

COMMITTEE ON BUDGETARY CONTROL



Report on the fact finding mission to Sicily and Calabria of a delegation from the Committee on Budgetary Control (CONT), 27 - 30 April 2008



Executive summary and recommendations:

Findings:

- * *First level control systems in Member States are generally ineffective or only moderately effective; a number of national and regional authorities do not manage EU funds with sufficient attention; in the 2006 audit sample of the European Court of Auditors (19 first level control systems) none of the systems was effective, only 6 moderately effective and 13 ineffective, and thus no progress has been made in the field of Structural Funds compared to 2005 (2006 Commission discharge resolution adopted on 22 April 2008);*
- * *In 2006 Italy reported irregularities from the European Agricultural Guarantee and Guidance Fund, structural actions and own resources totalling 318 104 000 of 1 143 007 000 for the EU-25 (Report on the Protection of the Communities financial interests 2006)*
- * *The framework for the implementation of ERDF during the programming period was not favourable.*
- * *Cooperation between principle actors has been insufficient;*
- * *The monitoring and financial control was weak;*
- * *One-off visits do not offer enough time to appreciate the effectiveness of projects;*

Recommendations:

- * *First level control systems in Member States must be considerably reinforced;*
- * *When irregularities are detected guarantees and proceeds should be seized and frozen immediately to avoid cumbersome recovery procedures;*
- * *European, national and sub-national policy priorities should be fully compatible;*
- * *Policy priorities must be shifted away from absorption to reaching programme objectives;*
- * *The monitoring and financial control under the structural funds must be substantially toughened; CONT could verify progress during the next discharge procedure;*
- * *CONT could verify, in 2009, the progress made in implementing projects which the delegation visited, to assure a follow-up, in particular the Gioia Tauro project should be evaluated;*
- * *Notes that the Commission intends to organise additional on-the-spot audits in Calabria in 2008 and 2009 and CONT expects to be informed about the outcome of the audits, as well as about possible suspension of payment and recovery orders issued;*
- * *Cooperation between OLAF and judicial authorities in Member States should be strengthened further;*
- * *Member States should provide important documents related to EU spending programmes also in one of the EU working languages;*
- * *A supplementary study could be commissioned to look into the role of financial institutions in Southern Italy with regard to the implementation of structural funds and the system of project financing;*
- * *Discussions with beneficiaries should be separated from discussions with authorities;*
- * *Presentations must be strictly limited in time and offer enough time for discussion;*

Introduction

In December 2007 the Bureau of the European Parliament authorised a CONT fact-finding mission to Sicily and Calabria which was subsequently scheduled for end of April 2008.

When asking for the authorisation CONT followed, on the one hand, the long established tradition to verify the use of European public money and the functioning of management and control mechanisms in applicant or member countries (earlier missions went to Bulgaria, Kosovo, Poland Romania and Slovakia); on the other hand the 2006 European Court of Auditors annual report gave rise to serious concern, primarily with regard to the control functions in Member States and their reticence to shoulder co-responsibility for the spending of structural funds by, for example, signing a national declaration of assurance.

The following criticism, with regard to the Member States in general, can be found in the 2006 Commission discharge report, adopted on 22 April 2008 by the European Parliament:

"104. Considers it unacceptable that, according to the ECA, first level control systems in Member States are generally ineffective or only moderately effective, and that a number of national and regional authorities do not manage EU funds with sufficient attention; notes that in the 2006 ECA's audit sample (19 first level control systems) none of the systems was effective, only 6 moderately effective and 13 ineffective, and thus no progress has been made in the field of Structural Funds compared to 2005; is very concerned by the inability of the Council to clearly recognise its responsibility for this situation, which is the result largely of inadequate controls by Member States;"

Italy also figured prominently in the Commissions 2006 annual report on the protection of the Communities financial interests (Report drafted by Francesco MUSOTTO): In 2006 Italy reported irregularities from the European Agricultural Guarantee and Guidance Fund, structural actions and own resources totalling 318 104 000 of 1 143 007 000 for the EU-25.

In addition, the committee received warning signals indicating that it might be difficult for Italy to invest money available to the country under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for the programming period 2000-2006.

In the context of the generally worrying information and in view to creating a sound knowledge base for the visit to the two Italian regions CONT decided to commission a study on "The structural funds in Southern Italy - focus on Calabria and Sicily".

The delegation also received comprehensive briefing notes from the Commission's Directorate General (DG) for Regional Policy and from DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) also provided documentation. Furthermore, the director of DG REGIO responsible for the regions took part in the mission. The responsible official of DG EMPL wanted to accompany the delegation as well but was prevented from doing so by ALITALIA which overbooked the flight.

The study: "The structural funds in Southern Italy focus on Calabria and Sicily"

The ERDF support for Calabria and Sicily represents some 20% of the total ERDF support for Italy during the programming period 2000-2006 (EUR 1.3 billion for Calabria and EUR 2.5 billion for Sicily), and amounts to 22% for the programming period 2007-2013 (EUR 1.5 billion for Calabria and EUR 3.3 billion for Sicily).

The study arrived at the following, preliminary conclusions:

*"In 2000-2006, both regions have experienced significant problems related to the **framework for ERDF delivery**. Sector policies and strategies and related regulations have not been established at all or too late to support ERDF implementation, and there have been problems over the compatibility between EU, national and regional policies. Similarly, the regulatory framework has not facilitated ERDF delivery. ERDF programming has been subject to substantial pressure to ensure that resources are used in line with the N+2 requirement. Frequent re-programming, i.e. shifting resources from the more innovative areas to other more traditional areas of ERDF support, which allow for fast absorption, means that original objectives can only be partly achieved. A further programming weakness was the distribution of ERDF resources across a large number of small interventions.*

*The delivery of the 2000-2006 ERDF has also suffered from a series of weaknesses related to **the actors responsible for delivering the two regions' programmes**. Cooperation and coordination between the concerned actors, both within public administration and between public administration and the socio-economic partners, has been insufficient. This has been exacerbated by weak staff capacities, in terms of staff numbers and staff experience. Finally, in 2000-2006, there have been problems over **ERDF monitoring and financial control**. Monitoring was largely limited to financial and procedural aspects with weak monitoring of results and impact. In relation to financial control, stakeholder feedback indicates that it was difficult to reconcile fast financial absorption with in-depth financial control. In this context, data from the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) shows that the Calabria and Sicily 2000-2006 programmes have been exposed to problems over irregularities and fraud.*

***The assessment draws the following conclusions:** Just as ERDF delivery in 2000-2006 improved in comparison to previous programming periods, the two regions' efforts to address the above problems are likely to lead to improved ERDF performance in 2007-2013. Stakeholder consultations in both regions indicate that the 2000-2006 lessons have been learned, and there is first evidence of the two regions' efforts to improve the framework for ERDF delivery (e.g. improved policy framework), and to strengthen the actors responsible for ERDF delivery (e.g. improved cooperation between public administration and the socioeconomic actors). The areas of monitoring and financial control are likely to benefit from more efficient systems and extensive capacity building. However, it remains to be seen whether the two regions will be successful in reconciling fast absorption (N+2) with sufficiently thorough financial control, and attention to the interventions' quality. Stakeholder consultations indicate that the region of Sicily is now in a better position to face this challenge; however, in Calabria improvements in ERDF delivery are likely to require more resources than currently in place.*

Information supplied by the Italian Permanent Representation to the EU

In the preparation of the delegation visit the Italian Permanent Representation to the EU highlighted the difficult economic environment for the country. It pointed out that the Community Support Framework (CSF) 2000-2006 for the Italian Objective 1 regions was conceived in 1998/1999, also based on the improved economic performance of the Southern regions in the second half of the 90s. However, Italy's growth rate over the period 2000-2006 reached only one third of the of the EU-27 growth rate. As a consequence the CSF was revised in 2004 with a lower level of additionality. Furthermore, Italy's high debt/gross domestic product ratio (almost twice the EU-27 average) reduced the country's possibilities to invest public money in structural development. Lastly, the representation underlined that Italy received less money from the EU, in terms of per capita support, than other Member States which were faced with significant regional disparities.

Findings of audit missions undertaken by the Commission

Audit missions undertaken by the Commission in recent years, showed the following weaknesses in the execution of Regional Operational Programmes in Sicily and Calabria:

- inadequate management verifications;
- insufficient sample checks and follow-up of its findings;
- inadequate publicity of ERDF contribution;
- and irregular expenditure declared to the Commission

At the end of 2007 the following amounts were withdrawn:

- Sicily - EUR 323.9 million representing an ERDF contribution of EUR 145.7 million;
- Calabria - EUR 69.6 million representing an ERDF contribution of EUR 34.8 million.

A particular problem occurred under the European Social Fund (ESF) The Commission declared EUR 14.4 million as inadmissible for EFS-co-financing in Sicily, as these projects were already financed by the Italian national budget and later declared to the ESF ("retrospective projects" = "progetti coerenti").

The fact-finding mission to Sicily

Upon arrival on Sunday, 27 April 2008, the Director of the Commission's office in Rome, Virgilio Dastoli spoke to the delegation. During his presentation he concentrated on the outcome of the national and regional election which took place a fortnight ago and had strengthened the centre-right parties.



Virgilio Dastoli addressing the delegation

The following morning the delegation met with representatives from the national and regional authorities



Discussion with representatives from the regional and national authorities



The CONT delegation

in the "Giuseppe Whitaker Foundation". The discussion centred on the regional operational programmes¹. In general the representatives from the Italian authorities did not deny problems during the 2000-2006 programming period, but underlined also the unfavourable general economic conditions and the likely improvements. The Commission noted progress in the development of renewable energy resources, the environmental infrastructure, local transport, in the information technology sector and progress in the preservation of Sicily's historic and cultural heritage. The delegation emphasised the need for region-



Giuseppe Whitaker Foundation

wide and even inter-regional planning for structural fund projects in view to maximising complementarities and interoperability (i.e. when considering building a bridge between Reggio and Messina, the authorities may wish to take into consideration the economic, social and environmental implications for the municipalities and regions concerned as well as the wish of the national authorities to establish a viable national infrastructure.).

After the first round the discussion turned to questions related to the prevention of irregularities. The Guardia di Finanza explained its structure and working method. The



The Guardia di Finanza addressing the CONT delegation

regional Court of Auditors (which has an audit function and a judicial function) confirmed delays in instituting control procedures for which the region was responsible. It considered tourism to be a high risk area. The most frequently committed irregularities were the submission of false documents and accounting errors. The Court also recommended that secondary guarantees be called in at early stage when irregularities occurred. The Court stressed the importance of its cooperation with the Guardia di Finanza. The Public Prosecutor's Office emphasised the necessity to transpose European legislation as swiftly as possible into Italian law. The Court of Auditors, the Prosecutor's

Office and OLAF have signed a cooperation agreement.

¹ More information about the operational programmes can be found in the briefing CONT received from DG Regional Policy.

In the afternoon the delegation met with a few persons or organisations who/which have benefited from EU funding. Whereas private investors often look to improving the tourism sector, environmentalists fear for Sicily's nature and cultural heritage. Arcidonna, an equal opportunity non-governmental organisation, complained that the Sicilian authorities had denied it access to European co-financing, an action which was ruled unlawful by the courts at a later stage.



Beneficiaries addressing the CONT delegation



Beneficiaries addressing the CONT delegation

Before leaving to visit projects, the delegation made a courtesy call on the newly elected President of the Region of Sicily and former Member of the European Parliament, Raffaele Lombardo.



Raffaele Lombardo welcoming the CONT delegation



Following the courtesy call some Members went to see the project aiming at modernising the railway line Agrigento-Palermo. The project, for which ERDF funding of EUR 63 751 500 is available, will enhance the efficiency of the railway by improving the network provided, while at the same time making the service more economically and environmentally sound.

The other group of Members went to visit *the Gallery of Modern Art of Palermo.*



The Gallery of Modern Art of Palermo and its interior



In 2006 the gallery moved to the old town centre, into the complex of "Sant'Anna alla Misericordia", a former 15th century private residence and a 17th century convent. They had previously been renovated by the municipality of Palermo. ERDF funds (EUR 1 080 305) paid for the fitting and equipment of the museum. The gallery displays works of 18th and 19th century Sicilian artists and pieces acquired at the Biennale of Venice. Since the opening the annual number of visitors went up from 5 000 to 70 000. The delegation was convinced that the Gallery of Modern Art will become an important tourist attraction in Palermo.

On Tuesday morning the delegation visited two more projects before leaving for Calabria: the "Alfa-Project", co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF), aiming at rendering professional and private life more compatible, and the modernisation of the Palermo airport.

The "Alfa-Project" is a public body with 65 centres in Sicily, offering financial assistance to



The CONT delegation in front of the 'Alfa-Project' centre in Palermo



those who find it difficult to integrate themselves into the labour market. The centres issue vouchers which can be used to pay for social services (i.e. child care, care for elderly) while the applicant follows vocational training courses or work. The project, which ran until June 2008, was endowed with EUR 8.8 million. The delegation felt that the criteria under which persons are eligible to receive vouchers would need further clarification. The impact and sustainable effects of the project could be verified again at a later stage.

The voucher-system is known in France and Belgium, and the delegation met with a devoted team.

Palermo airport was the gate way to Sicily for 4 250 000 passengers in 2006. According to planning the airport authorities expect these figures to triple by 2030. In order to allow for this development the airport's infrastructure has to be extended (i.e. runways, parking, and terminal). Currently investments amounting to EUR 13.7 million are foreseen in the National Operational Programme.



The modernisation plans for the Palermo airport



At the end of the fact-finding mission to Sicily the CONT delegation was taken by plane to Reggio/Calabria, courtesy of the Guardia di Finanza.



The Guardia di Finanza flight crew with the CONT delegation

Fact-finding mission to Calabria

The delegation was welcomed in Reggio airport by the airport authorities. They explained the scheduled work for the improvement of the airport facilities: the service and rescue

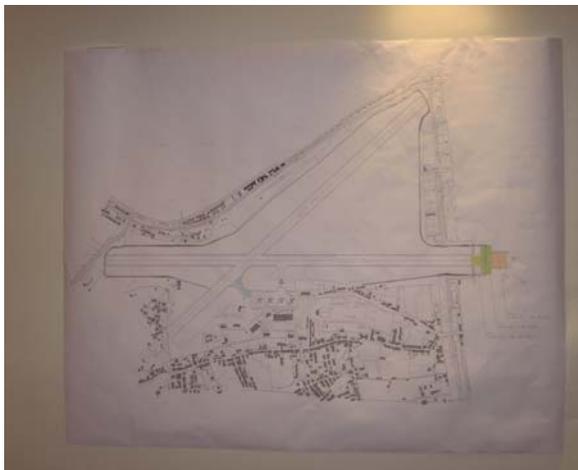


Figure 1 The plans for modernising Reggio airport



The airport authorities explaining the modernisation plans for Reggio airport

strips, the taxi-runway and additional safety areas. The costs are estimated at EUR 2 582 284 of which 50% are eligible costs under the ERDF. On the basis of the information supplied it can currently not be judged whether the improvement of the airport infrastructure will lead to a better integration of Reggio in the national airport system.

Given the time constraints the delegation decided that one group of Members would travel north to Gioia Tauro and Palmi, whereas the other group would assure the delegation's presence at the meeting with regional and local authorities.

In Reggio the delegation went to see the ruins of the Aragon Castle in Reggio. The ruins



The ruins of the Aragon Castle and its square



Explanations about the ruins of the Aragon Castle

were refurbished and integrated into a modern square, providing for visitors to appreciate one of the cultural heritages of the region. The costs for the project stood at EUR 2.8 million of which 50% was financed by the ERDF.

Afterwards, the delegation paid a visit to one of Reggio's employment centres. Its activities focus on assistance and information activities, on orientation and consultation, trying to match labour demand with labour supply and orientation activities for disabled and/or disadvantaged persons. Since 2002 the centre assisted 25 000 men and 29 000 women. The programme covered EUR 1 727 500 for office and logistical infrastructure, of which the ESF shouldered 70%. Such a short visit did not allow for fully appreciating the impact of the programme.



The CONT delegation at the Reggio employment centre



Following the visit to the employment centre a group of Members travelled on to Gioia Tauro, a container harbour (the development of the harbour itself benefited from a EUR 40 million financing under the "ERDF transport programme" between 1988 and 1993) , in which the cargo of container vessels can be reloaded to smaller ships servicing the Mediterranean basin. The harbour should also be linked up to an effective railway system. However, earlier attempts to create a commercial area around the harbour failed. A "technological park" regroups research bodies supplying data on maritime transport to private operators. The costs of the project add up to EUR 23.7 million. The ERDF participated with EUR 6 million. 50% of the costs are privately financed.

It must be noted in this context that the municipality of Gioia Tauro was recently dismissed and replaced by a Commissioner of the government due to Mafia infiltration. However, community co-financing was not handled by the municipality. The delegation felt that it was not informed in time and comprehensively enough about these events and that it would therefore like to re-evaluate this project at a later stage.

On their way back from Gioia Tauro the delegation stopped at Palmi to look at a kiwi farm. The project aims at strengthening the primary sector. The costs of the modernisation, including the store, the offices and other buildings) add up to EUR 3.1 million, which were co-financed by the EAGGF (EUR 938 690).

In the late afternoon the CONT delegation met with the regional and local authorities in Reggio. They agreed that that in the past control instruments were not sufficiently developed, thereby confirming the findings of earlier Commission audits.

The head of the regional government defined the following strategic objectives for the future:

- young people, schooling and access to the labour market,
- long-term employment, inclusion and competitiveness,
- to allocate resources in a transparent way, support audit and check impact,
- involvement of local bodies in the European process and concentrate spending.

With regard to fraudulent actions it was suggested that proceeds of such actions should be seized.

Numerous speakers admitted the presence and influence of criminal activities in the region.

The following morning the discussion continued with beneficiaries of EU programmes. They were of the opinion that in the initial phase of the 2000-2006 programming period the local communities were not well enough organised. However, they claimed that in the meantime the partnership relations developed further and the region would follow a more strategic approach (i.e. a network of mayors). A representative from Confindustria seconded by saying that at the time an integrated planning did not exist and that the socio-economic partnership did not function well. 61% if the money spent was disbursed over the last two years. In 2000 the region had not been ready.

Bill NEWTON-DUNN, MEP
Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control
and Head of the Delegation

Annex 1

Financial framework and comparison 2000-2006 – 2007-2013

	Programme Total Cost	ERDF contribution
2000-2006		
ROP Calabria	4.036.398.002	1.258.742.000
ROP Sicilia	8.459.909.318	2.524.128.000
2007-2013		
ROP Calabria	2.998.240.052	1.499.120.026
ROP Sicilia	6.539.605.100	3.269.802.550

POR Calabria: ERDF financial execution at 31/12/2007 (Euro)

Priority Axis	Total amount 2000/2006	Financial execution	
		Commitments	Payments
	(a)	(b)	(c)
1, Risorse naturali	870.914.000	842.294.058	667.139.102
2, Risorse culturali	122.290.000	181.885.882	105.144.196
3, Risorse umane	64.342.000	32.799.551	23.521.204
4, Sistemi locali di sviluppo	622.750.000	596.514.272	491.867.348
5, Città	289.052.000	394.886.986	241.334.742
6, Reti e nodi di servizio	508.252.000	599.996.057	449.512.226
7, Assistenza tecnica	39.884.000	41.378.139	29.913.913
Total	2.517.484.000	2.689.754.946	2.008.432.731

POR Sicilia: ERDF financial execution at 31/12/2007 (Euro)

Priority Axis	Total amount 2000/2006	Financial execution	
		Commitments	Payments ¹
	(a)	(b)	(c)
1, Risorse naturali	1.667.463.334	1.551.179.509	1.075.584.538
2, Risorse culturali	1.039.738.444	969.534.623	628.147.713
3, Risorse umane	131.220.000	182.558.500	61.501.265
4, Sistemi locali di sviluppo	1.283.503.443	1.505.091.794	739.359.085
5, Città	476.957.777	649.849.443	437.144.438
6, Reti e nodi di servizio	983.904.443	1.662.470.487	1.180.592.460
7, Assistenza tecnica	26.382.222	27.232.353	19.688.646
Total	5.609.169.663	6.547.916.710	4.142.018.143

	Programme Total Cost	ERDF contribution	ERDF absorption rate in early 2008
ROP Calabria	4.036.398.002	1.258.742.000	83%
ROP Sicilia	8.459.909.318	2.524.128.000	71%

Annex 2

Data on number of irregularities/fraud communicated to OLAF and the amounts involved for Calabria and Sicily as well as for Italy as a whole during the programming period 2000-2006

operational programmes	n° of suspected fraud cases	n° of irregularities	total number of cases
Calabria Operational programme	30	44	74
Sicily operational programme	39	47	86
Italy including Calabria and Sicily	611	654	1265

operational programmes	amounts involved in suspected fraud (EUR)	amounts involved in irregularities (EUR)	total affected amounts (EUR)
Calabria Operational programme	15 744 453	18 508 789	34 253 242
Sicily operational programme	34 695 646	11 547 481	46 243 127
Italy including Calabria and Sicily	186 885 835	118 839 202	305 725 037

Annex 3

Fact-finding delegation of the Budgetary Control Committee to Sicily and Calabria, 27 - 30 April 2008 (final version)

Members of the delegation:

Mr Bill NEWTON-DUNN (UK, ALDE, Head of the Delegation), Mr Antonio DE BLASIO (HU, EPP-ED), Szabolcs FAZAKAS (HU, PSE), Mr Umberto GUIDONI (I, GUE/NGL), Mrs Ester DE LANGE, (NL, EPP-ED), Mr Jan MULDER (NL, ALDE), Mr Francesco MUSOTTO (I, EPP-ED), Pierre PRIBETICH (F, PSE), Mr Bart STAES (BE, Greens/EFA), *9 members*

In attendance

Giusto CATANIA (I, GUE/NGL), Beniamino DONNICI (I, ALDE), Gianni PITTELLA (IT, PSE, only in Calabria)

CONT Secretariat

Mr Christian EHLERS

Ms Rebecca BEIZ

(EP mobile as of Sunday: +32-498-983534, +32-498-983218)

Advisors of Political Groups

Roberto GALTIERI (GUE/NGL)

Jonas KRAFT (EPP-ED)

Dominykas MORDAS (ALDE)

Henk PRUMMEL (Greens/EFA)

Assistants

Federica FERRETTI (Assistant of Beniamino DONNICI)

Silvia GARIGGIO (Assistant of Francesco MUSOTTO)

European Commission/OLAF

Alessandro BUTTICE, OLAF, Spokesperson

Raoul PRADO, Director, DG REGIO, Directorate G (Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain)

Interpreters:

Mrs Agnes BERNARD
Mrs Maureen FRIEDMAN-MANCINI
Mrs Maria MONTERISI-LIBERTI
Mrs Manuela PAEFFGEN-CERRETO

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(in attendance as of Monday, 28 April 2008)

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Permanent Representation of Italy to the European Union
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Accommodation and transport in Palermo and Reggio di Calabria

Centrale Palace Hotel
Via Vittorio Emanuele 327
90134 Palermo
Calabria
Tel.: +39-091-336666
Fax: +39-091-334881

Altafiumare Hotel
Santa Trada di Cannitello
89010 Villa San Giovanni Reggio
Tel.: +39-0965-759804
Fax: +39-0965-759566

The delegation will have a bus at its disposal.

Sunday, 27 April 2008

- All day Individual arrival of the Members of the Delegation in Palermo
Upon arrival members of the delegation the airport's VIP room is put at their disposal. From there a bus will take participants to the hotel. The shuttle is working between 16.30 h and 18 h.
- 18.30h The political and economic situation in Italy
Pier Virgilio DASTOLI, Director, European Commission, Rome
Venue: Centrale Palace Hotel, room "HERMES" Via Vittorio Emanuele 327, 90134 Palermo,
Tel.:+39-091-336666, Fax: +39-091-334881
- 20.00 h free dinner
(The scheduled official dinner was cancelled, as it was not possible to contact local and regional councillors, who were elected only two weeks ago; the delegation could consider having dinner in the restaurant, although participants will have to pay for themselves)
Venue: Antica Focacceria San Francesco, Via A. Paternostro 58, Palermo, Tel.: +39-091-320264

Monday, 28 April 2008

- 8.30 h Departure from the hotel
- 9.00 h Meeting with representatives of the regional authorities
Venue: Fondazione "Giuseppe Whitaker", Palermo, Villa Malfitano, Via Dante 167, Tel.: +39-091-6820522, Fax.: +39-091-6814156
- * Gabriella PALOCCI, Dirigente Generale Dipartimento Programmazione- Rappresentante Autorità de Gestione del POR Sicilia 2000 - 2006, ERDF
 - * Alessandra RUSSO, Dirigente Generale del Dipartimento Formazione Professionale - Amministrazione Capofila ESF
 - * Giuseppe MORALE, Dirigente Generale Dipartimento Interventi Strutturali in Agricoltura - Amministrazione Capofila EAGGF -G
 - * Maurizio AGNESE, Dirigente Generale Dipartimento Pesca - Amministrazione Capofila;

- * Sabina DE LUCA, Autorità di Gestione del QCS 2000-2006

11.00 h Meeting with representatives from the Court of Auditors, the prosecutor's office and the Guardia di Finanza

Venue: Fondazione "Giuseppe Whitaker", Palermo, Villa Malfitano, Via Dante 167, Tel.: +39-091-6820522, Fax.: +39-091-6814156

- * Giuseppa CERNIGLIARO, Magistrate, Court of Auditors, Sicily,
- * Carmelo CARRARA, Deputy Prosecutor, Appeal Court, Palermo,
- * Domenico ACHILLE, Commander of the Sicilian Regional Command, Guardia di Finanza,
- * Gabriella PALOCCI, Dirigente Generale Dipartimento Programmazione,
- * Marco SALERNO, Dirigente generale dell'Ufficio Speciale dell'Autorità di Audit,
- * Ludovico BENFANTE, Dirigente generale dell'Ufficio Speciale dell'Autorità di Certificazione;

13.00 h lunch

Venue: Fondazione "Giuseppe Whitaker", Palermo, Villa Malfitano, Via Dante 167, Tel.: +39-091-6820522, Fax.: +39-091-6814156

14.30 h Meetings with beneficiaries

Venue: Fondazione "Giuseppe Whitaker", Palermo, Villa Malfitano, Via Dante 167, Tel.: +39-091-6820522, Fax.: +39-091-6814156

- * Valeria AJOVALASIT, President of Arcidonna
- * Mimmo FONTANA, President of the Legambiente of Sicily (tbc)
(accompanied by Salvatore GRANATA, Director)
- * Isabella LAPIS, ECONECNA Srl
- * Cesare MADIA, Acacia Resort Srl
- * Antonino SALERNO, Vice-President of Confindustria Sicily
(accompanied by Giovanni CATALANO, Director General)

(In presence of representatives of the regional authorities: Carmelo Pietro RUSSO (tourism), Mario LA ROCCA (tourism), Mario SALERNO (audit), Ludovico BENFANTE (certifying authority))

16.00 h Meeting with Raffaele LOMBARDO, President of the Region of Sicily

*venue: Regione Sicilia, Piazza Indipendenza, Palazzo d'Orléans
Tel.: +39-091-6961111*

- 16.30 h structural funds' project visits
- * Railway project Palermo-Agrigento
(Società Rete Ferroviaria Italiana S. p. A., Alfonso BELLUCCIA, Via Rocco Pirri 24, Palermo, Tel.: +39-091-16033310)
 - * Modern Art Gallery
(Galleria d'Arte Moderna - Complesso monumentale di Sant'Anna Via Sant'Anna 21, Palermo)
- 20.00 h Dinner (invitation by Italian hosts)
Venue: Ristorante Charme, Piazzale Alcide de Gasperi 4/7, 90144 Palermo, Tel.: +39-091-662.88.88

Tuesday, 29 April 2008

- 8.30 h Structural funds' project visits
- * Palermo, vocational training project "compatibility of work and family"
 - * Palermo airport
- 12.00 h flight from Palermo to Reggio by special plane (Guardia di Finanza)
- 13.15 h visit of structural funds' project
- * Miglioramento dell'Operativà Strumentale dee'Aeroporto "Tito Minniti", Reggio (ERDF)
 - * Distretto Tecnologico per la Logistica e la Trasformazione Gioia Tauro, (ERDF)
 - * Ristrutturazione di una struttura esistente e acquisto Macchine per la Lavorazione allo stato fresco del kiwi, Palmi (EAGGF)
 - * Sistema Regionale dei Servizi per l'Impiego - Centro per l'Impiego della Provincia di Reggio Calabria (ESF)

- * Complementamento de Restauro del Castello Aragonese di Reggio Calabria - Riqualficazione Aree Esterne (ERDF)

18.00 h Meeting with local/regional authorities in Reggio di Calabria, the Court of Auditors, the Guardia di Finanza

Venue: Consiglio della Regione Calabria, Via Cardinale Portanova, 89123 Reggio di Calabria, Sala "Giuditta Levato"

- * Giuseppe BOVA, President of the Regional Council of Calabria
- * Agazio LOIERO, Head of the Regional Government, of Calabria
- * Silvio AULISI, President, Court of Auditors, Calabria
- * Giovanni MARLETTA, Procura Generale della Repubblica presso la Corte d'Appello, Reggio,
- * Riccardo PICCINNI, Commander of the Calabria Regional Command, Guardia di Finanza,

20.00 h Dinner offered by the Delegation on Budgetary Control

Venue: Restaurant Etoile, Piazza Indipendenza 6, 89126 Reggio di Calabria, Tel.: +39-0965-312968, Fax.: +39-0965-312968

Wednesday, 30 April 2008

8.30 h meetings with beneficiaries, UNICE, NGOs, social partners

Venue: Consiglio della Regione Calabria, Via Cardinale Portanova, 89123 Reggio di Calabria, Sala "Giuditta Levato"

- * Mario MAIOLO, Assessore alla Programmazione Nazionale e Comunitaria;
- * Salvatore PERUGINI, Presidente ANCI in rappresentanza dei Comuni della Calabria;
- * Giuseppe MORABITO, Presidente della Provincia di Reggio Calabria in rappresentanza delle Province Calabresi;
- * Rosy PERONE, Segreteria Regionale CISL Calabria in rappresentanza dei Sindacati dei Lavoratori;
- * Antonino MORABITO, President of Legambiente Calabria;
- * Piero MILASI, Associazione Onlus "Pro Pentadattilo".

10.15 h departure of the delegation