

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4403/07
by Sergio Berlato (UEN)
to the Commission

Subject: Digital map of the hiking trails in the Alto Adige

A singular lack of clarity accompanied the birth of a project to draw up a digital map of the hiking trails in the Alto Adige - a task which the Bolzano provincial authorities entrusted directly to the Alpenverein Südtirol (a local mountaineering organisation).

The EU has reportedly criticised the fact that the criteria for assigning the task to the Alpenverein were not transparent: even though the invitation to tender related to an amount exceeding EUR 3 million, potential candidates operating on the European market were allegedly excluded by virtue of the fact that the provincial authorities awarded the contract directly to the above-mentioned local organisation.

An internationally advertised open competition should have been held, not least (and in particular) on account of the fact that the EU would be allocating significant ad hoc funding.

Furthermore, a comment should be made regarding the way in which the project was assigned to and carried out by the coordinator (the Alpenverein). Even though the provincial authorities provided repeated assurances on the subject, the digital map which is now on the Internet on the <http://trekking.suedtirol.info> website displays only a very small number of Italian names for the trails and the localities shown on the map - a fact which detracts from the European dimension of the initiative.

In view of the above, will the Commission answer the following questions?

What action does the Commission intend to take in order to shed light on the criteria used for assigning the task in question and to establish whether or not the task was assigned in accordance with the relevant rules?

What action will be taken if it is established that the rules have been infringed?

What is the value of the funding earmarked and already made available by the EU for the execution of the project in question?

What immediate action does the Commission intend to take in order to ensure - as proof that an initiative co-financed by the EU has a European dimension - that the digital map which has already been published on the Internet on one of the Bolzano provincial authorities' administrative websites shows all place names in Italian, rather than (as is currently the case) almost entirely in German alone?