

Conference Highlights Need for Strong AFCOS in Candidate Countries



News

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Governments must “give law enforcement and public administration the tools they need to detect and to prosecute fraudsters,” said OLAF Director-General Ville Itälä at the annual conference of Anti-Fraud Coordination Services (AFCOS) in reference to EU candidate and potential candidate countries. The conference was held on 18-20 September 2019 in North Macedonia. It focused on translating operational knowledge into efficient fraud prevention measures.

The conference also highlighted the importance of cooperation between OLAF and AFCOS in the candidate and potential candidate countries in order to protect the EU budget. Between 2014 and 2020, pre-accession funding amounts to €12 billion. AFCOS facilitate the effective cooperation and exchange of information with OLAF. They are active in the implementation of comprehensive anti-fraud strategies at the national level and share information on possible irregularities in relation to the management of EU funds.

OLAF will continue to maintain its investigatory role in candidate countries and potential candidate countries, even after the European Public Prosecutor’s Office (EPPO) becomes operational. The EPPO has no jurisdiction to directly investigate fraud in third countries outside the EU. Hence, the solid cooperation established by the OLAF network remains crucial.

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