



22.11.2024

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Subject: Petition No 0448/2024 by W. S. (Italian), on behalf of the Comitato NoOvovia, signed by more than 10 530 people, on the allocation of NextGenerationEU funds to the cableway project in Trieste, Italy

1. Summary of petition

The petitioner calls for a review of the allocation of NextGenerationEU Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) funds for the Metropolitan Cableway Trieste – Porto Vecchio – Carso project in Trieste, as the works would not only be infeasible from a practical point of view, for environmental and economic reasons, but also fail to meet the need for efficient public transport. According to the petitioner, the cableway is expected to pass through a number of Natura 2000 areas classified as non-developable and would also pose a high hydrogeological risk. He also points to the negative outcome of the impact assessment (VIncA) carried out in October 2023 and the negative opinions of a number of regional bodies on the project. Furthermore, it would also infringe Directive 2009/147/EC and the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the ‘do no significant harm’ (DNSH) principle, compliance with which is a prerequisite to obtaining the aforementioned funds. In the petitioner’s view, the limited expected benefits such as the CO₂ emission reductions that the project would generate, are negligible from both a national and a global perspective. Also, owing to adverse weather conditions that will allegedly render the cableway inoperable for at least two months a year, it is unsuitable as a means of mass transport and will do nothing to bring down individual car numbers. Lastly, the petitioner states that the project, the cost of which has already increased from an initial 48.7 million euros to more than 63 million euros, is opposed by a large part of the population, which, through committees and associations, has appealed to the Italian courts. The petitioner therefore calls on the EU institutions to halt the project and for the funds for it to be redirected towards initiatives that are sustainable and for the benefit of the community.

2. Admissibility

Declared admissible on 4 July 2024. Information requested from Commission under Rule 233(5).

3. Commission reply, received on 22 November 2024

The Commission's observations

The Commission recalls that it has assessed the compliance of Italy's Recovery and Resilience Plans (RRP) against the "Do No Significant Harm" (DNSH) principle following documentation provided by the Italian authorities and concluded on a positive assessment of the overall Investment 4.2, as endorsed by the Council Implementing Decision approving the Italian RRP¹.

As a rule, and without prejudice to its role as guardian of the Treaties, the Commission does not assess the environmental impact of specific projects within overall investment measures. This is a primary responsibility of the Member States, which are requested to ensure compliance of specific projects with Union and national law, including the environmental *acquis*. Similarly, Member States are primarily responsible for ensuring that DNSH conditions are fully respected at all times, taking into account commitments set out in the submitted RRP in accordance with the DNSH Technical Guidance².

The Commission observes that the investment referenced by the petitioner, namely the cableway project in Trieste, in principle could belong to Investment 4.2 in Mission 2 Component 2 of Italy's Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP), dedicated to the construction and extension of rapid mass transport systems.

As part of the 5th payment request, submitted by Italy in December 2023 and endorsed by the Commission in July 2024, the Commission assessed milestone M2C2-24 pertaining to Investment 4.2, which concerned the award of contracts for rapid mass transport systems.

No contracts concerning the build-up of Trieste cableway were included in the evidence for the assessment of the milestone.

Conclusion

In conclusion, no cableway project in Trieste were presented as part of the assessment of Investment 4.2 in Mission 2 Component 2 of the Recovery and Resilience Plan of Italy.

¹ [COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION](#) on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Italy

² [DNSH technical guidance, amended October 2023 - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)