Fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law

2012/0193(COD) - 22/06/2017 - Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted the recommendation for second reading contained in the report by Ingeborg GRÄSSLE (EPP, DE) and Juan Fernando LÓPEZ AGUILAR (S&D, ES) on the Council position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law.

The committee recommended the European Parliament to **approve** the Council position at first reading without amendment.

In the short justification accompanying the recommendation, it is recalled that the conclusion of the negotiations on the directive is the **first step** towards the harmonisation of criminal law in Europe when crimes are committed against the EU budget.

The main priorities are:

- VAT fraud is included in the scope of the Directive for cases involving a loss of at least EUR 10 million in two or more Member States;
- public procurement fraud was also included in the revision clause;
- the maximum penalty for natural persons will be at least 4 years of imprisonment across Europe when involving damages or advantages of at least EUR 100 000. Parliament has made clear that the maximum penalties as well as the threshold for all offenses are binding to all Member States;
- prescription periods and deadlines for the enforcement of judgments will be 5 years. The length of the deadline for enforcement is also included in the revision clause.