**Question for written answer E-003738/2016**
**to the Commission**
Rule 130
**Hugues Bayet (S&D)**

Subject: Public investments in Europe

According to a study by the Federation of Enterprises in Belgium, Belgium is in the last place compared to the rest of Europe with only 0.6 % of GDP injected into its facilities for the 2010-2013 period.

The situation is the same in most European countries: massive disinvestment in the public sphere.

Yet European States should in fact be using low interest rates to their advantage to make significant investments, particularly in infrastructure, education and research. This would enable investment in the real economy and thus revive our economies.

However, States do not have the means to do this! In fact, they are in debt and, in the euro area, budgetary rules prohibit them from borrowing money for investment. They must respect the ‘golden rule’ and European accounting standards.

Since this is not the case for private enterprises, there is therefore a chasm between the two.

Would it not be appropriate to relax these rules in order to allow governments to invest? Why is there such a difference between the rules for the public sector and the rules for the private sector? Why is the public sector not subject to the same rules as the private sector?