

**Question for written answer E-000358/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Monitoring of border crossings at the Gibraltar/Spanish frontier

On 15 November 2013, the Commission presented the conclusions of its investigation into the events at the Spain/Gibraltar border. The Commission commented in its letter to the Spanish Government that the actions by the Spanish authorities had created a bottle-neck effect, as six queues of traffic waiting to pass through the border were funnelled into one single lane. The Spanish Government was asked to streamline its border-crossing procedures, improve the infrastructure available to do so, increase the number of lanes available and adopt a more intelligence-driven investigative method in combating cross-border smuggling. Spain was even offered funds to help meet the costs of improving its border facilities.

We are now two months on from these conclusions and residents in Gibraltar are still suffering from unnecessary queues and random harassment. There seems to be little activity or desire to improve matters on the Spanish side of the border. By contrast, the Gibraltar authorities have already announced that they will carry out outbound tobacco checks in an effort to implement the Commission's recommendations. I would therefore like to know the following:

1. What steps is the Commission taking to monitor the ongoing situation?
2. Has the Spanish Government submitted any proposals to improve its border-crossing activities?
3. How much money has been made available to the Spanish Government to improve its facilities?
4. Will the Commission be sending a follow-up investigative team to the frontier to monitor progress? If so, when is the team due to be sent or will this be carried out in secret?
5. By what date would the Commission expect progress to be made concerning its recommendations?