

OLAF and ANAC team up to tackle corruption in Italy and beyond

Few acts hurt a country more than corruption. Not only does corruption lead to huge losses in terms of tax revenue and investment, it also weakens trust in the state institutions, causing disenchantment among citizens and destabilising whole regions.

With [reports](#) stating that the lack of EU-wide action against organised crime and corruption costs the European Union and its Member States billions each year, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the Italian National Anti-Corruption Authority (ANAC) decided to step up their engagement in protecting the EU's financial interests by concluding an Administrative Cooperation Arrangement. Signalling the commitment of both parties to work together by exchanging information and expertise, this Arrangement will be signed on 20 April by OLAF Director-General Giovanni Kessler and ANAC Chairman Raffaele Cantone.

An independent regulatory body set up in 2009 to fight corruption in Italy, ANAC monitors public agencies for transparency compliance and enforces anti-corruption guidelines. It has the power to inspect offices and confiscate documents, as well as to intervene directly in public work contracts under investigation for alleged corruption. As such, OLAF and ANAC could effectively complement each other's work. While ANAC identifies possible wrongdoing linked to public procurement procedures at national level, OLAF is specialised in investigating instances of fraud and corruption affecting the EU budget. Signing the Administrative Cooperation Arrangement will enhance the capacity of both organisations to detect and fight fraud and corruption, both within Italy, and in relation to projects implemented beyond Italian borders. The increased cooperation will lead to faster, more efficient investigations, to the benefit of EU citizens.

The Arrangement underpins OLAF's commitment to follow a comprehensive approach in the fight against fraud and corruption, based on efficient international cooperation among law enforcement agencies and regulatory bodies. This is a measure already supported by more than 70 organisations of anti-corruption practitioners throughout Europe, who signed the [Paris Declaration](#) in November 2015.

European citizens are increasingly advocating for concerted EU-level action against fraud and corruption and OLAF stands prepared to take on this challenge. *"Fighting corruption across the European Union is impossible for an organisation or country alone,"* said OLAF Director-General Giovanni Kessler. *"Building strong partnerships between law enforcement bodies across Europe is a crucial step in tackling this difficult task,"* he added.

"The Arrangement with OLAF will constitute a big step forward in the direction of an enhanced partnership at European level" said ANAC President Raffaele Cantone, adding that he was pleased to note *"the level of ambition shown by both Parties in signing the Arrangement."*

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.

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