

**Question for written answer E-002463/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)

Subject: Laundering of money from Ukraine in European banks

There are widespread suspicions that leading political and business figures in Ukraine have transferred huge assets under their control to EU banks through corrupt and illegal activities. Ukraine's new Prime Minister, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, claimed on 27 February 2014 that up to USD 70 billion had been taken out of Ukraine's financial system and put into offshore accounts. Some media reports have published names, dates and documents detailing these allegations.

In its resolution of 5 February 2014 on the EU institutions and Member States, Parliament called on the Council 'to step up efforts to stop money laundering and tax evasion by Ukrainian companies and business people in European banks'. In its resolution of 27 February 2014, Parliament welcomed the imposition of an EU asset freeze (as well as a visa ban) 'directed against those responsible for human rights violations, violence and the use of excessive force' and called on the EU to assist the Ukrainian Government with its efforts to 'make the fight against corruption a top priority in its programme'.

The new directive on the freezing and confiscation of the proceeds of crime in the EU, of which the agreed text was recently approved by Parliament, also signals a renewed determination to tackle illicit enrichment.

Can the Commission outline what action it and Member States are taking to investigate alleged money laundering by Ukrainian persons in the EU and to freeze and confiscate illegally held assets?