

**Question for written answer E-005092/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)

Subject: Environmental Performance of the Inland Waterways Transport Fleet

On 10 September 2013 the European Commission adopted the NAIADES II package 'Towards quality inland waterway transport' (COM(2013) 0623) which noted that the inland waterways transport sector is now experiencing hard times and suffering from not only the economic downturn which began in 2008, but also from overcapacity in certain segments and increasing fragmentation of market players. In pursuance of ensuring long term sustainable and integrational sectoral development the Commission proposed structural changes in the inland waterways transport sector which would, inter alia, help in improving operational conditions, infrastructure, markets and innovations, job vacancies and skills as well as integration into the logistic chain.

However, the Commission failed to propose innovative and specific measures (as well as adequate financing for specific projects) that would help to fully implement the action programme and make an actual impact on the sector. It seems that the action programme NAIADES II is a combination of already existing measures.

Given the importance of the inland waterways transport sector in ensuring a sustainable transport chain in Europe, by, first of all, shipping freight, the Parliament is worried that there is no specific strategy for the inland waterways sector in place.

What specific actions will the Commission take and what funds will be allocated for the promotion of implementation of innovations in order to increase the environmental performance of the inland waterways transport fleet, given that access to financing is rather complicated for SMEs and extra-small enterprises?