

**Question for written answer P-014365/2013
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Tonino Picula (S&D)

Subject: Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina unable to participate in Erasmus+ programme

At the November 2013 plenary session, an overwhelming majority of MEPs voted in favour of the new Erasmus+ programme. The new programme will use the concepts of connection, exchanging experiences, social cohesion and mobility – basic values of the European Union – to enable over four million Europeans to participate.

As in other countries, official institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina were last month invited to take part in Europe's largest education programme, which has a budget amounting to EUR 14.7 billion. Regrettably, a political decision taken by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina means that pupils, students and professors from Bosnia and Herzegovina will be denied the chance to receive free education or to volunteer in a European country.

Bosnia and Herzegovina will thus be the only country in Europe that will not be participating in this incredibly important programme. This is particularly worrying given that one of the new programme's provisions aims to further step up the EU's links with third countries through education.

It is acknowledged that mobility and the exchange of experiences contribute to excellence in research and in lifelong learning generally. Given this decision's impact on the people and future prosperity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, does the Commission plan to take steps to allow the citizens of that country to take part in the Erasmus+ programme on an equal footing, despite the political institutions' rejection of the invitation?