

Laura Kövesi Addresses German Parliamentarians in Speech



Thomas Wahl

News

On 9 November 2022, [European Chief Prosecutor Laura Kövesi](#) spoke at the Legal Affairs Committee of the German Bundestag. She reported on the achievements of the EPPO since the start of its operational activity on 1 June 2021, emphasising that the EPPO worked very efficiently when comparing input and output. While the budget for the EPPO was less than €45 million in 2021, the EPPO was able to seize more than a quarter of a billion of Euro in the same year. “By defending the financial interests of the European Union, the EPPO is in reality bringing money back into national budgets”, she added.

Kövesi gave examples on how the EPPO has improved the protection of the EU’s financial interests, but stressed that it can only do so if the Office is properly equipped. She pointed out that the workload is expected to increase extensively in the next three years, which brings the existing legal framework to its limits. She also said that the full potential of the EPPO has not been deployed yet, considering that the current level of detection of EU fraud is still unsatisfactory. Given that several national authorities failed to report any suspicion of serious VAT and customs fraud, the EPPO has recently engaged in establishing an elite corps of highly qualified financial fraud investigators who can effectively tackle transnational crime with specialised expertise.

She criticised that the EPPO is still treated as a decentralised EU agency, which does not correspond to its status as an independent judicial EU body and which should be corrected by way of a legislative amendment. Further issues of review concern the following:

- Bureaucracy reduction regarding the administration of European Delegated Prosecutors;
- Clarification of modalities of EPPO’s cross-border investigations.

Ultimately, she favoured an extension of EPPO’s competence to the violation of EU restrictive measures, which needs a dissuasive, effective and uniform EU response.

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