

OLAF Investigated Irregularities in Funding Agricultural Activities in Slovakia



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European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

News

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On 21 January 2021, OLAF reported on three cases that were closed in 2020 involving **irregularities in agricultural funds in Slovakia**. The three cases concerned direct payment applications made between 2013 and 2019 by several Slovakian companies. Investigations found that the conditions to receive EU money from the agricultural funds were not given in these cases. Applications were ineligible, for instance, because land plots were overlapping, land was used for other purposes than agricultural activity or no valid lease contracts existed for the claimed area. OLAF also stressed that, beside the specific payment-related aspects, there have been several weaknesses and internal verification deficits regarding the control and management of the EU fund at the competent Slovak managing authority. In two cases, OLAF issued recommendations for financial and judicial follow-up. In all three cases, OLAF made several administrative recommendations. During the investigations, OLAF also closely cooperated with Eurojust and the competent Slovak administrative and judicial authorities so that the procedural rights of the suspects could be ensured.

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