

OLAF Operational Work: September-December 2025

Thomas Wahl

News

This news item highlights key cases that demonstrate OLAF's operational work between September and December 2025. It follows reports on operations supported by OLAF in the first seven months of 2025 (→[eucri](#)m 2/2025, 125-126), including the Office's cooperation with the EPPO. The following overview is in reverse chronological order.

- 8 January 2026: OLAF reports that it finalised an investigation that **revealed systemic weaknesses in the management of EU funds in Hungary**. The investigation concerned the funding of projects for tourism and sustainability under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). It was opened in March 2023 and closed in December 2025. OLAF detected a series of manipulated public procurement procedures and inflated prices for supplies. Administrative recommendations were issued; national criminal proceedings relating to the projects are ongoing. Approximately €500,000 was prevented from being unduly spent thanks to OLAF.
- 18 December 2025: A joint operation between OLAF and the French Customs results in the **seizure of more than 10.7 million counterfeit toys sold online**. After the French Customs reported initial discoveries, OLAF launched a coordinated investigation at European level. It brought together the Member States concerned to harmonise the investigation strategy, then supervised several months of online investigations, conducted jointly with French and Czech customs. It also closely collaborated with online platforms on which the illicit toys were sold by third parties. Further joint operations to combat counterfeit and dangerous products sold online will follow.
- 30 October 2025: OLAF informs the public of the **results of Operation NOXIA II**. This operation targets deep-sea containers in EU and Asian ports in a bid to prevent the smuggling of illicit cigarettes and dangerous substances. The first edition was conducted in 2023 (→[eucri](#)m 4/2023, 318). Operation NOXIA II resulted in the coordinated seizure of 149.5 million cigarettes, over 3,000 tonnes of illicit waste, 66.5 kg of pseudoephedrine, 52 tonnes of solid pesticides, and 21,000 litres of liquid pesticides. Under the lead of OLAF, this joint customs operation involved 40 European and Asian countries. OLAF stresses that the Operation has also fostered a network of like-minded investigators, aiming to set up a regular information exchange between the EU and Asia through the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).
- 24 October 2025: A customs operation monitored by OLAF leads to the **seizure of 12 tonnes of illegal F-gases in south-east Spain**. Acting on intelligence provided by OLAF, the Spanish authorities confiscated a truck carrying cylinders, worth around 413,000 euros. OLAF also identified the smugglers' international routes, as F-gases are typically imported to the EU from non-EU countries. F-gases are strictly regulated in the EU due to their impact on global warming, yet the black market continues to expand. Combatting the smuggling of illicit F-gases is one of OLAF's key priorities.

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- 24 September 2025: OLAF reports that one of its first complementary investigations for the EPPO resulted in [convictions of main perpetrators in Croatia](#). The investigation involved procurement fraud in relation to the purchase of an information system by the Croatian Ministry for Regional Development and EU Funds (MRRFEU). The purchase was **co**-financed by the European Regional Development Fund. The former minister of the MRRFEU was [sentenced to two years of imprisonment](#) in June 2025. In September 2025, one of two business owners involved in the case was [convicted](#) as well. The EPPO took over the case from OLAF in 2022. OLAF revealed that the public authority and the economic operator may have colluded to inflate the value of the public procurement procedure and ensure that the contract was awarded to the predetermined economic operator. OLAF also recommended the recovery of €1.4 million to the European Commission, while the EPPO indicted several high-ranking officials and businessmen in Croatia.
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