
EU Commission: fighting forced labour, people trafficking and prostitution. Guidelines for the European market

A “guide to due diligence”, that is, a thorough assessment, to help the EU companies address the risk of forced labour in their operations and in their supply chains, has been published earlier today by the European Commission and by the European External Action Service. There are about 25 million people around that world who are victims of forced labour, 16 million of them in the private sector, while 4.8 million are male and female sex workers and 4 million are victims of forced labour imposed by state authorities. The number of women and girls is disproportionate: these are the figures that the Guide has been prompted by, so as to provide “practical and effective advice on how to identify, prevent, mitigate and face the risk” of forced labour. “Strengthening the resilience and sustainability of the EU supply chains is already at the centre of our recent trading strategy”, Trade Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis explained: in this effort “companies are essential”, because “they can make all the difference by acting responsibly”. That’s why, Dombrovskis announced, the EU Commission is also working at a “legislation on sustainable corporate governance”, which “is expected to make due diligence compulsory” for the EU companies, which will then be bound to “identify, prevent, mitigate and account for the impact on sustainability” of their operations and supply chains. In the meantime, the just-published Guide will help them direct their efforts.

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