

**Question for written answer E-000569/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)

Subject: Unexplained delays in clearing 'bottlenecks' in Europe

Following the approval of the general state budget in Spain it has been confirmed that the government of this Member State has allocated only 5.75 % of the investment envisaged in this financial year (3 032 million euros) to the zone of the Atlantic Corridor known as the 'Basque Y'. In terms of the specifications approved by the European Parliament for the TEN-T (trans-European transport network), the Basque Y has priority status. This stretch of infrastructure forms the basis for improving one of the two rail connections between Spain and France, and it fulfils all the conditions for promoting interoperability and intermodality, which characterise the works to be carried out all across Europe in the near future.

However, despite these facts, the resources dedicated to this priority investment have been reduced by 50% with respect to the previous financial year. The progress of the works is being maintained thanks exclusively to the efforts of the Basque Government, which has taken over responsibility for the construction of part of this infrastructure. The decision has not been adopted as a result of any budget shortfall, since other stretches that do not involve the elimination of 'bottlenecks' have not seen their allocations of funds cut. The decisions that have been taken neither follow the criteria of the TEN-T nor are they in accord with the public declarations of the Spanish transport authorities or the terms of presumed memoranda of intentions signed at inter-state meetings.

In light of the foregoing:

1. Does the Commission consider that these decisions are consistent with the priorities laid down in the TEN-T?
2. Does the Commission consider that focussing short-term investment on solving the problems of so-called 'bottlenecks' between Member States is positive for the encouragement of inter-state cooperation?
3. Has the Commission received any official explanations from the Spanish Government regarding the grounds for these decisions?