

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000883/26
to the Commission
Stefano Cavedagna (ECR)
(4 March 2026)**

Subject: Fighting cross-border fuel fraud and safeguarding competition in the internal market

Integral to the free movement of goods, the road transport sector is a pillar of the internal market. Yet cases of illegal fuel trafficking and excise duty evasion occur nevertheless and make for a serious unlevelling of the playing field for companies across the Member States. For example, there have been reports of fraudulent practices whereby imported energy products have been declared as mineral oils or the like, and then released for consumption as automotive gas oil, circumventing the taxes due. Shell companies are sometimes behind these (often cross-border) operations. Aside from resulting in substantial tax revenue losses, such practices pose a threat to the survival of companies operating in full compliance with the rules and erode trust in the proper functioning of the internal market in accordance with both Directive (EU) 2020/262 and Directive 2003/96/EC.

In light of this:

1. Does the Commission have up-to-date figures on the scale of fuel tax fraud and the related revenue losses at EU level?
2. What steps will it take to improve traceability and coordination among national authorities in the fight against the illegal trafficking of energy products?
3. Does it consider it necessary to put forward further harmonisation measures to prevent the distortion of competition in the road transport sector?

Submitted: 4.3.2026

**Answer given by Mr Hoekstra on behalf of the European Commission
(29 April 2026)**

The Commission currently holds data from 2018 pertaining to specific types of fuel fraud and covering only a few Member States.

To gather updated and comprehensive data, the Commission launched in early 2026 an external study aiming to quantify the excise revenues that are lost due to fraud and non-compliance, including but not only on supplies of fuel.

This quantification is a preliminary step towards identifying the most affected areas within the EU and tracking the issue over time. The next phase will involve examining the structural factors contributing to this phenomenon.

This ongoing study is carried out in cooperation with Member States, focusing on methodological issues and extending to the exchange of experiences regarding new fraud patterns, risk indicators, and control measures.

The completion of the study is envisaged in early autumn 2026. Its results will feed into the 2026 edition of the ‘Mind the Gap’ Report ⁽¹⁾.

As regards coordination among national authorities, a Fiscalis Project Group was set up in early 2026 to enhance technical cooperation and allow for the exchange of information. The first meeting of the group will be held on 20 April 2026.

Regarding a strategy to address the issues at hand, technical discussions with Member States, facilitated by the Fiscalis Project Group, will aim to identify consensus areas for further harmonisation to mitigate fraud risks.

⁽¹⁾ https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/taxation/vat/fight-against-vat-fraud/mind-gap-report_en.