

# **Together we are stronger ? Harmonising the fight against fraud and corruption in Europe**

**A »CULTURE OF COOPERATION« BETWEEN NATIONAL  
AND EUROPEAN AUTHORITIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST FRAUD  
AND CORRUPTION**

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# Why do countries co-operate at the international level ?

- Because of their needs ?
- Because of the needs of other countries ?
- Because of the needs of the int'l community ?
- Because of their image ?

# Where to co-operate?

In the areas important for the country ?

or

In the areas important for everybody ?

# When to co-operate?

Does it really matter?

In practice: YES!

# What about fraud and corruption?

“In fact, one of the major obstacles encountered by OLAF in the pursuit of its mandate is the lack of mutual trust and collaboration within national agencies and administration” \*

\*Papers for the ANCORAGE –NET conference (May 2008)

# Enhancement of co-operation in the area of fraud and corruption in Europe

**EU enlargement process**

**OLAF**

**GRECO**

**Others**

# EU enlargement process I.

Countries follow given standards (if there are any) and they do it on time.....

but just before accession!!!

# EU enlargement process II.

Are we really equal ?

**NO !**

# European Anti-Fraud Office - OLAF

**An independent investigation service within  
the European Commission**

**Task:** detection and monitoring of fraud in the customs field, misappropriation of subsidies and tax evasion, insofar as the Community budget is affected by it, as well as the fight against corruption and any other illegal activity harmful to the financial interests of the Community

**Method:** administrative investigation

**Specialties:** high level of independence within the EC, internal and external investigations

# OLAF's problems

- Lack of collaboration with some countries
- Still perceived as a "hostile" institution
- Weak preventive measures

# Group of States against Corruption - GRECO

Partial and enlarged agreement  
of the Council of Europe

**Task:** to monitor anti-corruption  
efforts of its member states  
(46)

**Method:** peer-review in the form of  
evaluation rounds

**Specialty:** rigorous compliance procedure

# GRECO's problems

- Different goals of member states
- Deterioration of the implementation rate of recommendations
- “Unequal” treatment of member states

# Others

European Healthcare Fraud and  
Corruption Network - EHFCN

European Partners against  
Corruption – EPAC

Stability Pact Anti-Corruption  
Initiative – SPAI

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# Main features of international cooperation I.

- External pressure is decisive
- Influence of national political circumstances is important
- Two aims of international cooperation: image VS. deeds
- EU member states: old VS. new
- Different standards are applied

# Main features of international cooperation II.

- No visible/real interest of the EU
- Anti-corruption has to be moved into Pillar I
- Increase of anti-corruption resources of the EU is urgent
- Inclusion of states which are not EU members is vital
- The role of OLAF should be enhanced

# Main features of international cooperation III.

- Limitations by political considerations
- All countries have to equally take part in anti-corruption efforts
- Differentiation among countries is dangerous
- Harmonization of European anti-corruption efforts through UNCAC is possible

**Is there a culture of co-  
operation?**

**Not yet.**

**THANK YOU!**

**Questions, Comments,  
Remarks??**