



**18TH ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE EUROPEAN PARTNERS AGAINST CORRUPTION (EPAC/EACN)**

**RUST (AUSTRIA), 22-24 OCTOBER 2018**

**PANNONIA DECLARATION 2018**

We, the heads and key representatives of the national Police Oversight Bodies (POBs) and Anti-Corruption Authorities (ACAs) of the Member States of the Council of Europe and the European Union,

*Acknowledging* and *welcoming* the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and seeing it as an opportunity to promote important topics such as integrity and prevention of corruption, and thus placing particular emphasis on this field;

*Underlining* the importance of the rule of law, transparency and independent journalism as crucial elements in an effective fight against corruption;

*Recalling* international conventions, instruments and mechanisms, in particular the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), relevant Council of Europe conventions, the GRECO monitoring mechanism and the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention;

*Recalling* the EPAC/EACN Declarations adopted in Lisbon (2017), Riga (2016), Paris (2015), Sofia (2014), Krakow (2013), Barcelona (2012), Laxenburg (2011), Oradea (2010), Nova Gorica (2009), Manchester (2008), Helsinki (2007), Budapest (2006), Lisbon (2005), and Vienna (2004);

*Acknowledging* that corruption in all forms, including illicit enrichment, is a serious threat to the development, security and stability of states, undermines ethical values and justice, which has harmful consequences at all levels of governance, and jeopardizes public trust in democracy and its institutions;

*Reiterating* that corruption poses multiple challenges to all states and societies and therefore requires sustainable and interactive solutions collectively found by the European community;

*Continuing* to support the development of common standards and best practices for POBs and ACAs, and thus to set up working groups strengthening the exchange of best practices between POBs and ACAs and promoting cross-sector cooperation;

*Recalling* the EPAC/EACN 10 Guiding Principles and Parameters on the Notion of Independence of AC Bodies and recognizing the Jakarta Statement on Principles for Anti-Corruption Agencies of 27 November 2012;

*Encouraging further* POBs as well as ACAs to actively participate in the networks' activities;

*Welcoming* the membership applications of authorities/bodies from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Ireland as well as Spain, and looking forward to their full participation in the networks' activities by the beginning of 2019;

*Encouraging* EU member states to implement the General Data Protection Regulation and the Police Directive (Directive (EU) 2016/680 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016) in a way that does not render the fight against corruption and the oversight of law enforcement agencies inoperative by making available data inadmissible in legal procedures;

*Taking into account* the work of the EPAC/EACN Working Groups, in particular the progress of the EPAC/EACN Working Groups "How can POB organizations monitor the authorities of police forces in respect of the balance between collective security and individual rights during mass meetings/events" and "Analysis of big data, related legal aspects and the use of data", as well as the outcomes and conclusions of the Rust conference workshops, plenary sessions and a World Café session:

- Recommend to exchange best practices with different POBs in order to develop general guidelines regarding the following topics: security risks of festival visitors/employees, the need for legal provisions, the need for risk analysis, screening in national and international databases, defining criteria for screening, appeals process, screening practices, adequate quality control in screening assessments and violation of professional secrecy;
- Commit to addressing the challenges of managing big data sets during investigations into corruption cases, bringing together experts to share their experience and best practices in this field, and promoting the use of advanced IT techniques to improve the investigation methods and practices used;

- Call for implementing a working group similar to the one entitled “Analysis of big data, related legal aspects and the use of data”, which should operate on a regular basis to continue the exchange of experience and best practices in this field of expertise;
- Recommend ACAs and POBs to make use of the handbooks and guidelines developed by EPAC/EACN Working Groups such as the handbook for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of POBs or the guideline on integrity risk management for ACAs and POBs;
- Encourage members to consider the use of the “Guideline on Big Data Investigations” describing principles and techniques needed for reorganizing the procedural flow and functionalities of IT platforms used in criminal investigations;
- Commit to promoting the outcomes of the 7<sup>th</sup> session of the Assembly of Parties of the International Anti-Corruption Academy based in Laxenburg as well as the adopted resolutions;
- Call on the states to promote and protect the independence and ability of ACAs and POBs to perform their functions effectively and efficiently and without undue political influence. In that respect refrain from weakening the criminal legislation and the organizational framework of the above mentioned agencies;
- Encourage all States Parties of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and its Working Group on Prevention to promote the prevention of conflicts of interests and establish a declaration system regarding outside activities, employment, investments, assets and substantial gifts or benefits from which a conflict of interest may result, and therefore to strengthen the implementation of Article 7 Paragraph 4 and Article 8 Paragraph 5;
- Call for States Parties of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and its Working Group on Asset Recovery to highlight the importance of further cooperation in tracing assets, civil action for the purposes of asset recovery and recognition as well as enforcement of foreign confiscation orders;
- Take note of the achievements of the High-Level Conference “Strengthening transparency and accountability to ensure integrity: united against corruption” organized by the Group of States against Corruption of the Council of Europe (GRECO), commit to promote cooperation with GRECO and emphasize the lessons learned during the 5th Evaluation Round;
- Highlight the Anti-Corruption Experience-Sharing Programme of the European Union and the information received during the Meeting of the National Contact Points on Corruption;

- Acknowledge the initiative of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) to hold its first international conference to address anti-corruption matters and promote the exchange of experience between national anti-corruption authorities;
- Call for action to strengthen existing channels for international cooperation and exchange of information and to intensify the knowledge transfer by using already existing tools, such as Europol's Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA) and the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE).

The Declaration will be widely circulated by the members in their respective countries and submitted to relevant EU institutions and bodies, the Council of Europe's GRECO, and UNODC.



Andreas Wieselthaler

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