

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1249/02
by Carlos Ripoll y Martínez de Bedoya (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Tax in the Balearic Islands

On 23 April 2002 the Government of the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands adopted law 7/2001 on a tax on stays in tourist accommodation enterprises intended for the fund to develop tourist activity and protect the environment.

The explanatory memorandum to the law states that the extraordinary development of tourist activity has resulted in excessive spending on regional and environmental resources in the Balearics and that maintaining the competitiveness of the tourist product in the area will require an effort on the part of the relevant institutions to ensure that it can be sustainably developed. Given the lack of sources of funding, the abovementioned tax is therefore being introduced.

The Balearic Islands receive 11 million tourists per year, of which 50% stay in tourist accommodation enterprises.

Does the Commission not think that a tax of this nature with the objective described above should be aimed at all tourists and not merely 50% of them?

Does the Commission not think that this represents discrimination among tourists to the islands, according to where they stay?

Could this law be a barrier to the free movement of persons in a part of the Union's territory?