

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1519/01  
by Jacqueline Foster (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject: The Galileo satellite navigation project

Funding:

The Memorandum of Understanding signalling the provisional funding from private sector bodies of Euro 200 million needs further explanation. Could the Commission give examples of some of the industries which have agreed to the funding? Could the Commission also confirm the reports that unless a firm political decision is taken on the definitive phase by June 2001 then such engagement of funding by the private sector will become obsolete?

In the interest of transparency may I call on the Commission to make absolutely clear its intentions with the funding of this project and whether, in the absence of substantial private sector interest, it will fund the project solely from the EU budget, including the Euro 220 million it will cost to maintain the project per annum. Could the Commission also provide an up-to-date breakdown of the contributions foreseen from individual Member States?

Development:

Is the Commission aware that whilst the EU has been spending millions on Galileo, the US has been updating its existing technology? Its advances will enable protection against electromagnetic pulses and will provide the American GPS with greater accuracy on positioning. Therefore, could the Commission confirm that the Galileo satellite navigation system will not be technologically lagging behind latest development, if and when, it becomes operational?

Operations:

Could the Commission justify why Galileo will only be used for civilian purposes as it seems absurd that the EU decides to construct its own satellite navigation system, yet denies it a military capacity? Is it foreseen that there will ever be a military capacity to Galileo?

Predicted projected costs of Galileo have come in at in excess of Euro 6 billion and yet in the definitive phase we are still asking how it will work; if private funding will be secured; and if it is involved, how much power the private sector will yield?