

**Question for written answer E-014652/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
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Subject: Distribution fraud in the EU

An increasing number of European firms have fallen foul of distribution fraud over recent months. This type of fraud generally involves criminal gangs impersonating established, well-known firms. The methods used include using email addresses similar to those of the firms, or the firms' actual contact details, to place or take large orders for goods. The unsuspecting suppliers or buyers then send the goods to the false address given by the fraudsters or find that they have paid for goods they will never receive.

A large number of firms in Poland and elsewhere in the EU have been tricked in this way, and millions of euros have been lost and some businesses bankrupted as a result. In addition to the harm caused to businesses, there is also a significant risk to the health and lives of consumers, since a large proportion of the goods seized in connection with such fraud are food products. This type of fraud is also damaging to the single market, as it undermines mutual trust between businesses.

Is the Commission aware of the increasing prevalence of this type of fraud, which, in addition to being a crime, is undermining confidence in the single market?

Will it be taking legislative action, as well as other steps in cooperation with EU and national law enforcement authorities, in order properly to address the problem of distribution fraud in Europe?