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OLAF and Italian Carabinieri formalise commitment to curb fraud with EU money

Following years of fruitful collaboration and support, OLAF and the Italian Carabinieri formalized their commitment to fighting fraud with EU funds through the signature of an Administrative Cooperation Arrangement (ACA) on 20 May.

The ACA facilitates the exchange of information and the coordination of investigations on cases affecting the European Union's financial interests. The Agreement follows a formal reorganisation of the Italian Carabinieri, which led to the establishment of a new division. Since January 2017, a Specialised Unit Division for Environmental, Forestry, Agricultural and Food Protection was put in place to work on one of the biggest spending areas of the EU budget, structural funds.

"OLAF and the Italian Carabinieri have been closely cooperating for years. This Arrangement, and the establishment of their new division, bring about new opportunities to work together and will surely have a positive impact on the investigations of both our services," said OLAF's Director-General, Giovanni Kessler.

In addition to supporting OLAF's investigative activities in Italy by, for example, preparing and assisting during on-the-spot checks, the Carabinieri also intend to help OLAF in investigative activities in third countries through their own international presence and through their network of institutional partners.

OLAF mission, mandate and competences:

OLAF's mission is to detect, investigate and stop fraud with EU funds.

OLAF fulfils its mission by:

- carrying out independent investigations into fraud and corruption involving EU funds, so as to ensure that all EU taxpayers' money reaches projects that can create jobs and growth in Europe;
- contributing to strengthening citizens' trust in the EU Institutions by investigating serious misconduct by EU staff and members of the EU Institutions;
- developing a sound EU anti-fraud policy.

In its independent investigative function, OLAF can investigate matters relating to fraud, corruption and other offences affecting the EU financial interests concerning:

- all EU expenditure: the main spending categories are Structural Funds, agricultural policy and rural development funds, direct expenditure and external aid;
- some areas of EU revenue, mainly customs duties;
- suspicions of serious misconduct by EU staff and members of the EU institutions.

For further details:

Alina BUREA
Spokesperson
European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)
Phone: +32 2 29 57336
E-mail: olaf-media@ec.europa.eu
http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud



Silvana ENCULESCU
Deputy Spokesperson
European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)
+32 2 29 81764
olaf-media@ec.europa.eu
http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud

