

Strengthening the Commission's oversight in a modern and robust anti-fraud system

The new Strategy pushes for more consistency and better coordination in the fight against fraud among the various Commission departments and it paves the way for more data-driven anti-fraud measures in the coming years. The vision behind the new Strategy is to strengthen the corporate oversight of the Commission regarding all issues related to fraud and to reinforce the anti-fraud system that is already in place.

Günther H. **Oettinger**, European Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, said: *“The European Commission has zero tolerance to fraud. Every euro from the EU budget should be well spent and should create added value for the EU citizens. Today’s Strategy will help us stay focused on preventing, detecting and stopping fraud. We must always remain one step ahead of fraudsters.”*

Building on actions taken since 2011, the new Strategy seeks to make sure that the Commission makes the most out of the available data to prevent and detect fraud. It focuses on improving the quality and completeness of relevant information, on joining up different data sources and on creating smarter tools to draw operational conclusions.

The Strategy also seeks to reinforce the Commission’s corporate oversight of fraud issues, by giving the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) a much stronger advisory and supervisory role. OLAF will conduct mandatory reviews of the anti-fraud strategies of all Commission Directorates and monitor their implementation. It will liaise with all departments, and especially with the Heads of the Commission’s central services (Secretariat-General, Legal Service, DG Human Resources and DG Budget), in this process. This will strengthen the Commission’s overall governance of the anti-fraud system. In addition, the Commission will strengthen its follow-up of OLAF’s recommendations in order to ensure a better implementation.

Background

The Commission adopted its current Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy (CAFS) in 2011. It set out guidelines for the Commission’s fight against fraud, such as the principle of zero tolerance to fraud, and three priority actions, namely: (i) introducing anti-fraud provisions in Commission proposals on spending programmes under the Multi Annual Financial Framework for 2014-2020; (ii) implementing anti-fraud strategies at department level; and (iii) revising the public procurement directives. The general guidelines remain valid and the measures provided for in the 2011 CAFS have been fully implemented.

The Commission services performed an evaluation of the 2011 CAFS. The evaluation concluded that although the CAFS is still relevant and effective as a policy framework for the Commission in protecting the EU budget, it

needs to adapt to an evolving situation (new funding schemes and fraud trends, development of IT tools, etc.). For the review of the CAFS, the Commission carried out a fraud risk assessment, involving the executive agencies.

The 2019 CAFS also addresses some key recommendations issued by the European Court of Auditors in a Special Report entitled “Fighting fraud in EU spending: action needed”.

The 2019 CAFS complements the Commission’s ‘Governance Package’, adopted in November 2018, which designates OLAF as the lead service in the conception and development of a European anti-fraud policy and further assigns a strategic role regarding corporate aspects of the fight against fraud to the Corporate Management Board. The Corporate Management Board brings together the Commission’s Secretary-General and the Directors-General of its central services (budget, human resources and legal affairs).

For more information

- [Package of the European Commission’s Anti-Fraud Strategy 2019](#)
- [Communication on the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy](#) (24 June 2011)
- [Special Report ‘Fighting fraud in EU spending: actions needed’ by the European Court of Auditors](#) (10 January 2019)
- [Corporate governance arrangements within the European Commission](#)
- [Announcements of Commissioner Günther H. Oettinger](#)