

**Question for written answer E-000061/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: European Structural Funds and the practice of 'reserves'

The European Structural Funds can be drawn on to finance regional projects, at a set rate. In France, these funds have been managed by the regions since 2014 and they can redistribute them at a lower rate if they so wish. As the management authorities, they apply a lower payment rate than the one recommended by the European Union. The surplus amount then vanishes into the regional accounts and thus does not serve the purpose for which it was initially intended. The Member States have opposed any moves for the regions to return this money.

France's National Audit Office reiterated in May 2019 that the building up of these 'reserves' by the management authorities was an 'unsatisfactory practice'. Uncertainties like these are not compatible with management of taxpayers' money.

Does the Commission know how much these reserves amount to? Has it made provision for a mechanism to ensure use of these sums is transparent and is being monitored?