

**Question for written answer E-001813/2012
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Evgeni Kirilov (S&D)

Subject: Maximum permissible expenditure on remuneration under the 'Lifelong Learning' Programme for 2012 in the case of Bulgaria

In its manual for the 'Lifelong Learning' Programme for 2012, the Commission adopted a maximum per diem rate of remuneration for participants in projects under the programme, which in Bulgaria's case has resulted in a halving of the rates in comparison to 2011 and a halving of the rates in relation to the lowest rates applicable to other participating EU and non-EU Member States. This puts Bulgarian researchers included in joint projects at an extreme disadvantage, and has already sparked protests by Bulgarian research institutions and led to their refusing to participate in projects under this programme.

1. Can the Commission explain and justify in detail this drastic reduction in the rates for Bulgaria for 2012, given the fact that the reduction does not apply to all countries and that the rates have not been halved in comparison to 2011 for any other country?
2. What is the Commission's view on the possibility of achieving the goals of the EU's 'Lifelong Learning' Programme, given the fact that Bulgarian researchers are refusing to take part in it because they are being placed at a disadvantage compared to other participants in the programme? Does the Commission consider there to be imperfections in the programme's current regulatory framework and does it intend to propose amendments to overcome these in the future?