Question for written answer E-001592/2020

to the Commission

Rule 138

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Subject: Request for information concerning the possible recovery of fraudulently obtained funds in the agriculture sector

In 2013, Ciro Rossi, a partner in the agricultural undertakings F.lli Rossi and AgriCapital S.p.A., reported serious criminal and accounting irregularities by these undertakings to the Foggia Public Prosecutor’s Office — irregularities which were both to his detriment and to the detriment of the budget of the European Union and which were committed inter alia through the formation of new companies (Apulia Verde and 4 Erre). Investigations were carried out as a result of which goods were goods seized from AgriCapital; however, at auction the goods were always awarded to companies linked to relatives of the companies in question. The investigating authorities provided proof of the loss to the exchequer including by sending documentary evidence to the Court of Auditors.

In light of the above, we should be grateful if the Commission would answer the following questions:

1. Can the Commission provide information on the recovery of any EU funds obtained fraudulently by the companies involved in the above-mentioned investigations?

2. Considering that this is only one of the detected cases of fraud involving agricultural funds in various Member States and that the amount of fraud is steadily increasing, can the Commission provide information on the amounts recovered (broken down by individual countries) and on the Commission’s policies to increase these amounts?