

**Question for written answer P-000797/2011  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**George Sabin Cutaş (S&D)**

Subject: Problems over accession to the Schengen area

The obstacles being encountered by Romania with regard to joining the Schengen area seem to suggest that the EU is divided into first- and second-class members. It is regrettable that the Member States as a whole are unwilling to see beyond an outdated notion of national interest, in a context of common challenges which require a coordinated response. This state of affairs may be confirmed by the Council's refusal to give the EP access to the report on Schengen membership for Romania and Bulgaria.

Despite this, Romania's accession to the Schengen area should not be a matter for controversy: it is an obligation arising from Article 4 of its act of accession to the EU. How does the Commission, in its role as guardian of the Treaties, interpret the Council's refusal to permit access to documents which could influence the outcome of the vote in Parliament? Does the Commission believe it is legitimate to invoke additional conditions for Schengen membership other than those already successfully put in place by Romania?