

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3820/05
by Béatrice Patrie (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Reduction in budget of European Consumer Centres for 2006

As announced by the Commission to the various centres on 22 September 2005, the overall budget for European Consumer Centres for 2006 is to be 32% less than for 2005.

As funding requests for these centres must be submitted by 21 October, their representatives are concerned at the drastic cuts in resources, which could lead to redundancies and the closing down of many information and advice services, and could even pose a threat to the very existence of such centres.

The cuts are particularly regrettable because these centres are increasingly popular among the general public in Europe, who are using them more and more frequently.

The centres also play an important advisory role vis-à-vis the Commission, helping it to detect cases of fraud in the European internal market through surveys and studies, thereby enhancing the European Union's credibility among the general public.

Does the Commission intend to take due account of these funding requests for 2006?

What are its plans for the following years?