

WRITTEN QUESTION P-2978/03
by Nelly Maes (Verts/ALE)
to the Commission

Subject: Structural Funds in Brittany

Following the French Government's recent budgetary decisions, Brittany will be hard hit by the withdrawal of government funding, which is jeopardising the payment of EU appropriations. It would appear that part of the Structural Funds allocated to Brittany for the period 2000-2006 will be blocked owing to the fact that the French Government is no longer willing to disburse the amounts it had previously undertaken to pay under the State-Region planning contract. This situation is giving particular cause for concern in the Lorient area, which is already facing a serious economic crisis as a result of the Navy's withdrawal and the conversion of the arsenal, and in the Brest, Trégor and west central Brittany areas.

Given that the Commission has always taken pains to ensure strict observance of the additionality principle, would it not agree that the decision to withdraw funding half-way through the period is in breach of this principle, and that the government's attitude is placing a region which is in need of strong support from Europe in a position of extreme economic and financial uncertainty?

Does the Commission intend to ask the French Government for an explanation? If it has already done so, what form did this action take?