

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0371/01
by Reinhold Messner (Verts/ALE)
to the Commission

Subject: Brescia-Padova motorway concession company and the Valdastico motorway

Last May, without having issued a public call for tenders, the agreement between the company holding the concession for the Brescia-Padova motorway and the Azienda Nazionale Autonoma Strade (ANAS), the public agency responsible for managing Italy's national road network, was extended for a further nine years (until 2011).

Under the 'Ciampi-Costa' directive¹ motorway concessions may be extended, by way of exception, only in order to settle existing disputes (failure to adjust charges, recognition of the work carried out in connection with the 1990 World Cup and the Columbus celebrations in 1992 and any other disputes on which the opinion of the State legal advisory office must be requested). In this case, however, the justification put forward for the extension was the construction of new motorway links, including the A31 'Valdastico motorway' which would link Vicenza to Rovigo (A4-A31 interchange) by a 60-km road link. This motorway is additional to the Valtrompia motorway, which is also included in the Brescia-Padova concession company's financial plan and was the subject of my earlier question to the Commission (4047/00).²

Does the Commission not consider that the renewal of this concession is incompatible with Directives 92/50/EEC, 93/37/EEC and 89/440/EEC³ ?

Does the Commission consider it admissible to justify this extension, without a public call for tenders being issued, on the basis of a transfer of investment to the construction of a new motorway?

Irrespective of the need for a road axis through the valley in question, does the Commission not consider that accepting such a policy of exchanges between concession holders and the public authorities in favour of new motorways undermines the priority objective of redressing the balance between road and rail transport in the European Union?

¹ Directive of the Minister of Public Works and the Minister for the Treasury, the Budget and Economic Planning of 20 October 1998, Protocol No 011790 of the Ministry for the Treasury

² The investments authorised under the concession company's financial plan amount to a total of ITL 2466 billion (EUR 1.273 million).

³ Published in OJ L 209 of 24.7.1992, OJ L 199 of 9.8.1993 and OJ L 210 of 21.7.1989.