

PRESS RELEASE

Prosecutor General meets Director General of the European Anti-Fraud Office

Prosecutor General Péter Polt has invited Ville Itälä, the Director General of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), and the parties have agreed on deepening the good bilateral relations between the two organizations.

Mr. Péter Polt and Mr. Ville Itälä – who arrived in Hungary in the course of his introductory visits to all Member States – met to hold talks for the first time since the appointment of the Director General. During the results of the cooperation between the two organizations were reviewed, and further strengthening of their bilateral relations was also focused on.

The Hungarian Prosecution Service and OLAF work together closely, meetings at leader and expert level are regularly held. The continuous and good relationship between the two organizations was also highlighted by the former Director General of OLAF, Mr. Giovanni Kessler.

The mission of OLAF is to detect administrative irregularities affecting EU funds. As a result of its investigations, OLAF can make, among others, judicial, financial and administrative recommendations.

Judicial recommendations are made by OLAF if findings of the administrative investigations, in the view of OLAF, yield information about a suspicion of crime. On the basis of a judicial recommendation, the competent authorities of the Member State concerned decide whether it is necessary to launch a criminal investigation.

It shows the good working relationship between the two organizations that *the Hungarian Prosecution Service ordered a criminal investigation in each case indicated by a judicial recommendation of OLAF or if a criminal investigation was already ongoing, the recommendation was evaluated in the course of the criminal procedure.*

The success of the Hungarian criminal investigations are confirmed by the data of OLAF's Annual Report for 2018, as the report shows that *the Hungarian Prosecution Service filed indictments in 45 % of the cases involving judicial recommendations from OLAF, which is a significantly higher percentage than the average in the European Union (36 %).*

Another positive trend is that *the number of the judicial recommendations sent by OLAF has been steadily decreasing during the last years. While in 2015 and 2016 ten recommendations were received in each year, in 2017 six, in 2018 four, and in 2019 only two recommendations were issued. The last two recommendations concern the same, already ongoing criminal investigation, in the course of which a joint investigation team was already set up with the participation of different EU member states and OLAF.*

During the meeting the parties emphasised that they still consider information-sharing and cooperation in combatting against the misuse of EU funds as a priority. *They also agreed they would negotiate a cooperation agreement to deepen further the already existing good working relationship.*

Previous press releases issued on the topic of cooperation between OLAF and the Hungarian Prosecution Service can be found in the following:

- [The Rate of Indictments on the Basis of OLAF's Judicial Recommendations Exceeds The EU Average](#) (September 4, 2019)
- [Hungarian Prosecutor General meets OLAF Director-General to reinforce cooperation in investigations](#) (February 9, 2017)

- [OLAF Director General Mr. Giovanni KESSLER welcomed by Mr. Péter POLT, Prosecutor General of Hungary in his Office today \(June 22, 2015\)](#)

Budapest, 31st January 2020