NEWSLETTER 02 24

Dear EPAC/EACN members, colleagues, and friends,

We are excited to share with you the 2nd edition of the EPAC/EACN newsletter for the year 2024, brought to you by the EPAC/EACN Secretariat and highlighting the valuable contributions made by our network members. In addition, this edition of the publication includes important details about international conferences and upcoming events.

As always, we always appreciate and encourage EPAC/EACN members and observers to share their insights on a variety of topics such as past or upcoming events, conferences, seminars, training sessions, studies, project results, and more. We appreciate the input that has been provided and it will be given due consideration for inclusion in our forthcoming newsletters.

Your active engagement strengthens our community and fosters greater knowledge exchange.

Your EPAC/EACN Secretariat

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Together for Integrity

Bucharest, Romania • 23rd Annual Conference 26 - 27 nov 2024

EPAC/EACN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

We are looking forward to meet all of you at this year's EPAC/EACN Annual Professional Conference and General Assembly, which will take place at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Bucharest, Romania, on 26-27 November 2024.

The event is being hosted by the Anticorruption General Directorate (DGA) and other anti-corruption agencies and police oversight bodies of Romania, while the financial support will be partially offered by the EU Anti-Fraud Programme.

This year's Conference will bring together prominent speakers from international organisations, EU agencies and EPAC/EACN members to discuss the following themes: Strategic context and recent developments on prevention and combatting of corruption, Investigating and prosecuting corruption and fraud, Preventing corruption and integrity building in law enforcement, Moving forth the anti-corruption agenda – building resilient anticorruption frameworks for public institutions and private sector. The Conference will also feature traditional EPAC/EACN Awards for the best anti-corruption or police oversight initiatives.

The event will be closed by the EPAC/EACN General Assembly, which is the body of supreme authority in our network. The General Assembly will accept new Members and Observers, elect one EPAC/EACN Board member – Deputy Vice-President for police oversight, adopt Bucharest Declaration, discuss other important questions.

The venue of the conference will allow for an increased interactivity between EPAC/EACN members and observers, during a series of breakout sessions and panel discussions. In this context, we would like to invite you to contribute with your experience and best practices to the specific topics included in the draft programme.

For a smooth organization of the conference, we would also kindly invite you to fill in the online **Registration form**, by 8th of November 2024.
Additionally, we kindly encourage you to book in advance your flights and hotels. More information you can find here.

Should you require any further information, please contact the organisers, represented by Anticorruption General Directorate (DGA), Romania. If you have any queries please email (relint.dga@mai.gov.ro) or the EPAC/EACN Secretariat secretariat@epac.eacn.org.

Bucharest, Romania • 23rd Annual Conference 26 - 27 nov 2024

TOGETHER FOR INTEGRITY

23rd EPAC/EACN ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

26-27 November 2024, Bucharest

DRAFT AGENDA

Day 1 - 26/11/2024	
8:30-9:00	***Registration and welcome coffee***
PLENARY ROOM	
9:00-9:30	***Official opening of the 23rd Annual Professional Conference and General Assembly*** • **High level** representative of the Romanian Government (TBD) • **Linas PERNAVAS**, EPAC/EACN President / Director of the Special Investigation Service, Lithuania • **Ciprian ANTOHE,** General Director, Anticorruption General Directorate, Romania – representative of the hosting institution
9:30-10:30	***Strategic context and recent developments on preventing and combating of corruption*** • **Laura Codruta KOVESI,** European chief prosecutor • **Brigitte STROBEL-SHAW,** Chief of the Corruption and Economic Crime Branch at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime • **Livia STOICA BECHT**, Executive Secretary of GRECO • **Jeroen BLOMSMA**, Head of Sector Anti-Corruption at the European Commission • **Marius Ionuț VOINEAG**, Chief Prosecutor of the National Anticorruption Directorate, Romania
10:30 – 11:00	***Coffee break and Family Picture***
Theme 1 - Investigating and prosecuting corruption and fraud **Moderator: National Anticorruption Directorate, Romania**	
11:00-11:15	***Key cooperation issues in investigating corruption and any other illegal activities affecting the EU financial interests*** • **Dana-Manuela ANA, European Delegated Prosecutor**
11:15-11:30	***Tools and new developments in financial investigations of corruption*** • **Burkhard MÜHL, Head of European Financial and Economic Crime Centre, Europol**
11:30-11:45	***Investigation and prosecution of high-level corruption cases – perspective of a national prosecuting/investigative authority*** • **Radu Florin IONESCU, National Anticorruption Directorate, Romania**
11:45-12:00	***Tackling corruption and fraud, as enablers of organised crime*** • **Peter HALPERN, Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training, Department of justice, United States**

12:15-13:15	**BREAK-OUT SESSIONS**			
	Plenary room	**Break out room 1**	**Break out room 2**	**Break out room 3**
	Best practices in investigating transnational corruption	**Contemporary challenges and opportunities in investigating corruption and fraud**	**Challenges associated with identifying and recovering criminal assets**	**Risk based approaches in preventing corruption and fraud**
	Moderator: Burkhard MÜHL, Head of European Financial and Economic Crime Centre	**Moderator: Cosmin Daniel HĂLĂLĂU**, chief prosecutor of the International Cooperation Service, National Anticorruption Directorate, Romania	**Moderator: Cornel-Virgiliu CĂLINESCU**, General Director, National Agency for the Management of Seized Assets, Romania	**Moderator: Ernst SCHMID**, EPAC/EACN vice-president, BAK Austria
	Panellists: • Success stories in investigating transnational corruption – Chief Superintendent **Alexis DURAND**, Deputy Head of OCLCIFF and Head of Anti-Corruption Unit, France • **Semen KRYVONOS**, Director of NABU, Ukraine • Information exchange and the usage of operational platforms - **Neil WALSH**, Executive Secretary - GlobE Network • **Romulus Nicolae UNGUREANU**, Director for Operations, Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre	**Panellists:** • **Maris Urbans**, OECD Secretariat, Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Latvia (TBC) • Use of technology in corruption investigations and overcoming technical challenges – **Mădlina TIȚA**, Investigation Directorate, DGA, Romania • **Ziya HAJIYEV** and Isfandiyar **HAJIYEV**, Anti-Corruption Directorate with the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan • Data-driven approach in corruption investigation – **Tomas VERPEČINSKAS**, Analytical Anti-Corruption Department, Special Investigation Service (STT), Lithuania	**Panellists:** • Best practices and recent developments in the area of investigating crypto assets and digital currency EPAC/EACN representative (TBD) • Cooperation best practices and informal networking in identifying and recovering criminal assets – **Marjolijn VAN DER HART**, International Legal Assistance Centre, CARIN contact point, The Netherlands • Lithuanian STT approach in asset recovery – **Jurgita STEFANOVIČIENĖ**, Head of Asset Recovery Unit, Special Investigation Service (STT), Lithuania	**Panellists:** • National Agency on Corruption Prevention (NACP), Ukraine • **Manuel García BERNÁRDEZ**, Andalusian Anti-Fraud Office, Spain • Risk assessment and tailored integrity measures, **Mihai BARLICI**, director of Prevention Directorate, DGA, Romania
13:15-14:15	**Lunch**			

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">PLENARY ROOM</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Theme 2 – Preventing corruption and integrity building in law enforcement
Moderator: EPAC/EACN board or DGA Romania</td></tr>
<tr><td>14:15-14:30</td><td colspan="3">Mechanisms and tools for preventing and investigating corruption in law enforcement – lessons from the 5th round of evaluation
• Livia STOICA BECHT, Executive Secretary of GRECO</td></tr>
<tr><td>14:30-14:45</td><td colspan="3">Internal protection, pre-employments background checks and vetting regarding the access to classified information
• DGPI, Romania (TBD)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">15:00-16:00</td><td colspan="3">BREAK-OUT SESSIONS</td></tr>
<tr><td>Plenary room</td><td>Break out room 1</td><td>Break out room 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Emerging issues in corruption prevention, integrity training and police oversight</td><td>Challenges and new developments on combating corruption and improving resilience of police profession</td><td>Situational Reports on Corruption</td></tr>
<tr><td>Moderators: Lucile ROLLAND, vice-president EPAC/EACN, deputy director Inspection General de la Police Nationale, France and Mihai BARLICI, deputy vice-president EPAC/EACN, DGA, Romania
Panellists:
• Hellen HALL, Chief Executive, Policing Authority, Ireland
• Johan DE VOLDER, Acting Inspector General of the Belgian General Inspectorate of the federal police and the local police
• Dalia LOMBARDERO CHARTUNI, Immunity Board of the Police Department of the Republic of Lithuania</td><td>Moderator: Manuela POPESCU, deputy director general, DGA, Romania
Panelists:
• Willem Jan DE KONING, Director of The National Criminal Investigation Department (Rijksrecherche), The Netherlands
• Adrian RADU, General Directorate for Internal Protection, Romania (TBC)
• EPAC/EACN representative (TBD)</td><td>Moderator: Ernst SCHMID, EPAC/EACN vice-president, BAK Austria
Panelists:
• BAK (TBD)
• Annual integrity incidents report, Valentin TOPOLOIU, DGA Romania
• EPAC/EACN representative (TBD)</td></tr>
<tr><td>16:00-16:30</td><td colspan="3">Coffee Break</td></tr>
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PLENARY ROOM	
16:30-17:15	**Presentations and voting for the EPAC/EACN Award** - for the most innovative and successful Anti-Corruption (AC) and/or Police Oversight (PO) project in 2024
17:15-17:45	**Free time**
17:45-18:45	**Visit of the National Museum of Art (former Royal Palace)**
19:00-22:00	**Evening Dinner at the Palace of the National Military Circle**

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Day 2, 27/11/2024</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">PLENARY ROOM
Theme 3 – Moving forth the anti-corruption agenda – building resilient anticorruption frameworks for public institutions and private sector
Moderator: Andrei FURDUI, director of the Department for Crime Prevention, Ministry of Justice, Romania</td></tr>
<tr><td>9:00-9:15</td><td colspan="2">National strategies and engaging with civil society in monitoring anticorruption agenda
• Ana REVUELTA ALONSO, Analyst and Regional Coordinator for Europe UNCAC Coalition (on-line, TBC)</td></tr>
<tr><td>9:15-9:30</td><td colspan="2">Using IT tools to promote integrity within the public sector
• Florin MOISE, president of the National Integrity Agency, Romania</td></tr>
<tr><td>9:30-9:45</td><td colspan="2">• Agnieszka KWIATKOWSKA-GURDAK, Head of the Central Anti-Corruption Bureau (CBA), Poland (TBC)</td></tr>
<tr><td>9:45-10:00</td><td colspan="2">• Egidijus RADZEVIČIUS, Deputy Director of the Special Investigation Service (STT), Lithuania</td></tr>
<tr><td>10:00-10:15</td><td colspan="2">Towards a new binding instrument in the Council of Europe on international co-operation as regards the management, recovery and sharing of assets proceeding from crime
• Cornel-Virgiliu CĂLINESCU, Committee of Experts on Criminal Asset Recovery (PC-RAC), General Director, National Agency for the Management of Seized Assets, Romania</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">10:30-11:45</td><td colspan="2">BREAK-OUT SESSIONS</td></tr>
<tr><td>Plenary room</td><td>Break out room 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Marking the 25th anniversary of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention - Global reforms and progress of partner countries</td><td>Use of the automatic tools for ensuring integrity in public offices</td></tr>
<tr><td>Moderator: Andrei FURDUI, Director, Department for Crime Prevention, Ministry of Justice, Romania</td><td>Moderator: Silviu Ioan POPA, Secretary General of the National Integrity Agency, Romania</td></tr>
</table>

	Concept note Marking the 25th anniversary of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, this panel will explore its significant role in driving global anti-corruption initiatives and reforms. Panelists will highlight the Convention's effectiveness in setting international anti-bribery standards, promoting strong anti-corruption frameworks and enhancing international cooperation. Key examples of reforms in partner countries will be discussed in order to showcase its transformative impact worldwide. **Speakers:** • **Anca JURMA**, OECD Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia • **Hendrik BOSSHAMMER**, Project Manager, OECD South East Europe Division • **Angélique IVANCIUC**, Sub-Directorate for Consulting, Strategic Analysis and International Affairs, French Anti-Corruption Agency (AFA) • **Andrejs LISENKO**, Head of Second Investigation Department, Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau (KNAB), Latvia	***Concept note*** IT applications, whether traditional digital tools or AI-based solutions, offer significant opportunities for oversight bodies to uphold the integrity of public officials. This session will provide a platform to explore the transformative potential of these tools, including their usage for various purposes, such as online disclosure of financial interests, automated verification of assets declaration, prevention of conflicts of interest, or raising awareness towards integrity incidents. **Speakers:** • **Bruno González VALDELIÈVRE,** Head of the Data Analysis Team, Anti-fraud Office of Catalunya, Spain • **Laura VALLI**, Board Member of the Italian National Anticorruption Authority (ANAC) • **Jeanne Ollivier,** High Authority for transparency in public life (HATVP), France
11:45-12:15	**Coffee Break**	
12:15-13:45	**EPAC/EACN General Assembly** • Accepting new Members and Observers • Activity Report • Election of an EPAC/EACN board member • Adoption of Bucharest Declaration • EPAC/EACN Award	
13:45-14:45	***Lunch***	
15:30-17:00	**Tour of the Parliament building**	

EU NETWORK AGAINST CORRUPTION MET IN PLENARY FORMAT FOR THE SECOND TIME

Brussels, October 3, 2024 – In a significant step forward in the EU's fight against corruption, the second plenary meeting of the EU Network Against Corruption convened on October 3, gathering nearly one hundred participants from across the spectrum of anti-corruption stakeholders. This included representatives from EU Member States, EU institutions, international organizations, academia, NGOs, civil society, and the private sector—all essential players in promoting transparency and accountability.

Commissioner Johansson Highlighted the Progress

The meeting opened with a powerful video address from Ylva Johansson, EU Commissioner for Home Affairs, emphasizing the strengthened commitment of Member States to combat corruption. “Over the past year, we have witnessed a remarkable dedication of resources to bolster anti-corruption institutions and enhance preventive measures,” Commissioner Johansson stated, setting a determined tone for the discussions that followed.

Keynote Support from European Leaders

Opening remarks from Mr. Oliver Röpke, President of the European Economic and Social Committee, and Mr. François Valérian, President of the Board at Transparency International, further reinforced the significance of the plenary. Both leaders stressed the vital role of civil society and the private sector in driving anti-corruption initiatives. “Corruption cannot be combated in isolation; it requires a collective effort that unites government, civil society, and business,” Mr. Valérian noted.

Updates and Strategic Overviews

The European Commission provided an overview of its work over the past year, including the pivotal publication of the fifth Rule of Law Report in July 2024 and the launch of the Anti-Corruption Partnership Forum. Additionally, the Commission unveiled a first draft of the EU Network’s Rules of Procedure, ensuring a framework of high transparency standards for future operations.

Collaborative Presentations and Panel Discussions

The plenary featured in-depth presentations on essential anti-corruption tools and strategies. Discussions focused on national-level corruption risk assessments and featured insights from a new external study identifying high-risk areas across Europe. Representatives from anti-corruption networks shared their work and future activities, aiming to foster synergies across the continent. Notable speakers included:

- **Darius Mickevičius**, representing the European Partners Against Corruption (EPAC/EACN).
- **Isabelle Jegouzo**, Network of Corruption Prevention Authorities (NCPA).
- **Marie Lintzer**, European Network for Public Ethics (ENPE).
- **Monika Kalinauskienė**, European Network on Whistleblowing (NEIWA).
- **Willem Jan de Koning**, Internal Criminal Investigations Network (ICIN).

The Head of EPAC/EACN Secretariat, Darius Mickevičius, presented EPAC/EACN network and its activities, as well as engaged in panel discussion with partner networks and other stakeholders. Representative of EPAC/EACN extended an invitation to all participants to attend the 23rd EPAC/EACN Annual Professional Conference and General Assembly, set to take place on November 26-27 in Bucharest, Romania. All speakers highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts and upcoming initiatives aimed at strengthening the fight against corruption across Europe.

Exchanging Best Practices

One of the plenary's core sessions focused on the successful methodologies used to investigate high-level corruption cases. National prosecution authorities shared their experiences, emphasizing the indispensable role of civil society in monitoring and reporting corruption. These discussions underscored how collaboration and transparency can lead to effective outcomes in prosecuting complex cases.

The second plenary of the EU Network Against Corruption reaffirmed the collective commitment of EU Member States and anti-corruption stakeholders to enhance transparency, promote accountability, and address the pervasive issue of corruption. By sharing best practices and fostering collaboration, the network continues to build a robust framework to combat corruption at every level.

Additional Information: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/eu-network-against-corruption_en

BEST ANTI-CORRUPTION PRACTICE EXCHANGE PROJECT ENTERS SECOND ROUND

The BACPE project is an initiative of EPAC/EACN, designed to promote the exchange of effective anticorruption practices among its members. Through this project, EPAC/EACN aims to support the implementation of strong anticorruption measures, strengthen integrity, and encourage the sharing of innovative approaches across different contexts and jurisdictions.

ALREADY 24 VISITS PLANNED!

Focus areas for exchange visits in the second round include:

- Raising awareness about anti-corruption;
- Investigating corruption and fraud;
- Utilizing Big Data analysis.

Country	Institution	Country	Institution	Topic
AUSTRIA	Federal Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bundesamt zur Korruptionsprävention und Korruptionsbekämpfung, BAK)	**SLOVENIA**	Commission for the Prevention of Corruption of the Republic of Slovenia (CPC)	Anti-Corruption awareness raising
MOLDOVA	National Anticorruption Centre of the Republic of Moldova	**LITHUANIA**	Special Investigation Service (STT)	Assets recovery
UKRAINE	National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU)	**ROMANIA**	National Anticorruption Directorate (DNA)	Criminal investigation of corruption and fraud
UKRAINE	NABU	**LITHUANIA**	STT	Criminal investigation of corruption and fraud
HUNGARY	Integrity Authority (Hungary)	**LITHUANIA**	STT	Big Data Analysis
LITHUANIA	Immunity Board of Lithuanian Police Department Under the Moi	**FRANCE**	General Inspectorate of the National Police (IGPN)	Anti-Corruption awareness raising
ROMANIA	Ministry of Justice	**SLOVENIA**	Commission for the Prevention of Corruption	Anti-corruption awareness raising
LITHUANIA	Immunity Board of Lithuanian Police Department Under the Moi	**GREECE**	Internal Affairs Agency of Law Enforcement Bodies	Anti-corruption awareness raising
SPAIN	Oficina Andaluza contra el Fraude y la Corrupción	**AUSTRIA**	Austria Federal Bureau of Anti Corruption (BAK)	Anti-corruption awareness raising
SPAIN	Oficina Andaluza contra el Fraude y la Corrupción	**LITHUANIA**	STT	Anti-corruption awareness raising
LATVIA	Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau of the Republic of Latvia	**BELGIUM**	European Anti-Fraud Office	Big Data Analysis
MOLDOVA	National Anti-corruption Centre of the Republic of Moldova (NAC)	**LATVIA**	KNAB	Anti-corruption awareness raising
MOLDOVA	National Anti-corruption Centre of the Republic of Moldova (NAC)	**UNITED KINGDOM**	National Crime Agency (NCA)	Criminal investigation of corruption and fraud

LITHUANIA	Chief Official Ethics Commission (COEC)	ITALY	Italian National Anti-corruption Authority (ANAC)	Big Data Analysis
LITHUANIA	STT	AUSTRIA	BAK	Anti-Corruption awareness raising
ESTONIA	Estonian Police and Border Guard Board, Central Criminal Police, Corruption Crime Bureau	SPAIN	Agency for the Prevention and Fight against Fraud and Corruption of the Valencian Community (Spain)	Big Data Analysis
NORTH MACEDONIA	Department for Internal Control, Criminal Investigations and Professional Standards in the Ministry of Interior of Republic of North Macedonia	BULGARIA	Direction for Internal Security in Republic of Bulgaria	Anti-Corruption awareness raising
LITHUANIA	STT	BELGIUM	European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)	Big Data Analytics
LITHUANIA	STT	ITALY	Central Directorate of Criminal Police	Criminal investigation of corruption and fraud
POLAN	CBA	ESTONIA	Estonian Police and Border Guard Board, National Criminal Police, Corruption Crime Bureau	Criminal investigation of corruption and fraud
POLAND	CBA	AUSTRIA	BAK	Anti-Corruption awareness raising
AUSTRIA	BAK	GERMANY	Department 15 of the State Criminal Police Office of North Rhine-Westphalia	Big Data Analysis
UKRAINE	NABU	ROMANIA	National Anticorruption Directorate (DNA)	Criminal investigation of corruption and fraud
UKRAINE	NABU	LITHUANIA	STT	Criminal investigation of corruption and fraud

For more information and to apply for the BACPE project, please visit our dedicated webpage: https://www.epac-eacn.org/practice-exchange.

Please feel free to view our promotional video at the following link: https://fb.watch/u-IG7M9zLe/

CONFERENCE "POLICE ACTION – CONTROL MODELS"

We are thrilled to provide the results of the conference titled "Police Action – Control Models" which took place on 15 October 2024 in Lisbon, Portugal. The conference was co-organised by the EPAC/EACN and the **Inspectorate General of Internal Affairs (Portugal)**.

The main focus of this event was be to present and engage in discussions about different police oversight models in Europe, and to explore how these models are implemented in real-life scenarios. Participants were be able to gain valuable knowledge and insights from a distinguished panel of speakers hailing from **Belgium, France, Northern Ireland (UK), Portugal, Spain,** and **Ukraine,** who generously shared their experiences.

The conference was attended by Her Excellency the Minister of Internal Administration, Judge Counselor Margarida Blasco, who presided over the opening session, and by Mr. Linas Pernavas, President of EPAC/EACN.

Linas Pernavas, **President of EPAC/EACN**, emphasized: "*The theme of the conference, 'Police Action – Control Models,' goes to the very heart of our mission in law enforcement and oversight. A well-functioning control model ensures that institutions are not only reactive, but also proactive. It helps maintaining the integrity of our forces, protects the rights of our citizens, and enhances the overall effectiveness of our operations. At its core, a strong control model fosters trust—trust between the police and the public, between government bodies and the people they serve, and between nations working together toward common goals.*"

Additional Information:

● Promotional video https://bit.ly/4fbPHD1

● Police Action Program - Control Models Programa_Police Action_PT_v240930.pdf

● The conference video can be found on the IGAI YouTube channel at: https://bit.ly/4f2Kq0n

● Photos from the Conference can be seen in the gallery Internacional_Conference_Police_Action_-Control Models_European

NATIONAL PROTECTIVE SERVICE OF HUNGARY

THREE GOLD MEDALS FOR THE PROMOTIONAL (CAMPAIGN) FILM OF THE NATIONAL PROTECTIVE SERVICE OF HUNGARY

The reduction of the harmful phenomenon of gratuity payment on the patient side and the necessary awareness-raising is inconceivable without a society-wide awareness-raising campaign. A national awareness-raising television advertising campaign was developed and implemented by the National Protective Service in the framework of the EU project *"Eliminating Bribery in healthcare sector"* (RRF-9.2.1-23-2023-00001). The aim of the campaign was to contribute to the reduction of the offer/giving of gratuity payments as a harmful social practice among citizens, - which is punishable in Hungary from 1 January 2021, - and also to contribute to changing corrupt practices in the healthcare sector by creating a positive, value-based attitude.

The National Protective Service's campaign film against gratuity payments in the healthcare sector was awarded in several categories in New York.

The English-language version of the Rap Battle clip for the project *"Awareness-raising for the eradication of bribery in the healthcare sector"* has won gold medals in three categories at the MUSE Creative Awards (MUSE Awards) advertising competition in New York. The campaign was realized with the joint support of the Hungarian government and the European Union.

In the first half of 2024, the National Protective Service ran a public awareness television advertising campaign to reduce gratuity payments in the healthcare sector. The waiting room scene in the "Waiting" spot is aimed at the older generation, while the "Rap Battle" spot is aimed more at Generation “Z”. Rap Battle is part of a clip based on a duel of words between two rappers with opposing views. One of them represents the customary right to give gratitude, while the other singer represents the improvement of attitudes, giving a kind of absolution from this harmful habit. The promotional videos can be viewed here it. The Rap Battle video clip won the gold medal in the categories "government information", "youth outreach" and "TV commercial".

We are very proud of this and of the fact that our expertise in the field of corruption prevention has been recognised internationally.

Additional Information:
https://corruptionprevention.gov.hu/three-gold-medals-for-the-promotional-campaign-film-of-the-national-protective-service-of-hungary

https://museaward.com/winner-info.php?id=229100

National Agency of Ukraine for Finding, Tracing and Management of Assets Derived from Corruption and Other Crimes (ARMA)

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF ARMA IN 2024

ARMA reached a significant milestone this year, with the economic impact of its activities surpassing the state's expenditures on the agency for the first time. In 2024, ARMA generated nearly UAH 2 billion, highlighting its effectiveness in asset management and sales. One notable success is the introduction of new strategies for managing seized assets, leading to a remarkable increase in contributions to Ukraine's state budget.

At the same time, ARMA provides wartime support to our Defense Forces due to its effective management, allocating UAH 6 billion out of its nearly UAH 10 billion portfolio for the purchase of Military Bonds. In addition to financial contributions, ARMA continues to play a key role in supporting law enforcement efforts. Since the beginning of 2024, ARMA has already processed near 5,000 requests from law enforcement bodies and other competent authorities. During 2022-2024, most of the requests were related to sanctioned individuals and those connected to Russian military aggression. We received many requests about corruption, fraud, money laundering, and tax evasion. This highlights ARMA's critical function in asset tracing and management in response to the ongoing war and other serious crimes.

ARMA also initiated changes that were approved by the Government of Ukraine in 2023, establishing transparent procedures for managing and selling assets, including those located abroad. As a result, this allowed ARMA to be even more effective in asset sales, both within Ukraine and abroad. This enabled ARMA to implement the first-ever mechanism for the sale of a seized asset abroad, specifically the yacht 'Royal Romance.' This success was achieved through close cooperation with international partners and coordination with both Ukrainian and foreign authorities, which led to the launch of an open tender for the asset's sale.

CARIN recognized Ukraine as one of the most active participants in international cooperation in 2023. Among the 436 asset tracing requests sent to CARIN by Ukraine, 215 were sent from ARMA. In their report, CARIN experts attribute this activity on behalf of Ukraine to the importance of asset recovery during the war.

ARMA also contributed to legislative improvements, including the approval of the 2023-2025 Asset Recovery Strategy. This initiative sets the direction for Ukraine's asset recovery efforts and helps address the damage caused by the aggression of the Russian Federation.

Contact: Kristina Savicheva, Head of the Protocol and Translation Division of the Department of International Cooperation and European Integration of ARMA; tel.+380506945562

Additional Information: https://arma.gov.ua/en/

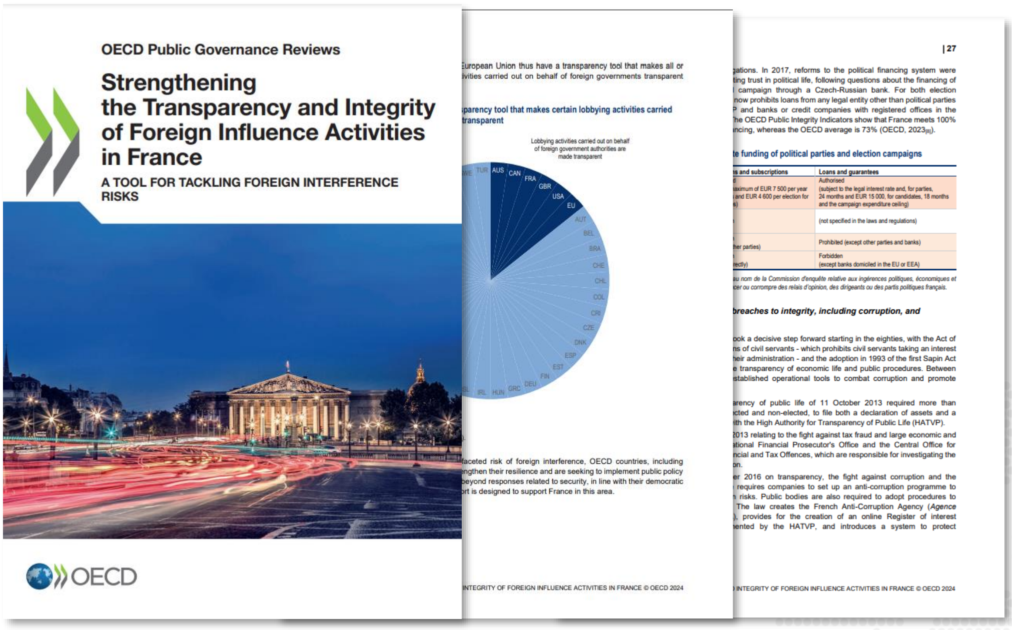
French High Authority for Transparency in Public Life (HATVP)

The French High Authority for Transparency in Public Life (HATVP) has experienced intense international activity in recent months with a new legislation on foreign influence, the work of the European Network for Public Ethics (ENPE) and its evaluation of Mali's application of the UN Anticorruption Convention.

On 22 May 2024, a law aimed at preventing foreign interference was voted in France, giving the HATVP a new mission: managing a transparency register of influence activities carried out on behalf of a foreign principal that will be operational by 1 **July 1 2025**. In addition, the control over the professional revolving-door movements to the private sector of some senior public officials is extended to the risks of foreign influence, and for a period of five years. In March 2023, the HATVP had called on the OECD to identify solutions aimed at strengthening the transparency of foreign influence actions in France that led to the publication of a report in April 2024: "**Strengthening the Transparency and Integrity of Foreign Influence Activities in France**".

On 5 March 2024, the European Network for Public Ethics (ENPE), which is chaired by the HATVP, welcomed two new entities: the Independent Authority Against Corruption (IAAC) of Cyprus and the Integrity Authority of Hungary. On 10-11 October = 2024, the ENPE will hold its next annual conference in Rome. It will focus on the directive on combating corruption as a key opportunity to raise integrity standards and on conflict of interests.

On 9-10 September 2024, the HATVP participated in Vienna in the evaluation of the second cycle of the first phase of the review of the application of the United Nations Convention against Corruption by Mali.



Contact: Marie Lintzer, head of international partnerships, marie.lintzer@hatvp.fr

Additional Information: https://www.hatvp.fr/en/

NEWSLETTER 02 24

EUROPEAN ANTI-FRAUD OFFICE (OLAF)

EUROPEAN ANTI-FRAUD OFFICE

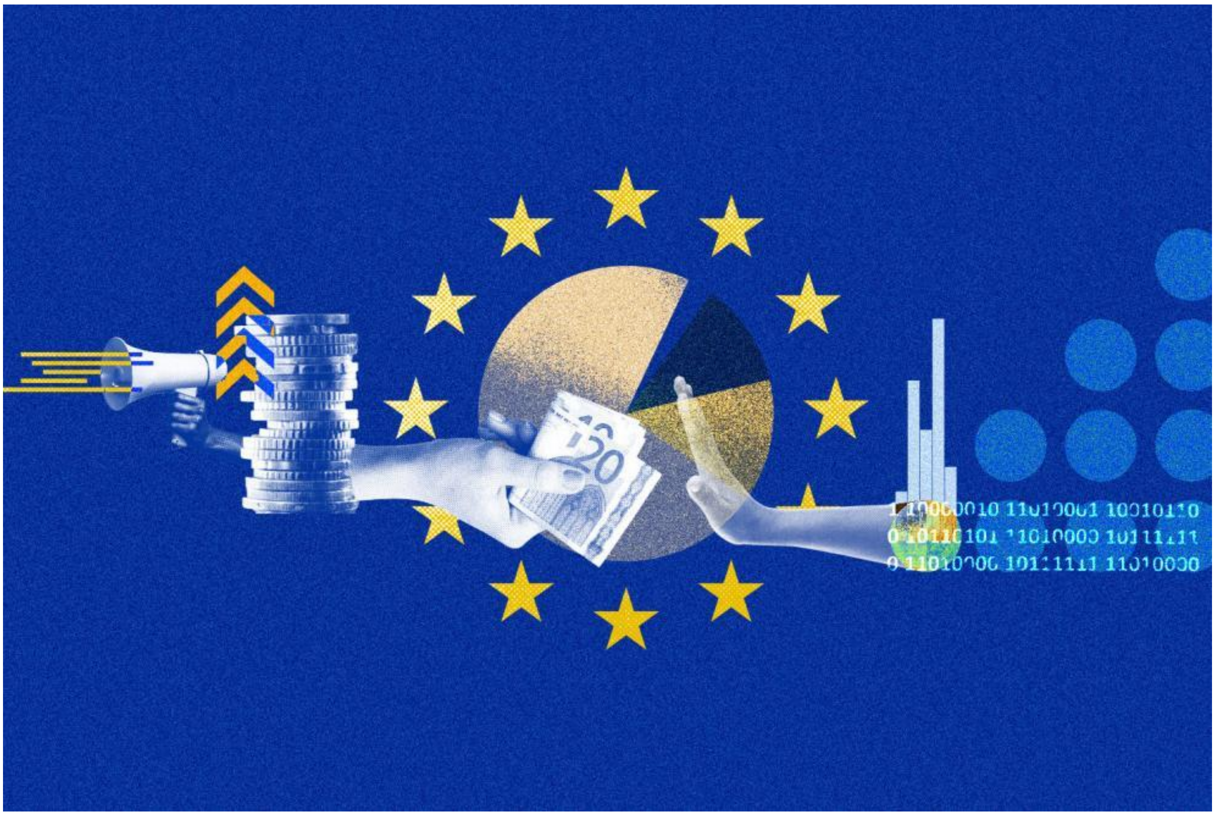
2023 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE PROTECTION OF THE EU'S FINANCIAL INTERESTS

The Annual Report on the protection of the EU's financial interests highlights measures at EU and national level to protect the EU budget, and presents data on irregularities and fraud reported by EU Member States. Authorities are encouraged to increase digitalisation of the fight against fraud and strengthen anti-fraud governance at national level

Each year the European Commission, in cooperation with the EU Member States publishes a report on the protection of the financial interests of the EU and the fight against fraud. The report, which is prepared by OLAF, the European Anti-Fraud Office, was published on 25 July this year.

It provides an overview of the most significant measures adopted at EU and national level, describes the follow up given by the Member States to the recommendations contained in the previous year and offers the state of play of anti-fraud strategies in the Member States. 21 Member States have an anti-fraud strategy in place, although underlying approaches still significantly vary and encompass national, regional, sectoral or even programme level anti-fraud strategies.

A total of 13 563 irregularities related to EU expenditure and revenue were reported by the Member States in 2023, amounting to EUR 1.90 billion. This is an increase of 2.3 percent compared to 2022. At the same time, the amounts concerned by these irregularities have increased by 4.6 percent.



According to the report, while progress keeps being made, detection, reporting and follow-up of suspected fraud and irregularities could still be improved in the Member States.

The report concludes with three recommendations to Member States. The first one addresses the need for national authorities to establish the appropriate channels of communication with law enforcement to ensure that the follow-up of cases of suspected fraud happens in a smooth and efficient manner.

The second asks Member States to accelerate the digitalisation of the fight against fraud, ensuring that it becomes part of their strategic approach against fraud.

The third recommendation focuses on the strengthening of the anti-fraud governance at national level to ensure an appropriate level of coordination and cooperation among the various bodies involved in protecting the EU's financial interests. The adoption of national anti-fraud strategies for the protection of the EU's financial interests is viewed as key in this context.

Contact: https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/contacts/general-contact-details_en

Additional Information: For more information, you can read the full press release and the PIF Report

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OLAF ANTI-FRAUD COMMUNICATORS NETWORK MEETING REINFORCES COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS IN FIGHTING AND PREVENTING FRAUD BY COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES.

On 2-3 July 2024, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) organised the annual meeting of the OLAF Anti-Fraud Communicators Network (OAFCN), bringing together over 50 communication professionals from national anti-fraud authorities. The two-day event, which took place in Brussels, aimed at strengthening collaborative efforts and enhancing communication strategies in the fight against fraud affecting the financial interest of the European Union.

Created in 2001, the OAFCN brings together communication experts from OLAF's operational partners in the Member States such as customs, police, law enforcement agencies, Member States' Anti-Fraud Coordination Services (AFCOS) and prosecutors' offices. It is a key platform for raising awareness and reaching out to various audiences on fraud issues.

During the two-day conference in Brussels, participants had the opportunity to explore and discuss the use of Artificial Intelligence in communication, getting an overview of the existing tools at EU level and discussing the benefits and risks of using AI. Members gave inspirational presentations of their anti-fraud communication campaigns in the past year, shared best practices and how they each shape and share their anti-fraud and anti-corruption messages.

The wide variety of topics presented and discussed ranged from communication campaigns promoting zero tolerance to fraud, corruption, gambling or nepotism to the use of gamification to increase engagement; from promoting transparency and accountability with communication and IT tools, to innovative recruitment campaigns. Presentations also marked important anniversaries, such as the 250th of Guardia di Finanza and the 25th of OLAF.

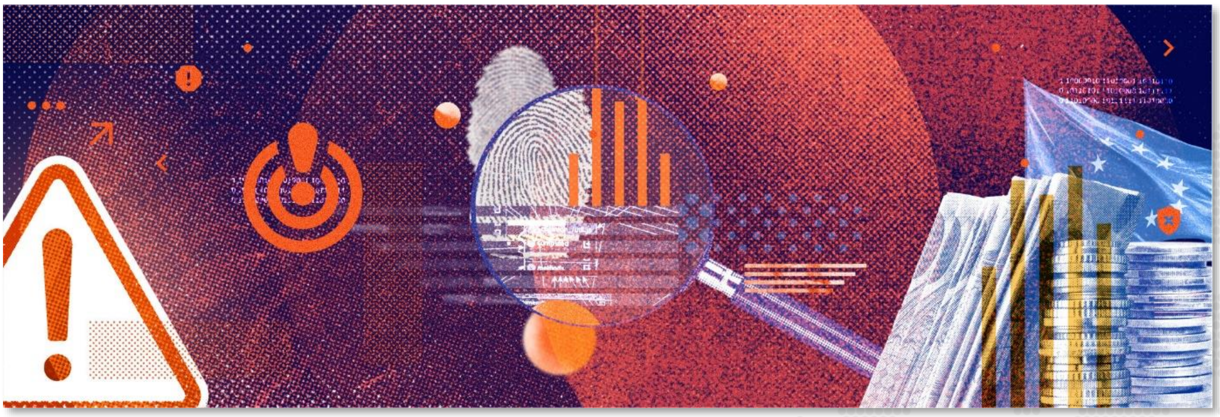
The network also heard from a representative of the Ukrainian National Agency on Corruption Prevention (NACP) about the communication strategy of the Ukrainian government aimed at changing citizens' attitudes to corruption.

The meeting concluded with participants reiterating their commitment to continuous improvement and innovation in anti-fraud communication.

Additional Information: The OLAF Anti-Fraud Communicators' Network (OAFCN) - European Commission (europa.eu)

OLAF REPORT 2023: INVESTIGATIONS IN 2023 FIND OVER €1.2 BILLION AFFECTED BY FRAUD AND IRREGULARITIES

In 2023 OLAF investigators closed 265 cases on the misuse of EU Funds, establishing that over €1 billion of EU taxpayers' money should be recovered and preventing €209 million before they could be unduly spent. OLAF investigations followed smugglers, counterfeiters and customs fraudsters, helping the enforcement of EU trade defence measures and sanctions and investigating suspicions of serious misconduct by staff or members of the EU's institutions.



The OLAF Report 2023 was published on 18 June 2024, providing an overview of OLAF's activities during the year. It presents examples of cases where OLAF and partners have worked together to help protect the EU's financial interests, citizens, economy and rule of law.

OLAF looked into allegations of collusion, manipulation of procurement procedures, conflicts of interest and inflated invoices for projects financed by EU budget. OLAF's investigations to protect EU taxpayers' money span across all areas of EU expenditure, from regional funding to agriculture and research. OLAF investigates in all EU Member States and in third countries, wherever EU money is spent.

In 2023, OLAF has also detected attempts to abuse customs transit procedures, evasion of anti-dumping duties, origin fraud and undervaluation of goods. OLAF's work with partners successfully stopped trafficking of various kinds, including fake medicines, half a million counterfeit and potentially dangerous toys, 6 million litres of illicit wine, beer and spirits and thousands of tonnes of illicit waste.

The OLAF Report also provides an overview of the investigations into irregular behaviour by staff or members of the EU's institutions. OLAF closed 44 of such cases in 2023 ensuring that everyone is held accountable to the highest standards of conduct and helping protect the EU's reputation as a whole.

OLAF works closely with its partners in fellow EU and international organisations, in national authorities in the Member States and in third countries. Connecting the dots is key as fraud does not stop at borders and jurisdictions. OLAF's network of partners reaches all corners of the globe and continues to grow every year. In 2023, new agreements were signed with authorities in the U.S., in Ukraine, and with the World Bank Group.

Contact: https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/contacts/general-contact-details_en

Additional Information: For more information, you are invited to read the OLAF Report 2023 in the digital and interactive version.

Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau of the Republic of Latvia

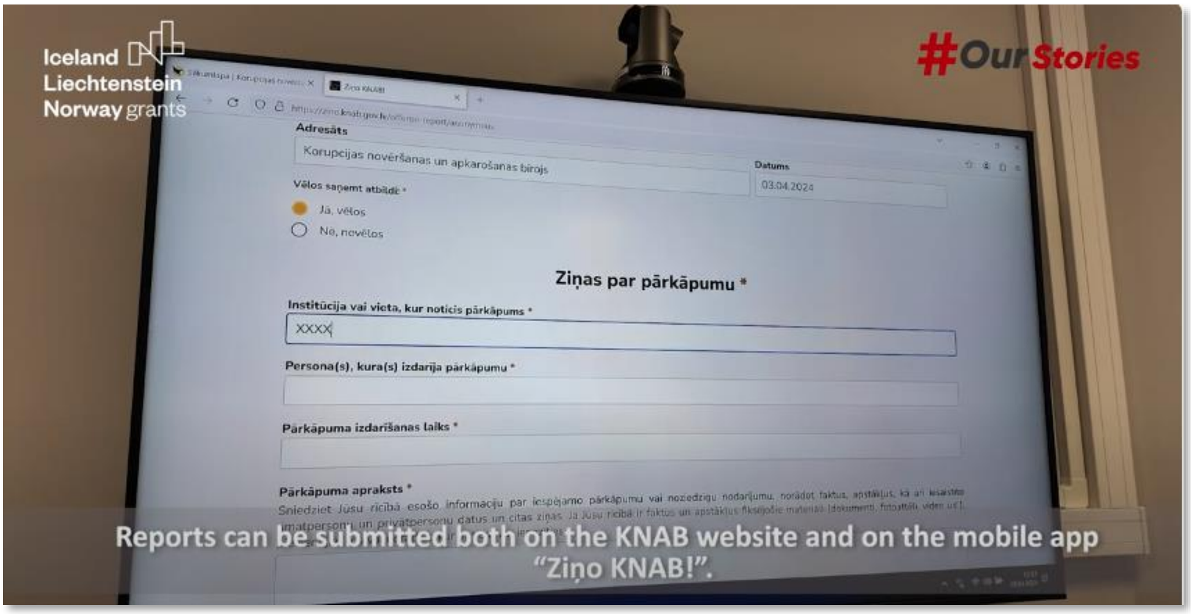
COMPLETION OF KNAB PROJECT "SUPPORT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WHISTLE-BLOWING SYSTEM IN LATVIA" CO-FINANCED BY EEA GRANTS

KNAB has concluded "Support for the establishment of a whistle-blowing system in Latvia" project co-financed by EEA grants, whose goal was to promote public involvement in reporting corruption and latent criminal activity by providing safe and convenient reporting channel and to improve KNAB competence in detecting and investigating corruption-related crimes.

Main project activity was completed last September when the platform "Report to KNAB" was developed. Compared to other channels, any person who has submitted information on possible corruption can keep track of the report at KNAB to a certain point. It provides an opportunity to receive feedback, and also to submit additional information and contact responsible KNAB official in an encrypted form.

Information can be submitted by natural, legal persons, and anonymously. The platform also allows to submit whistle-blower reports in the most convenient way for them - online or via the mobile app.

In September 2023, KNAB launched public awareness campaign “CORRUPTION SUFFOCATES! Report by using the KNAB app” to introduce the platform and encourage people to be vocal about possible corruption. In 2021, KNAB carried out information campaign to raise public awareness of the negative consequences of corruption and reduce tolerance towards corruption.



The project strengthened the competences of more than 850 individuals from KNAB, State Revenue Service, Financial Intelligence Unit, State Police, Internal Security Bureau, and Prosecution Office of the Republic of Latvia in the fields of financial investigation and analysis, detection and investigation of cross-border corruption crimes, dealing with whistle-blowers, etc., through 13 major training sessions.

KNAB expertise was also strengthened in 11 foreign exchange visits. Most were related to learning analytical experience of partner countries, not only strengthening existing cooperation, but also establishing new contacts for effective future cooperation and exchange of experience.

Three opinion polls were carried out to measure the attitude of people and businesses towards corruption. The attitudes thereof towards bribery saw little change during the project, with an average 80% of respondents rejecting bribery. This indicates a persistent and generally negative attitude towards bribery.

Additional information: https://www.knab.gov.lv/en/article/knab-project-support-establishment-whistle-blowing-system-latvia-co-financed-eea-grants-successfully-completed

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION SERVICE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

AN INNOVATIVE CORRUPTION RISK ASSESSMENT MODEL, EMPLOYING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, WILL BE DEVELOPED.

The Special Investigation Service (STT) met with high-ranking experts from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). During the meeting, the project "Introduction of digital innovations in law enforcement and development of a model for identification of corruption risks based on artificial intelligence in cases of use of public and European Union funds" was presented to the representatives of the invited Lithuanian public sector institutions. During the project, the OECD will advise on the improvement of STT data management and help develop a risk assessment tool based on artificial intelligence technology to identify the risks of corruption in the use of public funds.

Representatives of the European Commission drew attention to the potential of using artificial intelligence technology to protect public funds. In order to more effectively identify corruption risks, using state budget and EU funds, a data-based fraud and corruption risk assessment methodology will be developed during the implementation of the project. This methodology will be the basis for creating a machine learning solution that will integrate and use various state data sources (registers and information systems) in order to automate and improve the risk assessment of state budget funds, EU funding, grants and subsidies from an anti-corruption point of view.

"With this project, we aim to strengthen the activities of the Special Investigations Service by identifying the risks of corruption and its cases, using the most advanced technologies and methods. Based on the expertise of the OECD, we aim to create an artificial intelligence-based tool for assessing the risks of fraud and corruption in the use of state budget and EU funds. In this way, we aim to prevent problems before they turn into potential criminal acts. At the same time, this project is not only about technology, we are talking about improving data management and promoting inter-institutional cooperation in the state", said STT director Linas Pernavas about the newly launched project.

Additional Information: https://stt.lt/naujienos/7464/bus-kuriamas-unikalus-dirbtiniu-intelektu-gristas-korupcijos-riziku-vertinimo-modelis:3856

EPAC/EACN Secretariat
Special Investigation Service
of the Republic of Lithuania
Email: secretariat@epac-eacn.org