

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001950/24
to the Commission
Ana Miranda Paz (Verts/ALE)
(3 October 2024)**

Subject: Tunnel expansion project in Vigo

The Vigo government has announced the extension of a tunnel in the city centre. The tender for the original tunnel was awarded in 2020 for EUR 13.4 million, which rose to EUR 16.6 million in 2023. Despite initially being a two-year project, the tunnel remains unfinished, with completion now slated for 2026 and forecast to cost EUR 20 million, 63% more than it was first budgeted at.

1. Given that road-traffic alternatives have been in place for the past few years, and that one of the aims of the Green Deal is to reduce the use of private vehicles in city centres, would the Commission agree that these works are unnecessary and contradictory?
2. The works are contingent on an increase in funding that will ostensibly come from a reallocation of EU funds, all for a project that will not improve the air quality in a city that exceeds the EU's 2030 legal limits for pollution. Does the Commission plan to monitor this likely misuse of EU funds?

Submitted: 3.10.2024

**Answer given by Ms Ferreira on behalf of the European Commission
(19 November 2024)**

1. The Commission understands that the Honourable Member of Parliament refers to the Elduayen tunnel in Vigo. The Commission upholds the advantages of public transport and active mobility over the use of private vehicles, in particular in urban areas. EU funding instruments such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) help Member States and regions to improve sustainable multimodal urban mobility. Notwithstanding this, in accordance with the subsidiarity principle, it is for the competent national authorities, to assess the necessity or redundancy of works that fall under their competence.
2. According to the information received from the Spanish authorities, the ERDF and the RRF have not supported the construction or extension of the concerned tunnel in Vigo. The revised Ambient Air Quality Directive sets new EU air quality standards to be attained by 2030, but it is within the margin of discretion of Member States to decide how these are to be achieved, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. If, over the coming years, air pollution levels are higher than the new 2030 standards Member States need to carefully analyse whether they are on track to comply with the legislation on time and take the appropriate measures to ensure compliance by 2030. The air quality zone of which Vigo is part of is ES1221, which reported compliance with current air quality standards ⁽¹⁾ for the last year for which officially reported data is available (2023).

⁽¹⁾ Established under Directive 2004/107/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2004 relating to arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air, OJ L 23, 26.1.2005, p. 3-16, and Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe, OJ L 152, 11.6.2008, p. 1-44.