

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002722/25
to the Commission
Isilda Gomes (S&D)
(3 July 2025)**

Subject: Portugal-Spain cross-border connection project in Alcoutim and recovery and resilience plan deadline of 30 June 2026

Portugal included in its recovery and resilience plan (RRP) two cross-border connections with Spain in sparsely populated areas. One of them is the long-awaited bridge between Alcoutim and Sanlúcar de Guadiana, some 3 kilometres long, over the Guadiana river, connecting the Algarve to Andalusia. The project, set to receive an estimated EUR 15 million in investment, seeks to infuse new life into border areas.

Although the Municipality of Alcoutim has been ready since August 2024 to launch the tender for the works, the bilateral agreement between Portugal and Spain was only signed in October 2024 and ratified by the two countries in 2025. Publication in the Official State Gazette (Spain) is imminent.

Only a fortnight after it is published will the joint technical committee be able to meet to approve the final design, a step which is essential for launching the call for tenders. The work is expected to take 18 months, missing the current RRP deadline for concluding projects of 30 June 2026.

I would therefore like to ask the Commission whether it would be possible to:

1. extend the deadline for completion of the project;
2. finance the project through RRP loans with extended terms; or
3. integrate the project into the current multiannual financial framework 2021-2027?

Submitted: 3.7.2025

**Answer given by Mr Dombrovskis on behalf of the European Commission
(1 August 2025)**

The bridge between Alcoutim and Sanlúcar de Guadiana is part of Investment RE-C07-i03: Cross-border links of the Portuguese recovery and resilience plan (RRP). It is financed by loans. The European Commission is working closely with Portugal on the implementation of Portugal's RRP.

The regulation establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) states that the deadline to complete all reforms and investments, including those financed by loans, is 31 August 2026.

This means that any action taken by Member States after that date cannot be considered for the assessment of milestones and targets.

As per the regulation, all RRF disbursements must be made by 31 December 2026. This holds for measures financed by both grants and loans and there is no exception possible.

To mitigate possible delays, Member States should comprehensively review their RRP as soon as possible to ensure all milestones and targets can be implemented by the 31 August 2026 deadline.

Member States should explore replacing measures which cannot be fulfilled by the deadline to safeguard their RRP allocation. For more information, please see NextGenerationEU — The road to 2026, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, of 4 June 2025 ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/ad5f00c9-4101-41a0-9d8f-e78f06c0c7ed_en?filename=COM_2025_310_1_EN_ACT_part1_v8.pdf.