

**Question for written answer E-002138/2019
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Alitalia - what guarantees does the Commission have from the Italy that it will do things differently and turn the 'new Alitalia' in an efficient airline?

In the 1970s and 1980s, Alitalia used to be profitable, but in a protected, monopolistic market. Ever since the market was opened up to competition, Alitalia has lost money^{1 2}.

Alitalia has suffered from mismanagement, political interference and militant unions. More recently, it lost much of its former core market – domestic flights – to low-cost airlines and high-speed trains³.

Alitalia filed for insolvency but kept operating because it received loans from the state, which have totalled EUR 900 million. The loan should have been a temporary lifeline, but it has been extended again and again.

By January 2019, the Italian railways were originally meant to finalise its takeover offer for Alitalia. Yet the date was pushed back twice, first to 31 March 2019 and then to 30 April 2019⁴.

Ferrovie dello Stato are expected to bid for 30 % of Alitalia; another 15 % should be covered by the Italian ministry of the economy. The latter will become a shareholder as partial reimbursement for the state loan. The US company Delta is reportedly interested in another 15 %.

1. Alitalia will have to repay the state loans, as stipulated by EU antitrust rules. How long is the Commission prepared to wait, knowing that there are more efficient airlines that offer better prices to consumers?
2. What guarantees does the Commission have from Italy that it will do things differently and turn the 'new Alitalia' in an efficient airline , so as to not waste any more taxpayer money?

¹ <http://www.dpa-international.com/topic/urn:newsml:dpa.com:20090101:190417-99-864396>

² <http://www.dpa-international.com/topic/urn:newsml:dpa.com:20090101:190417-99-864396>

³ <http://www.dpa-international.com/topic/urn:newsml:dpa.com:20090101:190417-99-864396>

⁴ <http://www.dpa-international.com/topic/urn:newsml:dpa.com:20090101:190417-99-864396>