Question for written answer E-000266/2017
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: European minimum income

Pay disparities between Member States, taken together with the free movement of goods and services, are a prime driver of unfair competition within the EU. The situation is made worse by the ‘social dumping’ engaged in by eastern Member States in particular. In a non-legislative report adopted in plenary, Guillaume Balas has called for the establishment of a European minimum income set at 60% of average pay in each Member State. This call coincides with a proposal for the revision of the Posting of Workers Directive which establishes the principle of equal pay for equal work in the same place but fails to address the crucial issue of social security contribution disparities. However, if such a scheme were to be introduced and the level were to be set at less than 60% of average national pay, a number of Member States, including France, Luxembourg and Portugal, would be obliged to lower their current minimum income levels. The end result of this downward harmonisation would be an increase in social inequality within individual Member States and not just between Member States.

If such a scheme were to be introduced, would the Commission give national governments the option of setting a higher minimum income in their own countries?

How could the introduction of a European minimum income be seen as anything other than an attack on Member States’ sovereignty?