

**Question for written answer E-006768/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Sotirios Zarianopoulos (NI)

Subject: Conversion of unemployment benefit into employment benefit

The Syriza-ANEL government is advocating the conversion of unemployment benefit into 'employment benefit'. Enterprises will receive a subsidy from the resources of the OAED (the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation), which come from contributions by workers, in order to take on unemployed persons receiving unemployment benefit as free labour.

Together with similar programmes for 'work for the community', 'traineeships', 'training' and 'entry vouchers', this programme, known as 'unemployed people on benefits' is increasing the number of people working for free for employers, in breach of stable employment and labour rights. This will lead to a new wave of job losses for those who are in work, and to new forced wage cuts.

Essentially, this equates to opening the door to the abolition of unemployment benefit, which is currently received by only 1 in 10 unemployed persons. Already, in many Member States, receipt of unemployment benefit is linked to the provision of 'work for the community'.

Taking into account that the Commission's study on a European unemployment benefit system is expected to be complete within the first half of 2016:

- Is this decision by the Greek Government in line with the European unemployment benefit system which it and the Member State governments are working on?
- What is its position on the fact that unemployment benefit, which comes from contributions earned by workers' sweat and toil, is to be given to enterprises to enable them to take on dirt-cheap workers and thereby increase their profits?