

**Question for written answer E-001116/2012
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: More flexible spending under the current regulations of the Structural Funds

On 27 January 2012 the Commission submitted the proposal to allow the regional funds that are still available for the period 2007-2013 to be used for investment and job creation purposes. The amount involved is EUR 82 billion. We propose speeding up the investments from the structural funds, especially to fight youth unemployment and to support small and medium-sized entrepreneurs. This can also mean spending the 2013 budget allocations already in 2012.

In this context we wish to ask the following questions:

1. What is the size of the unspent budgets for each specific Fund (ERDF, Social Fund and Cohesion Fund)?
2. What are the specific measures taken to speed up investments in the years 2012-2013?
3. What adjustments have to be made to the current regulations in order to achieve greater flexibility and a more prominent role for investments by the EIB with a view to making it possible for the funds earmarked for 2013 to be spent in 2012?