

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000337/25
to the Commission
Nicolás González Casares (S&D)
(27 January 2025)**

Subject: Use of EU funds by the Regional Government of Galicia in heritage protection areas incompatible with other local authority projects

Local authorities are using EU funds to build a cycle path through a Unesco World Heritage Site in the area around the Banquete de Conxo Forest. The project involves building on important parts of the natural area, in the same place where Santiago de Compostela Council has launched a project to restore the natural environment.

The project not only breaches important heritage protections, but also runs counter to the aims of the project implemented by the local authorities. This may mean EU funds are being used improperly, even leading the EPPO to open a case to look into the matter.

1. Is the Commission aware of the dual contradicting uses of EU funds in this case, and in the Commission's view, what consequences could that contradicting use of funds in a single area have?
2. Are there specific safeguards for using funds in areas under certified heritage protection?
3. What specific tools does the Commission have or plan to introduce to avoid similar situations arising in the future?

Submitted: 27.1.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto on behalf of the European Commission
(16 April 2025)**

According to the information provided by the national authorities, the project has not been financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Based on public information, there are indications that the project referred to by the Honourable Member may be financed by the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF).

However, the Commission has no prior knowledge regarding the specific case at hand and its status. It works closely with the Member States to implement the recovery and resilience plans, and the implementation of specific projects resulting from the plans lies first with the relevant Member States.

Therefore, we encourage the Honourable Member to also contact the relevant national administration to enquire about this specific project.

Should the nature and the RRF funding of this project be confirmed, it should be noted that the RRF is a performance-based instrument.

Therefore, disbursements are made only if the milestones and targets established in the annex of the Council Implementing Decision⁽¹⁾ approving the plan are satisfactorily fulfilled. Member States are primarily responsible to ensure that RRF investments are implemented in line with EU and national law.

Article 18 of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation⁽²⁾ also generally provides that the Commission and the Member States should ensure effective coordination between the RRF and other EU programmes and ensure complementarity, synergy, coherence and consistency among different instruments at EU, national and, where appropriate, regional levels.

⁽¹⁾ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10150-2021-ADD-1-REV-1/en/pdf>

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/241/oj/eng>