

VareseNews

A man discovers, by accident, that the Social Security Organisation considers him dead

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It truly is a crazy time, with the council tax (IMU) doubling, the Italian revenue service, Equitalia, making exorbitant demands, and now, the social security organisation, INPS, declaring one man dead, but fortunately only on paper. This is what happened to a computer consultant, Luca Ercoli, 36, from Varese. **The agency informed him that they had considered him dead since 31 October 1998.** However, the agency has continued to receive his payments, more or less, since the same date. What a paradox: the INPS received the payments from the consultant from Varese, even though they considered him dead, and in order to not make any mistake, they never asked him anything; or rather, they never asked any relative of his if he really had, so to speak, departed.

The curious discovery was made by accident. Ercoli needed to check his tax position, for work reasons. He visited the website and entered his data. "Yesterday, I received a text message that reported an error, and I was asked to call a toll free number for verification. I called and gave them my tax code. At that point, **the call centre operator was surprised**, and was silent for a moment. Then he told me that **I appeared to be dead. He was also astounded.**"

This morning Ercoli went to the INPS office in Varese, with his identity card and his tax code, and said that he felt perfectly well. From the bureaucratic point of view, the computer consultant from Varese was literally resurrected. "I wonder what happened; I really have no idea," he explained. "The date of death actually coincides with the end of a pension that I received when I was young, which ended because of an age limit; maybe the mistake was made at that time. But what puzzles me is that **no one noticed in these fourteen years.** It was funny," he said. "Thankfully, it didn't cause any problems, just the two hours waiting in line."

We have asked the agency for an explanation, but we only got a reply from a national call centre, which was not able to verify the incident. It is not the first time that a computer mistake has occurred. **In Como, in 2007 a 65 year-old man had his pension stopped by the bank** for the same reason, but, on that occasion, someone at least realised that things were not right. In this case, however, had it not been for that unsuspecting request, who knows how long Ercoli would have continued to "rest in peace", without knowing about it!

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