

that there were more job vacancies in this area. Were this plan to go ahead, it would entail massive investment in housing, transport, education, health and even as regards taxation and social security, since unemployed persons from other parts of Spain would have to be transferred to this region.

This Spanish Government policy would be tantamount to consolidating and even increasing existing regional imbalances with the help of public funds, instead of addressing the historical 'deficit' of the Atlantic regions of Spain in terms of infrastructure and development, which is reflected by a very high unemployment rate (17% of the labour force in Galicia).

If the Spanish Government submitted an application of this kind to the Commission, could it authorise the former to use Structural and Cohesion Fund resources to pursue a policy which is clearly at odds with the objective of economic and social cohesion?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**

(11 October 1999)

The Commission is not aware of the 'geographical mobility Plan' to which the Honourable Member refers and which, based on the information provided, is only a Government statement of intent at this stage. Without the text of the plan or at least some detailed information on its purpose and implementation, the Commission cannot say whether it might attract assistance from the Structural Funds.

Under the terms of Council Regulation (EC) 1164/94 of 16 May 1994 establishing a Cohesion Fund<sup>(1)</sup>, the Fund exclusively assists investment in transport infrastructure and environmental protection. The Cohesion Fund does not therefore assist the sectors mentioned by the Honourable Member.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 130, 25.5.1994.

(2000/C 170 E/014)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-1437/99**

**by Camilo Nogueira Román (Verts/ALE) to the Commission**

(1 September 1999)

*Subject:* Telecommunications, audiovisual service and data-processing projects in Galicia

From a regional policy angle, it is vital that Galicia be fully integrated in the trans-European transport, telecommunications and energy networks. As a beneficiary of Structural Fund Objective 1 funding, Galicia has managed to secure substantive aid for this purpose.

Will the Commission say which projects and programmes have been funded in Galicia under the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund during 1994-1999 in the fields of telecommunications, audiovisual services and data-processing (including development and integration in band networks and service industries and social applications such as health and education)?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**

(11 October 1999)

The list of telecommunications, audio-visual and information technology projects part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund in Galicia up to the end of March 1999 is being sent direct to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

It should be noted that some service industries are included in the main priority 'support for productive activity'. In addition, some projects now included under vocational training were transferred from the education sector in order to produce a better general overview.

Under the terms of Council Regulation (EC) 1164/94 of 16 May 1994 establishing a Cohesion Fund<sup>(1)</sup>, the Fund exclusively assists investment in transport infrastructure and environmental protection. The Cohesion Fund does not therefore assist the sectors mentioned by the Honourable Member.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 130, 25.5.1994.

(2000/C 170 E/015)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-1438/99**

**by Camilo Nogueira Román (Verts/ALE) to the Commission**

(1 September 1999)

*Subject:* Integration of Galicia into the trans-European high-speed rail network

It is obvious that Galicia, like any other European region — above all given its visible history of marginalisation in the construction of the transport network of the Spanish state — needs to be integrated into the trans-European high-speed rail network. However, there appears to be no provision for this in the technical forecasts and budgets under the plan for the trans-European rail network up to 2010. Should this be the case, Galician society would, once again, find itself lagging behind in historical terms, as it did with the building of the motorway links with the rest of the peninsula and Europe and, in the more distant past, with the construction of the original national rail network.

It is essential that action is taken to forestall any such marginalisation. In this connection, can the Commission state how matters stand as regards the integration of Galicia into the deadlines and budget forecasts in respect of the plan for the trans-European rail network up to 2010?

Can the Commission also state what proposals have been submitted to the EU by the Spanish state?

(2000/C 170 E/016)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-1440/99**

**by Camilo Nogueira Román (Verts/ALE) to the Commission**

(1 September 1999)

*Subject:* Linking of Galicia and Portugal by a high-speed train network

Can the Commission state what the current forecasts are, in terms of time-schedules and budgets, concerning the construction of a high-speed train network to link Galicia and Portugal along the route Lisbon-Porto-Vigo-Santiago-Corunna-Ferrol, given the major economic importance of this transfrontier region, which, with its 14 million inhabitants, occupies a substantial part of the European Atlantic seaboard?

**Joint answer  
to Written Questions E-1438/99 and E-1440/99  
given by Mrs de Palacio on behalf of the Commission**

(11 October 1999)

Decision No 1692/0096/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 1996 on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network<sup>(1)</sup> contains in its annexes maps showing, for information purposes only, the links and nodes of this network based on how it should look in 2010. As far as the high-speed section is concerned, a distinction is drawn between lines already in service in 1996 and lines that are still in the early or more advanced stages of design.

With specific reference to Galicia, it is true that at the time when these guidelines were being developed no actual high-speed project, either towards Portugal or towards central Spain, was under scrutiny. However, the 1996 maps do show details of a project in Portugal, from Lisbon to Oporto, followed by a conventional line to Galicia, as well as details in Spain of a redevelopment project envisaging speeds of the order of 200 kilometres per hour (km/h) from Valladolid almost as far as Orense, followed also by a conventional line to Orense and Santiago.