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Motivations behind the EMAS stagnation and enabling measures to stimulate new registrations: characterization of Public Administrations and Private-owned organizations

MERLI R.^a, LUCCHETTI M.C.^a, PREZIOSI M.^a, ARCESE G.^b

^a Department of Business Studies, Roma Tre University, Via Silvio D'Amico 77, 00145, Roma, Italy.

^b Ionian Department of Law, Economics and Environment, University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy.

*Corresponding Author: Roberto Merli, roberto.merli@uniroma3.it

Abstract

The Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) is a voluntary Regulation that defines a management instrument developed by the European Commission for companies and other organisations to evaluate, report, and improve their environmental performance. Today the EMAS is undergoing a revision process, in order to fit organizations' and stakeholders' requirements and increase its diffusion. Italy accounts for roughly 1,000 of the 4,000 certified European organizations, and, especially during the last five years, a growing number of organizations have not renewed the certification. This context determined a stagnation in the number of EMAS registered organizations. Thus, the aim of the survey is to investigate why a growing number of Italian organizations have dropped out of EMAS, and to identify which enabling measures would be more effective in order to encourage organizations to move back to the certification. The target of the questionnaire were the 339 Italian organizations that did not renew their EMAS registration between 2010 and 2015, there were 99 respondents. In this paper, certified Public Administrations and private-owned organizations are compared in order to delineate significant differences between the two groups. Concerning motivations for not renewing EMAS, implementation costs were the key reasons for both groups. Conversely, considering the possible enabling measures, while private-owned organizations demand long term tax benefits, Public Administrations prefer a greater consideration of EMAS in public funding. This paper systematically addresses the phenomenon for the first time, contributing to reducing the existing gap in literature, and providing an input to decision-makers who are overseeing the EMAS revision process.

Keywords: EMAS; Environmental Management Systems; ISO 14001; EMAS barriers; public Organizations.