

Question for written answer E-014045/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Daniela Aiuto (EFDD)

Subject: Banca della Terra agricultural development scheme

According to a study carried out by the Institute for European Environmental Policy, large swathes of farmland in the European Union have been abandoned over the last few decades. Figures updated in August 2015 show that the unemployment rate in the EU stands at 9.5%, with youth unemployment at 20.4%. In many of the regions hit hardest by unemployment, significant stretches of farmland have been abandoned or are underused. Plans for a *Banca della Terra* (land bank) scheme under which prospective farmers will be given access to unused land in their region have already been approved in eight Italian regions, the most recent being Abruzzo. This scheme will stimulate growth in the agricultural sector and help to reduce unemployment.

1. Would the Commission not agree that schemes of this kind should be introduced Europe-wide in order to reverse the fortunes of the agricultural sector and combat unemployment in all the Member States?
2. Would it not agree that more EU funds should be invested in the agricultural sector so as to increase the industry's productivity and unlock its potential, including through schemes such as *Banca della Terra*?