

**Question for written answer E-005539/2013  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)**

Subject: Administrative burden encountered by clusters under FP7

Clusters are powerful driving forces behind economic development in the European Union. They spur economic growth and bring benefits to the economic system. The Commission has on several occasions stated its clear support for clusters as essential economic actors, especially where they are made up of SMEs combining synergies and thus contributing to the EU's competitiveness.

However, at present the Member States have differing legal rules as regards the status and liability models of SME clusters at national level, and this is acting as an obstacle in the way of their participation in FP7 research programmes and the relevant grant agreements. The implementation of Horizon 2020 and its new model grant agreements may allow a significant reduction in administrative burdens and a simplification of the rules governing participation in projects and the contractual rules relating to access to grant agreements. These rules should be laid down in such a way as to promote the participation of SME clusters, taking due account of the different types of legal status, financial and accounting rules and liability models applicable at national level.

In the light of the above, will the Commission state what measures are being taken as part of the preparation of the H2020 Programme and related legal acts to reduce the administrative burden encountered by clusters under FP7?