

**Question for written answer E-004598/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Michael Theurer (ALDE)

Subject: The distribution of contributions to the EU budget

In his book entitled 'Deutschland, Zahlmeister der EU' (Germany, the Paymaster of the EU), Heidelberg's Emeritus Professor of Economics, Franz-Ulrich Willeke, calculated that Germany had paid EUR 383.6 billion to the European Union since 1991 and that only EUR 213 billion had returned to Germany in the same period through EU programmes. In all, Germany contributed a net figure of EUR 170.6 billion to the EU budget. According to Willekes' argument, this amount corresponds to 45 % of the total net contributions by the 10 net payers in this period. A press report in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung newspaper from 11 February 2013 (p. 17) contained similar information.

When inflation is taken into account, the amount totalled EUR 250 billion when duty revenue and the remaining contributions to Brussels are included.

1. Do Mr Willeke's figures correspond with those of the Commission?
2. Is it true that Germany could have saved about EUR 60 billion (since 1991) if the donor countries had all been required to contribute the same percentage share of their GNI?
3. What is the position of the Commission concerning the funding of the EU budget?
4. How is it possible to ensure that the burden is shared out fairly between the Member States in the long term?