

**Question for written answer E-006534/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 130

José Blanco López (S&D)

Subject: VAT in the flower and plant growing sector

The economic crisis has had a very damaging effect on the flower and plant growing industry. In Spain the general situation has been exacerbated by the rise in VAT rates in this sector (up from 8 % to 21 %) brought in by the government in September 2012. This has led to a 50 % drop in sales, according to the Confederación Española de Comercio.

This rate rise was an especially bad move when considered against the fact that other European countries where this is a significant sector apply much lower VAT rates of between 6 % and 10 %. Competition is being distorted within the EU as a result and the adoption of tax harmonisation measures in this sphere would seem advisable therefore.

Does the Commission have any plans for tax harmonisation measures in this regard? Does the Commission know about the rise in VAT rates affecting this sector in Spain? What, in any case, is its opinion of this move?