



16.4.2021

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Subject: Petition No 0506/2018 by E. C. R. (Spanish) on the verification of the use of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for building a new hospital in Cáceres

1. Summary of petition

The petitioner calls upon the European Parliament to verify the use of EU funds that were allegedly assigned to build a new hospital in Cáceres and to examine the contributions from the regional government of Extremadura. From 2006 to 2014 the regional general budget of Extremadura did not commit funds for building the hospital. The EU funds from ERDF sources were instead linked to a general project for the construction, improvement and reforms of health facilities in the region of Extremadura.

2. Admissibility

Declared admissible on 22 November 2018. Information requested from Commission under Rule 216(6).

3. Commission reply, received on 22 February 2019

The petitioner raises the issue of the use of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for building a new hospital in Cáceres in Spain. The petitioner describes in a detailed way the history of the construction of the new hospital, raises concerns about the plan to build the hospital in two stages, which includes the division of the hospital in two buildings situated in two different areas, and asks to verify the use of ERDF and the contributions from the regional government of Extremadura.

The Commission services contacted the national authorities and requested information on the construction of a new hospital in Cáceres and especially on the use of ERDF.

Regarding the ERDF use and according to information received from the Spanish authorities,

for the programming period 2007-2013 six contracts were signed amounting to a total of EUR 51.051.040,41. Total expenditure with a value of EUR 40.782.596,46 was declared admissible out of which 80% was paid by the ERDF (for more details, see table below.)

Operation F2007	Reference number	Date of the signature of the contract	Total adjudication with TVA	Certified expenditure
JARA-200739010024	CS/99/1109021337/09/PA	11-11-2009	1.827.218,85	1.574.856,02
JARA-200739010024	CSE/99/1109053103/09/SPL	26-10-2009	8.145,28	8.233,99
JARA-200739010024	CS/99/1110030462/10/PA	01-12-2010	1.372.384,54	726.105,20
JARA-200839010010	CO/99/1113059565/13/SPL	12-11-2013	12.871,74	12.871,74
JARA-200839010010002001	O-06_014	22-12-2006	46.380.420,00	37.518.546,52
JARA-200839010010010001	AC-06_022	13-02-2007	1.450.000,00	941.982,99

In addition, the Commission is adding to this document the reply it received from Extremadura in which the reasons for the lengthy construction of the hospital and the reasons for building the hospital in two stages are explained. An overview of all contracts signed with regard to the construction of the new hospital can also be found in Annex I.

Conclusion

ERDF support of EUR 40.782.596,46 was used for the construction of the hospital of Cáceres. The hospital is operational since 30 January 2019.



2018 0506 annexe
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4. Commission reply (REV.), received on 30 August 2019

The Commission's observations

A first reply to the petitioner was discussed at the Committee on Petitions meeting on 21 March 2019. As already mentioned in its first reply, the Commission had contacted the national authorities and requested information on the construction of a new hospital in Cáceres and in particular on the use of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Regarding the ERDF use and according to information received from the Spanish authorities, for the programming period 2007-2013 six contracts were signed amounting to a total of EUR 51.051.040,41. Total expenditure with a value of EUR 40.782.596,46 was declared admissible out of which 80% was paid through ERDF (for more details, see table below.)

Operation F2007	Reference number	Date of the signature of the contract	Total adjudication with TVA	Certified expenditure
JARA-200739010024	CS/99/1109021337/09/PA	11-11-2009	1.827.218,85	1.574.856,02

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As a reply to Parliament, the president of the “Junta de Extremadura” described in detail in a letter the infrastructure of the Hospital of Cáceres and added in annex photos of the hospital. The letter enumerates the building areas, the number of rooms, the number of operating theatres, the laboratories, the radiotherapy services, the radiology, other technical services (such as the sterilisation unit, the anatomical pathology unit, and the endoscopy unit), outpatient medical consultation services, different treatment rooms, and the emergency services.

Conclusion

ERDF support of EUR 40.782.596,46 was used for the construction of the hospital of Cáceres. According to the information provided by the Spanish authorities, the hospital is a “real hospital” and fully operational and not only a place with ambulatory services.

5. Further reply from the Commission (REV. II), received on 16 April 2021

The petition The petitioner raised the issue of the use of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for building a new hospital in Cáceres in Spain. He formulated concerns about delays and the plan to build the hospital in two stages that entails the division of the hospital into two different buildings. He asked to verify the use of ERDF and the contributions from the regional government of Extremadura.

A first reply to the petitioner was discussed at the Committee on Petitions meeting on 21 March 2019. During the debate, objections were raised over the hospital of Cáceres being only partially functioning for ambulatory visits, and that it did not dispose of the basic services that a hospital should provide. The petition remained open. After the meeting, the Committee on Petitions had sent a letter to the government of Extremadura in order to urge for the completion of the hospital to which the President of the “Junta de Extremadura” replied on 27 June 2019. A final reply was sent to the Committee on Petitions on 30 August 2019 and the petition was closed.

Being not satisfied with the reply received, the petitioner requested a re-opening of the petition in October 2019.

The petition was discussed a second time in the Committee on Petitions at its meeting of 3 December 2019. The Commission participated in the meeting, explaining that the Commission services had taken note of the additional information sent by the petitioner pointing to the fact that the hospital, which had received financial support from ERDF, was not fully operational, and had sent a request for additional information to the competent authorities in Spain. The Commission services also clarified that, since a reply was pending, they could not provide any

further comment or clarification at the moment of the Committee on Petitions meeting. The Commission services also pointed out that the new request was aimed at clarifying the only point of concern to the Commission which was the fact that ERDF had been used for its declared purpose

The chair of the Committee on Petitions decided to keep the petition open.

The Commission's observations

The Commission services had contacted again the competent authorities in Spain enquiring about the use of ERDF for the construction of the new hospital in Cáceres and asking for confirmation that the hospital was operational.

As already portrayed in its previous written observations of August 2019, the Commission services had received a chronological overview of ERDF support for the construction of a new hospital in Cáceres (in EUR) (ERDF covers 80% of the certified expenditure).

In addition, the Commission services had also received a detailed explanation about the hospital of Cáceres ("*Información complementaria sobre el estado actual del Nuevo hospital de Cáceres*") which was sent to the Committee on Petitions. Finally, at the end of 2019 the competent Spanish authorities sent an overview confirming that the project "*Construcción Nuevo Hospital de Cáceres*" (financed under priority axis 6 during the programming period 2007-2013, project reference JARA-20083901001000201) which had been declared a "non-functional project" in the past, was functional and operational ("*en servicio*") since 30 January 2019. The authorities also sent again an explanation about the reasons for the delayed construction of the hospital, which was attached in the Commission's first observations sent in March 2019.

Conclusion

According to the information received from the competent Spanish authorities, ERDF support of EUR 40.782.596,46 (80% co-financing) was used for the construction of a new hospital in Cáceres. The hospital is operational since one year.