

**Question for written answer E-003286/2020
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Laura Ferrara (NI)

Subject: Fraudulent use of European funding for bogus tendering procedures in Calabria

In the last few hours, a complex police operation in Calabria codenamed 'Waterfront' has netted 68 individuals, who have been charged and cautioned, while companies and assets worth over EUR 103 million have been confiscated.

Charges include criminal association for the purposes of bid rigging and public supply fraud. According to the investigators, an illegal cartel made up of a number of companies was systematically rigging at least 22 public tenders, thereby defrauding the Calabria region and the European Union.

Seven of the tenders from 2007 to 2013 involved European Union funds totalling EUR 42 million under the operational programme for the region of Calabria to redevelop urban and waterfront areas near Gioia Tauro, Rosarno and San Ferdinando (P.I.S.U. – Axis VIII City – Specific Objective 8.1 'Cities and Cities and Urban Areas').

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say whether the projects relating to these tenders had been completed and the related payments fully paid?
2. Does the Commission intend to recover the EU funding channelled into these projects and fraudulently pocketed by the tendering companies and, if so, how?
3. Will it bring the 'Waterfront' operation to the attention of OLAF with a view to launching an official investigation?