

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004617/25
to the Commission
Fredis Beleris (PPE)
(19 November 2025)

Subject: OLAF proposal not to allocate funds to Albania from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development (IPARD III)

According to the recent European Commission report on Albania for 2025, the country is deprived of funding due to a lack of transparency and fears of mismanagement.

It is noted that, according to the 2023 report of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), the office investigated serious allegations of misuse of European funds in Albania from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development (IPARD II).

The allegations were confirmed, with OLAF classifying EUR 33 million as unlawfully spent and proposing that no further funds be allocated under IPARD III until Albania complies and takes corrective measures to protect the EU's financial interests. It is clear that Albania must align with the legality and transparency requirements for its access to European funding programmes.

The exclusion of Albania from IPARD III funds (EUR 112 million) is having a significant impact on the rural population, penalising farmers who are legally entitled to the subsidies.

The Commission is asked:

1. What procedure was followed to classify EUR 33 million as unlawfully spent?
2. What is the current state of Albania's administrative compliance for accessing IPARD III funds?
3. How does the Commission intend to address Albania's non-compliance with European transparency principles?

Submitted: 19.11.2025

Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(13 January 2026)

The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) identified part of the Union financing under the first and second call for applications under the 2014-2020 IPARD II programme in Albania as ineligible, based on its regular investigation procedure. Following its investigation, OLAF recommended the Commission to follow up its findings, as appropriate ⁽¹⁾.

As of July 2023, the Commission interrupted the payment deadline for reimbursing Albania for any spending under the IPARD II programme and put on hold the entrustment for implementing any measure under the 2021-2027 IPARD III programme.

These preventive measures, taken to protect the financial interests of the Union, continue to apply until further notice. A bilateral procedure between the Commission and the Albanian authorities is ongoing to ensure that appropriate remedial actions are put in place by the authorities for the proper implementation of IPARD support in Albania.

The Commission is closely monitoring and supporting Albania's progress in the fight against fraud and corruption in the context of the accession negotiations.

This includes efforts to streamline and harmonise the corruption prevention framework, notably through the adoption of key legislation, and to ensure its effective implementation. The Commission is assessing these laws to ensure alignment with European standards on transparency.

⁽¹⁾ The OLAF report 2023: Investigative activities — OLAF's investigative performance in 2023 — Protecting EU Funds — International Investigations: https://ec.europa.eu/olaf-report/2023/investigative-activities/protecting-eu-funds/international-investigations_en.html#serious-misuse-of-eu-pre-accession-agricultural-funds.