

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1299/04
by Doris Pack (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Interregional linking of the trans-European transport network (rail) Belgium - Luxembourg - France - Germany

Various measures to extend sections of the trans-European rail network are planned or being implemented in the region where Belgium, Luxembourg, France and Germany meet. Three projects affecting this area are listed in Annex III of the Commission communication of 11 November 2003 (COM(2003) 690 final):

Project no 4 - high-speed railway axis East (completion 2007),
Project no 17 - railway axis Paris - Bratislava (completion 2015),
Project no 28 - Eurocaprail Brussels - Strasbourg (completion 2012).

At the point where these high-quality and high-speed trans-European rail links intersect in the centre of the Saar-Lor-Lux region, it will be possible to create an international rail hub, which will greatly improve Saarland's infrastructure.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions regarding all three projects:

1. In view of the planned completion dates, what is its opinion on the way in which the various national strategies have been coordinated with regard to implementation and completion of the above-mentioned projects within as short a time as possible?
2. Does it plan to provide additional financial support to equip the above-mentioned sections of track with the new European train control system (ETCS)?
3. Which sections of the railway axes are suitable for the new funding models (PPP), and which could benefit from particular support as cross-border projects?
4. In relation to the road network, what does it believe the significance of the future international rail hub will be for transporting people and freight?

Can it also answer the following questions regarding project no 28 (Eurocaprail):

5. Given the relatively early completion date, what is its opinion on the feasibility and funding of the project?
6. Under which conditions could this section of track help to reduce the amount of traffic on other neighbouring TEN corridors, and which routing options should be taken into consideration?