

**Question for written answer E-002344/2019  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Ignazio Corrao (NI)**

Subject: Rural mafia in Europe

In Italy, EU agricultural funds are one of the main sources of income for the different kinds of mafia. Since they are paid directly into current accounts, in many cases they have been used by the mafia to finance leading mafia bosses who are fugitives from justice, such as Matteo Messina Denaro in Sicily.

The system consists of the seizure of private or public land through violence, with a monopoly on land allocation orders, or through fraud and the complicity of agricultural assistance centres, involving millions of euros in profit.

This method exists not only in Italy, but in Europe, too. We received confirmation of this through the investigative work of journalist Jan Kuciak in Slovakia, but investigations have also brought to light evidence in Corsica, Germany and Romania.

However, in Italy alone do we have laws to curb this, such as the 'Antoci Protocol', which is a formidable tool against the appropriation of EU agricultural funds by the mafia, since it provides for anti-mafia checks on companies that apply for funding.

Can the Commission clarify the following:

- 1) What is its view of the existence of this phenomenon in Europe?
- 2) What instruments will it adopt at EU level to combat the financing of European mafias through EU agricultural funds?
- 3) What is its view of the possible application of a special law enforcement package and the Antoci Protocol at EU level?