

**Question for written answer E-001171/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Fernando Maura Barandiarán (ALDE)

Subject: Regulated application of higher education reforms in Europe

Since 1999, the Bologna Process has enabled the European Higher Education Area to emerge, contributing to start educational reforms in 47 countries towards the introduction of the three- cycle system in university education and the mutual recognition of qualifications among the member countries. Nevertheless, the situation is highly diversified among the member countries, thus impeding the achievement of a real common higher education area.

Spain is currently in the process of reforming the duration of the university cycle, shortening the first degree from 4 to 3 years. The announcement by the Minister of Education and Culture, José Ignacio Wert, giving the green light to reform has provoked a chorus of protests in opposition circles and in the universities, from those who fear that the reform aims to reduce staff numbers and resources for public universities, in line with the current policy of budget cuts in culture and education in Spain.

Given the experience accumulated since 1999, how can the Commission efficiently control the functioning of the reform process in the Member States?

How effective are the bodies such as ENQA (the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) which coordinate the national agencies for the evaluation of the quality of education?