

**Question for written answer E-012755/2015  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Ivan Jakovčić (ALDE)**

Subject: Third countries and European groupings of territorial cooperation

Article 3a of the revised Regulation on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) (Regulation (EU) No 1302/2013) allows the accession of members from third countries or from EU overseas countries or territories under certain conditions: where the Member States and third countries in question jointly carry out territorial cooperation actions or implement programmes supported by the Union; where they share a common land border, or where they are eligible under a joint maritime cross-border or transnational programme under the European territorial cooperation goal, or under another cross-border, sea-crossing or sea-basin cooperation programme; where the Member State concerned considers the EGTC to be consistent with the scope of its territorial cooperation.

So far, 48 groupings of territorial cooperation have been established. However, the participation of third countries is still largely absent. Given that the EU has dedicated EUR 6.6 billion to 60 programmes for the 2014-2020 period aimed at supporting European cross-border cooperation, and that the EGTC directly allows subnational actors to interact with the EU level, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

- Does it intend to adopt a strategy aimed at fostering groupings of territorial cooperation involving EU Member States and third countries?
- Does it intend to offer any incentives for the establishment of EGTCs involving Member States and third countries?