

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3509/03
by Helmuth Markov (GUE/NGL)
to the Commission

Subject: Interreg IIIA: Future funding of Euroregion offices

Euroregion offices have to date been funded under the 'Technical Assistance' component of the Interreg IIIA programme. The Spree-Neisse-Bober Euroregion office has however recently learnt by means of an oral communication from the Ministry of Economic Affairs that as of 2004 Euroregion offices will no longer be funded under the 'Technical Assistance' component of the Interreg IIIA programme, but under the programme's cooperation funds. In addition, as of 2005 the level of funding will gradually decrease. According to the Ministry, the reason for the change in funding arrangements is a request from the Commission.

This change in funding arrangements would cause particular problems for the Spree-Neisse-Bober Euroregion, which includes only one administrative district in Germany. It would be impossible to increase the membership fees of this district sufficiently to fund the office.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

Has the Commission asked for the Euroregion offices to no longer be funded under the 'Technical Assistance' component of the Interreg IIIA programme, but under the programme's cooperation funds? What are the Commission's general thoughts on the future work of the Euroregions, in particular in the area concerned, which is located on a border between the EU and the accession countries?