

**Question for written answer E-000250/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Piernicola Pedicini (EFDD)

Subject: Findings of the EU Court of Auditors regarding the fraud monitoring mechanism

In its January 2019 report on fraud in connection with EU spending, the EU Court of Auditors (CoA) concludes that the existing fraud prevention mechanism is generally 'inadequate'. It takes the view that the Commission lacks comprehensive information regarding the scale, nature and causes of fraud to the EU budget and that its reporting on fraud in areas for which it is directly responsible is incomplete. In addition, administrative investigations by OLAF have led to charges being brought in less than half of the cases and to the recovery of less than one-third of undue disbursements.

In 2018, the Guardia di Finanza uncovered irregular and unlawful dealings with regard to almost EUR 1.5 billion of the over EUR 2.4 billion in EU subsidies for Italy, relating principally to the common agricultural policy and cohesion policy.

In view of the CoA recommendations and in line with Directive 2017/1371:

1. Can the Commission say what measures it intends to take within its remit to combat fraud affecting the allocation of structural funds, causing them to be squandered instead of underpinning agricultural production and cohesion policy?
2. How will it improve on the methods used by OLAF to investigate and recover funds unlawfully appropriated by public/private recipients at the expense of European taxpayers?