

**Question for written answer E-012978/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Paavo Väyrynen (ALDE) and Hannu Takkula (ALDE)

Subject: Use of TEN-T funds in Finland

In recent years the Commission has funded schemes in Finland under the TEN-T programme that do not correspond to its aims and principles.

The Commission funded the planning and construction of the Vantaa ring rail line, although this is principally a local transport project seeking to concentrate jobs and housing in the Greater Helsinki region. The project was justified on the grounds that the ring rail line would facilitate the rail link between the centre of Helsinki and Helsinki-Vantaa airport.

However, there was already a project which would have created a direct and faster rail link to the airport and from there on to the main rail lines to Eastern and Northern Finland. It would also have facilitated a direct link from the airport to the Russian rail network towards St Petersburg. This project would have fulfilled the objectives of the TEN-T programme.

At the end of last year, the Commission decided to fund the planning of the Rail Loop to be built under the city of Helsinki. Finnish government resources are also being committed to this work.

However, the Rail Loop has no significance for promoting cross-border traffic or for linking different modes of transport. It would serve to ease the flow of local traffic to some extent, but this could be achieved much more cheaply by developing existing rail stations. Furthermore, the aim of this project is to concentrate jobs and residential areas in the centre of Helsinki.

The funding from the Commission is being used in internal Finnish politics as a basis for trying to override projects that better serve the transport needs of the whole country, as well as the development of cross-border links.

Is the Commission aware that in funding certain Finnish projects it has violated the principles of the TEN-T programme and promoted poor investments, and does it propose in future to consider more carefully the use of the EU's common funds?