

**Question for written answer E-014224/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Closure of the Presseurop website

Since 2009, the news website Presseurop has translated EU-related news articles daily from some 200 publications into 10 different languages.

At the beginning of December, the Commission, which until now has funded the site to the tune of EUR 3 million a year, decided not to renew its five-year contract, which expires at the end of 2013. Without any funding, therefore, the site could be forced to close with immediate effect on 20 December 2013, leaving some 70 journalists, freelancers and translators in a precarious position.

The Commission's decision is surprising to say the least. Indeed, during the Strasbourg part-session, on 20 November, the initial budget for multimedia projects in 2014 was increased by EUR 6.8 million.

With the 2014 elections approaching, this decision has understandably been met with incomprehension by our fellow citizens. The Presseurop site enables high-quality news articles on EU action in the various Member States to be distributed free of charge. It helps people feel more a part of the EU.

How, then, can the Commission justify its intention to withdraw its funding for Presseurop?

Did the Commission carry out an impact assessment beforehand to assess the consequences of such a decision on the future of Presseurop's employees? At a time when the gap between the European institutions' decisions and the reality as experienced by our fellow citizens is widening, can the Commission explain its new communication strategy, which serves to distance the citizens even more from the actions of Europe's elected representatives?

Furthermore, what solutions can the Commission provide in order to guarantee as many people as possible the right to information on the European Union?