



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE AUTHORITY

Medical Counter-Measures

Brussels
HERA.3/AJ

Subject: Purchase of medical equipment in Spain during COVID-19 pandemic.

Dear Petitioners,

Thank you for your messages to the President of the Commission expressing concerns about alleged mismanagement of funds regarding the purchase of medical equipment in Spain during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The European Commission is committed to upholding the rule of law, a fundamental value of the European Union, and recognises the threat that corruption poses to our institutions and shared values. The Commission takes all allegations of corruption and misuse of EU funds seriously and has a range of tools and mechanisms in place to monitor their use and ensure compliance with EU rules and regulations.

Under the legal framework governing EU cohesion policy, Member States bear primary responsibility for preventing, detecting, and correcting irregularities, including fraudulent activities, and for developing and implementing anti-fraud measures tailored to identified risks.

To safeguard the EU's financial interests, the European Commission, the European Court of Auditors, the European Anti-Fraud Office, and the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) collaboratively conduct controls, audits, and investigations within their respective areas of competence. In cases of EU fund misuse, the relevant institutions and bodies exercise their mandates to prevent further irregularities and ensure accountability.

In March 2024, the EPPO has opened an investigation into possible fraud related to public contracts awarded by the health authorities of the Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands to a single company for the purchase of medical equipment during the pandemic. Following consultation with the Spanish authorities, the EPPO took over the investigation from the Spanish Central Court in May 2024, expanding its scope to cover all contracts awarded to the same company within a short period.

While we appreciate your concerns about the specific allegations in Spain, I must emphasise that the European Commission respects the independence and autonomy of national and European authorities and their respective legal processes. In this context, it would be inappropriate for us to comment on ongoing investigations.

Rest assured that the European Commission is committed to upholding the highest standards of transparency, accountability, and integrity in the use of EU funds. We will

continue to work closely with the Spanish authorities and relevant European institutions to ensure that any irregularities are addressed.

Thanking you again for your letter, we would like to confirm that we attach a great importance to your concerns and we appreciate your commitment to promoting the values of transparency and accountability that underpin the European project.

Yours faithfully,

Olivier GIRARD
Head of Unit