

**Question for written answer P-001177/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Laura Ferrara (EFDD)

Subject: Audit Authority for the region of Calabria: systemic irregularities and substantial deficiencies

The Audit Authority (AA) for the Calabria ROP 2014/2020 was downgraded to category 3 because of serious deficiencies exposing the European funds to potential irregularities.

The Commission's auditors pointed out that the management and control system of the POR Calabria worked only partially and that substantial improvements were needed.

Indeed, several projects were apparently found to have 'systemic irregularities' that the AA had not adequately dealt with.

In particular, many actions appear to have already been concluded prior to the decision on their eligibility for funding, but the Managing Authority (MA) and the AA do not appear to have taken account of the Commission's instructions and instead entered projects as expenditure under the 2014-2020 Calabria ROP subsequent to the letter of acceptance from the beneficiary.

This negative trend, which has been exacerbated in particular in the last few years under the leadership of the new Directorate-General, forms part of a worrying picture.

In view of the above,

- 1) Does the Commission intend to request an in-depth audit of the activities of the AA to verify the effectiveness of the first-level checks, to ascertain whether data has been correctly uploaded to the SIURP system (Single Regional Information System for Planning) to create electronic files, and to establish how many of these projects were actually eligible for inclusion under ROP expenditure?
- 2) Does it intend to verify the level of reliability of the AA in Calabria and whether its staff meet the necessary requirements?
- 3) Does it intend to request an in-depth audit of the Calabrian Certification Authority?