

**Question for written answer E-000076/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Patricia van der Kammen (NI)

Subject: EUR 450 million for research and innovation in the European rail sector

On 16 December 2013, the Commission announced that it would be investing no less than EUR 450 million in rail research and innovation over the next seven years. The intention is to provide a new generation of high-capacity trains, better infrastructure and more efficient rail services and traffic management systems. The rail sector will also have to make a financial contribution to the scheme, according to the Commission.

1. Is the Commission aware of the article from Dutch website *www.nieuws.nl* on EU plans to allocate EUR 450 million to the rail sector¹?
2. Is it true that the Commission plans to spend EUR 450 million of taxpayers' money on research and innovation for the European rail network? If so, what is the motivation for the Commission to spend half a billion euros on something that the Member States can organise perfectly well themselves?
3. Is it true that the Commission also intends to spend over EUR 160 million on the fourth railway package and that, in addition, a certain portion of the budgets for Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) has been earmarked for railway infrastructure?
4. Does the Commission share the view that there is already a wildly excessive number of projects (fourth railway package, CEF and TEN-T) with all manner of aims for the railways? If not, why not?
5. Does the Commission share the view of the PVV that the existing projects are doomed to fail, since the Commission now seems to be suggesting² that they are not adequate to ensure rail innovation? Why does the Commission think that hurling enormous amounts of taxpayers' money at this issue is helpful?
6. Does the Commission not comprehend that its patronising subsidies totalling millions of euros are crippling the market and will eventually completely destroy it?
7. When will the Commission realise that it needs to stop meddling in affairs with immediate effect, so that the market and the Member States themselves can develop profitable solutions which are based on market forces and cooperation between the Member States and which will actually offer added value, instead of carelessly squandering money in the form of 'free handouts from the EU'?

¹ <http://www.nieuws.nl/algemeen/20131216/EU-maakt-450-miljoen-vrij-voor-spoorwegen>

²