

**Question for written answer E-005681/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Hugues Bayet (S&D)

Subject: Excessive-deficit procedure against certain Member States

The Commission has launched an excessive-deficit procedure against Spain and Portugal, which risk being fined and having access to EU funding suspended.

In 2014 and 2015, the government deficit in both countries exceeded the authorised limit of 3% of gross domestic product; and they have not reduced it at the agreed rate.

In Portugal, the new government that recently took office wants to break only to a very slight extent with the all-out austerity policies rejected at the elections. Spain, for its part, has halved its deficit over the last few years. The Commission, however, refuses to entertain the sort of productive public investment that, as a host of economists stress, would provide a way out of the crisis.

1. What message is the Commission seeking to give in taking the position it has taken?
2. Does not European recovery deserve something better than austerity policies?