

**Question for written answer E-009453/2013  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Monika Panayotova (PPE)**

Subject: EU-funded deinstitutionalisation of children in Bulgaria

The head of the State Agency for Child Protection in Bulgaria was dismissed on 31 July 2013 without any objective explanation as to why he was dismissed.

One of the main priorities for the agency is to reform the national support system for children without parental care, which is a key area for Bulgaria, so as to fulfil the national strategy entitled 'Vision for the deinstitutionalisation of children in the Republic of Bulgaria', and the associated Action Plan for implementing this vision.

The deinstitutionalisation process is a precedent at European level for successfully synergising various operational programmes, priority axes and funding sources (the Regional Development operational programme, the Human Resources Development operational programme and the Rural Development Programme).

Reform of the childcare system, which has achieved significant results since 2010, has reached a crucial stage. The head of the agency plays an essential role as coordinator for the reform process, including as regards the successful implementation of EU-funded projects.

In this context, what mechanisms will the European Commission use to ensure that this kind of dismissal at such a critical stage in implementing reform will not seriously compromise the ongoing process and will not create real risks for children and young people living in institutions?

Might the provision of EU funds targeted at achieving deinstitutionalisation goals be delayed?