

CENTRAL ANTI-CORRUPTION BUREAU

<https://www.cba.gov.pl/en/news/1009,Prosecutor039s-Office-files-indictment-in-an-investigation-of-extortion-of-EU-fu.html>
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Prosecutor's Office files indictment in an investigation of extortion of EU funds

Regional Prosecutor's Office in Gdańsk has filed an indictment to the court against 52 defendants in an investigation conducted by the CBA Regional Office in Gdańsk into extortion of EU funds. The proceedings concerned obtaining subsidies totalling over PLN 30 million from the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development in Warsaw by two furniture companies in 2013-2015 for the implementation of projects under the Innovative Economy Operational Programme 2007-2013, Priority Axis 4 - Investments in innovative undertakings, Measure 4.4 - New investments with high innovative potential. The condition for participation in the programme was holding the status of an SME (micro, small or medium-sized enterprise) by the applicant.

Evidence gathered in the investigation indicates that multi-million zloty grants were obtained by companies which used fraudulent documents. The criminal scheme carried out by two organised crime groups consisted in falsifying bidding procedures, inflating the value of machinery and equipment purchased with the use of EU funding, using inaccurate VAT invoices, and then laundering the proceeds of crime using suppliers and manufacturers of machinery and equipment. The invoices, which did not reflect real transactions, stated amounts inconsistent with the real value and led to the undue reimbursement of VAT in the total amount of approximately PLN 8 million to the detriment of the State Treasury. As a result of the suspects' operations, there was a settlement of the criminal benefit in the total amount of over PLN 6.5 million. During the investigation, machinery and equipment purchased under both subsidies as well as assets of the suspects with a total value of approximately PLN 20 million were secured.

Due to the irregularities revealed, PARP called on the beneficiaries to return the whole of the subsidies paid. One of the beneficiaries returned the whole of the granted funds of PLN 13,396,131.44 (+ statutory interest) with the reservation that they are waiting

for the completion of administrative proceedings, which will show whether the return of the subsidy is legitimate.

The investigation was conducted in many threads. As regards some of the threads, materials were excluded to separate proceedings and had already been concluded with indictments.

CBA Press Team



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