Question for written answer P-000728/2014
to the Commission
Rule 117
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)

Subject: State aid for young workers' salaries in the trades sector

In Poland, pursuant to a regulation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy dated 19 December 2013 amending the regulation on refunding young workers' salaries from the unemployment fund (OJ U 2013, item 1671, 30 December 2013), the period in which it is authorised to give state aid in the form of refunds of salaries paid to young workers from the unemployment fund is scheduled to expire on 30 June 2014.

In view of the above, there are real concerns that many tradesmen may cease to offer young people vocational training contracts. At present, there are approximately 80 000 such contracts throughout the country, which allows the trades sector to have a real influence on shaping the labour market in Poland, where youth unemployment is approaching 30 %.

In justifying its decision, the Polish Government invokes the new draft Commission regulation on state aid block exemptions, which is set to replace the current Regulation (EC) No 800/2008.

1.   Does the Polish Government's abolition of one of the main mechanisms for supporting tradesmen not worry the Commission, given that it would lead to a significant growth in youth unemployment in Poland?

2.   Within what time frame does the Commission expect to publish its new draft regulation   on block exemptions?

3.   What level of eligible costs will fall within the ceiling for permissible state aid for   vocational training?

4.   Will tradesmen providing vocational training be able to benefit from two types of support   in the form of refunds of the costs of paying young workers' salaries and in the form of   the co-financing of their training costs?

5.   Has the Polish Government submitted a request to the Commission on maintaining   provisions in the new regulation that allow for refunds of salaries paid to young workers   who are gaining vocational qualifications as they work in the trades sector?