

**Question for written answer E-001242/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Coronavirus emergency: measures to support SMEs

The fast spread of the coronavirus and the measures being taken to combat it are disrupting people's lifestyles and habits in Italy and the EU, causing serious damage to our economic system. Last Friday alone, European stock exchanges lost EUR 310 billion. But it is small and medium-sized enterprises that are paying the highest price and also suffering a growing cash crisis.

Against this worrying background, it is essential that we support companies and protect jobs. It is therefore vital that we do not stop lending to businesses. Where SMEs are unable to repay their debts, the loans should not be considered uncollectible or irrecoverable. We therefore need a freeze on repayments, though banks should not be penalised. The rules governing the treatment of so-called non-performing loans thus need to be temporarily suspended.

What action does the Commission intend to take with regard to current EU lending rules?

Will it provide for any extraordinary measures to temporarily suspend arrangements for identifying and treating non-performing loans?

What measures does it intend to take in order to have a set of rules that facilitate a continuous flow of credit to European SMEs, in particular to those in the areas affected by the coronavirus?