WRITTEN QUESTION E-0616/02
by Concepción Ferrer (PPE-DE) to the Commission
(5 March 2002)

Subject: Interreg III

The Inforegio/News bulletin of January 2002 reports that the Commission has approved 36 Interreg III programmes. According to the newsletter, these include a Spain/France programme with a contribution of €84.3 million.

Can the Commission provide information on this programme's objectives and the territory covered?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2002)

On 13 December 2001 the Commission approved the Interreg III A Community Initiative programme 'Spain/France' (1), to which the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) will contribute €84.3 million.

The programme concerns the Spanish border provinces of Girona, Guipúzcoa, Huesca, Lleida and Navarre and the French departments of Ariège, Haute-Garonne, Hautes-Pyrénées, Pyrénées-Atlantiques and Pyrénées-Orientales. The following areas, which do not lie on the border and where the measures to be financed do not account for more than 20% of total expenditure under the programme, may also benefit: Barcelona, Tarragona, Zaragoza, Rioja, Vizcaya and Álava, in Spain, and Aude, Tarn, Tarn-et-Garonne, Gers and Landes, in France.

Following an examination of the area and its socio-economic characteristics, the two Member States and the regions concerned, in partnership with the Commission, agreed to establish the following three priorities (plus technical assistance) for the programme:

- structuring and strengthening cross-border areas (including the joint management of the countryside, the prevention of natural disasters, urban and rural development and improved cross-border transport and infrastructure);
- expanding activity and employment (including the development of cross-border tourism, the exploitation of local products, research and the transfer of technologies and the stimulation of cross-border economic activity);
- open and supportive societies: exchanges, social integration and equal opportunities (including the promotion of joint training, the development of joint instruments for employment, health, equal opportunities for men and women and joint action on culture).

The Commission believes that this programme could make a significant contribution to improving cross-border cooperation in the Pyrénées in economic, cultural and institutional terms, and that it offers an opportunity to solve the problems which have sometimes hindered the development of these areas.


WRITTEN QUESTION E-0630/02
by Alexander de Roo (Verts/ALE) and Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE-DE) to the Commission
(6 March 2002)

Subject: Requirement to achieve results under the Water Framework Directive

On 23 October 2000, the Water Framework Directive entered into force. Member States are required to transpose it into national law in 2003 at the latest. In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Transport and