

**Priority question for written answer P-004753/2021
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Laura Ferrara (NI)

Subject: Suspension of ESF payments to the Calabria Region

It has recently been reported that ESF payments to the Calabria Region have been halted by the Commission because of a number of irregularities detected in the system for managing and controlling public expenditure. According to the newspaper LaCnews24¹, the Calabria Region submitted two separate payment applications, one on 8 June and the other on 28 July 2021, which were not followed up. On 8 August 2021, the Commission then allegedly informed the Regional Government that the payments were to be suspended as a necessary precautionary measure following irregularities detected in ESF expenditure.

In view of this, can the Commission say:

1. what were the measures and/or operations, in detail, that were affected by irregularities leading to the halting of payments;
2. how much funding has been frozen to date;
3. whether the problems encountered in the programme's control and management system, in both the managing authority and audit authority, are such that they might jeopardise the entire Regional Operational Programme in addition to future measures to be taken under the national recovery and resilience plan (NRPP)?

¹ https://www.lacnews24.it/economia-e-lavoro/l-europa-blocca-i-pagamenti-alla-regione-calabria-irregolarita-nella-gestione-dei-fondi-_144547/