

**Question for written answer E-002877/2017
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Maria Grapini (S&D)

Subject: 'Smart Villages' initiative

The Commissioner for Regional Policy, Corina Crețu, has launched the 'Smart Villages' initiative alongside her colleagues, Phil Hogan, the Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, and Violeta Bulc, the Commissioner for Transport. This initiative aims to facilitate attractive and sustainable rural living, including through an increase in rural mobility, quality food production and energy efficiency, through environmental protection and through the large-scale development of IT activities.

Unfortunately, in many EU countries, villages are in the process of disappearing, which means that we need to encourage people, and young people in particular, to live in rural areas. Villages in Eastern Europe risk becoming deserted and devoid of economic activity.

What steps will the Commission take to foster the framing of rural development projects within the perspective of this initiative, and what action will it take to ensure a more generous allocation of EU funds to rural, less developed, areas in the EU?