

**Priority question for written answer P-003602/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Proposal for a Council recommendation on minimum income

The Commission stresses that national minimum income programmes should focus primarily on job market integration and that incentives for returning to work should be created to that end¹.

Unemployment should not lead to long-term unemployment. People should therefore be mobilised and encouraged to be proactive as of the very first months of unemployment. Violations of obligations should lead to a reduction in benefits, as penalties are effective and push people to reintegrate into the working world.

The citizens' basic income that will be available in Germany as of 1 January 2023 under the Hartz-IV programme will have precisely the opposite effect.

The Federal Court of Audit has already criticised the fact that there is no control of assets foreseen and that the citizens' basic income will as such be open to abuse².

Another problem is that those who refuse an offer of employment from the job centre or training opportunity within the first six months won't lose out on any benefits. Only after nine months could penalties actually be imposed.

1. What does the Commission think of the fact that there are no penalties imposable within the first six months of someone receiving the citizens' basic income?
2. Does it not agree that the longer someone is unemployed, the harder it becomes for them to reintegrate into the job market?
3. In the context of tackling long-term unemployment, what does it make of the citizens' basic income scheme?

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¹ Questions and answers: adequate minimum income, European Commission, 28 September 2022.

² Bundesrechnungshof warnt vor Missbrauch bei Bürgergeld, *Die Welt*, 17 October 2022.