

(98/C 102/67)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2482/97**by Ludivina García Arias (PSE) to the Commission***(16 July 1997)*

Subject: Support for the activities of the associations of maritime regions, the coal industry and the textiles industry

Each year in the debate on the budget, Parliament repeats an amendment to line B5-411: Industrial competitiveness strategy for the European Union (Section III — Commission — Part B — Operating appropriations) adding the words 'to support the activities of the associations of maritime regions, the coal industry and the textiles industry, such as EURACOM and ACTE'.

Can the Commission provide detailed information on the expenditure which it has authorized in the past three years (1995, 1996 and 1997), the activities authorized, the criteria applied by the Commission in granting authorization and the procedure to be followed in requesting such funding?

Answer given by Mr Bangemann on behalf of the Commission*(29 September 1997)*

The Commission, in its capacity as the institution responsible for authorising appropriations shown under budget heading B5-411, is indeed aware of the Parliamentary amendment tabled since 1995 in the debate on the budget and has taken this into account when using the funds allocated. Accordingly, the Commission has responded favourably each year to the request from the association of European maritime regions by allocating a subsidy of ECU 100 000 in 1995 and ECU 100 000 in 1996. The amount to be allocated for 1997 is currently being examined in the course of discussions between the association and the Commission. The amount of the subsidy could be higher than for previous years.

As regards the textile and clothing industry, the Commission has provided cofinancing, over the last three years, amounting to some ECU 140 000 in respect of four projects conducted by the association of European textile corporations (ACTE) and the local authorities affiliated to ACTE.

As regards the other aspect of the amendment applicable to the coalmining areas, the Commission is ready to give favourable consideration to requests for financing in support of actions organised by the European association for coalmining areas (EURACOM) between now and the end of 1997.

(98/C 102/68)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2483/97**by Luciano Pettinari (GUE/NGL) to the Commission***(16 July 1997)*

Subject: Interreg II and the port of Monopoli

The Apulian port of Monopoli is one of the most important points of contact between Italy and Albania and thus serves as a major link between the territory of the European Union and Tirana. Precisely for that reason the port of Monopoli was included among the sites that would benefit from the Interreg 2 development programme (Italy-Albania) and receive considerable Community funding. Following a series of high-level contacts between the commune of Monopoli, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic and the region of Apulia the port was definitively selected as a beneficiary project of Interreg 2; but for no apparent reason the Commission informed the commune of Monopoli on 22 May 1997 that the port was to be excluded from Interreg 2. This appears to be undue interference in the autonomous choices that are the preserve of political bodies; given the natural and obvious value of the port of Monopoli in the development of EU-Albania relations, why is the Commission excluding the port of Monopoli from the list of beneficiaries of Interreg 2? Does the Commission not intend to grant the port at least part of the funds available since if the entire amount were given to Bari it would undoubtedly exceed requirements? What sites in the region of Apulia have been selected as recipients of Interreg 2 funds and what were the selection criteria?