

**Priority question for written answer P-001419/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
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Subject: Policies and public funding to combat depopulation

Rural areas cover more than 80% of the EU's territory and are considered a sustainable model of life and business that can make a decisive contribution to the green transition. However, our current challenges have aggravated the disadvantages suffered by these areas, such as the demographic challenge, connectivity or poor access to other services.

The long-term vision for the EU's rural areas set out guidelines for stronger and more connected, resilient and prosperous regions by 2040. It therefore stressed the need for a specific funding envelope for these areas. However, some regional authorities fail to comprehend the magnitude of the challenges facing rural areas, leaving half of the funds earmarked for depopulation in the 2024 financial year unspent.

In the light of this state of affairs:

1. Would the Commission agree that addressing the disparities suffered by rural regions is a priority issue on the European agenda?
2. Does the Commission believe that investing in these areas can help to slow the demographic decline?
3. Does it consider that rural challenges should be addressed at all levels of public administration: European, national, regional and local?

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