

**Question for written answer E-003860/2026  
to the Commission**  
Rule 144  
**Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)**

**Subject:** Family caregivers, right to care and territorial cohesion: implementing the European Care Strategy in Italy, starting with Sicily and southern Italy

The growing demand for long-term care is a social challenge for Europe. According to the Italian statistics institute (ISTAT), more than 12 million people in Italy provide care for free, and 4.4 million of them live with the person they are caring for, with women most affected (21.7 %, compared with 17 % of men)<sup>1</sup>. A report by Italy's National Council of Economy and Labour (CNEL) on the social value of carers shows that more than half associate care with emotional and psychological stress<sup>2</sup>.

In Sicily and southern Italy, the critical nature of local services and disparities in access to care exacerbate the family burden. Sicily has recently allocated more than EUR 2 million to district social and health services for the 'caregiver bonus', confirming the need for structural measures<sup>3</sup>.

The European Care Strategy and the 2022 Council Recommendation call for accessible and high-quality services, support for informal carers and a reduction in territorial inequalities<sup>4</sup>. In addition, Directive (EU) 2019/1158 protects reconciliation, leave and work flexibility, with a view to ensuring gender equality<sup>5</sup>.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission intend to monitor the implementation of the European Care Strategy in Italy with a view to reducing territorial inequalities in access to care and support services for family carers in Sicily and southern Italy? If so, how?
2. Will it mobilise the ESF+, ERDF and other cohesion policy instruments to increase investment in home services and psychological support for family carers, especially in regions that lack care services?

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ansa.it/sito/notizie/economia/2026/07/25/istat-i-caregiver-sono-oltre-12-milioni-le-donne-piu-impegnate\\_8a3ac910-ac47-40e1-a240-9971be4f9a77.html](https://www.ansa.it/sito/notizie/economia/2026/07/25/istat-i-caregiver-sono-oltre-12-milioni-le-donne-piu-impegnate_8a3ac910-ac47-40e1-a240-9971be4f9a77.html).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cnel.it/comunicazione-e-stampa/notizie/news/detail/2026/03/27/presentato-il-rapporto-cnel-sul-valore-sociale-del-caregiver>; <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/663da961-1777-11f1-8870-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.regione.sicilia.it/la-regione-informa/politiche-sociali-2-milioni-caregiver-familiari-albano-rafforziamo-sostegno>.

<sup>4</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32022H1215\(01\);https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/european-care-strategy-caregivers-and-care-receivers-2022-09-07\\_en](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32022H1215(01);https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/european-care-strategy-caregivers-and-care-receivers-2022-09-07_en).

<sup>5</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32019L1158>.