

WRITTEN QUESTION E-6424/07
by Beniamino Donnici (ALDE)
to the Commission

Subject: Business-incentive scheme in Calabria (Italy)

Despite having spent the generous funding provided both by the EU and by Italy itself, Calabria is still a Convergence Objective (formerly Objective I) region - a fact which demonstrates the total failure of the action taken by the local authorities over the last ten years.

In addition to at-times inappropriate planning, ineffective checks, bureaucratic and administrative delays and structural and contextual factors, the causes of that failure include in particular the business-incentive scheme implemented by means of the capital-account financing instrument, which has given rise to corruption, the establishment of fake companies and a very high incidence of fraud, as revealed by judicial inquiries carried out by various public prosecutors.

Hence the Italian authorities are trying to put matters right by reforming their own financing instruments (such as Law 488/92).

In view of the fact that, during the 2007-2013 period, EU financial resources to the value of approximately EUR 8 billion will be transferred to Calabria, the incentive scheme should ideally be reworked: non-returnable capital-account funding should be abolished and finance should be provided via interest-bearing accounts with concessionary medium- and long-term rates, to be combined with tax breaks and additional service funding.

Does the Commission not agree that any appropriate initiative which will enable the current business-incentive scheme to be reformed through the elimination of the above-mentioned undesirable aspects should be explored in conjunction with the Calabria Regional Government and other competent authorities in the country?