

Question for written answer E-004663/2014
to the Commission
Rule 117
Slavi Binev (EFD)

Subject: Serious violations of European transport law

The rights of Bulgarian citizens are being seriously violated in the construction of the 'fast north link' road in Sofia, which is part of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) and connects several corridors – IV, VIII and X. The project is being funded through the regional development operational programme, which is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund. The evaluation of the value of the property subject to compulsory purchase so that this stretch of road can be constructed is scandalous, and totally unlawful. A value has been established of between 0.6 and 0.8 BGN/m² of farmland (which is currently planted with crops that are the subject of EU financing agreements). Some of the properties subject to compulsory purchase, whose owners have for years been paying local taxes and charges, have unlawfully been designated as agricultural land. Notification of compulsory purchase has not been published on the website of the Ministry of Regional Development. 1 % to 4 % of the budget for the overall project has been earmarked for the compulsory purchase of land under the 'fast north link' project when, in the past, around 20 % has been allocated for similar projects in the same metropolitan area. According to the main agricultural funds and the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute, the price of agricultural land is increasing. Compulsory purchases by local councils and the state are being conducted using different methodologies and different evaluations. Serious doubts exist as to their transparency and aim. The aforementioned infringements are of transposed European legislation. There is a real risk that up to BGN 200 million in EU structural funding will not be utilised.

Can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of these facts;
2. what action will it take in response to the failure by those governing Bulgarian to comply with European law?