

VareseNews

“The Province has a deficit of €50 million”

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Varese's new provincial council, led by President **Gunnar Vincenzi** (who is supported by the Democratic Party, SEL and NCD) has accused the old provincial council (led by the Northern League, Forza Italia and UDC) of leaving a balance deficit of **about €50 million**

Considering that the provincial council has a budget of a little more than **€100 million**, this is a very high figure which has forced President Vincenzi to report the serious and alarming situation of the Province's coffers to the State Auditors' Department, and to ask the auditors to suggest a recovery plan that, in 5 or 10 years, could be carried out by cutting spending and selling off property.

The decision of President Vincenzi and of the majority councillors to reveal the state of the Province's accounts has begun a bitter **political conflict** between the current, NCD+Centre-Left majority, and the previous, Centre-Right-Northern-League-led administration, particularly over the former President and Commissioner, **Dario Galli**.

President Vincenzi said, “**Unfortunately**, our meticulous work of preparing the 2014 final statement, which has also been confirmed by the auditors' report, **has certified that, in the budget of Varese Province**, which had been approved by the former special commissioner for 2014, non-existent active surpluses of €29 million had been included in the balance sheet since the 2012 statement. Basically, these active surpluses are alleged credits of the Province that don't actually exist. As well as this alleged €29 million surplus, the sum of €22 million, which the Province owes the government, for 2014, because of the spending review, which the government will take back this year by force, was also not

included among the liabilities.”

Vincenzi continued. “These oversights **allowed making expenditure, in 2012, 2013 and 2014, that was covered by receipts that did not exist**, and this is leading to, and will lead to, serious consequences for the 2014 and 2015 balance sheets.” Vincenzi’s statement is based on the work of the auditors, who, curiously, are the same people who certified the budget the previous year.

“They’ve removed their blinders,” the majority councillors said to explain the situation.

Councillor **Laura Cavalotti** added, “The missing income mainly concerns regional transfers, such as those for road taxes, that have no reason to exist in that form. As far as the unregistered expenditure is concerned, we should say that **the decree, of 21 February**, which explained how much would be cut from the provinces until 2014, was very clear,” she pointed out. “The previous provincial administration did not take them into account, and this was clearly a mistake.”

However, the political mystery exists. Last October, a resolution had confirmed the budget balances, but according to Councillor Laura Cavalotti the situation was actually quite different. President Vincenzi has said they are not going to call for criminal charges. However, **reporting the matter to the State Auditors’ Department** was necessary, also to protect the current administrators. A period of financial difficulties is also imminent, but for now, the recovery plan seems to be the best path to follow. In any case, **employees’ jobs and salaries** will be protected. Gunnar Vincenzi and the executive officer Paolo Bertocchi went on to say that, as far as the **Expo Bids** are concerned, the Province will somehow guarantee those of 2014, but those of 2015 will certainly not be paid, because, in effect, the call for bids was made without financial cover. In contrast, the executive officer Magrini has said that, **as far as the debts with the government are concerned**, they will consider the recent suggestion by the national association of building constructors, ANCE.

di **Roberto Rotondo** traduzione **Maria Chiara Saporì** (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)