

**Question for written answer E-003918/2013  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Sylvana Rapti (S&D)**

Subject: Social impact of fiscal adjustment programmes

The European Commission's EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review dated 26 March 2013 clearly illustrates the negative impact on employment and growth, especially in countries under fiscal adjustment programmes.

As noted in the aforementioned review, fiscal adjustment in the Member States has affected employment both directly and indirectly: directly due to cutbacks in the public sector (13 % in Greece) and in public spending and indirectly due to the recession which it has caused, as it is widely recognised that the present economic conditions favour larger fiscal multipliers. For example, unemployment in Greece has risen from 9.6 % at the end of 2009 to 26.4 % in February 2013.

Furthermore, reduced social spending due to the demands of fiscal consolidation, which is much higher than in previous periods of economic recession, is negating the effects of economic stabilisation of social protection systems in numerous Member States and exacerbating the recession. Low-income households have been worst hit by the reduction in social security benefits and wage cuts and taxation and have seen their living standards plummet. In view of these data and based on the objectives set out in Article 3 TEU and in Articles 151, 152 and 153 TFEU to achieve social progress, promote employment and improve living conditions, will the Commission say:

- On what legal basis is its proposal to give economic indicators priority over employment and social cohesion based?
- To what use does it intend to put the conclusions of the EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review?
- What measures does it intend to propose in order to address the adverse social impact of the fiscal adjustment programmes which it introduced and imposed as a member of the Troika?
- Is it considering the possibility of reviewing the rate of fiscal adjustment of the Member States, as proposed in the European Parliament's 2013 resolution 'European semester for economic policy coordination: employment and social aspects in the annual growth survey 2013' (P7\_TA(2013)0053 dated 7 February 2013)?