

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002013/26
to the Commission**

Nicola Zingaretti (S&D), Mario Furore (The Left), Carolina Morace (The Left), Sandro Ruotolo (S&D), Benedetta Scuderi (Verts/ALE)
(13 May 2026)

Subject: The proposed Italian performing arts law's new organisational model and its potential breach of Directive 1999/70/EC

Chapter IV of the proposal for a new performing arts law — which the Italian Government has submitted to the country's regional authorities and the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) — establishes a national ballet company for outstanding talents, all of whom would be hired on fixed-term contracts of 36 months — which can be extended by a further 24 months — and also perform in Italy's most prestigious opera houses.

There is a risk that these precarious contracts will become the new norm, as setting up a national company will come at the expense of reconstituting the resident troupes of 10 of Italy's 14 flagship venues, which would offer stable working conditions to their employees.

Having regard to Directive 1999/70/EC on the abuse of fixed-term contracts, the objectives of the cultural compass on decent work, the European Pillar of Social Rights's principles concerning employment stability and the CJEU's judgment in case C-331/17 (which found that the misuse of successive fixed-term contracts in Italian operatic and orchestral foundations was unlawful), could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is setting up the aforementioned national ballet company and opting for precarious contracts compatible with EU law and/or EU objectives?
2. Will the Commission monitor the proposed performing arts law's legislative process and will it consider activating the relevant procedures laid down in the Treaties if any incompatibilities with EU law arise?

Submitted: 13.5.2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(23 June 2026)

The Commission notes that the Italian performing arts law is still under discussion. Any assessment of compatibility with EU law, including with Directive 1999/70/EC ⁽¹⁾ concerning the framework agreement on fixed-term work, can however only be carried out on the basis of the final text once adopted.

Nevertheless, the Commission respectfully recalls that limits on the overall duration of successive fixed-term contracts and limits on the number of renewals are amongst the measures that Member States may adopt, pursuant to Clause 5 of the framework Agreement, to prevent abuse arising from the use of successive fixed-term employment contracts or relationships.

Based on the information available, the proposed system appears to provide for employment relationships of 36 months, which can be extended by a further 24 months.

Such limits would in principle appear suitable to prevent abusive recourse to successive fixed-term contracts, provided that effective penalties are also in place if abuse nevertheless occurs in practice.

The Commission will follow developments concerning the proposed legislation and, where appropriate, will assess its compatibility with EU law in light of the final adopted provisions.

The Commission also recalls that improving artists' working conditions remains an important priority, as recently reaffirmed in the Culture Compass for Europe.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/1999/70/oj/eng>.