

**Question for oral answer O-000005/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 115

Vital Moreira, Daniel Caspary, Niccolò Rinaldi, Jan Zahradil, Robert Sturdy
on behalf of the Committee on International Trade

Subject: European business centres in Asia

The decision to set up European business centres in Asia derives from the 'Global Europe' strategy and Small Business Act. Parliament has always supported all policy measures aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of EU companies beyond the single market. However, an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of European business centres in Asia revealed that all of them have underperformed.

1. Can the Commission explain to what extent the best practice of existing bilateral chambers of commerce was taken into account when EU business centres were established in Asia, in particular those in India, Thailand and China? How is the Commission planning to ensure coherence with other EU support measures?
2. Can the Commission give an assessment of how effectively resources were allocated through the ICI+ programme and how resources will be sustained through the Partnership Instrument, including by giving details of what percentage of the total project cost is covered by the business centres' own revenue?
3. Does the Commission think that the existing business centres in Asia have demonstrated that they offer sufficient added value for European companies wishing to engage in the Asian market and/or those already operating there? What measures does the Commission intend to take to increase the efficiency of these business centres? How does the Commission intend to increase awareness of the services offered, in particular among SMEs?
4. Can the Commission say to what extent the Parliament's recommendations concerning structured coordination with Members States were taken into account when it began setting up new European business centres throughout Asia?
5. Can the Commission clarify for Parliament its intentions as regards the creation of new business centres in third countries, and the budgetary allocations committed and/or disbursed for this purpose?

Tabled: 8.1.2014

Forwarded: 10.1.2014

Deadline for reply: 17.1.2014