



**AGENZIA DELLE DOGANE
E DEI MONOPOLI**

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PRESS RELEASE

BOLZANO CUSTOMS OFFICE

**FRAUD ON IMPORT UNMASKED: MORE THAN € 4.5 MILLION EURO
OF BORDER DUTIES EVADED**

The Anti-fraud Service of the Bozen Customs Office, following a The Anti-fraud Service of the Bozen Customs Office, complex control activity based upon information received from Olaf (European Anti-Fraud Office) and then continued, following a specific information of crime, with an investigation carried out acting on instructions received from the Bolzano Court Public Prosecutor, detected an important tax fraud linked wood screws imported by a rapidly growing local company, operating globally.

The company concerned imported wood screws declaring they were of Thai origin. Actually most of such screws were of Thai origin.

The preferential duty treatment granted on grounds of certificates of origin unduly issued by the competent Thai authorities allowed the Italian local company to evade the huge antidumping duty (amounting to 85% of the value of goods in the initial period of application of the tariff barrier, and 74.1% afterwards), the traditional duty and the corresponding VAT on import of the large majority of screws, actually manufactured in a Chinese plant, obtaining thus great advantages, also in terms of competition in the European market.

The fraud consisted in transiting through Thailand the wood screws manufactured in the Chinese plant. In Thailand, in a specific plant, the screws of Chinese origin more than complemented the insufficient local production, in order to ensure that the needs of the Italian importer were met.

Besides the evasion of the relevant border duties, the investigations highlighted also specific quality problems of the products: the production was carried out

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following standard not always complying with those established by the purchaser and the labelling contained incorrect information.

Thus, the importer was denounced not only for aggravated smuggling and misleading of a public official delivering a public act, but also for violations concerning product safety standards, the irregular CE marking and the irregular labelling of wood screws released for consumption.