200 Romanians test positive for virus in German slaughterhouse

28 April 2020

Around 200 Romanians working at a German slaughterhouse have tested positive for the new coronavirus, Romania's foreign ministry (MFA) said Tuesday.

According to the ministry, those infected had all been working at a slaughterhouse in the southwestern German town of Birkenfeld, where 500 of the 700 employees are Romanian.

"German authorities say 300 employees are confirmed with COVID-19 and are now in quarantine. So far there is no precise data regarding the citizenship of those infected, but the majority (over 200) are Romanian citizens," the ministry said in a statement.

They added that most of the 200 had "no symptoms or slight symptoms".

The ministry insisted that those affected were "not seasonal workers" but rather employed by sub-contractors of the slaughterhouse.

Romanians make up a significant proportion of the estimated 300,000 seasonal workers who travel to Germany each year.

With borders closed across Europe due to the coronavirus crisis, the German government was forced to fly in thousands of Romanians on chartered flights earlier this month.

On Tuesday, the MFA said that "Romanian citizens who are abroad and are facing difficult situations, including instances in which their rights are not respected, should contact our diplomatic missions."

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