

**Question for written answer E-008962/2011
to the Commission**
Rule 117
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Subject: Reform of higher education

The most recent Commission communication on the reform of higher education (COM(2011)0567) raises fresh questions concerning tertiary education in certain Member States. Both the 2020 Strategy and this new Commission communication emphasise the need for higher education systems to produce more graduates and for the drop-out rate to be reduced. The communication further stresses the importance of training researchers and consolidating the links between education, research and business with a view to promoting excellence and innovation. However, it is not possible to implement these priorities in all Member States.

In Romania, according to a recent study by the Federation of Independent Teachers' Unions, 40% of university teachers aged under 35 are likely to leave the education system over the next five years. In addition, the most recent survey by the Romanian Institute for Evaluation and Strategy (IRES), found that 66% of Romanians have a negative or very negative opinion of education in their country, with 61% of respondents taking the view that teachers are not properly trained. These data include higher education.

1. To what extent does the Commission believe that the priorities set out in the 2020 Strategy and the recent Commission communication for the modernisation of higher education can be implemented in a system such as that existing in Romania?
2. What binding instruments are available to the Commission enabling it to put pressure on the Romanian authorities to ensure their proper implementation?