

Brussels, February 2021

Minutes of the 30th meeting of the OLAF Anti-Fraud Communicators' Network (OAFCN), 10 February 2021, Brussels

1. Opening of meeting and welcome address

OLAF Spokesperson Jana Cappello (JC) opened the meeting by welcoming participants to the 30th – and first virtual – OAFCN meeting. She noted how, despite its limitations in terms of personal networking, the virtual format allowed for a broader participation than in previous years. JC recalled OLAF's reorganisation, which entered into force on 16 June 2020 and included the creation of Unit 02, 'Coordination and Communication', with Olivier Salles at its head. She also introduced the rest of the press team: Deputy Spokesperson Chris Jones (CJ), and Press Officers Kirill Gelmi and Victoria Hansson Malmjöf.

In a subsequent formal opening address, Margarete Hofmann (MH), Director for 'Expenditure - Operations & Investigations' since OLAF's reorganisation in June 2020, presented how the next OLAF Annual Report will mainly focus on health and safety. In this regard, she mentioned OLAF's work in relation to counterfeit and substandard personal protective equipment (PPE) related to the COVID-19 pandemic but also other counterfeit goods. In the area of expenditure, MH welcomed the good results achieved despite the difficulties connected to the pandemic and related measures, praising the creativity of OLAF's investigators in finding ways to continue carrying out successful investigations. MH welcomed the positive developments since the last meeting of the OAFCN, namely: the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), which will require vigilance to counter a potential risk of fraud. Other recent developments include the adopted revised Regulation 883 and the future cooperation between OLAF and EPPO, as well as OLAF's ongoing work on updating the Guidelines on Investigation Procedures in line with the revised Regulation and the work with EPPO. MH also referred to the upcoming new Anti-Fraud Programme (PAF), which is to replace the Hercule programme in supporting Member States in the fight against fraud. MH encouraged the participants to see how they can apply to and benefit from this programme.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted and the minutes of the 29th meeting (Brussels, 23-24 January 2020) were approved.

3. Nature of meeting

The meeting was non-public.

4. Topics discussed

Working session 1: Experiences of communication about fighting fraud in the virtual environment

The first working session of the day focused on members' experiences of communicating about fighting fraud in the virtual environment made necessary by the pandemic.

Adapting to the new normal: OLAF communication in 2020, Ms Jana Cappello and Mr Chris Jones, OLAF

JC and CJ shared how 2020 became a year of teleworking and virtual meetings and events, with the consequent rapid adaptation required from OLAF's press and communication team. JC stressed the importance of proper preparation and testing of platforms ahead of meetings, and discussed OLAF and Commission experiences of using various platforms for their communications. JC shared best practices and lessons learned from the presentation of the OLAF 2019 Report. CJ also presented how the yearly meeting to present the OLAF report to stakeholders, which usually take place in the EU Parliament, was transformed into a 20-minute video summary of the report. Finally, CJ introduced four new video clips on OLAF's work produced in 2020.

Organising Eurojust's first virtual open day, Ms Jurgita Mikelenaitė, Eurojust

Jurgita Mikelenaitė (JM) outlined Eurojust's experience of organising its first virtual open day. Relevant factors taken into account in the planning phase included: location, equipment, internet connection, accessibility, choice of virtual platform (and related challenges such as capacity, security, data protection), budget, target audience, and languages used. JM stressed the importance of proper planning. Eurojust contracted a professional studio offering a safe virtual platform for web streaming, JM explained. The event consisted of six sessions, each with a moderator – lessons learned included the planning of proper backup for the moderators in case of unexpected absence, and for sessions to last longer than 60 minutes and be interactive. JM shared the results of the event: 279 persons from 34 countries and 38 nationalities attended, and 195 participants subscribed to Eurojust's quarterly newsletter. JM also shared positive results from the promotion of the event on social media. JM noted the advantages of the format to reach audiences outside the host city and country, setting a positive example for future hybrid events.

State of play: Setup and Communication, Ms Tine Hollevoet, European Public Prosecutor's Office

Tine Hollevoet (TH) gave a brief introduction on the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), its mandate and structure. The EPPO expects to start its operations within the next few months, as it is waiting for a number of EU Member States to appoint their respective European Delegated Prosecutors and adapt national legislation. TH explained her role as a spokesperson and her first steps in setting up the EPPO's communication office. These included the drafting of a communication strategy, guidelines for corporate and internal communication, social media guidelines for staff, the creation of a working group with European Prosecutors on how to communicate operational activities, and the creation of a website for the EPPO. Ongoing and future work described by TH includes SEO, branding, the start of EPPO operations, and protocol.

Integrity Academy: a new initiative in Lithuania, Ms Renata Keblienė, Special Investigation Service

Renata Keblienė (RK), Special Investigation Service (STT), introduced the four functions of the STT: anti-corruption education and awareness raising, corruption prevention, analytical anti-corruption intelligence, and criminal prosecution. RK proceeded to present a new initiative called the Integrity Academy; a virtual platform for exchanging good practices in anti-corruption launched which was launched in December 2020. The activities of the Academy are coordinated by the STT, with the participation of volunteer experts from public and private sector organisations. These anti-corruption and compliance professionals provide expertise on building an anti-corruption environment; the participants are public sector institutions interested in getting anti-corruption expertise. With an action plan developed by the experts,

progress and achievements will be monitored accordingly. RK explained that so far three remote events had already been held, with more than 850 participants.

Introduction to the RRF and OLAF's role in the revision of national plans, Mr Clemens Kreith, OLAF

Clemens Kreith (CK) from OLAF gave a brief presentation on the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). As it currently stands, about 672.5 billion EUR will be mobilised to support both public investments and reforms, based on Member States' proposals in line with EU priorities. The main element in the implementation are the National Recovery and Resilience plans, to be officially submitted by Member States by 30 April 2021. The RRF will run over the next five years and all reforms and investment projects outlined by the Member States will need to be implemented by 2026. CK stressed that another very important element is the completely new delivery of the model, as the financing is not cost-based but performance-based. CK explained that the regulation itself contains a clear requirement to protect the EU's financial interests against fraud, corruption, and other illegal activities. Each Member State is to establish effective and efficient internal control systems for the funds used under the RRF; all measures have to be included in the national plans. OLAF has a dedicated team to look into the measures and to support the European Commission in the ongoing dialogue with the Member States on their national plans.

Working session 2: Future communication campaigns

Tour de table on members' recent communication activities and communication plans for 2021

Reacting to interest by fellow OAFCN members, JC assured that all relevant information on the new Anti-Fraud Programme would be sent to members in due course. She further explained that OLAF is planning to launch two calls for proposals after the Anti-fraud Programme Regulation enters into force. This is expected to happen around the end of May 2021, so the calls for proposals could be launched around June, via the Commissions Participants Portal. The first call for proposals should concern mostly the purchase and maintenance of technical equipment, including specific training and IT tools, and methods by public authorities to support investigations and detections of EU irregularities. The second call for proposals should concern the development of specialised training and comparative law studies targeting the protection of EU financial interests.

JC announced that in 2021 Europe Day (9 May) will be held virtually, making it accessible also to EU citizens who do not reside close to EU institutions. All EU institutions will participate. JC shared general plans as well as OLAF's activities in preparation and encouraged OAFCN member to share any material in that regard that they may have at their disposal. CJ reminded participants of the section on the OLAF webpage where digital content by OAFCN member can be shared and encouraged members to share their web and social media content with OLAF. CJ presented OLAF's ambition to increase its presence on social media.

Dimosthenis Avarkiotis, from the Greek AFCOS thanked for the invitation and recalled how he last year had presented the newly established National Transparency Authority. Angeliki Matsouka (AM), from the Greek Independent Authority for Public Revenue (IAPR), presented the actions of Independent Authority 2020 and their future actions, mentioning how 2020 posed two important challenges: COVID-19 and Brexit. The IAPR replied to both of the challenges with new digital applications. AM pointed out that the IAPR press office communicated intensively on seizures of counterfeit goods, including PPE. For 2021, the

action plan of IAPR foresees the participation in actions combatting smuggling and cooperation with other law enforcement authorities.

Tatiana Prievalská Bartošová (TP), representing the Unit National Office for OLAF within the Control Section of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic (Slovak AFCOS), explained how they had subtitled one of OLAF's new videos in Slovak. This has now been shared in the Slovak authority's own channels and is also available in the European Commission's audio-visual library. TP expressed their interest in sharing material for the Europe Day virtual event.

Oriol de Luca from the Italian Guardia di Finanza (GdF) and Luciano Lizzi from the Permanent Representation of Italy to the European Union presented video material produced by GdF on seizures of counterfeit PPE.

5. Conclusions and next steps

Jana Cappello concluded the meeting with reference to several points. She encouraged fellow participants to share feedback on the virtual format of the OAFCN meeting. She also encouraged members to follow each other and OLAF on social media, and share content as appropriate. To this end, a list will be circulated in order for members to share their updated social media contacts with OLAF. She reminded participants to inform OLAF in case of changes of contact points in the member's institutions. JC also shared that OLAF plans to create an online database with existing materials (photos, video, etc.); more information about this will follow.

A brief live survey on possible joint communication actions showed the greatest interest of members to do a joint communication campaign, closely followed by organising an EU Anti-corruption day. Other suggestions for joint communication actions given by the participants included informative infographics, organising expert discussions, and online tests and quizzes.

OLAF will circulate minutes of the meeting and all featured presentations will be sent to participants. OLAF will also address members on possible joint communication actions, as well as with more information on the Anti-Fraud Programme, and the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

6. Participants

NAME	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
ANDREOU Christos	Police	CY
AVARKIOTIS Dimosthenis	National Transparency Authority, General Directorate of Integrity and Accountability Anti-Fraud Coordination Service (AFCOS)	EL
BERNÁČER Teresa	Agencia Tributaria - Tax Agency	ES
BRANCHI Vincenzo	Italian AFCOS -Department of European Policies, Presidency of Council of Ministers	IT
BRECKPOT Stephane	Federal Public Service Finance	BE
CALLEJA Kevin	Internal Audit & Investigations Department (IAID) - AFCOS	MT
CAPPELLO Jana	European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)	

CHENDI Andrei	Fight Against Fraud Department - DLAF, Romanian Government	RO
CHRISTOU Christos	Customs & Excise	CY
COBANO Danyel	Délégation nationale à la lutte contre la fraude (AFCOS)	FR
CORSETTI Carlo Felice	Gruppo giornalisti uffici stampa (GUS)	IT
DE LUCA Oriol	Guardia di Finanza	IT
DINTOI Bogdan Ionut	Fight Against Fraud Department - DLAF, Romanian Government	RO
FERNANDES Helder	Republican National Guard - Unidade de Acção Fiscal	PT
FRENDO George	Malta Police Force	MT
FRONCOVÁ Svetlana	Criminal Office of the Financial Administration of the Slovak Republic	SK
GAJGER Georgina	National Tax and Customs Administration (AFCOS)	HU
GELMI Kirill	European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)	
GERAGHTY Liam	An Garda Síochána - Police	IE
GRĪNVALDE Lelde	Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Latvia (AFCOS)	LV
HANSSON MALMLÖF Victoria	European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)	
HAUBNER-IMMERVOLL Veronika	Federal Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAK) - Federal Ministry of the Interior	AT
HERVENT Ivan	Customs and Excise	BE
HOLLEVOET Tine	European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO)	
JONES Chris	European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)	
KABANOVA Inita	State Revenue Service	LV
KEBLIENĖ Renata	Special Investigation Service	LT
KOTOULA Polyxeni	Directorate of International Financial Relations, Development Aid and Compliance - Ministry of Finance	LU
KRZEMIEN Aleksander	Ministry of Finance - Department for the audit of public funds (PL-AFCOS)	PL
KURE Irena	Ministry of Finance, Budget Supervision Office (AFCOS)	SI
KWIECIŃSKA Dorota	Ministry of Finance - Department for the audit of public funds (PL-AFCOS)	PL
LASMANE Nata	Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Latvia (AFCOS)	LV
LEVI Mariateresa	Guardia di Finanza	IT
LIZZI Luciano	Permanent Representation of Italy to the European Union	IT
MALCLES Marie-laure	Délégation nationale à la lutte contre la fraude (AFCOS)	FR
MALÝ Petr	General Prosecutor's Office	CZ
MANEA Catalina	European Investment Bank	
MASTRULLO Vincenzo	Italian AFCOS -Department of European Policies, Presidency of Council of Ministers	IT

MATSOUKA Angeliki	Customs and Excise, Independent Authority for Public Revenue	EL
MENEGALIJA Drago	Police	SI
MIKELENAITE Jurgita	EUROJUST - European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation	
MOTA TORRES Alexandra	Autoridade Tributária e Aduaneira – Tax and Customs Authority	PT
NORKELIŪNĖ Indrė	Customs department - Ministry of Finance	LT
ONDREJOVÁ Anna	General Prosecution Office	SK
PANTÈ Antonio	Italian AFCOS -Department of European Policies, Presidency of Council of Ministers	IT
PANTELI Ermioni	Customs & Excise	CY
PISONI Lorenzo	Agenzia delle Dogane e dei Monopoli (Customs)	IT
POMPONIO Alessandra	Corte dei Conti - Court of Auditors 1	IT
PRIEVALSKÁ BARTOŠOVÁ Tatiana	Unit National Office for OLAF within the Control Section of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic (Slovak AFCOS)	SK
RAMLJAK Ivana	Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds	HR
RASCANU Carmen	Fight Against Fraud Department - DLAF, Romanian Government	RO
RODRIGUEZ María del mar	Intervención General de la Administración del Estado – Servicio Nacional de Coordinación Antifraude (AFCOS)	ES
ROUSSEL Florence Helene	EUROJUST - European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation	
SAID Mark	Internal Audit & Investigations Department (IAID) - AFCOS	MT
SAINT-SUPERY Muriel	Agencia Tributaria - Tax Agency	ES
SCHMIDT Gábor	Office of the Prosecutor General	HU
SIMONSEN Sandra Marie	Ministry of Finance (AFCOS)	DK
SKRINJAR Barbara	Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia	SI
SOCZEWKA Tomasz	Ministry of Finance - Department for the audit of public funds (PL-AFCOS)	PL
STRIDSMAN Henrik	Tullverket - Customs	SE
TIALA Toni	Ministry of Finance (AFCOS)	FI
TODOROVA Tsvetelina	Ministry of Interior - AFCOS Directorate	BG
TSIGKAKOS Michail	General Directorate of Financial and Economic Crime Unit (S.D.O.E.) – Ministry of Finance	EL
VALERI Mauro	Polizia di Stato - Police	IT
YOICHEV Yordan	Customs	BG
ZALEWSKI Dominik	Ministry of Finance - Department for the audit of public funds (PL-AFCOS)	PL

ZDANAUSKAITE Modesta	Financial Crime Investigation Service, Ministry of the Interior (AFCOS)	LT
ZEDDE	Italian AFCOS -Department of European Policies, Presidency of Council of Ministers	IT