

**Question for written answer E-001411/2017
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Jozo Radoš (ALDE) and Ivan Jakovčić (ALDE)

Subject: Financial assistance for extreme frost damage in Croatia

Frost and low temperatures caused severe damage to crops throughout Croatia in late April 2016, as a result of which agricultural producers sustained major losses. The damage was particularly severe in relation to fruits, grapevines, cereals and vegetables resulting in yield losses in orchards and vineyards of between 50 % and 100 % and on cereals and vegetables between 30 % and 70 %. Consequently, in some Croatian regions a state of natural disaster was declared.

The cold front also hit other European countries such as Hungary, Austria, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia, causing similar problems for their agricultural crops.

Bearing these circumstances in mind, farmers were in need of quick and effective financial assistance that could alleviate the negative impact on their agricultural production caused by the harsh weather .

At the end of the same year, the EU financial assistance provided to Croatian farmers for this purpose was allegedly taken by the Croatian tax authorities to compensate for their existing obligations toward the state.

Does the Commission have any evidence that this was done? If this was not permitted, what does the Commission intend to do by way of response?