



22.10.2024

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Subject: Petition No 0398/2024 by Fernando Mínguez (Spanish) on the environmental consequences of EU-funded projects in Cuenca, Spain

1. Summary of petition

The petitioner denounces the fact that the government of Castilla-La Mancha has devised a project to attract more people to live in the city. The project will involve an investment of over 15.6 million euro funded by the Next GenerationEU Recovery Plan. It will include six escalators and six elevators to ensure universal accessibility. According to the petitioner, despite assurances of minimal visual impact, the project has begun with the destruction of all trees. In his opinion, this action contradicts the government's commitment to protect and preserve Cuenca's heritage and goes against the ecological priorities of the NextGenerationEU funding. The petitioner criticises the Castilla-La Mancha government for violating the ecological goals of the Recovery and Resilience Plan and calls on the EU institutions to ensure that the project respects the intended ecological purpose of the funding mechanism.

2. Admissibility

Declared admissible on 5 July 2024. Information requested from Commission under Rule 233(5).

3. Commission reply, received on 22 October 2024

Commission's observations

The petition submitted relates to a project in the city center of Cuenca involving an investment of over 15.6 million euro, funded by the Next GenerationEU Recovery Plan, to include six escalators and six elevators to ensure universal accessibility, and promoting sustainable

mobility, including in urban and metropolitan areas.

This action is part of the Spanish Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP), under Component 1, investment 1¹. In the Council Implementing Decision of the related investment, the Commission took into account Spain's commitments in relation to compliance with the Do-No-Significant-Harm (DNSH) principle. In relation to environmental objectives, Spain indicated that actions would not require large civil works and therefore vulnerability in relation to environmental objectives would not be increased.

Conclusion

The Commission will assess the related target linked to the above-mentioned investment in due course when Spain submits a payment request for the relevant part of the RRP. The Commission notes nevertheless that the primary responsibility with ensuring compliance Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) conditions, including compliance with the DNSH principles lies with Member States.

¹ see Annex to the Council Implementing Decision - [com\(2024\) 185 final annex](#)