

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002113/24
to the Commission
Estrella Galán (The Left)
(16 October 2024)**

Subject: Potential loss of a historic site in Oviedo: European funding for soil decontamination at the old gas and electricity factory

Just as the platform Fábrica de Gas e Ideas and the municipal group IU-Convocatoria por Oviedo have warned, the planned renovation works at the old gas and electricity factory in Oviedo — including its demolition and decontamination — could lead to the loss of a historic site and of the opportunity to restore it. The entire premises would then be handed over to public use, as Rome, Athens and Glasgow have already done.

In the urban speculation project that threatens the conservation and restoration of this site, which holds irrefutable cultural value, a schedule of works is to be carried out by the private company Ginkgo Advisor to decontaminate the soil and water.

Given that this decontamination must be done in full compliance with the relevant EU legislation and that the demolition, besides entailing an enormous loss of cultural heritage, could result in health repercussions:

1. Has the European Commission been informed of the planned renovation of the old factory?
2. Could the Commission clarify if it has granted European funds for any part of the special plan to renovate the interior of the gas factory in Oviedo?
3. Is the Commission aware that the company Ginkgo Advisor is receiving European funds to decontaminate the site at issue?

Submitted: 16.10.2024

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(17 December 2024)**

The EU is committed to the preservation of cultural heritage of European significance, in accordance with Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, which provides that the conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance are primarily a national responsibility, and that action by the EU is limited to encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action.

In view of pursuing the policy of healthy soils defined by the EU Soil Strategy for 2030 ⁽¹⁾, the proposed Soil Monitoring Law ⁽²⁾, currently undergoing interinstitutional negotiations between the co-legislators, envisages an obligation on the Member States to address unacceptable risks for human health and the environment from contaminated sites by taking risk reduction measures.

Without prejudice to the Commission's role as guardian of the Treaties, Member States are primarily responsible to ensure compliance with EU law and investigate potential breaches of the relevant rules.

1. The Commission was not informed about the planned renovation of the former gas and electricity factory in the city of Oviedo.
2. -3. According to the information received from the Spanish authorities, the European Regional Development Fund ⁽³⁾ and the Just Transition Fund ⁽⁴⁾ have not supported and are not expected to support any part of the special plan to renovate the interior of the gas factory in Oviedo. No funding has been given by the European Investment Bank ⁽⁵⁾ for this project either.

⁽¹⁾ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/eu-soil-strategy-2030_en

⁽²⁾ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-directive-soil-monitoring-and-resilience_en

⁽³⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/erdf_en

⁽⁴⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/just-transition-fund_en

⁽⁵⁾ <https://www.eib.org/en/index>