

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1155/04
by Marco Formentini (ELDR)
to the Commission

Subject: Request for the Commission to intervene in the dispute between the company Invesmart bv and the Czech Republic regarding the bankrupt Union Banka

Under the conditions for entry into the European Union the accession countries were supposed to bring their national legal systems and administrative procedures, and the behaviour of public administration into line with the legal principles observed within the Union. The aim of this question is to highlight a series of abuses and instances of wrongful treatment suffered since December 2002 by the Dutch firm Invesmart bv and its majority shareholder Prof. Paolo Catalfamo, an Italian national, as a result of their investing in Union Banka, which at the time was the fourth largest bank in the Czech Republic.

The investment, as well as the broad restructuring plan accompanying it, were agreed by the investors with the Czech Central Bank and the Minister of Finance. After the investors had spent a year and a half fulfilling various difficult obligations the Czech authorities suddenly (and improvidently) declared the bank bankrupt, which seriously damaged investors. These events were widely publicised both in the Czech Republic itself and in the international economic press.

Can the Commission obtain information directly from the Czech authorities - who, when proceedings were brought for damages of around € 300 million, stated that the Czech government was willing to settle the dispute amicably - as to what their intentions actually are and ask them to settle the dispute in a correct and fair manner?