

**Question for written answer E-006061/2020  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Dimitrios Papadimoulis (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: Freezing of criminal proceedings for smuggling and tax evasion

A provision adopted on 5 November 2020 by the government majority in the Greek Parliament<sup>1</sup> provides for the freezing or suspension of criminal proceedings for smuggling and tax evasion pending conclusion of all procedures by the customs and tax authorities owing to expiry of the appeals deadline or until a definitive ruling has been handed down by the administrative appeals court.

Given that Greece is still significantly lagging behind in the fight against fraud and tax evasion, the above initiative has provoked unfavourable reactions in the international press<sup>2</sup>, coming as it does in the wake of a number of provisions already adopted, regarding release of the proceeds of financial crime after 18 months<sup>3</sup> for example.

In view of this:

1. Has the Commission been apprised of the above provisions?
2. What view does it take of them, particularly in the light of the urgent need, which the Commission has itself highlighted on several occasions, to step up the fight against fraud, tax evasion, tax avoidance and money laundering?

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<sup>1</sup> This is the purpose of Article 32 of the bill regarding arrangements for acceleration of cases pending under Law

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/9f630c1a-4c96-4852-8705-3a15148eddcf>

<sup>3</sup> Article 9(2) of Law 4637/2019 (Government Gazette A 180/18.11.2019).  
<https://www.ft.com/content/37512b46-06b4-11ea-9afa-d9e2401fa7ca>