(English version)

Question for written answer E-001694/25
to the Commission
Ilhan Kyuchyuk (Renew)
(28 April 2025)

Subject: Ensuring proper connectivity between Rudozem, Bulgaria and Xanthi, Greece

On 20 June 1995, an agreement was signed between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Hellenic Republic to open three new border crossing points (BCPs) and their adjoining road links no later than the end of 1998.

Bulgaria has completed work on a new road section and the Rudozem-Xanthi BCP, thereby completely fulfilling its commitment to construct and put into service the last of the three BCPs agreed with the Hellenic Republic.

The Hellenic Republic claims that the road has not been completed — despite being co-financed with funds from the EU's interregional cooperation programme Interreg Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020, with a final reporting deadline of 31 March 2025 — and, instead, a metal fence and concrete barriers have been erected on the Greek side, making it impossible to cross the border, even on foot.

Given that Bulgaria has been a full member of the Schengen area since 1 January 2025:

1. How does the Commission view the fact that the long-awaited Rudozem-Xanthi road section remains inaccessible to transport, in view of the commitments under the Schengen Borders Code?

2. What does the Commission estimate the lost benefits arising from this delay to be in terms of failing to reduce transport pressure or comply to with Vision Zero for reducing road accident victims by 2050?

3. What immediate steps will the Commission take to make transit possible and ensure proper connectivity between Rudozem and Xanthi?

Submitted: 28.4.2025

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

1. The Commission is aware of the situation concerning the Rudozem-Xanthi Road section, which forms part of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) comprehensive network and has addressed the situation with Greece. The timely development of this infrastructure is important for improving cross-border connectivity and is relevant in the context of the Schengen Borders Code. The Commission underlines the responsibility of the Member States concerned to ensure that infrastructure projects are delivered in line with their commitments under the TEN-T Regulation ([1]), which foresees the completion of the comprehensive network by 2050.

2. Delays in making this cross-border section operational may affect progress towards key policy goals, including the reduction of transport pressure on other corridors and improvements in road safety. While the Commission has not carried out a specific assessment of the economic or social impacts of this particular delay, well-functioning transport links are known to contribute to both regional development and the objectives of the EU's Vision Zero strategy ([2]), which aims to eliminate road deaths by 2050.

3. The Commission encourages the competent national authorities to take the necessary steps to address the outstanding issues and ensure that this section of the TEN-T network becomes fully operational. Continued dialogue and coordination between the Member States concerned remain essential to achieve proper cross-border connectivity in line with the broader objectives of the TEN-T policy.

([1]) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1679/oj/eng.
([2]) https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/document/download/1c3740d6-a8bf-4be8-b4b2-ad6324299dfe_en?filename=H2020%20Transport-Road%20Safety%202022-web.pdf.