

**Question for written answer E-009642/2013
to the Commission**
Rule 117
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Subject: International competitiveness of European universities

On 15 August 2013, the 2013 Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities was published.¹ This year's ranking confirms the primacy of US and the rise of Asian universities, although the criteria used are to a great extent restricted to research and research-related performance. As far as European universities are concerned, a number of UK universities do well, followed further down the ranking, by German and French universities. In January 2013, the Commission launched its own evaluation system, U-Multirank², which classifies universities on the basis of a larger number and wider range of criteria than the Shanghai ranking: the first results will be published in early 2014³. Despite this, can the Commission say:

1. How does it evaluate the findings of the Shanghai international ranking?
2. What conclusions can be drawn regarding the performance of European universities and the direction EU and Member State policy in the field should now take?
3. Why are European universities lagging behind, despite years of research funding?
4. Since research and development are one of the five objectives of the 'Europe 2020 Strategy', with a target of 3% of EU GDP to be invested in this area by 2020, what progress has been made so far in implementing the annual goals?

¹ <http://www.shanghairanking.com/Academic-Ranking-of-World-Universities-2013-Press-Release.html>

² http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-66_el.htm

³ http://www.u-multirank.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/UMR_key_questions_and_answers.pdf