

PRESS RELEASE No 14/2021

5 July 2021

EPPO and OLAF working arrangement: ensuring no case goes undetected

A working arrangement as basis for coordination and cooperation between their two offices was signed today in Luxembourg by Ville Itälä, Director-General of the European Anti-Fraud Office and the European Chief Prosecutor, Laura Kövesi.

The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) conducts administrative investigations, while the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) conducts criminal investigations and prosecutes cases falling under its competence in front of national courts. The common aim is to increase fraud detection at EU level, to avoid duplication, to protect the integrity and efficiency of criminal investigations and maximize the recovery of damages. Both offices will combine their investigative and other capacities to improve the protection of the financial interests of the European Union.

Laura Kövesi said: *"This working arrangement allows us to clearly delineate our respective tasks and responsibilities, so as to work together in the most efficient manner with only one goal in mind: to better protect EU taxpayers' money and to bring all crimes against the EU budget to justice as quickly as possible."*

Ville Itälä added: *"The working arrangement between OLAF and the EPPO is an important milestone in our future relationship. It sets out in concrete terms how we will work together, based on trust and transparency. Focusing on rapid, effective and reciprocal exchanges of information, it should ensure that no case goes undetected. It is a major part of ensuring that together we can step up the fight against fraud and corruption affecting the financial interests of the EU."*

Among other things, the working arrangement sets out how the two offices will exchange information, report and transfer potential cases and support each other in their respective investigations. It also covers how OLAF will carry out complementary investigations when needed, as well as ensuring the two offices share regular information on trends, and conduct joint training exercises and staff exchange programs.

The full text of the agreement can be found [here](#).

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.

Once OLAF has completed its investigation, it is for the competent EU and national authorities to examine and decide on the follow-up of OLAF's recommendations. All persons concerned are presumed to be innocent until proven guilty in a competent national or EU court of law.

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