

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5861/08
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to the Commission

Subject: Serious infringement of provisions seeking to reduce regional disparities

The European Union was founded on the basis of unanimously accepted principles with the aim of achieving social, economic and political objectives conducive to a climate of balanced development in all regions of the 27 Member States. Regional development policy should accordingly seek to reduce regional imbalances through the equitable distribution of funding, irrespective of any political considerations.

Sad to say, however, on 30 September 2008 the decision allocating funding for the purpose of balancing local authority budgets for 2008, adopted by the Suceava County Council, seriously infringed the principles adopted at European level, since 87.81% of the total funding of ROL 2 555 198 was allocated to 58 localities, the mayors of which were members of the same party as that holding the majority within the county council, thereby depriving the remaining 56 of the funding necessary to balance their budgets, making it impossible for them to provide a minimum level of services or engage in any further development in the immediate future. What is worse, 28 out of a total of 114 administrative units in the county of Suceava received no funding at all, prompting the opposition councillors to vote against the decision and demand a fair distribution of public funds. Furthermore, such discrimination in the allocation of funding will undermine the objectives of nationally and Community-funded projects which are under way in most of the localities concerned and make it harder to achieve the desired results.

In the light of the discussions which the chairman of the North-East Regional Development Council, Mr Gheorghe Flutur, indicates that he conducted one month ago with Commissioner Danuta Hubner, in the Romanian city of Iași situated in North-East Development Region No 1 (the poorest region in the European Community according to Eurobarometer), what view does the Commission take of this situation?