

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001629/25
to the Commission
Rosa Serrano Sierra (S&D)
(23 April 2025)

Subject: Transport poverty in rural areas and the need for regional strategies

Transport poverty — the paucity or absence of available and accessible transport services and infrastructure — is one of the critical challenges that rural areas in the EU are grappling with, as it hinders rural communities' access to essential services (education, healthcare, etc.) and makes them more isolated.

Some regional authorities offer few or no transport solutions in our towns and villages, particularly in the most remote areas, either denying residents the right to live there or causing the social exclusion of those who are determined to stay.

This situation is at odds with the EU's cohesion principle and runs counter to the Commission's objective of strengthening the social dimension of mobility with a view to addressing transport poverty and improving access for isolated rural areas.

In view of the above:

1. Will the Commission put forward measures to meaningfully address mobility-related issues in rural areas in the next EU recommendation on transport poverty?
2. Does the Commission believe that improving transport connections could make rural areas less disadvantaged?
3. Does the Commission agree that it is important to outline strategies at the regional level, especially in cross-border territories, to ensure that all areas can count on an adequate number of quality connections?

Submitted: 23.4.2025

Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission
(10 July 2025)

Transport poverty is indeed a serious problem in many rural areas. In its Recommendation on transport poverty ⁽¹⁾, the Commission puts forward different policy measures to Member States that should, if implemented, contribute to mitigating transport poverty in rural areas.

The Commission shares the view that improvement in transport services can further benefit the economic development of rural and structurally weak regions.

The Commission's long-term vision for Europe's rural areas ⁽²⁾ calls on Member States and regions to develop sustainable rural mobility strategies, with the overall objective of creating 'stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040'.

Preventing and mitigating transport poverty is also one of the priorities in the development of the European transport network, and for EU support instruments such as Cohesion policy funds including Interreg, Recovery and Resilience Facility, and the Social Climate Fund, to ensure seamless mobility and accessibility for all users.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reco/2025/1021/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ COM (2021) 345 final, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2021/06/30-06-2021-long-term-vision-for-rural-areas-for-stronger-connected-resilient-prosperous-eu-rural-areas.