

# Overview of Convictions in EPPO Cases: January – March 2024



**euCRIM**

European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

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**News**

The following is an overview of court verdicts and alternative resolutions in EPPO cases, which continues the overviews given in previous euCRIM issues (last → [euCRIM 4/2023](#)). A brief analysis of EPPO's news reports from January to March 2024 is presented in reverse chronological order.

- 20 March 2024: Investigation 'Cheap Ink' results in the conviction of four individuals in Italy. The investigation uncovered a massive VAT carousel fraud scheme involving the sale of toner cartridges and office supplies at cheap prices. The main heads were two entrepreneurs from Padua/Italy. The fraudsters systematically evaded VAT, amassing profits estimated at €58 million. By means of an abbreviated procedure, the Italian court convicts the defendants of participation in a criminal organisation, VAT fraud, money laundering, forgery of public documents, and forgery of signatures. One defendant accused of being a straw man is acquitted. The first court decision is still subject to appeal.
- 2 February 2024: As the first of several defendants, the [Berlin Regional Court](#) convicts a former notary to two years of imprisonment (on probation) for forgery and false notarisations. The conviction comes following an investigation into an €80 million VAT fraud scheme involving luxury cars and medical face masks (→ [euCRIM 2/2023, 125](#) > entry 27 July 2023). The notary was considered a gang member responsible for false notarisations and forgeries.
- 10 January 2024: The Regional Court of [Ostrava in Olomouc \(Czechia\)](#) convicts a business owner and his company of EU funding fraud. According to the court, they knowingly violated the conditions of a project financed under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for which they received subsidies from the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade. The owner is sentenced to three years of imprisonment (on probation), a penalty to the amount of €40,672, and prohibition from being involved in subsidy procedures in any capacity for a period of eight years. The company has to pay a fine amounting to €81,344 and is prohibited from receiving grants and subsidies for a period of ten years.

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