

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3268/09  
by Marcello Vernola (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Earthquake in Abruzzo (Italy)

Abruzzo was struck in the night of 5-6 April by a violent earthquake measuring 5.8 on the Richter scale, with its epicentre in L'Aquila. Telluric movements continued to occur in subsequent weeks, injuring many people and damaging property. 294 people died, another 40 000 were evacuated and entire villages were wiped out. According to data issued by the Italian Civil Defence after initial inspections, 30% of the buildings in the province of L'Aquila are unsafe, 50% are safe and 20% will only be safe after repair work.

The areas most at risk have been evacuated. The survivors, camped out in tent cities, in their own vehicles or temporarily lodged in hotels on the coast, have lost everything: homes, student accommodation, schools and universities, public buildings, businesses, places of worship, health facilities, roads and infrastructure.

The real cost of the damages and the resources needed for reconstruction work cannot be estimated as yet and it is impossible to say how much time will be needed before the population affected can return to normal living and working conditions.

Can the Commission say what steps it intends taking to facilitate the exchange of good practice between Abruzzo and other regions of Europe that have previously suffered similar natural or human disasters, concerning ways of reconstructing the area's social fabric?