

**Question for written answer E-000624/2014  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Guido Milana (S&D)**

Subject: Data collection - Regulation (EC) No 199/2008

Regulation (EC) No 199/2008 establishes the methods and deadlines for annual data collection – work that involves a large number of public and private research bodies. In particular, the regulation does not include cover for general expenses, but only for the salaries of employees (researchers and data-collectors). Each recipient should receive an advance payment equivalent to 50% of the amount for the entire annual data-collection programme at the beginning of the year, and submit a claim for payment of the full 100% (i.e. the remaining 50%) by 31 March of the following year. Provided no objections are raised to this claim, the (balance) payment should be made at the latest by October of the year following the data-collection year in question.

It appears that, in many cases, research bodies have received advance payments that have not always covered 50% of costs and that, even when no objections have been raised to their claim, they have still not received balance payments for the data-collection years 2011 and 2012.

At a recent seminar on potential technical changes to the data-collection system, held in Brussels on 16 January, the European Commission's representative said that delays in balance payments for recent data-collection years were due to confusion over EMFF approval periods, and that only the 2014 data-collection year, not previous years, could be taken into consideration.

In the light of this, please could the Commission explain the reasons for these delays in payment?