

**Question for written answer E-001617/2023
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Jordi Cañas (Renew)

Subject: Suspected electoral fraud in the Melilla elections

Local Criminal Court Number 2 of the Spanish Autonomous City of Melilla has opened preliminary proceedings for suspected electoral fraud after a disproportionate number of requests for postal voting were detected and multiple indications of possible vote-buying came to light¹. Recent news indicates that the fraud might have been orchestrated by Morocco as part of its strategy to violate the territorial integrity of an EU Member State². This would be an extremely worrying situation because it would add to suspicions about Morocco's involvement in 'Qatar-Morocco Gate'.

Given the EU's concerns about third countries interfering in its democracy:

1. Will the Commission investigate this extremely serious situation that would constitute a direct threat to Article 4 of the TFEU?
2. If the suspicions of foreign interference are confirmed, what consequences would there be for the State concerned, and will the Commission follow the position of Parliament on foreign interference, in particular the recommendations in paragraph 83³? Could the Commission establish an instrument to protect European democratic processes from foreign interference, prevent fraud and partially or totally revoke the benefits of third countries associated with the EU?

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¹ <https://elpais.com/espana/elecciones-municipales/2023-05-18/la-junta-electoral-de-melilla-ordena-entregar-el-voto-por-correo-con-el-dni-y-en-persona-para-evitar-la-compra-de-sufragios.html>

² <https://www.vozpopuli.com/opinion/melilla-aberchan-voto-correo-rabat.html>

³ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0064_EN.pdf