

Question for written answer E-014650/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Mara Bizzotto (ENF)

Subject: Italian public authorities Europe's worst payer, with EUR 61 billion in debts to suppliers

According to the Banca d'Italia, Italian public authorities owed EUR 61 billion to suppliers as at 27 October 2015.

The Mestre CGIA (small business and crafts association) has drawn attention to the fact that Italian public authorities take on average 144 days (brought down to 106 days following the introduction of electronic billing) to pay for goods and services, as against a Europe-wide average of 38 days. This situation is in clear breach of Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in commercial transactions, which has been in force in Italy since 1 January 2013 and requires public authorities to pay their bills within 30 to 60 days, depending on the circumstances.

Given that in June 2014 the Commission opened infringement proceedings (in case 2014-2143) against Italy under Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union on grounds of late payment by public authorities in breach of the above directive, can the Commission say:

- if there have been any new developments in the proceedings against Italy;
- what urgent steps it will take to secure payment for the firms to which money is owed;
- what practical support it will provide for the very many Italian firms that are suffering as a result of public authorities' failure to pay?