

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0700/04
by Benedetto Della Vedova (NI)
to the Commission

Subject: Use of European Social Fund resources in connection with the Edunet project

In two earlier questions (E-0103/01¹ of 29 January 2001 and E-2345/02² of 29 July 2002) the author of this question referred to the Commission for its consideration the case of the 'Edunet Project', which was being promoted by the CST srl company and financed by means of the EU's European Social Fund (Adapt programme) and in connection with which EU funding seemed to be being used for a purpose totally different from its intended one.

In her reply of 8 March 2001 Mrs Anna Diamantopoulou (Commissioner) said that in response to the above questions the Commission had asked the Italian Ministry of Labour to check the expenditure made in connection with the Edunet project and not to pay any advances.

In her second reply (of 16 September 2002) Mrs Diamantopoulou announced (a) that she had received a report from the Ministry of Labour, according to which there appeared to be 'a confusion of project-related activities and activities outside the scope of the project, i.e. trade union activities', (b) that the Ministry of Labour had suspended all further payments, (c) that the case had been forwarded to the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and (d) that the Commission was awaiting the financial certification of the closure of the Community initiatives (Adapt/Employment) and had reserved the right to evaluate the eligibility of the submitted expenditure.

In the light of the facts set out above the Public Prosecutor's Office in Rome opened a judicial inquiry, the preliminary stage of which has now, apparently, been concluded.

Would the Commission answer the following questions?

- Has it received (from the Italian Government, amongst other sources) any further clarification concerning the Edunet Project?
- Is it now able to evaluate the eligibility of the expenditure made in connection with the Edunet Project?

Furthermore, given that the organisation involved in the above case (the FISACAT-Cisl company) is now involved in other initiatives financed by means of the European Social Fund (such as the Flexible Training System project), does the Commission consider this to be compatible with the purposes and the objectives which that Fund is intended to serve?

¹ OJ C 340 E, 4.12.2001, p. 11

² OJ C 309 E, 12.12.2002, p. 225