

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001548/26
to the Commission
Danilo Della Valle (The Left), Valentina Palmisano (The Left)
(15 April 2026)**

Subject: Delays in boosting administrative capacity in southern Italy: impact on the implementation of the NRRP and cohesion policy

In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2021/241 (Recovery and Resilience Facility) and Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (Cohesion Policy Funds), boosting administrative capacity is an essential condition for the effective use of EU funding.

In this context, the ‘Coesione Sud’ (‘Southern Cohesion’) competition, aimed at recruiting 2 200 experts for public authorities in southern Italy, is a key tool to support the implementation of EU-funded projects. However, despite the approval of the shortlists in May 2025, the entry into service of the successful candidates remains far from complete.

This delay — also highlighted in recent findings of the Court of Auditors — risks undermining the administrative capacity of the regions concerned when they are at the crucial stage of implementing the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), made all the more difficult by regulatory uncertainties and issues in recruitment mechanisms at national level.

In light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of these problems and does it believe that the failure to employ candidates who have already been selected could affect the achievement of the administrative capacity targets laid down in Regulation (EU) 2021/241?
2. What tools will it use to ensure that Member States ensure adequate administrative capacity for the effective use of EU funds?
3. Does it deem it necessary to take specific steps to prevent implementation delays at national level from undermining the full achievement of the economic, social and territorial cohesion objectives set out in Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union?

Submitted: 15.4.2026

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto on behalf of the European Commission
(19 June 2026)**

1. The Commission is closely following the implementation of the competition, supported by the European Regional Development Fund under the Capacity for Cohesion National Programme ⁽¹⁾ and designed to introduce in the Italian public administration new staff to be exclusively dedicated to the EU Cohesion Policy. According to the information in its possession, as from 14 April 2026, 987 persons had been hired and entered service, over a total of 1394 candidates shortlisted; the managing authority of the programme reports the difference is being mainly due to the high number of selected candidates withdrawing availability once called in service.

2. The Commission supports Member States through free training — both online and in person — covering public procurement, state aid and fraud prevention. It also facilitates knowledge-sharing via peer-to-peer exchanges and communities of practice, fostering collaboration to strengthen administrative capacity in use of EU funding.

3. The Commission has been informed by the Italian authorities of additional measures planned to ensure the attainment of the final target of 2 200 persons hired, including the launch of a supplementary competition and the verification of the interest for hiring candidates of a different profile than the one initially requested. The Commission will closely monitor the implementation of these measures.

⁽¹⁾ <https://capcoe.it/>.