

**Question for written answer E-004099/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)

Subject: Calling on the EU to promote employment in the light of recently published Eurostat data about Sicily and southern Italy

The latest Eurostat data show that, in 2024, the EU regions with the lowest employment rates among people between the ages of 20 and 64 were all in southern Italy. Only a number of Turkish regions recorded figures that were even lower than Calabria's 48.5 %, Campania's 49.4 % and Sicily's 50.7 %¹.

These Italian regions are of vital importance to EU cohesion and have significant potential for growth, yet finding work there is still a challenge – particularly for women. This employment gap undermines the Union's economic, social and territorial cohesion and requires a tailored approach that can get the most out of the EU's instruments (the cohesion policy, ESF+ and ERDF).

Having regard for the European pillar of social rights action plan and the EU's 2030 employment targets – and with due consideration for the principle of subsidiarity and the Member States' competences in the area of active labour policies – could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What is its assessment of Eurostat's employment data highlighting Sicily and southern Italy's continued struggles to catch up with the rest of the EU?
2. How will the Commission convert these data into concrete EU policies – which could, for example, include issuing guidelines for the targeted use of ESF+ and ERDF funding, reprogramming these instruments or issuing specific recommendations for Italy?
3. What operational measures could the Commission push for in the short and medium term with a view to achieving the EU's 2030 objectives in Sicily and southern Italy?

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¹ Eurostat: "47% of EU regions reached EU's employment rate target".