

**Question for written answer E-000046/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Stanislav Polčák (PPE)

Subject: European policy challenges in relation to rural areas

In my speech in December 2022 at Parliament's plenary session, during which I discussed the long-term vision for EU areas, I expressed my concern that, despite the efforts made, cohesion policy and its achievements were still failing to reach the countryside in a tangible way. The purpose of this policy, however, is to effectively reduce disparities between regions. It must, of course, also contribute, along with other policies, to keeping the countryside alive and to making it a place not only for farmers, but also for young people, who will get decent jobs there and not be forced to leave. The following, I am afraid, sums up the current situation: cities act as a magnet that attracts jobs, people, technologies and services, and I have some doubt that we can reverse this trend.

1. Does the Commission also perceive this danger?
2. Does it consider the existing measures to be sufficient How should European policies respond to them?
3. In the light of these facts, how does it assess the efforts to undermine the notional envelope earmarked for cohesion funds?

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