

**Question for written answer E-007670/2013  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Konrad Szymański (ECR)**

Subject: Availability of Schengen visas in Polish consulates in Belarus

I am informed that it has recently become much more difficult to apply for a Schengen visa in Polish consulates in Belarus. This problem mainly affects the consular section in Minsk, but other consulates are also concerned.

Belarusians are alarmed, as for several months now they have been unable to honestly obtain an appointment to submit a visa application to Polish consulates. Attempts to register an application on the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs e-consulate system result in an error message or in a message stating that no appointments are available. This is most likely due to the fact that all of the appointments are immediately snatched up by hackers, who then sell places in the queue for between EUR 200 and EUR 400.

Despite the numerous interventions that have been made within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this state of affairs shows no sign of improving.

Will the Commission take steps to ensure that Belarusian citizens have equal and honest access to Schengen visa application procedures in Polish consulates in Belarus?