

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3204/09
by Fernando Fernández Martín (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Integration of the outermost regions (ORs) in their respective geographical areas

The conclusions of the 'First Forum on connectivity and transport: regional integration and connectivity of the ORs with neighbouring non-Community countries' were officially presented to the Commissioner for Regional Policy on 9 March 2009.

The Forum was clear in its conclusions that regional integration with the countries in their respective geographical areas is of vital importance for the ORs' economic, social and cultural development and that this regional integration cannot be accomplished without suitable air and sea links. The legislation must be altered therefore to match the ORs' special characteristics in order to facilitate regional integration.

The Forum asked the Commission to set up an interdepartmental working party to produce a study identifying the obstacles to said regional integration and proposing necessary correction mechanisms.

1. What specific measures does the Commission have in mind in order for the third strand of the proposed OR strategy – regional integration in their respective geographical areas – to be implemented by means of improved air and sea links between ORs and their neighbouring non-Community countries?
2. When will the interdepartmental working party be set up, as requested, to look into the issues raised in the Forum's conclusions, and when does the Commission envisage being able to present the working party's findings?