



GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Administration des douanes et accises

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OLAF and Luxembourg customs host training on communication as a fraud deterrent

With fraudulent activities costing European taxpayers several hundred million euros every year, it is crucial that the public is kept constantly informed on how to fight fraud throughout European Union (EU) Member States. That is why some 80 anti-fraud communicators from OLAF's partner services across Europe will meet in Luxembourg from 2-4 December for the 13th training seminar of the OLAF Anti-Fraud Communicators' Network (OAFCN). The seminar entitled "How best to communicate to deter fraud" is hosted by the European Anti-Fraud office (OLAF), in cooperation with Luxembourg Customs and Excise. It will focus on providing training on the most used communication vehicles, such as written press, TV and radio, as well as on the use of new media. Luxembourg's Minister of Finance will open the event, which will take place during the country's Presidency of the EU.

The programme will open with a panel engaging representatives from various EU Institutions, national administrations and media experts in an active dialogue on communicating fraud in Europe, which will be open to the press. A second roundtable amongst anti-fraud stakeholders will address the challenges of data protection when communicating about fraud. Practical workshop sessions will equip press and communication experts with the tools to develop successful anti-fraud campaigns and to use effective media techniques and strategies to quickly and efficiently convey deterrent messages.

"At a time when the EU budget is facing constraints, getting anti-fraud messages across to the public is of crucial concern," OLAF Director-General, Giovanni Kessler said. "OLAF and its partners are committed to exploiting all communication channels available to ensure European citizens know and understand our work," he added.

Head of Luxembourg Customs and Excise, Pierrot Reding, said: "Informing the public about the increasing amount of fraud committed encourages citizens to denounce it, which in turn enables national law enforcement agencies to better combat fraud."

Background

The OAFCN was created over a decade ago and is a unique cross-European network of communication experts working on anti-fraud issues. The Network brings together Communication Officers and Spokespersons from OLAF's operational partners in the Member States (i.e. customs, police, law enforcement agencies, Member States' Anti-Fraud Coordination Services (AFCOS) and prosecutors' offices). It plays a pivotal role in communicating the threat of fraud to the public across 28 Member States, as well as the joint efforts made by national and European authorities to combat it. It is a key platform for raising awareness and reaching out to various audiences on fraud issues. The training seminar is a biennial event hosted by OLAF together with an OAFCN partner service.

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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