



NEWSLETTER

**Dear ladies and gentlemen,
colleagues and friends,**

The first quarter of the year is over and winter is on a break, so make sure to sign up for some amazing anti-corruption events. We can especially recommend the first meeting of the EPAC/EACN Working Group “EU Integrity”, taking place this May, as well as two anti-corruption meetings in Tallinn, scheduled for the summer. Scroll down to find out more and take a look at our selection of anti-corruption news and events coming up in the next couple of months.

As always, we would appreciate your input regarding future or past events, conferences, seminars, training courses, studies, project findings, etc., to include in the next newsletter.

Your EPAC/EACN Secretariat

EPAC/EACN EVENTS AND LATEST NEWS

FIRST EPAC/EACN BOARD MEETING OF 2019



On 7 February, this year’s first EPAC/EACN board meeting took place at the Austrian Federal Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAK) in Vienna.

Editor: [EPAC/EACN Secretariat](#)

Homepage: www.epac-eacn.org

The main topic on the agenda was an exchange on the follow-up actions to be taken in response to the views and expectations expressed by member organizations at the 18th EPAC/EACN Annual Professional Conference in Rust, Austria, on the (current) functioning of the networks and possibilities of further cooperation.

Specific points of discussion included, inter alia, future strategic partnerships with non-EPAC/EACN members, possible approaches to making EPAC/EACN's vision more widely known, additional opportunities for interactive and in-depth exchanges among EPAC/EACN members with similar mandates, as well as the networks' web appearance.

Furthermore, the board members updated each other on the current status of the EPAC/EACN working groups. In this context, representatives of the BAK presented a concept paper, visualizing the intended structure, content and timeline of the EPAC/EACN Working Group "EU Integrity" established at the 2018 General Assembly. With regard to the EPAC/EACN newsletter, which is published three times a year, it was recalled that members are invited to contribute relevant articles, reports, etc.

Finally, the board members were informed that the 2019 EPAC/EACN Annual Professional Conference and General Assembly will be generously hosted by the Swedish Special Investigations Department.

The next EPAC/EACN board meeting will be held in Tallinn, Estonia, on 7 May 2019.

FIRST MEETING OF THE EPAC/EACN WORKING GROUP

"EU Integrity"

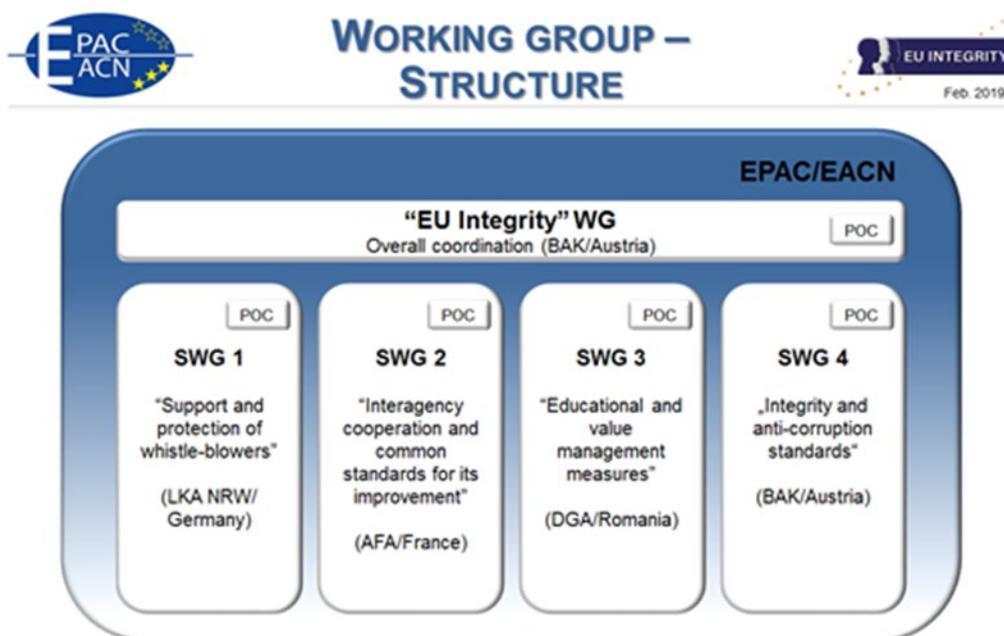


* During the 18th EPAC/EACN Annual Professional Conference and General Assembly, an "EU Integrity" workshop was held to put forward the idea of setting up an "EU Integrity" working group (WG) under the umbrella of the networks EPAC/EACN (see figure below). Even though the application for EU funding had been unsuccessful, the four authorities having applied [State Criminal Police Office of North Rhine-Westphalia (LKA NRW), Germany; French Anti-Corruption Agency (AFA), France; Anticorruption General Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (DGA), Romania; Federal Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAK), Austria] confirmed their willingness to move forward with the "EU Integrity" initiative. Many workshop participants also expressed their interest in taking part in this EPAC/EACN WG, which was officially established at the end of the 2018 General Assembly.

The idea is to have four sub-working groups (SWGs), each led by one of the aforementioned authorities with a focus on a particular aspect.

The overall objective is to ensure that added value will be generated to create a positive stance in promoting integrity in all sectors across the EU. The specific goal is to share views and experiences, develop and agree on common standards and strategies, as well as to promote best practices, create synergies and adopt diversified approaches to promote integrity. The four SWGs will deal with the following topics:

- “Support and protection of whistle-blowers”
- “Interagency cooperation and common standards for its improvement”
- “Educational and value management measures”
- “Integrity and anti-corruption standards”



As is usual with EPAC/EACN WGs, participation in all meetings will be on a self-payer basis.

The first meeting of SWG 4 (“Integrity and anti-corruption standards”) is set to take place from 28 to 29 May 2019 in Vienna, Austria, and will be organized by the BAK.

If you are **interested in participating in the “EU Integrity” WG**, please send an email to secretariat@epac-eacn.org and CC to Ms. Nemeč (Eva.Nemec@bak.gv.at) **as soon as possible and not later than 19 April 2019!**

The organizers are looking forward to many applications by interested parties and a fruitful WG!

ANTI-CORRUPTION TRAINING AND MEETING IN TALLINN, ESTONIA

In the first week of July 2019, INTERPOL will be organizing and implementing a Law Enforcement Investigators Training in Tallinn, Estonia, with a focus on integrity in sports. The aim of this event is to strengthen skills to investigate competition manipulation, to collect and evaluate evidence, to monitor bets, to work in the field of sports, and to consolidate the key role of the INTERPOL Match-Fixing Task Force (IMFTF). The training will also provide networking opportunities by bringing together key investigators engaged in fighting corruption and, specifically, fighting corruption in sports. Most of the participants will be from ACAs in Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland or Estonia.

After the INTERPOL training, on the third working day, there will be a follow-up meeting for the same ACA representatives to discuss present problems of the fight against corruption with the aim of strengthening cooperation among neighbouring countries.

Invitations to both events will be distributed in the coming months.

The Corruption Crime Bureau of Estonian Police and Border Guard Board has the great opportunity to attend, assist with and support these important expert meetings, which will both take place in Tallinn this summer.

EUROPOL'S OPERATIONAL SUPPORT TO ACAs



Europol supports EPAC/EACN and offers different services to its members, therefore giving substance to the provisions of Council Decision 2008/JHA/852 on a European contact-point network against corruption, and strives to enhance operational international cooperation.

The following initiatives have been fostered by ECAB (Europol Criminal Assets Bureau), which deals within Europol with grand corruption issues.

Anti-corruption portal

The Europol Platform for Experts (EPE; epe.europol.europa.eu) is a secure web-based solution where members can exchange non-operational data and upload or download documents relevant to their field of expertise.

The EPE offers access, inter alia, to the anti-corruption portal. This portal has a subpage for EPAC/EACN anti-corruption and police oversight bodies and serves the whole anti-corruption community.

In 2018, the EPAC/EACN Secretariat received a dedicated training by Europol for the administration of the EPE.

SIENA for anti-corruption authorities

From 2014 to 2016, the EU Commission funded the “S4ACA” project to promote the use of SIENA (Secure Information Exchange Network Application) among ACAs. <https://bak.gv.at/en/news.aspx?id=44705464714C66687664773D> Units connected to SIENA are able to send operational messages directly to their counterparts in a secure and expedient manner. They may also choose to copy Europol, opening grounds for further support by the European agency (see below).

Are you an anti-corruption investigative unit interested in but not yet connected to SIENA? Send an email to 050@europol.europa.eu for more details.

Europol operational support

Europol is competent to provide operational support for grand corruption cases involving at least 2 Member States. This support is coordinated with the liaison bureaus of the concerned countries.

- Contributions are first compared to information already inserted in the Europol database. If this initial cross-check triggers a hit, the respective contributors are informed (insofar as they gave prior consent to the exchange of information).
- In complex cases, Europol can, upon request, offer analytical support, the range of which is assessed on a case-by-case basis. In times of big data and scarce resources in many EU Members States, Europol’s operational support may be decisive to solve such cases.
- Whenever investigators from different countries need to meet and discuss common cases, Europol can finance operational meetings, usually in its headquarters in The Hague.
- Finally, during so-called action days, Europol can deploy staff on the spot for specific activities.

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY TESTING & CORRUPTION RISK ASSESSMENT

On 26 June 2019, an international workshop on exchanging best practices in the field of professional integrity testing and corruption risk assessment will be held in Chişinău, Moldova. The event is organized within the EU-funded Twinning Project “Support to the strengthening of the operational capacities of the Law Enforcement Agencies of the Republic of Moldova in the field of prevention and investigation of criminal acts of corruption”. The project has a duration of two years and is implemented with the participation of experts from three EU Member States: Lithuania, Romania and Finland. The National Anti-Corruption Centre of the Republic of Moldova is the main beneficiary of the project and the institution organizing the workshop.

The twinning project aims to contribute to the implementation of professional integrity testing and corruption risk assessment in the Republic of Moldova in the light of European best practices and in accordance with human rights standards. Therefore, the workshop will bring together professionals from different European anti-corruption bodies to share their knowledge and describe similar mechanisms of corruption prevention existing in their countries.

(See: <https://www.cna.md/tabview.php?l=en&idc=60&t=/Institutional-development/Foreign-assistance-projects/Foreign-assistance-projects/>;
<https://www.stt.lt/en/menu/international-cooperation/international-projects/>)

82nd PLENARY MEETING OF GRECO

Strasbourg, 18-22 March 2019

In a plenary meeting GRECO discussed and adopted 5th round evaluation reports on Malta, North Macedonia and Sweden focusing on corruption prevention in central governments, including top executive functions, and law enforcement. GRECO also adopted a public Declaration in respect of Belarus due to its persistent lack of compliance with anti-corruption standards. Other topics on the agenda were 3rd round compliance reports on Belarus, Germany and Turkey, as well as 4th round compliance reports on Azerbaijan, Georgia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Norway, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Turkey and USA. (See: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/greco/-/82nd-plenary-meeting-of-greco-strasbourg-18-22-march-2019->)

OECD GLOBAL ANTI-CORRUPTION & INTEGRITY FORUM

Paris, 20-21 March 2019

Blockchain, big data analytics, AI and other new technologies are transforming the way of working for governments, businesses and society. The 2019 Forum "Tech for Trust" focused on the risks and opportunities of new technologies for anti-corruption and integrity. New insights related to trade, foreign bribery, competition and development cooperation as well as other issues also featured in the discussion.

With over 1,800 participants from 120 countries, the OECD Global Anti-Corruption & Integrity Forum is leading the policy debate on integrity and anti-corruption worldwide. The event was free and open to the public. (See: <http://www.oecd.org/corruption/integrity-forum/>)

10th IAACA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND GENERAL MEETING

Vienna, 22-24 January 2019

The 10th Annual Conference and General Meeting of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA) took place from 22 to 24 January 2019 at the Vienna International Centre, Austria. The conference was themed "15 years of the United Nations Convention against Corruption: Accomplishments and Prospects". For the Vienna Declaration, please follow the weblink: <https://www.iaaca.net/publications>

(See: <https://www.iaaca.net/iaaca-annual-conference-2019>)

7th ICAC SYMPOSIUM

Hong Kong, 22-24 May 2019

The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and the World Justice Project will be co-hosting the 7th ICAC Symposium, titled "Fighting Corruption - A New Perspective" and taking place in Hong Kong from 22 to 24 May 2019. To mark this joint venture which also coincides with the 45th anniversary of the ICAC, eminent speakers who have made remarkable contributions to the cause of corruption eradication in their own fields will shed light on topics that are close to the heart of law enforcers: the latest global challenges, strategies to advance law enforcement, the rule of law, preventive measures and public engagement.

(See: <https://www.icac.org.hk/symposium/2019/en/index.html>)

OPEN APPLICATIONS AT IACA

The International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) opened applications for two of its academic degree programmes as well as the Summer Academy 2019.

IACA invites to apply for its two academic degree programmes: Master in Anti-Corruption Studies (MACS) and International Master in Anti-Corruption Compliance and Collective Action (IMACC).

The MACS is a two-year, modular degree programme in anti-corruption and compliance. Interdisciplinary in nature, it combines distance learning with in-class sessions (at IACA or other locations worldwide), written assignments, and a final thesis. The MACS faculty is an international array of leading experts in their respective fields.

The IMACC is a two-year programme specifically designed for practitioners involved with the business sector. It consists of six modules, each including an intensive in-class session, as well as a practical final project or thesis.

The IACA Summer Academy is an intensive 8-day programme for professionals looking to consolidate their experience and enhance their competences to better counter corruption. It is interdisciplinary, addresses trends and practices on the global anti-corruption agenda, and promotes a culture of the reflective practitioner. Every year, the programme is delivered by more than a dozen renowned academics and practitioners. This year's Summer Academy will take place from 28 June to 5 July 2019 at IACA's campus in Laxenburg, Austria.

For more information and to apply for the above-mentioned programmes, please visit IACA's website (<https://www.iaca.int/>).

EUROPEAN PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE – STATE OF PLAY

On 8 June 2017, 20 EU Member States reached a political agreement on the establishment of a new European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) under enhanced cooperation. Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 establishing the EPPO under enhanced cooperation was adopted by the JHA Council of 12 October 2017 and entered into force on 20 November 2017. 22 Member States will participate: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Spain, Finland, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, and Slovakia.

Following a build-up phase of three years, the EPPO is envisaged to take up its functions by the end of 2020. Important steps have already been taken to implement the Regulation establishing the EPPO, including implementing measures for the selection and appointment of the European Chief Prosecutor and European Prosecutors, the development of the Case Management System, and other logistical, administrative and financial matters.

Following the Council Decision on the appointment of the members of the selection panel and its operating rules, the Vacancy Notice for the European Chief Prosecutor was published on 19 November 2018 with the application deadline of 14 December 2018. The selection panel's main task is to draw up a shortlist of candidates for the position of European Chief Prosecutor and to assess the qualifications of candidates for European Prosecutors before their appointment by the Council. On 4 February 2019, the selection panel submitted the shortlist of candidates for the position of European Chief Prosecutor to the European Parliament and to the Council of the EU in the following order: Laura Codruța Kövesi from Romania, Jean-François Bohnert from France and Andrés Ritter from Germany. Laura Codruța Kövesi became the choice of the EP, and Jean-François Bohnert is the Council's preferred candidate. On 20 March 2019, Parliament and Council began talks about who will be their joint pick for the first-ever EU public prosecutor.

The EPPO will operate as a single office across all participating Member States and will combine European and national law enforcement efforts in a unified, seamless and efficient approach. The EPPO will be built on two levels: the central and the national level. The central level will consist of the European Chief Prosecutor, its two Deputies, 22 European Prosecutors (one per participating Member State), two of whom as Deputies for the European Chief Prosecutor and the Administrative Director. The decentralised level will consist of European Delegated Prosecutors who will be located in the participating Member States. The central level will supervise the investigations and prosecutions carried out at the national level. As a rule, it will be the European Delegated Prosecutors who will carry out the investigation and prosecution in their Member State.

The rights of the suspects and accused persons will be guaranteed by comprehensive procedural safeguards based on existing EU and national law. The EPPO will ensure that its activities respect the rights guaranteed by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, including the right to fair trial and the right to defence. The procedural acts of the EPPO will be subject to judicial review by the national courts. The European Court of Justice – by way of preliminary rulings – has residual powers to ensure a consistent application of EU law.

The EPPO will be the key actor to fight crimes against the EU budget, which is EU taxpayers' money.

OVERVIEW OF UPCOMING EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

22 to 24 May 2019:	Seventh ICAC Symposium, Hong Kong
24 May 2019:	Intersessional Meeting of the UNCAC Implementation Review Group - Drawing of Lots, Vienna
27 to 29 May 2019:	10th session of the UNCAC Implementation Review Group, Vienna
28 to 29 May 2019:	First meeting of the EPAC/EACN Working Group “EU Integrity”, Vienna
29 to 30 May 2019:	13th session of the UNCAC Working Group on Asset Recovery, Vienna
30 to 31 May 2019:	8th session of the UNCAC Expert Meeting on International Cooperation, Vienna
17 to 21 June 2019:	83rd Plenary Meeting (GRECO), Strasbourg
25 to 28 June 2019:	Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery (OECD), Paris
26 June 2019:	International workshop on exchanging best practices in the field of professional integrity testing and corruption risk assessment, Chişinău
First week of July 2019:	Anti-corruption training and meeting organized by INTERPOL, Tallinn