

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1427/03
by Laura González Álvarez (GUE/NGL)
to the Commission

Subject: Transport difficulties on the Balearic Islands

One of the declarations annexed to the Treaty of Amsterdam recognises that island regions suffer from structural handicaps which impair their economic and social development, and acknowledges that Community legislation must take account of these handicaps so that specific measures can be adopted in favour of these regions to integrate them better into the internal market on fair conditions.

Furthermore, paragraph 13 of the European Parliament's Resolution of 12 February 2003 on the Commission White Paper 'European transport policy for 2010: time to decide' highlights '... the need for transport policy to contribute to economic and social cohesion, and take into account the specific nature of most remote, island and mountain regions and regions with low population density, through measures designed to offset as much as possible their disadvantaged situation and to ensure territorial continuity', while paragraph 14 calls for '... the growing liberalisation of the transport sector to be accompanied by guarantees, investment, mobility, subsidies, price support and maintenance of services for remote and island regions'.

Bearing in mind that Spain's Balearic Islands suffer from a series of handicaps primarily affecting transport and, consequently, the supply conditions for essential products, that they also suffer from a lack of water and energy resources and from difficulties regarding the elimination of waste, and that above all the handicaps referred to limit the possibility of residents of the islands being able to travel at low prices:

What measures could the Commission take to offset these handicaps?

Does it see a need for the declaration of a public service obligation as provided for in Regulation (EEC) No 2408/92¹?

¹ OJ L 240, 24.8.1992, p. 8.