

**Question for written answer E-015041/2015**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Marijana Petir (PPE)**

Subject: Complaints from Croatian farmers

Farmers' association in Croatia claim that the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture has permitted related companies (subsidiaries) to apply for tenders for the award of European funds linked to measure M04 – Investments in physical assets, and sub-measure 4.1. – Support for investments in agricultural holdings, under Croatia's Rural Development Programme for the 2014-2020 period. The sum of HRK 473 097 904, or 54.92% of the total support under the first tender and 27.46% of the total budget for the sub-measure over the entire seven-year period, was granted to 16 beneficiaries. Under the terms of the public tender, all of these companies gained extra points as joint projects with related companies. Of these 16 companies, five generated a turnover of HRK 4.87 million in 2014 while having only two employees between them. After the current tender, there are plans to award them HRK 152.75 million in support, or 17.85% of all support over the seven-year period foreseen by the first tender.

Such a policy is contrary to the objectives of the common agricultural policy, which is focused on family farms. The fact that subsidiaries have obtained points in a competition for projects carried out in cooperation with other companies to which they are connected by ownership relations constitutes a gross violation of competition. Does the Commission plan to carry out an investigation in relation to this matter?