

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4937/08  
by Marco Rizzo (GUE/NGL)  
to the Commission

Subject: Educational reform in Italy

The recent educational reform introduced in Italy by Decree Law No 112 of 25 June 2008 penalises the weakest sections of society and most disadvantaged regions. It constitutes a frontal attack on educational standards, providing for huge staff cuts. It seeks to hide the fact by providing, as in the past, for only one schoolteacher for elementary classes, without mentioning that this will mean the loss of 100 000 jobs, according to recent estimates. The decree also severely penalises disabled pupils who, under the presidential decree of 24 February 1994, are entitled to specialised teaching to meet their special learning, therapeutic and rehabilitation needs. In view of the drastic cuts in specialised teaching staff provided for in the latest decree, it will be impossible to meet the needs of such pupils.

1. Will the Commission make representations to the Italian authorities, asking them to ensure that the right to education be guaranteed for the most disadvantaged citizens, including disabled persons?
2. Does the Commission not consider that, if the current Italian educational reform does in practice lead to a drastic reduction in the number of teachers and, hence teaching standards, especially in the country's most disadvantaged regions, it will be in breach of a whole range of Community human rights standards?