

**Question for written answer E-007042/2013
to the Commission**
Rule 117
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Subject: Reform of the pension system

In recent years, most EU Member States have had to reform their pension systems due to demographic changes (higher life expectancy and low birth rate) and economic changes (the late age at which young people enter the labour market and the rise in unemployment in the EU).

The Commission has urged the Spanish Government to initiate a series of steps before the end of the year to avoid being sanctioned for excessive imbalances.

The changes proposed by the Commission include pension reform and, more specifically, defining the sustainability factor in order to guarantee the long-term financial stability of the pension system by ensuring, among other things, that the retirement age increases in accordance with the rise in life expectancy.

Parliament recently adopted a resolution on an agenda for adequate, safe and sustainable pensions (P7_TA(2013)0204) which deplores the severe cuts in the Member States hardest hit by the crisis that have pushed many pensioners into, or put them at risk of, poverty. It also calls for governments, employers and trade unions to reach a consensus on modifying the increase in the number of contributory years.

What steps does the Commission intend to take to prevent the budgetary adjustments established by the troika from affecting the right to a decent quality of life for all in old age?

The White Paper on Pensions, published by the Commission in February 2012, does not adequately address the importance of universal first-pillar pension schemes (universal public pay-as-you-go pensions) which at least keep people out of poverty and form the basis of the welfare state. Does the Commission intend to prioritise this issue in order to ensure that older people enjoy a decent standard of living and economic independence?