

**Question for written answer E-003640/2021/rev.1**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Mauri Pekkarinen** (Renew)

Subject:     Curtailing the growth in internal differences in countries receiving EU regional aid

Regional differences in development between Member States have decreased. That is a good thing. It is what should happen. There are several Member States in eastern Central Europe that receive over EUR 300 per capita in regional aid from year to year. That is over 10 times more than many other countries receive.

Closer inspection of the regional development indicators shows that development is concentrated on major cities and urban centres in many of the countries that receive the most aid. For some, their gross regional product has surpassed that of many regions in more 'developed' countries.

At the same time, there has been much less development in NUTS-3 areas outside the urban centres. In some cases, the gross regional product has even fallen in recent years.

The increased differences in development in the countries receiving the most aid are contrary to the objectives of EU cohesion policy. It is evident that the distribution of aid at national level in the countries in question does not promote balanced development.

On 15 June, those of us on Parliament's Committee on Regional Development listened to the results of research on the stunted development of certain low-growth areas. It would appear that there are deficiencies in the national distribution of aid in some Member States with regard to the targeting of resources.

Does the Commission have the means or plans to curtail the growth in internal differences in countries that receive a great deal of regional aid?