

WRITTEN QUESTION P-2504/10
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to the Commission

Subject: Support for people who have lost their jobs at public institutions as a result of the economic and financial crisis

The economic and financial crisis has seriously affected the Member State's economies. At the start of 2010, the unemployment rate for the EU-27 stood at 10%, but in some countries such as Spain and Latvia that figure was as high as 20%. Recent ILO forecasts indicate that the rate of unemployment will not fall until the first half of 2011.

The economic crisis has had a dramatic impact on the private sector, with many big companies as well as small and medium-sized enterprises either making swingeing job cuts or having to stop operating. Owing to the decrease in the number of jobs and companies, less tax is being paid into the budget, resulting in a drastic reduction in the amount allocated for public expenditure. Likewise, without an ambitious and sustainable industrial policy, the competitiveness of the European economy will suffer, and in the future this could have major repercussions on employment in the EU. However, companies hit by the economic and financial crisis can use both the European Social Fund and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund to support people who have lost their jobs.

When it comes to the public sector, the EU does not have sufficient instruments at its disposal to support people who have lost their jobs at public institutions or with public-interest entities owing to cuts in national budgets arising from the economic and financial crisis. At the same time, the international undertakings entered into by some Member States with the International Monetary Fund and the European Commission aimed at escaping the economic crisis have entailed massive cutbacks in staff at public institutions and public-interest entities.

Such people should receive support from the EU under the same conditions as private sector employees who lose their jobs as a result of the economic crisis.

Can the European Commission state whether it will consider providing Community support to people who lose their jobs at public institutions or with public-interest entities as a result of the economic and financial crisis? Does it intend to amend the rules applicable to the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund so that public and public-interest entities are also eligible, or does it plan to set up a European Fund for the reform of public institutions, geared to the way in which the economic and financial crisis is affecting the national budgets?