

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3958/09
by Béla Glattfelder (PPE)
to the Commission

Subject: Abuse of the LEADER programme in Hungary

A number of studies show that the LEADER groups and local action groups involved in the tendering system have been set up along political lines. The groups contain large numbers of former socialist local government officials with links to the young left. There is information to suggest that this is having an effect on the projects submitted and their evaluation: the distribution of funds is decided on an 'insider' basis, within a kind of political inner circle. At the same time, indications from the Hungarian Regional Development Agency are that the quality of the application files is below average and that they need subsequent correction. Whilst no decisions have yet been taken on funding, the use of rural development funding cannot be said to be effective; in this particular environment of political determination and satisfying the interests of a forceful lobby, the issue is more one of the strongly influenced distribution of funds.

Little or no attention was paid to the wishes of local communities when the action groups were formed.

Is the Commission aware of these irregularities?

Has the Commission investigated, or does it intend to investigate, the use of LEADER funds in Hungary?

What action does the Commission intend to take in order to combat the unsavoury practice described above?