

**Question for written answer E-000833/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)

Subject: Calls for tender and instruments to support social entrepreneurship

In its communication on the promotion of co-operative societies in Europe (COM(2004)0018), the Commission recognised that social enterprises play an important role in the European economy and contribute to overcoming the crisis. The social enterprise sector in Europe is growing ever larger; it now accounts for 10% of all European enterprises and employs more than 11 million people.

Social enterprises often receive support through calls for tender published by the management authorities in the Member States under the European Social Fund. At EU level, Regulation No 346/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European social entrepreneurship funds, which should also enable private investment in the development of social enterprises, was adopted on 17 April 2013. It is regrettable that the chapter on social entrepreneurship has been entirely left out of the Slovenian operational programmes under the ERDF in the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework.

We in the European Parliament believe that the Commission and the EIB/EIF should ensure that social economy enterprises have access to EU-level financial mechanisms, including, where appropriate, the SME financing action plan.

In view of the above, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. What incentives are aimed at social enterprises in the 2014–2020 multiannual financial framework, and what financial mechanisms will be available to social enterprises at EU level?
2. What guidelines does the EU apply and what support does it provide for Member States setting up new financial instruments to provide start-up and financial capital and for the creation and growth of social enterprises?
3. Will social enterprises also be eligible for financing under other calls for tender for small and medium-sized enterprises, and to what extent will they benefit from positive discrimination?
4. To what extent will the sustainable nature of social enterprises be included among the financing conditions in calls for tender as regards eligibility for funding? Will it be possible to include the purchase of used equipment as eligible costs rather than new equipment?
5. What has been the experience so far with setting up European social entrepreneurship funds, and what role could the national public authorities play in this regard?