

**Question for written answer P-009845/2012
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Elisa Ferreira (S&D)

Subject: Macroeconomic conditionality in the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework

The Commission proposal on the future 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework (MFF 2014-2020) is reviving the approach whereby European funds are to be granted on the basis of macroeconomic conditionality.

The Council Presidency's latest 'non-paper', dated 10 October 2012, which sets out the state of play in the MFF 2014-2020 negotiations, assumes that macroeconomic conditionality will be incorporated into the final agreement, as it is, in the Presidency's words, largely accepted by the national delegations, although a decision has yet to be taken on the implementation arrangements.

By virtue of the commitments secured in the economic governance packages, the fruit of long, tough negotiations between the Council and Parliament, with the Commission as broker, penalties in various forms can already be imposed on Member States that fail to honour the commitments agreed, whether under the Stability and Growth Pact or for the purposes of correcting macroeconomic imbalances, which can amount to as much as 1% of GDP.

1. Where do the legal basis and the political legitimacy of this proposal lie, bearing in mind that, as well as being the direct opposite of Parliament's position, it will penalise economically more fragile Member States twice over (through penalties and the loss of structural funding) if they breach budget discipline?
2. Why is the Commission insisting on macroeconomic conditionality where the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund are concerned, even though it has itself recognised (both in public statements by its President and in adjustments to the eligibility rules) that structural funding is the main means (not to say the only means) to employ in order both to revitalise the economies of countries subject to assistance programmes and to combat the tensions which are driving European economies apart and have also been a contributory factor in the present crisis?