

EN

E-000495/2021

Answer given by Mr Wojciechowski
on behalf of the European Commission
(8.4.2021)

The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), which is mandated to investigate the evasion of duties on goods imported into the EU damaging the EU budget, may open investigations in case of sufficient suspicions of fraud. In order to protect the confidentiality of its activities, OLAF does not comment on investigations that it may or may not be treating, including the data that might be required for these investigations.

In November 2007, OLAF finalised a previous investigation into alleged customs fraud involving imports of tomatoes from Morocco into the EU and passed its findings at that time on to the Member States concerned. Complementing this intervention at national authorities' level, the Commission also carried out between 2007 and 2008 an evaluation on both the entry price system (EPS) and export refunds system applicable to the fruit and vegetables sector. The granting of export refunds was abolished at Common Market Organisation (CMO) reform in 2007¹. Finally, in 2014 at the subsequent CMO reform, the Commission improved and simplified the EPS notably with the elimination of the so-called "deductive price" method (to clear customs) which had triggered accusations of enabling importers to evade some of the import duties that would otherwise be due. The Commission does not currently envisage any changes to the existing system.

¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 1182/2007