

**Question for written answer E-005093/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)

Subject: Financing Measures for the Inland Waterways Transport Sector

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 in order to facilitate the access of SMEs, which make up the majority of the inland waterways transport sector, to various EU financing instruments, given the fact that access to these instruments is often available only through certain administrative and bureaucratic know-how which is not available to SMEs?