

**Question for oral answer O-000139/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 115

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on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control

Subject: Lack of results in rural development programmes

The European Court of Auditors has published seven special reports in the past years on the spending of rural development funds in the period 2007-2013. These reports cover more than EUR 30 billion in EU funding for rural development. Worryingly, the Court of Auditors concludes that, in most cases, the objectives set by Member States and approved by the Commission are too broad, that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms do not demonstrate achievements adequately, and that Member States are not sufficiently selective when allocating funding to projects and beneficiaries. In the words of the Court itself, 'the Member States showed little interest in the results achieved with their rural development plans. The Commission accepted Member States' RDPs with vague, open-ended objectives that were not specific about what the programmes intended to achieve.'

1. Given the findings in the reports and the commonality of many of the problems highlighted, what specific action has been taken to ensure that for the new MFF 2014-2020 the Commission will approve only those spending plans (RDPs) where the objectives are clear, where the need for public funding is demonstrated and where the projects and beneficiaries are selected for their contribution to achieving policy objectives?
2. What specific action has been taken to ensure that for the new MFF 2014-2020 the monitoring and evaluation of spending will be improved to make sure that the results, in terms of achieving the objectives set, demonstrate the success or otherwise of the specific measures financed, and provide feedback in good time for necessary changes for the subsequent MFF to be made?
3. Will the Commission use the option of suspending or freezing payments if the monitoring and evaluation forming part of the control systems conclude during the new MFF that results are not satisfactory?
4. What other measures will the Commission take in this regard?

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