

**Question for written answer E-000836/2018
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Damiano Zoffoli (S&D)

Subject: The Europe Direct network for 2018-2020

In 2018 the Commission has renewed the Europe Direct (ED) Network for the period 2018-2020. In Italy, following the call for proposals COMM/ROM/ED/2018-2020, the number of centres selected was significantly lower than the previous number of over 50.

The region of Emilia-Romagna is the sixth Italian region in terms of size and number of inhabitants. The number of centres there has been reduced from four to two, leaving Romagna without any centre at all. In this part of the region, a centre on the Forlì Campus of the University of Bologna had been operational. It had been recognised as a JM Centre of Excellence by the Commission and some of its activities had been recognised as ED network best practices.

Of the centres being funded, three are in Umbria (which is 16th in terms of size and 17th in terms of population) or in Abruzzo (13th and 14th).

Can the Commission therefore say:

1. why it wishes to reduce the number of Europe Direct Information Centres (EDICs) when there is a need for more information on the EU locally;
2. why the work done by EDICs that were previously operational has not been assessed;
3. what objective criteria have been used to implement the provisions of paragraph 9.2 'Geographical balance' of the call for proposals, the wording of which is not clear?