



## **Commission adopts Annual Report on the Protection of the EU's financial interests**

**Today, the European Commission adopted its Annual Report on the Protection of the EU's financial interests, covering the year 2017.**

The Report finds that in 2017, the EU and its Member States made progress in tackling the cross-border challenges of fraud and irregularities against the EU financial interests. Both national and EU bodies showed increased awareness of the threats posed by fraudsters, as well as growing willingness to share information and best practices, and renewed political commitment to address these challenges.

In particular, two major legislative initiatives were adopted which will enhance the effectiveness and uniformity across the EU of the fight against cross-border fraud: the directive on the fight against fraud by means of criminal law and the regulation establishing the European Public Prosecutor Office (EPPO) by enhanced cooperation.

Alongside these flagship initiatives, other measures were adopted in 2017 to boost the protection of the EU financial interests. Member States reinforced their national systems and procedures focusing on prevention and detection, for instance on public opinion campaigns, on reorganisation of national anti-fraud services, on the deployment of dedicated IT tools, focused trainings and joint operations.

### **Background:**

Member States manage approximately 80% of the EU budget, in areas such as agriculture, fisheries and cohesion policy. Today's report, which is based on information reported by the Member States, is prepared annually under Article 325 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It provides an in-depth analysis of the approaches, procedures and tools used by the Member States in their fight against fraud. While anti-fraud remains primarily a Member-State responsibility, the Commission works closely with national authorities to share best practices, ensure coordination and provide guidelines.

The report is available on the [OLAF website](#).

## **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;
- suspicion of serious misconduct by EU staff and members of the EU institutions.

### **For further details:**

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