

High-Level Meeting of Police Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authorities
“Upholding Integrity: Urgent Challenges in a Changing World”

24 November 2025, Eurojust, The Hague, Netherlands

Co-Chair’s Summary

On 24 November 2025, in the margins of the 24th EPAC/EACN Annual Professional Conference and General Assembly, a group of high-level representatives from national police oversight bodies, anti-corruption authorities, and judicial institutions gathered at Eurojust in The Hague for the High-Level Meeting of Police Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authorities (HLM). The event brought together more than thirty senior officials from across Europe, along with representatives of EU bodies and agencies, including the European Commission, Europol, the European Public Prosecutor’s Office, and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

The meeting was convened at a time of rapidly evolving corruption risks, marked by geopolitical tensions, hybrid threats, digital vulnerabilities, and increasing pressure on law enforcement and oversight systems. Participants engaged in a strategic, closed-door dialogue focusing on corruption’s impact on security, democratic governance, public trust, and the rule of law. They explored how institutional integrity can be strengthened across Europe, what capacities are needed to detect and address sophisticated corruption schemes, and how national and EU-level actors can improve cooperation to counter threats that cross borders and sectors.

The High-Level Meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on four overarching questions shaping today’s anti-corruption landscape:

- how corruption affects current global and regional developments;
- what skills and resources authorities need to uncover complex and concealed corruption schemes;
- what barriers impede the prosecution of high-level corrupt actors;
- and how combined efforts across sectors can create a more resilient, transparent, and accountable system of governance.

Participants exchanged national experiences and presented concrete proposals for strengthening cross-border cooperation, improving analytical and investigative capacities, and reinforcing the role of EPAC/EACN as a platform for peer learning, exchange of expertise and information, and collective action.

The discussion acknowledged corruption as a multidimensional challenge that undermines development, human rights, institutional resilience, economic stability, and democratic legitimacy. Participants underlined the growing interconnectedness between corruption, organised crime, foreign influence, cyber-enabled crime, and illicit financial flows. Against this backdrop, the HLM aimed to clarify what skills, resources, and strategies are required to identify hidden corruption mechanisms, protect public institutions from internal and external vulnerabilities, and ensure accountability for both public officials and private-sector actors involved in wrongdoing.

Throughout the exchanges, special attention was given to persistent difficulties in bringing high-level and cross-border corruption cases to justice, including legislative gaps, limited access to financial intelligence, insufficient asset recovery tools, and the increasing technological sophistication of criminal networks. The

meeting also emphasised the importance of strengthening preventive measures, cultivating integrity in public institutions, ensuring the independence of oversight and anti-corruption bodies, and enhancing cooperation between law enforcement, judicial and administrative authorities, civil society, and private-sector partners.

Opening session

The HLM opened with welcoming remarks by the Co-Chairs, who emphasised that the meeting was designed as a strategic, closed-door exchange among senior representatives. The application of the Chatham House Rule was recalled, enabling participants to contribute openly without attribution. The Co-Chairs outlined the structure of the meeting and highlighted the importance of balanced and focused interventions.

The Co-Chairs underlined that corruption is increasingly complex, cross-border, and intertwined with broader security, governance, and integrity challenges. It was noted that corruption undermines accountability and weakens institutional credibility. The meeting setting was described as a symbolic affirmation that integrity and accountability are fundamental to effective governance.

Cluster I – EU Institutional Perspectives

The first cluster focused on strategic perspectives shared by representatives of various institutions involved in integrity and accountability matters and the fight against corruption. Participants outlined ongoing policy and legislative initiatives aimed at strengthening coherence, improving preventive frameworks, enhancing investigative tools, and reinforcing training and awareness. The importance of developing comprehensive, forward-looking strategies was highlighted, particularly in light of evolving risks and insufficient data.

Several representatives emphasised that corruption has adapted to technological change. New tools, digital infrastructures, encrypted communications, and complex financial arrangements increasingly enable concealed misconduct. Participants discussed the growing difficulty of tracing illicit flows and challenges encountered with non-cooperative countries.

The discussion also highlighted the interconnected nature of corruption, financial crime, organised criminal activity, and misuse of legal and corporate structures. Participants stressed that early detection, strong international cooperation across borders, rapid information exchange, joint capacity-building efforts and engagement with private actors are critical for addressing these challenges effectively.

Another intervention emphasised the need for a holistic approach that integrates prevention, detection, response, and recovery. Participants noted that ongoing reviews of legal and institutional frameworks offer opportunities to improve coherence and ensure that different mechanisms complement rather than duplicate each other. Protecting public resources and addressing cross-border wrongdoing were identified as shared responsibilities.

Cluster II – Police Oversight Bodies

The second cluster focused on integrity challenges within policing and oversight systems. Participants stressed that even limited breaches of integrity can expose institutions to external influence. Preventive approaches, including integrity screening, disclosure obligations, and targeted safeguards for high-risk functions, were identified as essential tools.

Several representatives described the evolution from reactive, complaint-driven models toward more proactive and intelligence-informed approaches. Broader information channels—such as internal referrals,

protected disclosures, and early-warning indicators—have improved the detection of complex misconduct and allowed for earlier intervention.

Participants discussed the growing use of insiders by criminal networks to obtain sensitive information. Addressing this phenomenon requires a comprehensive approach targeting all actors involved, not only the individual insider. Stronger cooperation, flexible support mechanisms, and opportunities for operational exchange were identified as key enablers.

Other contributions highlighted the importance of regularly updating ethical frameworks, safeguarding institutional independence, strengthening analytical and data capabilities, and fostering an organisational culture that prioritises integrity. Digital-era risks, including unauthorised access to information systems, were identified as an area requiring further collective attention.

Cluster III – Anti-Corruption Authorities

The final cluster addressed broader anti-corruption challenges and responses. Participants emphasised that corruption cannot be addressed solely through enforcement measures. Prevention, education, awareness-raising, and long-term capacity building were identified as equally important components of effective integrity systems.

Several representatives noted that geopolitical tensions, hybrid threats, and shifting national priorities can generate new vulnerabilities and corruption risks. Advanced analytical tools and data-driven approaches were highlighted as increasingly necessary, alongside strong safeguards to ensure respect for fundamental rights.

Participants discussed corruption involving private actors, the importance of asset recovery as a deterrent, and the growing intersection between corruption, foreign influence, and sanctions avoidance. Concerns were raised about attempts to weaken the independence of institutions responsible for safeguarding integrity. Proactive, risk-based approaches and strategic guidance for decision-makers were presented as good practices.

Electoral corruption and efforts to undermine trust in public institutions were identified as particularly serious challenges in fragile or crisis-affected environments. Participants stressed the importance of coordinated responses and sustained cooperation among all relevant stakeholders.

Final Reflections

In the final reflections, participants emphasised that trust and legitimacy are central to effective governance and policing. Understanding emerging patterns of misconduct, sharing lessons learned, and translating standards into practical action were identified as priorities.

Closing remarks highlighted that corruption, in its various forms, erodes democratic systems and public confidence. Addressing it requires an integrated approach encompassing prevention, detection, accountability, and recovery, supported by modern legal and policy frameworks.

The Co-Chairs concluded by reaffirming the value of peer learning, cooperation, and prevention. Participants were informed that this Co-Chair's Summary would be published without attribution and were invited to share feedback on the usefulness of this format and the desirability of holding similar meetings in the future.