

## **OLAF and Hungary strengthen cooperation to combat fraud and corruption**

**Mr Ville Itälä, Director-General of OLAF (European Anti-Fraud Office), and Mr Ferenc Pál Biró, President of the Integrity Authority of Hungary, met today in Budapest to discuss strengthening cooperation to combat fraud and corruption across EU borders.**

The two leaders emphasized the importance of pooling resources and expertise to address complex cross-border fraud schemes that jeopardize EU taxpayer money. Both parties expressed a shared commitment to enhancing the powers and capabilities of national authorities and improving detection, investigation, and prosecution of international fraud.

*"It is crucial that we strengthen our efforts to safeguard EU funds and protect the integrity of our financial system,"* said Mr Itälä. *"The cooperation between OLAF and national authorities, such as Hungary's Integrity Authority, is fundamental to ensuring transparency and accountability across borders."*

Mr Biró added, *"We are committed to working with OLAF to ensure that public funds are used responsibly and that corrupt practices are swiftly detected and dealt with. I am pleased to see our shared vision for a stronger, more united approach to tackling fraud."*

### **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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