

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4470/09  
by Edward Scicluna (S-D)  
to the Commission

Subject: Gozo

Annexed to Malta's Treaty of accession to the EU, Declaration 36 points out that NUTS 3 classification given to Gozo would not, on its own, be sufficient to ensure implementation of the EU's commitment to take measures to benefit less favoured regions such as Gozo in the Union.

Indeed, Declaration 36 declares that before the end of each Community budgetary period:

'Malta will request that the Commission report to the Council on the economic and social situation of Gozo and, in particular, on the disparities in the social and economic development levels between Gozo and Malta. The Commission would be asked to propose appropriate measures, as required, in the framework of the Community regional policy or other relevant Community policies, to ensure the continuation of the reduction of disparities between Gozo and Malta as well as the further integration of Gozo into the internal market on fair conditions.'

Did the Maltese Government request that the Commission report to the Council on the economic and social situation of Gozo and, in particular, on the socio-economic disparities between Gozo and Malta before the 2007-2013 budgetary framework was negotiated?

If not, can you give the reason(s), since to date the Maltese, but especially the Gozitans, are still owed an explanation?

Will the Commission commit to conducting such a report in advance of the negotiations for the EU budgetary cycle 2014-2020?

In view of the fact that the economic disparities between Gozo and the rest of Malta have widened, with Malta's Office of National Statistics showing that Gozo's GDP per capita now stands at under 75 per cent of that of Malta, will the Commission consider granting special recognition and eligibility to aspects of EU regional policy for Gozo?