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## Eleven indicted as a result of OLAF tipping-off Armenian authorities about fraud scheme

**Following the conclusion of two investigations of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) that revealed fraud in EU-funded projects in Armenia, last week 11 persons were indicted in the course of a fully-fledged criminal investigation of the Armenian judicial authorities.**

In its investigations, closed in 2015, OLAF uncovered a scheme through which NGOs had fraudulently pocketed more than €300 000 worth of EU funds for projects that never took place, supported by false invoices and on the basis of fake participant lists.

OLAF submitted its findings to the Armenian judiciary and also recommended the recovery of the embezzled sums to the competent Directorate for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations of the European Commission (DG NEAR). OLAF has continuously supported the on-going national judicial investigation and DG NEAR has already initiated the recovery procedures.

### **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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