

**Question for written answer E-001470/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Johan Nissinen (ECR), Charlie Weimers (ECR)**

Subject: Is the EU's cohesion policy really cohesive?

While cohesion funding for Italy is dwarfed by the scale of the recovery plan, it still accounts for an impressive EUR 43 billion in taxpayer's money in the current seven-year EU budget. Recently, Gaetano Vecchione, writing for the financial newspaper *Il Sole 24 Ore*, questioned whether the EU's cohesion policy model still works for Italy, especially if the focus is on reducing regional inequality within the country<sup>1</sup>.

Given that the south of Italy, the Mezzogiorno, had a GDP gap of 10pp compared to 2007 levels in 2019, the intention of bringing the south closer to the rest of the country, and to the EU, seems not to have worked.

1. Italy's south continues to lag behind economically and the 2010s saw its structural problems worsen, despite massive cohesion spending. Why has the EU's cohesion funding failed to yield better results?
2. Has cohesion funding worked better for other EU Member States or regions? Can the Commission name examples and possible reasons?
3. How could the Commission improve transparency and accountability in order to make cohesion funding more effective and enable better public access to evaluations of the real impact of the funding?

Submitted: 4.5.2023

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/la-politica-coesione-sotto-osservazione-AESVz9KD?refresh\\_ce=1](https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/la-politica-coesione-sotto-osservazione-AESVz9KD?refresh_ce=1)