

# 33rd PIF Report



**Thomas Wahl**

## News

On 23 September 2022, the European Commission presented the [33rd annual report](#) on the protection of the EU's financial interests and the fight against fraud in 2021. It provides information on:

- The key legislative acts adopted and the relevant CJEU jurisprudence in 2021;
- The EU anti-fraud architecture;
- The cooperation in anti-fraud matters;
- The key measures for the protection of the EU's financial interests;
- The results of control activities;
- An outlook for 2022, including conclusions and recommendations.

The report stressed that the introduction of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic caused new challenges for the protection of the EU money. The Commission has supported national authorities while assessing the national plans, paying particular attention to the design of measures to protect the RRF resources from fraud, corruption, conflict of interest and double funding. Nonetheless, Member States must develop expertise and control strategies of different management modes linked to the implementation of the various funds in the coming years.

Another key development in 2021 was the start of operational activities by the EPPO on 1 June 2021. It is highlighted that the operational results from OLAF and the EPPO show the added value that EU bodies bring to the protection of the EU's financial interests and the fight against fraud, in particular in view of overcoming limitations of national systems in dealing with cross-border crime.

Regarding the key figures in 2021, the report stated that 11,218 cases of fraud and irregularities in total were reported. This is a bit less than in 2020. The related irregular amounts increased to €3.24 billion, due to a limited number of significant cases in some Member States.

Regarding the outlook into the near future, the Commission addressed the following recommendations to the Member States:

- Member States must ensure the correct implementation of the PIF Directive – the Commission will continue to control the correct transposition of the EU legislation into national law;
- Member States that have not yet joined the EPPO should do so and the Member States that participate should ensure the EPPO is in a position to exercise all the powers bestowed upon it by its founding Regulation;
- Member States should fully use the potential of digitalisation in the fight against fraud and especially take advantage of the existing tools, such as ARACHNE, EDES, and IMS.

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- Member States must strengthen fraud risk analyses.

Along these lines, the Commission will strengthen EU action particularly by new rules of the Financial Regulation, which were recently proposed (→ [eucrim 2/2022, 105](#)). As in the previous years, the annual report on the protection of the EU's financial interests is accompanied by several other documents, including:

- [Annual overview with information on the results of the Union anti-fraud programme in 2021](#);
- [Activity report of the inter-institutional panel of the Early Detection and Exclusion System \(EDES\)](#);
- [Follow-up by the Member States on the recommendations of the PIF Report 2020](#);
- [Measures adopted by the Member States to protect the EU's financial interests in 2021 \(Implementation of Art. 325 TFEU\)](#);
- [Report on the state of play of the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy \(CAFS\) Action Plan](#);
- [Statistical evaluation of irregularities reported for 2021](#)

For the annual reports of previous years → [eucrim news of 20 November 2021](#) and the related links there.

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