

**Question for written answer E-001871/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Jordan Bardella (Pfe)

Subject: EU forking out EUR 123 million for a bridge to be built by a Chinese company in Tunisia

The fact that the contract to build the Bizerte bridge in Tunisia has been awarded to the Chinese company Sichuan Road and Bridge Group has raised concerns about the allocation of public funds to third countries. Costing EUR 200 million in total, the project is primarily financed by a loan of EUR 123 million from the European Investment Bank.

With the EU being one of the main donors, one has to question the transparency of the selection processes and the relevance of using EU funds to support non-EU companies, especially in a context where China is stepping up its efforts to establish itself in North Africa through the New Silk Routes Initiative.

1. What control mechanisms has the Commission put in place to ensure that priority is given to allocating EU funds to European companies in international projects?
2. How will it ensure greater transparency in the award of contracts financed by the EU abroad?
3. How will it strengthen Mediterranean cooperation while ensuring that European companies are better positioned in future EU-funded projects in third countries?

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