

**Question for written answer E-001799/2012
to the Commission
Rule 117
Jiří Havel (S&D)**

Subject: Suspension of payments for one of the Operational Programmes in the Czech Republic (Education for Competitiveness - ECOP)

The sixth and penultimate year of the current budgetary period (2007-2013) has commenced. In the context of the EU Structural Funds, Parliament is debating the 2010 report of the European Court of Auditors, which shows that the Czech Republic is one of the Member States with the highest error rates for projects submitted (along with Spain and Italy). This is also borne out by the fact that, in January 2012, the Commission (DG EMPL) stopped payment for one of the Operational Programmes (Education for Competitiveness).

- How does the Commission evaluate the steps taken by the Czech Republic to restore payments under the aforementioned Operational Programme?
- What is the real status of the Czech Republic's absorption of EU Structural Funds?
- In the Commission's view, what are the biggest problems that the Czech Republic has when absorbing Structural Funds?
- What steps should the Czech Republic take, in the Commission's view, in order to make the absorption of funds possible as part of the suspended ECOP?
- To what extent does the Commission believe there is a real risk that the Czech Republic will not absorb funds from the ECOP, or will lose them?
- Are any other Operational Programmes at risk?