

## **OLAF signs cooperation agreement with Bulgarian prosecutor**

**The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Bulgaria have signed an administrative cooperation agreement that will see the two bodies work even more closely together to fight fraud and corruption affecting the EU budget.**

The agreement was signed last week by OLAF Director General Ville Itälä and the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Bulgaria Ivan Geshev and provides a framework for the two offices to work together on fighting fraud, corruption and other illegal activities involving EU funds.

Ville Itälä said: *"I am delighted that we have signed this agreement with the Bulgarian prosecutor's office. We have already worked successfully together many times in the past, and this new agreement is a clear indication of the willingness on both sides to do even more. Rooting out fraud and corruption is vital if we are to protect the reputation of the European Union and its institutions, and to ensure that EU funding is spent right where it is needed, on improving the lives of European citizens. We share this goal with prosecutors in Bulgaria and across the whole of the EU and beyond, and I am sure this new agreement will lead to many more successful investigations and prosecutions in the years to come."*

Ivan Geshev said: *"The cooperation agreement signed with OLAF is another step that shows the determination of both the Prosecutor's Office and the European institutions to keep up their shared fight against corruption and fraud concerning European funds. I am sure that the Prosecutor's Office and OLAF will continue to work in full coordination and cooperation based on high levels of trust and professionalism."*

The agreement will allow for a more effective and targeted exchange of information between OLAF and the Bulgarian Prosecutor's Office, respecting the relevant rules on confidentiality and data protection, as well as for operational assistance and training. OLAF will provide the Prosecutor's Office with its final reports on investigations concerning Bulgaria, including any recommendations for further action and other relevant documents. The two parties will also support each other at the operational level when relevant.

However, the agreement does not cover mutual legal assistance or other forms of judicial cooperation in criminal matters, nor does it affect future cooperation by both OLAF and the Bulgarian Prosecutor's Office with the new European Public Prosecutor's Office.

**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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