

**Question for written answer E-004079/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Sandra Petrović Jakovina (S&D)

Subject: Possibility of co-financing prisons from EU funds

Croatia's prison system is overcrowded, and the consequences of this include inadequate healthcare provision for prisoners, unhygienic conditions, a lack of qualified staff and an absence of privacy, etc. Thanks to legislative changes relating to prisons and alternative punishments and to the participation of the Probation Service, the number of prisoners in Croatia has fallen significantly, from 5 162 in 2010 to 4 508 at the end of 2013. Nonetheless, Croatia's prison system is still housing 30 % more prisoners than it has the capacity to handle. As the above demonstrates, legislative changes and administrative improvements are not enough: it is now vital that the capacity of prisons be increased.

In view of the findings of the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Croatia tried to interest the Council of Europe Development Bank in expanding and updating the prisons in Zagreb and Šibenik. Since even these projects will not be able to fully – or even satisfactorily – resolve the problem, I should like to put the following questions to the Commission:

1. Could the construction and updating of prisons be financed from European Union funds?
2. If so, which funds would be suitable for such a use?