

Question for written answer E-001981/2025
to the Commission
Rule 144
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)

Subject: Access to school canteens in Sicily and the use of ESF+ and NRRP funds

According to a recent survey of school canteens in Italy¹, rising canteen prices in Sicily (up 13 % and 8 % since last year in nurseries and primary schools respectively) have resulted in families on the island forking out an average of EUR 83 per child on school meals.

In addition, it is extremely difficult to even access school meals in Sicily, where only 13.7 % of all schools have canteens, a figure which rises to 41.2 % and 43.1 % in central and northern Italy respectively.

Although Italy's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) includes specific measures to remedy these kinds of inequalities, it has only allocated 37 % of its school canteen funding to southern Italy, Sicily and Sardinia.

This state of affairs makes it extremely difficult for Sicilian children to access a healthy and adequate diet, which is one of the fundamental rights enshrined in the European Child Guarantee², which aims to ensure full access to essential services for children in vulnerable situations.

In view of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation concerning Sicily's school canteens, and how does it assess the way in which the island's NRRP allocation has been used?
2. Which European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) instruments and resources could be used to guarantee that Sicilian pupils can regularly access school canteens?
3. Will the Commission take further steps to reduce regional disparities and ensure that the European Child Guarantee is effectively implemented in Sicily?

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¹ <https://www.cittadinanzattiva.it/notizie/17124-viii-indagine-sulle-mense-scolastiche-circa-85-euro-il-costo-medio-mensile-servono-piu-risorse-contro-la-poverta-alimentare.html>.

² https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/rights-child/eu-strategy-rights-child-and-european-child-guarantee_en#european-child-guarantee.