

WRITTEN QUESTION E-6672/08

by Erik Meijer (GUE/NGL) and Elly de Groen-Kouwenhoven (Verts/ALE)
to the Commission

Subject: Persistent stagnation and setbacks in the fight against corruption in Romania following the departure of Minister Monica Macovei, and the EU's reaction to this state of affairs

1. Is the Commission aware that, according to a list produced by 'Coaliția România Curată', 244 candidates for the national parliamentary elections on 30 November 2008 in Romania had in the past been involved in high-profile conflicts of interest or were accused of corruption or of preventing action to combat corruption and organised crime, and that, since the dismissal of former Minister of Justice Monica Macovei, many people have been seeking to dismantle the anti-corruption institute DNA and to prevent the actual prosecution of those accused in the past of self-enrichment by means of corruption or illegal expropriation of public property?
2. Does the Commission recall its reply of 26 April 2007 to question 1055/07 by Erik Meijer, in which it stated on the one hand that under the cooperation and verification mechanism a formal assessment of Romania's progress in the justice, freedom and security area could not take place until a later date, but stressed on the other hand that on many occasions the Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security, had publicly stated his appreciation for former Minister Macovei's competence and commitment in her role in undertaking the necessary reform of the judicial system in Romania in combating corruption leading up to Romania's accession to the EU?
3. Is the Commission aware that the minister whom Romania rejected is now advising another candidate state for EU membership in its fight against corruption so as to enable it to comply fully with the conditions for EU accession?
4. Does Romania's full membership of the EU since 2007 mean that the opportunities the EU had, while Romania was still a candidate country, to give priority to combating corruption and punishing its perpetrators have now disappeared?
5. Does the Commission intend to acquiesce in the fact that a majority of the Romanian political elite do not yet regard combating corruption, and punishing those who were guilty of it in the past, as a priority, that this is clearly not an election topic and that most voters stay at home, partly because they do not see any way their vote will actually change this state of affairs?
6. What opportunities does the Commission see for effecting thoroughgoing changes? How? When?

Source, 'Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung', 30 November 2008.