

**Question for written answer E-012066/2011/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)

Subject: Criminalisation of homelessness

A law has entered into force in Hungary that allows the competent authorities to punish homelessness. There are some 10 000 homeless persons in the Hungarian capital, and the adoption of this law is an attempt by the Hungarian Government to combat the problem. The law enables, for example, a police officer to fine someone found sleeping on the street after a previous warning. Even imprisonment may be involved. The law explicitly prohibits the use of public spaces for purposes for which they are not intended. This law is immoral and inhumane. The level of poverty in Europe is reaching frightening proportions, but to forbid it is absurd and utterly pointless. The law, moreover, is practically unenforceable as, in most cases, a homeless person will not have the funds to pay the fine.

- Are these measures taken by Hungary in line with the EU's programme for combating poverty?
- Does the Commission plan to revise existing legislation in this area with a view to ensuring that fundamental rights and human rights are respected?