

**Question for written answer E-000337/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Ignazio Corrao (EFDD)

Subject: Information on fibre optic financed by Sicily's 2007-2013 Rural Development Programme

Sicily funded its 'Let's use broadband to cultivate development' project through measure 321/b/1 of its 2007-2013 Rural Development Programme. The goal of the EUR 23 million project was to bring fibre optic to 78 of Sicily's rural communities to enable browsing using 7 to 20 megabytes. The work was completed between 2014 and 2015. In some municipalities the fibre optic network then lay idle for two years.

Some of the municipalities that took part in the project have reported that TIM-Telecom has the sole franchise for the fibre optic network, with operators having to pay the company a toll for use of fibre optic lines that belong to Sicily's regional government.

In 2016 the 'Openfiber' project was granted EUR 106 million by the Ministry for Economic Development to bring fibre optic to '142 municipalities in Sicily'. Many of the municipalities listed, however, figure among those that had already had fibre optic laid under the rural development programme.

Can the Commission answer the following:

- 1) Is the ADSL service that was funded by the rural development programme fully operational and is it the case that TIM-Telecom has become the de facto owner of the fibre optic network?
- 2) Is the Openfiber project incorporating the previously laid network and will this mean faster connections for users who already benefit from the rural development programme project?
- 3) Does this overlap constitute a waste of public money and mean Openfiber has more capacity than necessary?