

Eurojust Helps Unveil Major Fraud Case with EU's Agricultural Funds



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European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

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News

On 23 February 2022, Eurojust reported on the results of a joint investigation team that involved Romanian and Italian prosecutors and OLAF. The investigations dismantled an organised crime group which defrauded the EU of at least €800,000 in the sector of agricultural funds. The case was brought to Eurojust by Romanian authorities in 2019 and targeted five Italian citizens who allegedly set up shell companies in Romania in order to obtain EU funds for the planting and selling of tomatoes. By falsifying documents, the EU money, however, was never used to plant and the fraudsters transferred the money to several bank accounts in Italy. In 2021, the suspects were indicted in Romania on charges of fraud against the EU's financial interests; they will also face charges in Italy for self money laundering.

Eurojust assisted the Romanian and Italian prosecution services in the exchange of information and coordination of parallel investigations, in particular as regards the issuance and enforcement of freezing orders on the assets of the suspects and their companies. Eurojust also helped the countries determine the most suitable jurisdiction for prosecution.

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