

**Priority question for written answer P-005690/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Andrea Caroppo (NI)

Subject: SELECTION OF PARTNERS TO CARRY OUT EUROPE DIRECT ACTIVITIES (2021-2025) IN ITALY | Call ID: ED-ITALY-20 – request to reopen the call

Through the above-mentioned notice, the Commission, by means of its representation in Italy, launched a call for the management of Europe Direct centres for the period 2021-2025, aimed at public bodies and local/regional authorities.

The deadline for the submission of applications was set for 17.00 on 20/10/2020.

Owing to the COVID-19 outbreak, regional elections were held on 20 and 21 September in all the municipalities of Campania, Liguria, Marche, Apulia, Tuscany, Veneto and Valle d'Aosta.

Municipal elections were held at the same time as the regional elections, while the second ballot took place on 4 and 5 October. Different dates were established for the municipalities of Sicily, where the elections were held on 4 and 5 October, and Sardinia, where the elections will be held on 25-26 October.

The COVID-19 emergency has been keeping Italian local authorities extremely busy up to now, preventing them from taking part in the call, or making it extremely difficult for them to do so.

The establishment of Europe Direct centres is of key importance in Italy, since they actively promote citizens' participation in order to strengthen their sense of responsibility towards the EU.

In the light of the above, would the Commission consider it appropriate and useful to reopen the call and extend the deadline for participation, in order to allow Italian local authorities to successfully apply to become partners in the management of those vital Europe Direct centres?