

**Question for written answer E-000621/2014
to the Commission
Rule 117
Philippe de Villiers (EFD)**

Subject: Corruption and development assistance in republics in Central Asia - Report by the European Court of Auditors

The development assistance provided to republics in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan) in the period 2007-2012, which was managed and planned by the European Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS), has been criticised by the European Court of Auditors.

The Court of Auditors has doubts about how effective this development assistance is, above all because 'the Commission provided assistance to a larger number of sectors than is consistent with best practice', through an equally excessive number of programmes, 'which placed a greater administrative burden on delegations'.

In the Corruption Perceptions Index, published by the organisation Transparency International, all of these republics scored less than 28 out of 100 in 2013, with Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan featuring in the lowest 10% of the 177 countries evaluated. With this in mind, given that problems relating to corruption in these former Soviet Republics are rife, the Commission 'should have been more rigorous in managing its budget support programmes and tied these to specific anti-corruption measures'.

750 million euros were set aside for this region in the period 2007-2013. From 2007 to 2012 (the period audited) the Commission invested some 435 million euros in assistance. However, 'managing the programme was also made more difficult by the wide range of financial instruments involved and multiple lines of reporting, which makes it difficult to establish how much the EU has spent per sector and per country in Central Asia. The Commission has not attempted to assess the overall administrative costs of its development assistance programme in Central Asia'.

1. What is the proposed budget for development assistance for republics in Central Asia for the period 2014-2020? What will be the overall administrative cost of this programme?

2. What measures will be taken in future in order to prevent another negative assessment from the Court of Auditors?