

**Question for written answer E-004970/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Ignazio Corrao (EFDD) and Dario Tamburrano (EFDD)

Subject: Pantelleria - information concerning the possibility of establishing a European free-trade zone

Pantelleria, an Italian island lying 110 km off the coast of Sicily and 70 km from Tunisia, is a geothermal site without parallel in the Mediterranean. It has a population of less than 8 000 and, as of 1 January 2014, a negative rate of natural increase, while per capita income stands at EUR 8 000 – 78 % less than the European average. Additional causes for concern are the youth unemployment rate, high prices, and persistent monopolies on the supply and sale of goods and services.

In addition to mirroring the economic crisis that has affected the whole of the EU, this state of affairs can be largely attributed to a lack of adequate strategic infrastructures which are invaluable to an island community – namely a well-organised port, effective air links and an internal market capable of supporting the island's potential.

In light of Regulation (EU) No 952/2013, and given the important role played by free-trade zones in low-diversity economies which are incredibly vulnerable to the dangers of monopolies and recessions, can the Commission please answer the following questions:

- Is it aware of the current economical and social situation on Pantelleria, and how does it plan to remedy it?
- Has it received a request from the Italian Government for a free-trade zone to be established on Pantelleria, and will it consider this option?
- Taking the geothermal energy project as a precedent (a possibility for sustainable development for the whole of the Mediterranean), are there any other pilot projects in the pipeline?