

**Question for oral answer O-000066/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 128

Ingeborg Gräßle

on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control

Subject: Fighting customs fraud and protecting EU own resources

Traditional own resources, comprised mainly of duties on imports from outside the EU and sugar levies, account for around 12.8% of EU own resources. In early 2017, OLAF concluded an investigation on a case of customs fraud in the UK. It calculated a loss of EUR 1987 billion to the EU budget in terms of unpaid customs duties on textiles and shoes imported from China through the UK in the period 2013-2016. This may be compared with the fact that in 2016 OLAF recommended a total of EUR 631.1 million for financial recovery over 272 investigations concluded. The investigation also revealed substantial VAT evasion in connection with imports through the UK by abusing the suspension of the payment of VAT, the so-called Customs Procedure 42. These VAT losses are cumulatively estimated to be in the range of EUR 3.2 billion for the period 2013-2016. Moreover, it has recently been revealed that OLAF is investigating a new case involving the port of Piraeus, which is estimated to have cost Italy tens of millions of euros in unpaid VAT, although the investigation is not over and the total could therefore prove to be far higher. Although these cases are emblematic because of their scale, they are far from being isolated and cases could emerge concerning other Member States.

- What immediate action can the Commission take in order to recover EU own resources that have failed to be collected?
- Is the Commission of the opinion that the Council regulation of 30 November 2017 amending Regulation (EU)904/2010 as regards measures to strengthen administrative cooperation in the field of value added tax, together with the proposed changes to Article 13, constitute sufficient measures to address the recommendation of the European Court of Auditors regarding the facilitation of information flow between tax and customs authorities on imports? Is the Commission planning any further legislative follow-up with regard to Customs Procedure 42?
- What possible actions does the Commission envisage to harmonise and standardise the application of customs controls by the Member States?
- What other measures is the Commission considering in order to avoid fraud of this nature in the future?

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Forwarded: 15.6.2018

Deadline for reply: 22.6.2018