



NEWSLETTER



**Dear ladies and gentlemen,
colleagues and friends,**

As usual, we would like to close the year with our EPAC/EACN newsletter. We have again received many interesting articles on various anti-corruption and police oversight activities from across the EPAC/EACN network. The challenges this year were truly enormous, but still the fight against corruption continued.

As always, we would appreciate your contributions about future or past events, conferences, seminars, training courses, studies, project findings, etc., so that we can include them in the next newsletter.

We wish you a happy holiday season and an excellent new year 2021 in safety and good health!

Your EPAC/EACN Secretariat



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A word of greeting to the EPAC/EACN community **From Mati Omblar, Vice President ACA**

As my professional career will change at the beginning of next year, I am stepping down from the position of Vice President of EPAC/EACN. I have led the Estonian Corruption Crime Bureau for more than 9 years and have been part of the EPAC/EACN community since then, as Vice President since 2017.

In this context, I would like to thank the EPAC/EACN Board and the Secretariat for keeping our community together and developing it in a better direction. I would also like to thank all the members we have been working with in such a significant field as anti-corruption. It has been an impressive period in my life and I wish you all continued strong will to make our countries more honest and better! The anti-corruption work we are doing does matter and is needed more and more in these changing times.

I wish you all a peaceful Christmas and great success in the coming year!

Mati

Council of Europe – European Code of Police Ethics, 20 years – 20-21 October 2020 **By Thierry Gillis, Deputy Vice President POB**

For the 20th anniversary of the European Code of Ethics, the Council of Europe (CoE) organized an international conference for the High Representatives of the Ministers of Interior. Our Vice President and Deputy Vice President for POBs both attended this conference and were able to present the role of the EPAC/EACN network to all participants.

The Conference of the Council of Europe centered around a few main items, one of which was "Accountability and control of the police: Internal control/ External control". Our members can read the entire résumé directly on the website if they want to read in full all that was discussed. However, what was of importance for our network was the fact that we took the opportunity to present the benefits of our network and of our work to this audience. The Secretary of this meeting, Mr Esposito, recognized this as he also works on GRECO subjects where the ACA Strand has also been a very useful partner of the Council of Europe. We did this in the light of the fact that the POBs were solely represented by one other network, IPCAN. Our aim was and still is to also offer our EPAC/EACN support for the CoE initiatives in this debate and to advocate the benefits of all types of POBs. Not only POBs linked to national parliaments are the defenders of human rights and capable of exercising independent control over police forces, but also those working for the Ministers of Interior or other entities of the executive branch of the member states. On this subject, it is my opinion that only by joining forces of all types of POBs can the rights of citizens be appropriately defended when they

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express concerns about the police service they experienced. It is with this reason in mind that we intend to pursue this first exchange with further contacts with the Council of Europe and the IPCAN network in 2021. We hope to present the outcome of these actions at our next General Assembly.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-rule-of-law/police-conference2020>

Developing an existing mechanism for reporting signals of corruption, the "Whistle-blower mechanism"

This project by the Internal Security Directorate - Bulgaria will further develop the existing mechanism for reporting signals of corruption, the "Whistle-blower mechanism". An anonymous open line will use newly developed software that will facilitate the process of reporting signals with faster speed, as well as the processing of received information. It also provides a call back option and is protecting the sender. This is expected to increase the transparency of ongoing anti-corruption activities.

It is planned to develop a mobile platform – application that will be iOS and Android based. Its homepage will feature the logo of the Internal Security Directorate, whose competency is servicing the anonymous phone line and internet page for reporting signals against police officers. This application is to have an integrated software to access the Mol website for recommendations and signals, and the phone line for reporting signals of corruption, and an option to report anonymous signals by sending video files or pictures. The application will allow the direct sending and receiving of information to and from URL address www.mvr.bg. This software will allow the user to access the above listed interfaces by clicking the corresponding buttons on the menu and will guarantee protection of personal data and/or anonymity.

To promote the channels for reporting acts of corruption (anonymous phone lines, online platforms and mobile application), the Internal Security Directorate will organize and implement a national information campaign. It is planned that members of the Internal Security Directorate participate in this campaign together with popular figures who will volunteer to be the face of the campaign on billboards, leaflets, etc. The campaign will be promoted to reach a bigger audience in Bulgaria and abroad by using social media channels, mass media, and others.

This project is focusing mainly on the employees of the Directorate Internal Affairs in the Mol; they are the main target group because of their specific competency for prevention and related matters.

Educational project for teenagers

The Prevention and Fight Against Corruption Office of the Balearic Islands has developed a training programme aimed at young students between the ages of 13 and 18, with 4 main objectives:

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- Encourage values and attitudes favourable to integrity, honesty, individual responsibility, solidarity and respect for others.
- Introduce – within the public – ethics for an equitable, supportive and efficient distribution of public resources.
- Explain why it is so important that everyone contributes their taxes to sustaining the welfare state and that these resources are spent in the best possible way.
- Finally, explain the concepts of fraud and corruption, and how they prevent meeting the above objectives.

Content of the presential training itinerary by the Office:

1. Presentation of a 3-minute video on corruption, edited by the Office, to enhance students' understanding of the meaning and impact of corruption and other related acts.
2. Explanation of the main elements of the different parts of the video, always linking its content towards the objectives of integrity, honesty, individual responsibility and solidarity.
3. Introduction to two playful tools:
 - a. "And what would you do?": This would be about discussing in class 19 possible dilemmas, for which there are 4 closed answers, and analysing what the consequences of the different actions would be.
 - b. "Rate your integrity": This is about each class, in a group or individually, responding to 10 dilemmas, in this case with a rating scale from 1 to 7, which allows to obtain a score to qualify the group or person.
4. Make various guides available to teachers so that they can complete the explanations on integrity and ethics to their students.
5. Invite students to participate in an award, with three different versions: best video, best comic and best billboard.

<https://oaib.es/proyecto-educativo>

Expert Meeting of Anti-Corruption Authorities hosted online by the Czech Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic hosted the videoconference "Expert Meeting of Anti-Corruption Authorities" on 19-20 November 2020. Originally, this event was to take place in-person during the Czech presidency of the Visegrad Group in the second half of 2019 and first half of 2020,

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but had to be postponed and eventually held on-line. The event was attended by Austrian, Croatian, Hungarian, Polish and Slovak experts from various authorities.

More specifically, the event was attended by experts from: Conflict of Interests and Anti-Corruption Department of the Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic; Federal Bureau of Anti-Corruption of the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Austria; Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia; Office of the Ombudswoman of the Republic of Croatia; Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Hungary, National Protective Service of the Republic of Hungary, Central Anti-Corruption Bureau of the Republic of Poland; National Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Poland and the Office of the Government of Slovak Republic.

The agenda was divided into three sessions where the first one provided for a discussion on different roles and responsibilities of individual participants' authorities as well as on their anti-corruption strategies, frameworks and both short-term and long-term goals and challenges. Furthermore, the participants were able to discuss the topic of achievements and challenges in prosecution of corruption cases. Also, COVID-19 related issues were briefly discussed.

The second session focused on whistle-blowers' protection. More specifically, on draft legislation on whistle-blowers' protection and on the implementation of the relevant EU Directive. Within this topic, the state of implementation works, material scope of the draft laws, effective protection of whistle-blowers and external reporting channels were discussed.

The third session focused on the regulation of lobbying, more specifically on perceptions of lobbying, challenges of lobbying regulations, and possible regulation instruments; also, whether the regulation should be mandatory and whether lobbying should be regulated at EU level.

After the meeting, the participants concluded that they perceived the exchange as interesting and fruitful. They agreed to exchange some of the relevant legislative texts discussed, and agreed that there could be more similar meetings in the future.

The Integrity Academy – a new initiative launched in Lithuania

The Integrity Academy is a place for exchange of best anti-corruption practices, where top experts in integrity standards share their experiences and advice on how to create anti-corruption environments.

The exchange of best practices on integrity was initiated by the President of the Republic, Mr. Gitanas NAUSÉDA. Activities of the Academy are coordinated by the Lithuanian Special Investigation Service (STT), and supported by volunteering experts from the public and private sectors.

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(Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania/official photos by Robertas Dičkus)

The idea of the Integrity Academy is to bring together highly experienced and competent experts, who would share their experience and practice with participants of the Integrity Academy – public sector organizations that voluntarily join the project and are willing to accept advice and share experience, and are committed to actively creating anti-corruption environments.

„The Integrity Academy was initiated in order to increase the involvement of institutions on a voluntary basis in the creation of integrity and anti-corruption environments and the promotion of responsibility for integrity within their own institutions. We strive for this initiative to contribute to the transparency process, increase the quality of the public sector and provide real added value to Lithuania”, said STT Director Mr. Žydrūnas BARTKUS.

Ms. Rūta KAZILIŪNAITĖ, Deputy Director of the STT, who is also Deputy Vice President of EPAC/EACN for the ACA Strand, is a Coordinator of the Integrity Academy.

The Integrity Academy was launched on 9 December 2020 on the occasion of the International Anti-Corruption Day, at an event held at the Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania. The event was attended remotely by almost 500 representatives of the public and private sectors.

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(Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania/official photos by Robertas Dičkus)

The Integrity Academy is a long-term project, which will start off by assessing the needs and corruption risks of the participants. According to this assessment, the most appropriate experts and activities will be proposed to assist in improving the integrity and anti-corruption frameworks of the participating institutions. An action plan prepared by experts will allow to achieve the set goals by the most effective means. During the implementation of the action plan, the experts will provide consultations and advice to the Academy participants. This will ensure the dissemination of best practices. Finally, progress and achievements made will be measured accordingly.

Web page: www.skaidrumoakademija.lt (temporarily in Lithuanian only)

Integrity Academy on LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/skaidrumo-akademija/?viewAsMember=true>

Update on the Internal Criminal Investigations Network (ICIN) of Europol

EU countries show great interest in nominating organizations for ICIN – an initiative of the Swedish Police.

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As mentioned in the latest EPAC/EACN Newsletter, summer edition, the Special Investigations Department in the Swedish Police has invited countries within the mandate of Europol to nominate organizations for the new ICIN network.

One of the purposes of initiating ICIN was to create a network for professionals working with internal criminal investigations.

As of today, 26 organizations from 20 different countries were counted as having been nominated to become members or observer organizations in ICIN. There are still a few pending nominations from organizations that will hopefully be welcomed into ICIN in the near future.

ReLAWed platform

A new corruption prevention mechanism by the National Anti-Corruption Centre of Moldova was discussed with several public authorities in the context of the Anti-Corruption Week.

A workshop on a new corruption prevention mechanism, the reLAWed platform, has taken place within the framework of the activities dedicated to Anti-Corruption Week. During the event, organized by the NAC in partnership with UNDP Moldova, several public authorities discussed the importance of constant cooperation between the institutions to promote the corruption prevention mechanisms in the Republic of Moldova.

According to the organizers, the reLAWed platform provides the opportunity to the citizens to get involved in the process of improving the legal framework, to take a stand and to communicate incomplete or interpretable normative acts that could generate corruption acts, abuses and other illegalities. With the help of this tool, every natural or legal person can report a law, a legal norm that, in his/her opinion, has favoured or may generate an act of corruption.

In order to make the reLAWed platform functional in 2019, the National Anti-Corruption Centre, with the support of the project “Curbing corruption by building sustainable development in the Republic of Moldova”, implemented by UNDP Moldova, organized a Legathon, during which 30 young people from the Republic of Moldova had the opportunity to contribute to the elaboration of the interface of the reLAWed application. Immediately after the public launch of the platform, 6 alerts were registered, however, in order to make the platform efficient, the active involvement of citizens is necessary.

<https://cna.md/libview.php?l=en&idc=5&id=3029&t=/Mass-media/Events/ReLAWed-platform-a-new-corruption-prevention-mechanism-was-discussed-with-several-public-authorities-in-the-context-of-the-Anticorruption-Week>

<http://relawed.cna.md/>

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Study on the efficiency of anti-corruption expertise

Private interests still interfere in the legislation of the Republic of Moldova.

Several normative acts or draft laws adopted in 2016-2018 contain provisions that promote private interests to the detriment of the public interest. At the same time, contrary to the legislation in force, some official documents are adopted without anti-corruption expertise or in disregard of the recommendations by the National Anti-Corruption Centre (NAC) which are issued to exclude provisions that might generate corruption. The costs for non-observance of anti-corruption expert reports account for millions of MDL. This is the conclusion drawn by the authors of the Study “Anti-Corruption Expertise”, developed with UNDP support.

The authors of the study analysed the way in which public authorities enforce the provisions related to anti-corruption expertise – a corruption prevention tool that assesses to what extent the content of legislative and normative drafts comply with national and international standards. At the same time, based on this expertise, the NAC identifies provisions that foster or could foster corruption and develops recommendations to eliminate them or diminish their impact.

The corruption risks identified by NAC experts in draft laws subject to anti-corruption expertise include abuse of office, conflict of interest and/or favouritism, active corruption, trading in influence, exceeding official powers, and exercise of undue influence.

The efficiency assessment of anti-corruption expert reports’ recommendations reveals that such recommendations are accepted in 70% of cases. Nevertheless, the risk factors that are most frequently removed from draft normative acts are those that can be tackled rather easily and refer to legislative coherence and the linguistic formulation of the drafts’ texts.

<https://cna.md/libview.php?l=en&idc=5&id=3019&t=/Mass-media/Events/Study-on-efficiency-of-anticorruption-expertise-Private-interests-still-interfere-in-the-legislation-of-the-Republic-of-Moldova>

https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/ro/home/library/effective_governance/expertiza-anticorupie-2016-2018--eficien--costuri--impact.html

Target operation of the National Anti-Corruption Centre of the Republic of Moldova and Europol

Eleven persons are suspected, five of them are detained, in a match-fixing case

Eleven suspects, all of them from the football environment, are under criminal investigation by the National Anti-Corruption Centre and prosecutors, in a case initiated for manipulation of sports events. Among them are presidents of football clubs in the Republic of Moldova, directors of specialized

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football schools and players, from 5 teams out of the 10 of the National Division (highest Moldovan football league). Europol delivered operational and analytical support to the investigation. UEFA also assisted by providing a wide range of expertise to a comprehensive and multidimensional investigation of all the circumstances.

As an outcome of Moldovan investigations, a large number of suspicious bets were identified which did not correspond to the real odds, proving the fact of the permanent manipulation of football matches in the Republic of Moldova with the involvement of clubs.

The prosecutors revealed amounts between 10,000 and 20,000 € for a fixed match, most of them being registered in Asian betting companies with clear links to EU countries' betting offices.

The investigators detected around 20 arranged games in the period starting from July 2020, the total amount of criminal proceeds being estimated at 600,000 €.

On 7 December 2020, the NAC, together with anti-corruption prosecutors and EUROPOL representatives, performed house searches of the targeted suspects under investigation, including presidents of football clubs, coaches, and players of the national football teams. Following the criminal investigation actions, out of the 11 suspected persons, 5 were detained for 72 hours and placed in the NAC detention centre. If found guilty, they risk a criminal fine of up to 5,000 conventional units or imprisonment from 2 to 6 years, in both cases with the deprivation of the right to hold certain positions or to exercise a certain activity on a term from 4 to 7 years.

<https://cna.md/libview.php?l=en&id=3018&idc=5&t=/Mass-media/Events/High-value-target-operation-of-the-National-Anticorruption-Center-of-the-Republic-of-Moldova-and-Europol-Eleven-persons-are-suspected-five-of-them-are-detained-in-a-match-fixing-case/>

Volunteering activity

National Anti-Corruption Centre of Moldova – first prize for the implementation of a volunteering activity.

The National Anti-Corruption Centre (NAC) was named the most active accredited host institution that implements volunteer activities. The award was presented at the 17th edition of the Volunteer Festival, organized by the Foundation for Non-Formal Education.

The group of anti-corruption volunteers was established by the National Anti-Corruption Centre in 2016, with the support of UNDP Moldova, and now has 50 members.

Among the most important events at which the volunteers teamed up with the NAC and UNDP are: the campaign "An anti-corruption day in your city", the Pro-Integrity quiz, the campaign "A lesson on integrity from Kapushon" and other awareness raising activities. They are also the actors in a

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promotion spot of the Anti-Corruption Ideas Club, and of the Anti-Corruption Education Project in the online environment "Integrity Dictionary". Additionally, the anti-corruption volunteers are among the organizers of information sessions in the framework of Online Summer School 2020 entitled "YOUTH AGAINST CORRUPTION".

Publication of the BAK's research study on law enforcement officers' attitudes toward corruption

The Federal Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAK) has been conducting research on attitudes toward corruption since 2015. Now, the results of the second research study examining law enforcement officers' attitudes toward corruption are available.

Since 2015, the BAK has been working closely with corruption researchers of Hanover University. Following an initial study – the BAK has reported: <https://bak.gv.at/news.aspx?id=53394E30716C7A334F59343D> – a measurement tool for measuring attitudes toward corruption was developed and standardized that is specific to Austria. This instrument can be used, among other things, to assess possible vulnerabilities to corruption of a certain group in comparison to the general population of Austria. In the now presented follow-up study on law enforcement officers' attitudes toward corruption, this Austrian version of what is called the Hanover Corruption Scale – HKS 38 Ö – was used for the first time. With the help of HKS 38 Ö, around 1,400 new entrants to the Austrian police service were queried about their attitudes toward corruption.

As it turns out, the average attitude toward corruption held by Austrian police officers in training is comparable to that held by the general population of Austria. There is a slight tendency for police officers in training to disapprove of corruption more readily than the general Austrian population. Moreover, as the age of respondents increases, they tend to have a more adverse attitude toward corruption. No differences in attitudes toward corruption can be found with regard to gender.

The new title "Corruption – Attitude – Police" of the "Personalpsychologie" publication series (link below) discusses in detail the results with regard to the abovementioned and other variables, which are classic subjects of self-report studies and official statistics on the topic of corruption. Among other things, the new publication answers the question to what extent such findings are reflected in the dark figure of crime, and whether variables derived therefrom show a cause-effect relationship with attitudes toward corruption.

The study results also help to adapt relevant training concepts as well as specific training measures to the requirements of the particular training group.

This research study was co-funded by the European Commission as part of the ISF "Situation Picture" project. To view the publication, visit the link:

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<https://serwiss.bib.hs-hannover.de/frontdoor/index/index/docId/1750>



OLAF brings together colleagues from around the world on fighting corruption

International Anti-Corruption Day is held each year on 9 December, and this year saw OLAF mark the day with its first virtual conference. More than 800 EU staff members from all over the world participated in the event, the aim of which was to create an anti-corruption community across EU institutions to raise awareness and strengthen the fight against corruption.

Although corruption sadly does exist in the EU, it is not so widespread here as in other parts of the world, and the focus of OLAF's first Anti-Corruption Conference was very much on helping colleagues working in delegations and other services across the globe to detect, report and prevent corruption related to the use of EU funds.

The aim was to provide insight to colleagues on how OLAF detects and investigates corruption – using a real-life investigation into corruption involving EU agricultural guarantee funds – but also how to report suspected cases and what OLAF can do to help colleagues across institutions to detect and prevent corruption more effectively where they are.

Wide-ranging discussions in the second part

The second part of the conference featured a debate on the wider role of how the EU tackles corruption, with OLAF's Acting Deputy Director-General Ernesto Bianchi moderating the discussion between OLAF Director-General Ville Itälä, Olivier Onidi, Deputy Director-General from DG HOME and MEP and member of the European Parliament's Budgetary Control (CONT) committee, Marian-Jean Marinescu. The discussion ranged far and wide around the topic of corruption and included the impact of the Rule of Law debate, the effect of the pandemic, the indirect impact of corruption on the wider economy, the social cost of corruption in democratic societies, and the importance of cross-border cooperation in fighting corruption.

Raising awareness together

In her closing remarks Margarete Hoffman, OLAF Director Expenditure – Operations & Investigations, reiterated the need for a concerted effort between EU institutions and OLAF staff to fight corruption and the importance of raising awareness of how to detect and report corruption and fraud. One way of doing that will be a new collaborative space developed by OLAF to allow colleagues from around

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the world to share their experiences, questions and problems and learn more about how OLAF works to investigate and prevent corruption.

News from International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA)

IACA engages in projects with a variety of partners and stakeholders, playing a leading role in facilitating and delivering anti-corruption education, as well as fostering dialogue to increase awareness and facilitate activities to prevent and combat corruption. Training programmes, workshops, conferences, and other types of events on current topics relating to anti-corruption, compliance, and integrity are organized with renowned international partners in response to challenges and needs in such fields. IACA is open to receiving proposals for joint projects and welcomes contributions for the implementation of such activities. Currently, IACA and UNODC have one joint project open for funding on Providing Specialized Training on Anti-Corruption Legislation to Least Developed Countries to Fast-Track UNCAC Implementation. If you wish to obtain further information on IACA projects, please send an e-mail to (mail@iaca.int) or call the IACA Secretariat (+43 2236 710 718 101).

Open applications at IACA

The International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) has just launched a series of online trainings on anti-corruption and compliance related topics. These trainings cover various topics, including corporate investigation, anti-corruption compliance, ethics management and leadership, anti-corruption project planning, and anti-money laundering. The trainings are currently available in English, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian languages. A detailed catalogue of the online trainings can be found on the IACA web site: <https://www.iaca.int/iaca-programmes/online-training/training-catalogue.html>

IACA's tailor-made trainings address the specific anti-corruption and compliance needs of individual organizations, such as government ministries, national anti-corruption authorities and audit institutions, and private and state-owned companies. Tailor-made trainings can vary in length and can be organized in languages other than English or include possibilities for simultaneous interpretation. The venue can be at IACA, the requesting organization, or at other locations. Events can also be conducted fully online.

Applications for the new classes of the Master in Anti-Corruption Studies (MACS) and International Master in Anti-Corruption Compliance and Collective Action (IMACC) will open in January 2021. Both programmes will begin in October next year and will be offered in an online and hybrid formats. For more information and to apply for the above-mentioned programmes, please visit IACA's website (<https://www.iaca.int>).

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Meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) (16-18 November 2020, virtual format)

In line with the latest measures introduced by the host country Austria in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNCAC-related intergovernmental meetings scheduled to take place in November 2020 at the Vienna International Centre were held in an online format only. The thematic focus of the second resumed 11th session of the Implementation Review Group (IRG) was on chapters IV (International cooperation) and V (Asset recovery) of the Convention.

The organization of work enabled the Group to consider agenda items 4 (State of implementation of the UNCAC) and 5 (Technical assistance) jointly with agenda items 2 (Overview of progress made in the implementation of asset recovery mandates), 3 (Practical aspects of asset recovery, including trends, challenges and good practices), 4 (Thematic discussions) and 5 (Technical assistance) of the 14th meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery as well as with agenda item 3 (Implementation of chapter IV of the UNCAC: lessons learned, good practices and challenges) of the 9th open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/IRG/session11-second-resumed.html>

Meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (31 August-2 September 2020, hybrid format)

The Implementation Review Group held its first resumed 11th session in Vienna from 31 August to 2 September 2020, in a hybrid format (in person and online). The Group held five meetings, which were chaired by Harib Saeed al-Amimi (United Arab Emirates), the President of the Conference at its 8th session; most of the meetings were held jointly with the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption. The IRG considered items 4 (Technical assistance) and 5 (Other matters) of its agenda jointly with the Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption. The Working Group considered item 2 (Implementation of relevant Conference resolutions) of its agenda jointly with the IRG.

<https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/WorkingGroups/ImplementationReviewGroup/31Aug-2Sep2020/V2004800e.pdf>

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29th session (regular and reconvened) of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (3-4 December 2020, virtual format)

The regular 29th session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) took place in a scaled-down format on 3 December 2020, to be immediately followed by the joint reconvened session of the 29th CCPCJ and the 63rd Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Preparations for the 14th and 15th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice were also on the agenda as the CCPCJ acts as the preparatory body for the Crime Congress. The 14th Crime Congress will be held in Kyoto, Japan, from 7 to 12 March 2021, with pre-Congress consultations to be held on 6 March 2021.

https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/29_Session_2020/session-29-of-the-ccpcj.html

Intersessional meetings of the Conference on preparations for the special session of the General Assembly against corruption (2-4 September and 19-20 November 2020, hybrid/virtual format)

In its resolution 74/276 entitled “Special session of the General Assembly against corruption” (UNGASS), the General Assembly, inter alia, reiterated the importance of an inclusive preparatory process, including extensive substantive consultations, and invited the Conference of the States Parties to hold up to three intersessional meetings, as required, to advance such consultations. The first intersessional meeting (thematic focus on the prevention of corruption) of the Conference on preparations for the UNGASS, which was originally scheduled for 22 and 23 June 2020, had been rescheduled for 2 September to 4 September 2020. Besides general preparations for the UNGASS a panel on challenges and approaches to the prevention of corruption during times of crisis as well as on ending impunity by effectively combating corruption were held. The second intersessional meeting took place on 19 and 20 November 2020 (thematic focus on asset recovery) and provided three panels on the topics denying safe havens to corruption offenders and their proceeds of crime, challenges in identifying, tracing and freezing proceeds of corruption, and possible solutions and optimizing cooperation and assistance mechanisms, especially those involving vast quantities of assets. The Special Session of the General Assembly against corruption has been rescheduled from April 2021 to 2 to 4 June 2021.

<https://ungass2021.unodc.org/ungass2021/en/intersessional-meetings-of-the-conference.html>

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On the occasion of the International Anti-Corruption Day, a short overview of EPAC/EACN history



In the early days of 2000, following the impetus given by the Maastricht Treaty (1992), European cooperation in the police field was well under way, but a counterpart in terms of police oversight did not exist. It is important to keep in mind the fact that while the concept of "police" or "police forces" or "law enforcement" is fairly homogeneous in European countries, it is quite diverse when it comes to the concept of police oversight or monitoring mechanisms of police forces. Different legal cultures and administrative traditions have generated various different situations on the continent.

Well aware of this at the time, the Belgian Committee P and the Luxembourg IGP, joined by other police inspectorates and monitoring services or "complaints boards" of European Union Members such as Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom, under the auspices of the Belgian Presidency of the European Union, put all their energy into overcoming this problem and set up a framework in which the different POBs could exchange and share their knowledge and experience in the field of monitoring police forces.

Very soon, twenty-five heads of police oversight bodies representing the 15 European Union Member States of the time recognized the necessity of increased police oversight cooperation as a way of better addressing shared challenges and finding unified responses. As a first step, they decided to convene on an annual basis.

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This resulted in a first colloquium, which was held in Brussels on 20 and 21 December 2001 under the Presidency of the Chairman of Committee P, André Vandoren. It was dedicated to the citizen and the functioning of police within the European Union and focused in particular on the inspection and monitoring of law enforcement as a “specific functionality”.

The conclusions issued at the end of this conference illustrated the historical nature of the event; it was thus specified:

- “in the view of the evolution of the police action on the European scale, it was considered essential to organize such meetings regularly”,
- “that all useful information should be exchanged, namely the reports of activities of the monitoring and inspection bodies.”

This was the starting point for European cooperation between police oversight bodies.

The following year a new colloquium took place at Europol in The Hague. Investigation methods were on the agenda.

In 2003, it was the turn of the Luxembourg IGP to welcome its partners to discuss “the contribution of police oversight bodies in improving the quality of police work”.

One of the conclusions adopted at the end of this third colloquium is a classic example of the spirit that dominated the discussions: the great importance of the exchange of experiences on the way POBs function and the methodologies adopted by their services, with the aim being “to develop similar and compatible approaches, procedures and methods beyond borders.”

However, the post-conference conclusions did not mention the fight against corruption. Such a development took place between the 2003 colloquium and the 2004 Vienna Conference on the initiative of Austria. Then, the leadership changed from the Belgian Committee P (André Vandoren) to the Austrian Bureau for Internal Affairs (Martin Kreutner). The 2004 Vienna Declaration placed anti-corruption bodies at the centre of the new cooperation framework.

This change was fundamental, as it determined the range of actions performed by the platform that was subsequently created.

Thus, in 2004, in Vienna, the annual conferences took on a new dimension. They became conferences bringing together not only the heads of police oversight bodies but also heads of national and international anti-corruption authorities.

This is how EPAC – European Partners against Corruption – was born. The cooperation between national bodies reached its specific quality. Supported by the EPAC Secretariat, an unprecedented exchange of activities was carried out.





During the 2004 annual conference in Vienna, EPAC supported the launch of a more formal European anti-corruption network, the European contact-point network against corruption (EACN). In 2006, the Austrian EU Presidency of the time, along with six other Member States, launched an initiative for a Council decision to establish this network. EPAC members again endorsed this initiative at their annual meeting in Budapest, Hungary, in November 2006. The idea was picked up again in 2008, by the then German EU Presidency. EACN was formally established by a European Council decision in 2008, to build on the existing structures of EPAC.

Obituary

Jens Bomberg, Chief Criminal Investigator, passed away on 10 November 2020 at the age of 56. He started his service at the State Criminal Police Office of North Rhine-Westphalia in January 1999. When the new Department 15 was established to fight corruption, Jens Bomberg was one of the founding members. With a great deal of commitment and energy, he investigated corruption cases, some of which were extremely large, and processed the reports and tips that were received on the Department 15 whistle-blower hotline. In this capacity, he also participated in various EPAC/EACN working groups and EU-funded projects, such as the European Anti-Corruption Training (EACT) coordinated by the Austrian Federal Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAK). In 2018, he transferred to a new assignment, where he again conducted his investigations with commitment and enthusiasm.

The sudden death of Jens Bomberg has deeply shaken all who knew him. He will be remembered and missed as an outstanding and dedicated investigator who took pride in his work, as a straightforward, helpful colleague who was there when we needed him, as a reliable, humorous and honest person who will be missed. Jens Bomberg leaves behind a wife and four children.

List of upcoming events

- 22 - 23 February 2021, Vienna: Third CoSP intersessional meeting in preparation for UNGASS 2021 against corruption, with the participation of all stakeholders. Thematic focus to be determined.
- 22 - 26 March 2021, Strasbourg: 87th Plenary Meeting (GRECO)

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