

**Question for written answer E-001351/2015  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Ivan Jakovčić (ALDE)**

Subject: The problem of loans in Swiss francs

Loans in Swiss francs (CHF) with a currency clause that Croatian citizens were taking in Croatian banks, mostly for the purchase of housing, have created for them serious financial problems. Many citizens found themselves entrapped by debt because the exchange rate of the Swiss franc rose by more than 40 % in relation to the Croatian kuna (HRK). Banks secured themselves with mortgages or liens on the property whose value exceeded the loan amount. Meanwhile, the value of real estate has fallen, it no longer covers the debt, and the current principal of a loan commitment is greater than the amount of the loan obtained. The Croatian parliament recently passed a legislation to freeze the Swiss franc at HRK 6.39. Citizens feel that they have been cheated because their loans were formally in Swiss francs, while at the time of their approval banks did not have coverage in deposits or loans recovered in Swiss francs, and the value difference to the foreign currency position was later compensated by the use of financial derivatives. When obtaining loans, citizens were not informed about the exchange rate risks unlike, for example, in Austria. Therefore one can talk about financial speculation and fraud.

1. Are there in this case elements of financial speculation and business fraud?
2. How can the Commission help to remediate the problem faced by more than 60,000 Croatian citizens who have been cheated and whose protection as consumers has not been considered by any competent institution?