

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2624/05
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to the Commission

Subject: European policy on social security schemes

Many British people retire to France where they buy a house and take up residence, permanently leaving the United Kingdom. However, because they have worked in the United Kingdom all their lives, they are entitled to the reimbursement of 100% of their medical expenses in their country of origin.

In France, the costs of treatment for foreigners are met from appropriations outside the general hospital budget and for European citizens the cost of hospitalisation in public hospitals is covered in full.

Medical treatment outside hospital is reimbursed at a rate of 70% as for all French citizens, whereas in the United Kingdom these pensioners would be reimbursed in full.

Many British citizens have raised this difference in treatment with their French MEPs, asking whether there is a European fund to compensate for these disparities, despite the fact that social policy falls within the jurisdiction of each individual Member State. What practical initiatives and measures does the Commission envisage taking to ensure that British citizens who have contributed all their lives in the United Kingdom can obtain 100 % reimbursement in France?