

**Question for written answer E-004303/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Brice Hortefeux (PPE)

Subject: EU funding to maintain national air routes

Clermont-Ferrand-Auvergne airport is the first French airport to supply airlines with sustainable biofuels and is as such fully committed to reducing CO2 emissions.

In 2020, Air France stopped flying between the airports of Clermont-Ferrand-Auvergne and Paris-Orly. A private airline has since offered to cover this route, with the support of local and regional authorities.

Maintaining this route is essential for the region's vitality, particularly as the economy recovers from the pandemic; it allows citizens to remain connected to the capital, given that there is no high-speed rail line between Clermont-Ferrand and Paris.

However, local authorities have little means to help the airlines and their budgets are too tight to consider providing a post-pandemic stimulus. In addition, this case does not meet the criteria to receive the EU funding that is available for regional development or the creation of new routes.

Can the Commission confirm whether there are any other EU funds that could complement the support packages offered by the local authorities to maintain and get this vital route back up and running? If there are, can it please specify the nature of the subsidies?

Can it provide a list of European air routes that have been maintained through EU support?