

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002309/24
to the Commission
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)
(29 October 2024)**

Subject: Conformity of teaching contracts in Italy with the NRRP and EU law

A bedrock of all modern, democratic societies, education is vital to their future. Abusive contractual practices in the Italian educational system have been in the spotlight lately, specifically concerning the excessive use of fixed-term contracts for teaching staff. As outlined in a letter sent by the FLC-CGIL trade union ⁽¹⁾ and in the Commission's subsequent reply ⁽²⁾, this practice raises doubts as to whether Italy is complying with the EU policy principles of fairness and non-discrimination.

It is vital to ensure that the measures taken under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) do not merely respond to immediate post-pandemic recovery needs, but are also closely aligned with EU regulatory requirements.

In the light of the above:

1. What specific actions could the Commission take to ensure that the NRRP's ⁽³⁾ reforms are implemented in a way that complies with the principles of fairness and non-discrimination, which are required by EU law?
2. Will the Commission set monitoring measures in motion to ensure that the NRPP resources allocated to the Italian education sector are used to achieve the objectives of improving the working conditions of teaching staff and ensuring that they have stable employment conditions?
3. What additional measures might the Commission take to tackle the abusive use of precarious employment contracts, as well as improve the plight of the prospective teachers who passed the competitions of 2020 and 2023?

Submitted: 29.10.2024

**Answer given by Mr Dombrovskis on behalf of the European Commission
(5 February 2025)**

The Commission approved Italy's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) under Regulation (EU) 2021/24 ⁽¹⁾, which establishes milestones and targets detailed in the annex to the Council Implementing Decision ⁽²⁾. The Commission works closely with the Italian authorities to ensure smooth implementation and compliance to NRRP requirements.

The NRRP does not directly finance teachers' recruitment costs, but supports a reform (Mission 4, Component 1, Reform 2.1) to improve recruitment and qualification processes, aiming to increase professional standards. The reform targets the recruitment of at least 70 000 new teachers covered by the reform through permanent contracts by 2026.

The reform introduced a structured qualification pathway and transitional measures to allow teachers with temporary contracts to participate in recruitment competitions and complete the qualification process during the 'probationary period'.

This contributes to reducing the excessive use of consecutive fixed-term contracts in the school system, improving working conditions and guaranteeing more stable employment conditions.

Under EU law (Directive 1999/70/EC ⁽³⁾), Member States are required to take effective steps to prevent the abuse of successive fixed-term contracts.

The EU Court of Justice held that there is no general obligation on Member States to automatically convert fixed-term contracts to permanent ones, but it is for the Member States to lay down the conditions for their conversions.

¹ <https://www.flcgil.it/files/pdf/20240913/lettera-flc-cgil-a-commissione-europea-su-riforma-formazione-e-reclutamento-docenti-italiani-missione-4-componente-1-riforma-2-1.pdf>

² <https://www.flcgil.it/scuola/precari-scuola-commissione-europea-risponde-lettera-flc-cgil-abuso-contratti-termine-italia-attenzione-istituzioni-comunitarie-confermata-procedura-infrazione.flc>

³ Mission 4 Component 1 Reform 2.1

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

⁽²⁾ Annex to the COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION amending the Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Italy eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CONSIL:ST_9399_2024_ADD_1&qid=1717059380496

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/1999/70/oj/eng>

Nevertheless, where abuse has taken place, effective guarantees for the protection of workers must be provided for. In that regard, Italy amended its rules on financial compensation for misuse of fixed-term employment contracts, with law of 14/11/2024, n. 166 ⁽⁴⁾.

⁽⁴⁾ G.U. 14/11/2024, n. 267.