

EN

E-000915/2026

Answer given by Mr Brunner
on behalf of the European Commission
(5.5.2026)

The Commission shares the concerns about organised value added tax (VAT) and customs duty fraud and their impact on Member States and, indirectly, the EU budget, economy and security. Europol's 2025 Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment confirms¹ that fraud remains a serious and persistent threat.

As announced in ProtectEU: a European Internal Security Strategy², the Commission will propose to reinforce the mandates of Europol and Eurojust and modernise the rules to fight against organised crime in 2026. In addition, the European Public Prosecutor's Office investigates and prosecutes criminal offences affecting EU's financial interests, while the European Anti-Fraud Office conducts administrative investigations into irregularities against the EU budget. The Commission also supports the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats operational action plan on VAT and Missing Trader Intra-Community fraud³.

The Commission is currently reviewing the EU's Anti-Fraud Architecture, to strengthen the protection of the EU's financial interests. The aim is to modernise the EU's anti-fraud framework and, thus, strengthen the EU's capacity to detect and combat crimes affecting the EU budget, including VAT and customs fraud.

To implement the follow-the-money approach, the Commission calls for swift transposition of the Directive on asset recovery and confiscation⁴. Once operational, the new EU Customs Authority and EU Customs Data Hub⁵ will better equip customs to perform risk analysis and further improve cooperation between all law enforcement bodies. Together, these measures will better equip the EU and Member States to disrupt criminal networks and better protect Europe's security, economy and financial system.

¹ <https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/EU-SOCTA-2025.pdf>.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025DC0148>.

³ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/internal-security/law-enforcement-cooperation/empact-fighting-crime-together_en.

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1260/oj/eng>.

⁵ https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/customs/eu-customs-reform_en.