

**Question for written answer E-005954/2018  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Steeve Briois (ENF) and Dominique Bilde (ENF)**

Subject: Excessive budgetary deficit procedure against Italy

Pierre Moscovici, European Commissioner for Economic Affairs, threatened to launch an excessive budget deficit procedure against Italy. The procedure provided for under Article 126 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union may lead to a fine of up to 0.5% of GDP and a suspension of European funds – funds towards which Italy has made a financial contribution. The threat followed an economic forecast announced by the Italian government according to which public deficit would increase from 0.6 % of GDP to 2.4 % of GDP in 2019.

1. On what grounds would the European Commission be entitled to open an excessive budget deficit procedure against Italy, given that its government is forecasting a deficit below the 3% limit imposed by the Stability and Growth Pact?
2. Is it the populist nature of the Italian government which leads the European Commission to want to sanction Italy and not the other thirteen Member States which also have a debt ratio above the 60% limit set by the Stability and Growth Pact?