

**Question for written answer E-010060/2011
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Motorway tolls in northern Portugal

15 October 2010 saw the introduction of a new system of tolls on a number of motorways in northern Portugal, following which we tabled a series of questions to the Commission and, finally, sent a letter to the Commission Vice-President Siim Kallas. Mr Kallas' answer of 19 July 2011 confirms that proceedings are under way concerning these motorways and that the Commission is evaluating the Portuguese authorities' response to the formal letter sent to Lisbon on 6 April 2011.

It is a year now since the new toll system was introduced. It has had a negative impact on commercial relations between Galicia and northern Portugal: this has been observed by, for example, the Galicia-Northern Portugal Association for Territorial Cooperation (GNP-AECT), in an initial study on the matter, officially presented on 3 May 2011¹. Business circles in both regions have also repeatedly expressed their concern over the consequences of the tolls.

It appears from numerous press reports in recent weeks that the Portuguese government is planning to extend the system of tolls, automatic or electronic, to another four motorways in northern and southern Portugal.

All these facts testify to the importance and urgency of the matter. The Commission must, if it has not already done so, complete its evaluation of this toll system and its adaptation to the European legislation in force, including its possible discriminatory effect, also taking account of the factors of proportionality and accessibility and the costs (the only ones so far fixed) of the electronic payment apparatus.

In view of the above, can the Commission state whether it has concluded its evaluation of the Portuguese government's answer and provide information on the outcome? Should the evaluation not have been completed, can the Commission state when it expects it to be ready and whether it is aware of the Portuguese authorities' apparent intention to extend this controversial system to other motorways?

¹ <http://www.gnpaect.eu/multimedia/adjuntos/1319026086.pdf>.