

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3004/09
by Corina Crețu (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Measures to counter the social impact of rising unemployment in the EU

The current global economic crisis, which is without precedent in post-Second World War history, is such that this week's G-20 summit in London is of an importance going beyond its announced themes. The fact that the G-7 member states, namely the world's biggest industrial powers, have been joined by countries from the emerging economic regions, including some of the most vulnerable, is to be welcomed, since it confirms that global issues can only be managed on a multipolar basis, with all both contributing what they can and seeking the same means of resolving the crisis.

My expectations as a social democrat are essentially linked to the destiny of the least-favoured, who must not be left to the mercy of economic and financial storms. We know the social price which was paid by the generation of the Great Depression of 1929-1933. I hope we will not repeat the errors of judgment thanks to which that price was paid. I am, meanwhile, encouraged by the recent speech of Prime Minister Gordon Brown and his statement that we cannot turn our backs upon the poorest among us.

Even though the European social model has proved, at least up till now, to be an effective instrument for palliating the social effects of the crisis, it is now beginning to reveal its limits, especially in the countries of Eastern Europe. In view of the above, what measures does the Commission envisage with a view to countering the social impact of accelerating unemployment in the EU, especially from the viewpoint of supporting those European citizens who have lost their jobs, in circumstances in which it is evident that Member States' individual efforts cannot suffice and cannot be effective unless there is also coordination and involvement on the part of the Commission?