

**Question for written answer E-003668/2012
to the Commission**
Rule 117
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Subject: U-Multirank (multi-dimensional global university ranking)

In 2009 the Commission announced that it was promoting a research study aimed at developing a multi-dimensional global university ranking. The Commission pointed out the three main characteristics of this new ranking tool: its multi-dimensional nature, its transparency and its global orientation. Taking into consideration the EU's long tradition in higher education and research and the variety in the profiles of universities and higher research institutions, the Commission is asked to answer the questions set out below.

1. What kinds of measures will it take in order to ensure that the EU's higher education institutions rise to the highest positions in the ranking system?
2. In accordance with Principle 2 of the Berlin Principles, U-Multirank's classification of higher education institutions is based on homogeneous performance indicators which take into account the variety in universities' profiles. However, the classification of both public and private institutions is unavoidable, putting private institutions in higher positions than public institutions. How do U-Multirank's stakeholders intend to deal with this kind of differentiation in methodological terms and help ensure that public institutions also reach the highest positions in the ranking?
3. Given that the private sector seems to represent a significant source of funding for the implementation of U-Multirank, what kinds of measures should be taken on the Commission's behalf in order to ensure the quality, transparency and independence of this ranking system, thereby protecting it from any kind of private interest?