

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002817/26
to the Commission
Emma Fourreau (The Left)
(8 July 2026)**

Subject: Withdrawal of funding for the Seine-Nord Europe canal

The Seine-Nord Europe canal is one of the largest transport infrastructure projects co-funded by the European Union. Its construction will have significant environmental consequences, increasing land take and reducing biodiversity. Those environmental issues are compounded by significant delays and skyrocketing costs, which call into question the viability of the project.

According to a recent report by the European Court of Auditors ⁽¹⁾, the project is estimated to cost a total of EUR 5.1 billion — and might even end up costing more than that. For its part, the French Court of Auditors now estimates the project cost to be between EUR 8.38 billion and EUR 10.53 billion before tax ⁽²⁾.

The project is heavily reliant on EU funding, which currently amounts to around 40% of the eligible expenditure. In fact, several people in charge of the project have stressed that ‘Europe is the project’s life insurance’ ⁽³⁾.

Given the environmental impact, the budget overruns observed and the project’s dependence on EU funding, does the Commission intend to stop providing financial support for the Seine-Nord Europe canal?

Submitted: 8.7.2026

**Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission
(10 September 2026)**

The Commission takes note of the Honourable Member’s concerns regarding the Seine-Nord Europe canal. The Seine-Escaut cross-border global project, mainly on the North Sea-Rhine-Mediterranean European Transport Corridor, aims to complete a wide-gauge inland waterway link between France, Belgium and the Netherlands to better connect their sea and inland ports. It has the potential to improve inland waterway transport thus reducing emissions of air pollutants and noise of transport.

The Seine-Escaut project was included in the annexes on pre-identified projects on the Trans-European Transport network (TEN-T) core network of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) 2014-2020 and CEF 2021-2027 Regulations — adopted by the European Parliament and the Council.

The project is making solid progress and its promoters in France and Belgium are working together closely under the coordination of France’s Ministère de la Transition Écologique.

Up until the present date, approximately EUR 528 million has been invested in this project under CEF 2014-2020 (at a 43% co-financing rate) and EUR 1,083 billion are allocated under CEF 2021-2027 (at a 50% co-financing rate).

The Commission included the Seine-Escaut project in the indicative list of projects of common interest with cross-border dimension under the CEF 2028-2034 proposal.

This is now being negotiated by the co-legislators. In line with current practice, the CEF 2028-2034 proposal envisages direct management by the Commission based on competitive calls for proposals.

¹ <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/publications?ref=SR-2026-02>

² <https://www.ccomptes.fr/fr/publications/la-construction-du-canal-seine-nord-europe-et-ses-consequences>

³ https://www.contexte.com/fr/article/transports/canal-seine-nord-europe-un-chantier-fleuve-et-intranquille_259893