Union 2021

European Commission President von der Leyen announced in her State of the Union speech of 15 September 2021:

“We will propose a ban on products in our market that have been made by forced labour.”



The Communication on Decent Work Worldwide

- 23 February 2022
- General elements of the future legislative proposal



Future legislative proposal

- an effective prohibition of the placing on the EU market of products made by forced labour (marketing prohibition)
- covers both domestic (EU) and imported products
- combined with a robust, risk-based enforcement framework
- built on international standards
- complements existing horizontal and sectoral EU initiatives, in particular the due diligence and transparency obligations



Process

- Co-lead by EVP Dombrovskis and Commissioner Breton
- Close involvement of EMPL, INTPA ,TAXUD, EEAS...
- Legislative proposal: targeted adoption date is mid-September 2022



The Commission would like to hear your views!

- The Call for Evidence: published on 23 May at the '*Have your say*' portal [Effectively banning products produced, extracted or harvested with forced labour \(europa.eu\)](#) - open for feedback until 20 June
- Meetings with stakeholders



Some questions for discussion:

- The Communication on Decent Work Worldwide outlines the key components of the legislative initiative. What specific or additional elements should be included?
- How can forced labour in a supply chain be identified (tools, sources of information, risk indicators, reliable and relevant evidence)?
- What role could due diligence play in the legislative initiative? What are current practices? Can you provide examples of due diligence information that enterprises can share with each other?
- What instruments could help SMEs in the implementation of the new instrument?
- What accompanying or supporting tools would you consider necessary or useful for the implementation of such legislation?



Thank you!

