

## **OLAF and EPPO investigate alleged fraud and money laundering in Romania**

**The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) have been looking into suspected fraud worth 15 million euro in Romania. 38 house searches were carried out this week following OLAF's and the EPPO's investigations.**

The investigations concern IT projects financed by the European Union to support innovation and foster productivity. In coordination with the EPPO's criminal cases, OLAF opened complementary investigations.

Investigators uncovered an international fraud scheme that allegedly syphoned millions off EU funds through fake or incorrect invoices and then tried to launder the money. The investigations also concerned legal entities and persons based in Cyprus and the Czech Republic, as well as Malta, Monaco and the United States.

*Ville Itälä, Director-General of OLAF, commented: "I am pleased with this joint success that shows the impact of good cooperation between OLAF and the EPPO. We have uncovered an alleged fraud scheme worth 15 million euro, and we have analysed and tracked down a likely money laundering scheme at international level. Fraud is often an international business. Following the money, analysing financial transactions and concrete investigative action across borders are key in anti-fraud investigations."*

For more information, please see the [EPPO's press release](#). In order to protect any ongoing investigations, OLAF is not in a position to provide further information.

### **Background**

A complementary investigation is an investigation conducted by OLAF based on the provisions of Article 12f of [Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) No 883/2013](#). OLAF may conduct a complementary investigation into the same facts as an ongoing EPPO criminal investigation to facilitate the adoption of precautionary administrative measures or of financial, disciplinary or administrative action. Such investigations are opened either on the EPPO's request or on OLAF's initiative, where the EPPO does not object to such investigation.

#### **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.

Once OLAF has completed its investigation, it is for the competent EU and national authorities to examine and decide on the follow-up of OLAF's recommendations. All persons concerned are presumed to be innocent until proven guilty in a competent national or EU court of law.

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