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F.T 18/9/2000

Missing the point on Europe's jobless

From Ms Anna Diamantopoulou.

Sir. Otmar Issing of the European Central Bank argues ("A roof over the European house", September 15) that Europe's unemployment problem does not need a supranational, European solution. He goes on to raise the completely false spectre of a European "Social Union" with uniform wages and harmonised social standards, while calling for ongoing deregulation in labour and product markets.

It is disturbing that a senior member of the ECB's executive

should conjure up such a caricature while apparently being unaware of the EU's current approach. At their recent summits in Feira and Lisbon, Europe's leaders called, unanimously, for a strengthening of the European employment strategy. This strategy is based on higher investment in human resources, higher productivity and higher skills, backed up by an active welfare state. We are building a modern European social model. This is the current European reality, which has little to do with Mr Issing's two

extremes of a Social Union versus a completely deregulated free-for-all.

There is no room for complacency but already we have seen results. If we push on with our efforts, there will be no cause for anyone to argue that Europe's labour markets are holding back growth.

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