

EPP SUPPORTS PLAN OF BARROSO COMMISSION FOR TACKLING UNEMPLOYMENT

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The European People's Party (EPP) offered today its full support to the new initiative of the European Commission to immediately free-up €19bn in earmarked funds for tackling unemployment as a result of the current economic crisis in Europe.

"Unemployment is the worst consequence of the economic crisis and the main concern for European citizens. The new plan announced by the Barroso Commission is on the right track to stimulate job growth and to put Europe back on the path for economic development," stated the President of the EPP, **Wilfried Martens**.

The plan also includes important measures, such as help for the unemployed citizens to avoid the risk of long-term unemployment and the loss of relevant skills; the creation of a new EU microcredit facility funded with more than €500 million; practical help for companies and workers in order to better manage and anticipate business restructuring.

"The EPP is also very pleased the Commission's initiative because it reflects most of our proposals that are included in our campaign manifesto for the European elections "Strong for the People" and is compatible with our concept of the Social Market Economy. I expect that this plan will be approved at the meeting of the European Council of 18 and 19 June. The EPP Summit prior to this meeting will surely offer its support to President Barroso and his plan," Martens added.

For more information: EPP Press Officer, Javier Jiménez, Tel: +32 475 480 446

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