

**Priority question for written answer P-000825/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Useless high-speed railway project from Grisignano to Padua

The European Court of Auditors, in its Special Report entitled 'A European high-speed rail network: not a reality but an ineffective patchwork', highlights the recurring phenomenon of costly and ineffective high-speed rail projects with 'insufficient cost-benefit analysis and poorly connected networks.'

This is the case with the Grisignano-Padua high-speed rail section, which consists of two perfectly straight tracks. A complete refurbishment project for this section is both unnecessary and costly, offering only a marginal saving in travel time. The environmental impact assessment for the project dates back to 2006, and there has been a lack of any public debate on the matter. Construction work will have a serious impact on citizens and threatens many businesses with closure. According to the analysis by RFI, the project sponsor, the cost-benefit analysis shows a negative outcome of EUR 900 million. Additionally, the Bridges Research Trust, an authoritative source, estimates a negative outcome of EUR 2 004.8 million. Finally, there has been no application of the 'do no significant harm' (DNSH) principle as outlined in Regulation (EU) 2021/241¹.

Does the Commission not believe it should hold Italy accountable for this project, given its significant issues and minimal benefits?

Submitted: 19.3.2024

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility, OJ L 57, 18.2.2021, p. 17.