

**Question for written answer E-000602/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Eugen Tomac (PPE)

Subject: More support for Romanian SMEs and business development

The Romanian business environment needs extra support, both from policymakers and from the EU. Although small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are key to improving the productivity level of the economy, the number of SMEs per inhabitant in Romania (29 per 1 000 inhabitants) is well below the EU average (58 SMEs per 1 000 inhabitants). Meanwhile, 99.7 % of Romanian companies are SMEs, and their productivity is around 40 % lower than that of large companies. Moreover, SMEs only account for about 30 % of Romania's total exports. This shows that Romanian business is lagging behind the overall European average, with business conditions being negatively affected by such factors as energy costs, uncertainty and transport infrastructure.

1. What is the Commission's explanation as to why Romania's business environment and outputs are lagging behind those of other EU Member States?
2. What is the Commission's assessment of the immediate next steps that the Romanian Government should take to modernise the country's business environment and increase productivity, and what are some of its direct recommendations?
3. What progress has Romania made in terms of the good use of the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund since the approval of the Partnership Agreement 2021-2027?

Submitted: 23.2.2024