Prohibiting products made with forced labour on the Union market

2022/0269(COD) - 12/12/2024 - Final act

PURPOSE: to prohibit economic operators from placing and making available on the Union market or exporting from the Union market products made with forced labour.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) 2024/3015 of the European Parliament and of the Council on prohibiting products made with forced labour on the Union market and amending Directive (EU) 2019 /1937.

CONTENT: this regulation lays down rules **prohibiting** economic operators from placing and making available on the Union market or exporting from the Union market products made with forced labour in order to improve the functioning of the internal market, while contributing to the fight against forced labour.

Competent authorities

Each Member State will designate one or more competent authorities to be responsible for carrying out the obligations set out in this regulation. Member State competent authorities and the Commission will work in close cooperation and be responsible for ensuring the effective and uniform implementation of this regulation throughout the Union.

The regulation provides for the establishment of a **Union Network Against Forced Labour Products** which will serve as a platform to ensure structured coordination and cooperation between the competent authorities of the Member States and the Commission and to streamline the enforcement of the regulation within the Union in order to enhance the effectiveness and coherence of enforcement.

Database of forced labour risk areas or products

To facilitate the implementation of this regulation, the Commission will establish a database containing **verifiable and regularly updated information** about forced labour risks, including reports from international organisations (such as the International Labour Organization). The database should support the work of the Commission and national competent authorities in assessing possible violations of this regulation.

In addition, the Commission will:

- set up a **dedicated centralised mechanism** for the submission of information;

- develop accompanying measures to support the efforts of economic operators and their business partners in the same supply chain, in particular the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;

- publish by 14 June 2026 at the latest, and regularly update, **guidelines** which include guidance for economic operators on the due diligence in relation to forced labour;

- establish and update a single website (**Forced Labour Single Portal**).

Risk-based approach

The regulation establishes clear criteria that should be applied by the Commission and national competent authorities when assessing the likelihood of violations of this regulation. These criteria are:

(a) the **scale and severity** of the suspected forced labour, including whether state-imposed forced labour may be a concern;

(b) the **quantity** or volume of products placed or made available on the Union market;

(c) the **share** of the parts of the product likely to be made with forced labour in the final product;

(d) the **proximity** of economic operators to the suspect forced labour risks in their supply chain as well as their leverage to address them.

Field inspections

The Commission will be leading investigations outside the EU territory. Where the risks are in the territory of a Member State, the **competent authority** of that member state will lead the investigations.

If competent authorities, while assessing the likelihood of violations of this regulation, find new information about the suspected forced labour, they must inform the competent authority of other Member States, provided that the suspected forced labour is taking place in the territory of that Member State. Similarly, they must inform the Commission if the suspected forced labour is occurring outside the EU.

Before initiating an investigation, the lead competent authority may request information from the economic operators under assessment and, where relevant, other product suppliers, on the relevant actions they have taken in order to identify, prevent, mitigate, bring to an end or remediate risks of forced labour in their operations and supply chains with respect to the products under assessment.

The lead competent authority shall respect the right of the economic operator to be heard at all stages of the process.

In exceptional situations where the lead competent authority deems it necessary to conduct field inspections, it shall do so taking into consideration where the risk of forced labour is located.

Final decisions

The final decision (i.e., to ban, withdraw and dispose of a product made with forced labour) will be taken by the **authority that led the investigation**. The decision taken by a national authority will apply in all other member states based on the principle of mutual recognition.

The decision must contain the findings of the investigation and the information and evidence underlying them, as well as **reasonable time limits** for economic operators to comply with the orders, which may not be less than 30 working days; in the case of perishable products, animals and plants, the time limit may not be less than 10 working days.

In cases of supply risks of critical products made with forced labour, the competent authority can decide not to impose their disposal, and instead order the economic operator to **withhold the product** until it can demonstrate that there is no more forced labour in its operations or respective supply chains.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 13.12.2024.

APPLICATION: from 14.12.2027.