

**Question for written answer P-000641/2014  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Ana Gomes (S&D)**

Subject: Issue of 'golden visas' in Portugal and elsewhere in the EU

In 2013, Portugal, which is under Troika supervision, issued 471 'golden visas' in return for investments in the country worth EUR 306.7 million. Eighty per cent of these visas were granted to Chinese citizens.

As of October 2012, it is possible for third country nationals to obtain a 'golden visa' or 'residence permit for attracting investment', either personally or through a company and for a minimum period of five years, provided they invest in Portugal an amount of EUR 1 million or more, or create ten jobs, or purchase property worth at least EUR 500 000. The 'golden visa' entitles the third-country investor to move freely within the Schengen area, work without restrictions and benefit from the right to family reunification. After five years, the holder of the 'golden visa' can apply for Portuguese citizenship and obtain it at the end of six years.

Does the Commission not see this system of allocating 'golden visas' as undermining the rights and obligations of European citizenship and the security of the Schengen area, creating a system for the sale of nationality by instalments and promoting the unequal treatment of third country nationals wishing to gain access to the Schengen area but lacking substantial financial resources?

What did the Commission, as part of the Troika, do to discourage the governments of Portugal and other Member States from constructing this and other similar 'nationality-vending' or 'golden visa' systems, which undermine the principles, values and interests of the EU and the security of the Schengen area?