

**Question for oral answer O-000028/2020
to the Council**

Rule 136

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Subject: Planned POSEI budget cut

In its proposal for a Regulation on the common agricultural policy (CAP) for the 2021-2027 period (COM(2018)0394), the Commission proposes a 3.9 % cut in the budget allocated to POSEI, which provides support for outermost regions facing specific challenges such as remoteness, insularity or a difficult climate.

The EU's outermost regions (ORs) face obvious specific constraints: distance, dispersion and limited and dependent markets. These constraints require positive policies and investments that can counter trends of economic, social and demographic depression. EU structural funds dedicated to the development of the ORs empower the productive sector in these regions, increase the scope and quality of public services, improve their connectivity through accessible transport, and protect their ecosystems and traditional human activities. They are, thus, essential for combating the different levels of isolation which these regions face.

This cut to the POSEI budget, in addition to the proposed cuts to the CAP and the cohesion funds, is objectively contrary to the needs of OR economies, and to their sustainability. It is contrary to the strategic development that these regions need.

Regardless of its original proposal, the current and previous Commission have published several communications stating its willingness to withdraw this proposal, and maintain the current level of POSEI funding in the next multiannual financial framework and during the transition period. Parliament and several Member States have also expressed their opposition to these cuts.

1. How does the Council evaluate the current impact of POSEI on the OR economies?
2. Given the persistence of significant structural constraints still facing the ORs, is the Council willing to maintain or increase the POSEI allocation for the post-2020 period both in the 2021 transition regulation and the subsequent regulation covering the period to 2027? Is the Council considering the possibility of reinforcing and broadening the scope of the POSEI scheme?

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