

**Question for written answer E-001640/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Caroline Nagtegaal (ALDE)

Subject: Commission decision on Italy not based on its own figures

Recently, the Commission decided not to fine Italy. It argued that, according to the relevant figures, the country's finances were in considerably better shape. It was not clear what figures the Commission was taking as a basis, and the answer to that question has only emerged now. Thanks to thorough research by two members of the Netherlands House of Representatives, Pieter Omtzigt and Aukje de Vries, it has become clear that Italy's forecast of its economic growth was almost 0.8 percentage points higher than the Commission's own figure¹. At the same time, Italy was spending billions extra in the form of one-off budget allocations, the country's sovereign debt remained unchanged, and Italy managed to avoid a fine by making a number of promises. But we were not supposed to know all this, as the Commission stubbornly kept the relevant documents secret. Now we know why.

1. How often, and when, does the Commission take decisions on the basis of a country's own figures instead of conducting its own research?
2. Can Italy expect to be penalised now that it has emerged that the figures are wrong?
3. What action will the Commission take to ensure that future decisions are transparent and based on genuinely accurate figures?

¹ <https://nos.nl/artikel/2278784-europese-commissie-baseerde-zich-niet-op-eigen-cijfers-bij-besluit-over-italie.html>