

Ptuj, 26. 08. 2023

Civil Initiative FOR the construction of the Ptuj Bypass Road
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European Commission
Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels, Belgium

Subject: Violation of the Agreement between the Republic of Slovenia and the European Economic Community in the field of transport

Dear Sir/Madam,

We write to you on behalf of the Civil Initiative for the Ptuj Bypass. We represent a group of residents living along Ormoška Road - Spuhlja, road section **G1-2/0249 Ptuj – Spuhlja and R1-228/1291 Spuhlja - Zavrč**, who face daily congestion due to intense traffic that far exceeds its capacity.

Our primary concern is the violation of the Law on the Ratification of the Agreement between the Republic of Slovenia and the European Economic Community in the field of transport (Official Gazette of the RS – International treaties, No. 14/93). This commitment specifically states that the motorway should run along the route Maribor - Ptuj - Ormož - Ljutomer. Despite over twenty years of commitment, this has not been realized, infringing the rights of approximately 1,200 residents living directly alongside the road that a new transport route should alleviate.

Every day, we witness about half of the freight vehicles from the Adriatic TEN-T corridor (Ptuj-Gruškovje motorway) diverting through Ptuj town and villages past our homes. The traffic on our road even exceeds the total number of vehicles entering the Republic of Slovenia in Lendava.

A new TEN-T corridor from Serbia through the Republic of Croatia is on the horizon, which will connect with the network in Slovenia near Ormož, most likely in Središče ob Dravi. This will undoubtedly further burden an already overloaded section.

The Republic of Slovenia has not allocated any funds for road improvements or bypass construction in its upcoming five-year budget. As a result, we are forced to seek help from European institutions and others who might assist.

Noise and air pollution are causing numerous health problems among our members. Living alongside such a busy road is a constant risk, and our children are deprived of a normal life

since they have to share the same driving lane with trucks, as some parts of the road do not even have sidewalks, let alone bicycle paths.

In Spuhlja, two transport routes **R1-228/1291 Spuhlja – Zavrč** and **G1-2/250 Spuhlja- Ormož** merge, leading through the UNESCO-protected city of Ptuj (**G1-2/0249 Spuhlja- Ptuj/Budina** and then on **R1-229/0248 Ptuja/Budina-Ptuj/center**), further increasing the negative impact on the quality of life and cultural heritage.

We also highlight that the lack of the mentioned motorway causes a developmental stagnation in our region and also hinders the development of neighboring Croatian counties. Due to limited accessibility, our economic opportunities and socio-economic development are severely restricted.

We are desperate. We trusted the commitment of the Republic of Slovenia upon joining the EU. Today, after more than twenty years, we cannot live normally because of this unfulfilled promise. As residents, we are not wealthy enough to afford a new living environment. Across the EU, transit freight traffic has been removed from urban centers, but in our case, international transit traffic still runs through residential areas and increases significantly year by year.

The European Court has, in several cases, confirmed the obligation of Member States to provide appropriate infrastructure and reduce the negative impacts of traffic on the environment and human health. Court practices, such as cases C-142/16 Commission v. Germany, C-196/13 Dieter Janecek v. Freistaat Bayern, and C-404/13 and C-428/13 ClientEarth v. the United Kingdom, clearly show that the European Union has a legal basis for action if a Member State does not fulfill its obligations.

We believe that the European Commission, as the guardian of EU treaties, should respond to our concerns and act against the Republic of Slovenia, which violates its commitments from the Traffic Agreement and does not respect its obligations in accordance with European environmental and human rights legislation.

Awaiting your response, we send our best regards.

With respect,

**Civil Initiative for the Ptuj Bypass Road
Sergeja Puppis Freebairn, President**

