

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3485/07  
by Georgios Karatzaferis (IND/DEM)  
to the Commission

Subject: EU appropriations for Greece

In an interview with Eleftherotypia newspaper on 13 March 2007, a representative of the Greek Finance Ministry responsible for managing EU funds, said 'project maturity studies' have been entered in the Third CSF. He went on to say that 'the delays that had so far occurred with the CSFs over the past 20 years are like the sound of an old engine. But the road ahead is a steep one because we have to complete the Third CSF within the following year or two while at the same time taking on the 'burden' of the Fourth CSF. The fines imposed on Greece during all these years are the 'pollution' emitted by this engine. Efforts have been made to overhaul this engine. Without them we would have broken down. This is a reference to the present management system which we overhauled in mid-term and was approved only in 2005, although the Third CSF began in 2000. However, the NSRF (National Strategic Reference Framework) provides an opportunity to change the engine and make it faster and cleaner...' Replying to a question about whether the initial assessment of the Third CSF made in 2000 that some EUR 10 bn. in private capital would be invested in the Third CSF, he replied straightforwardly: 'The answer is: not yet. If public funds are to create 'a leverage effect' in the CSF, this cannot be done by decree and through instructions. People must be informed about the opportunities that are available and mobilised accordingly.'

Will the Commission say what is meant by the curious term 'project maturity studies' and what amounts of appropriations they refer to? Are there Commission officials who have followed the year-long delays in take-up in Greece and then gone on to occupy government posts in Greece? If so, who are they? Is the Commission at fault for not informing the public about 'the opportunities that are available', as the above Finance Ministry official notes, after three years of Nea Dimokratia government? Can the 'engine' to which the official refers 'be repaired' or 'is it about to be withdrawn as a 'museum piece' since take-up has totally failed and thus remains at very low levels? Is the Commission responsible for the fact that private capital has been reluctant to invest in the Third CSF? What amount of private investment capital has been forthcoming? If the Commission is not to blame, who is?