



**RELATIONS
OF THE EPPO
WITH ITS PARTNERS**



Relations of the EPPO with its partners

In 2023, the EPPO pursued the implementation of its external strategy to reinforce ties and foster cooperation with all concerned counterparts, including institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the EU, relevant authorities of non-EU countries and EU Member States not participating in the EPPO, as well as international organisations, expert networks and fora. Raising awareness, around the globe, of the EPPO's mandate, tools and jurisdiction where EU funds are involved, is key to increasing the reporting of crime, and to ensuring trust and effective cooperation from its partners.

RELATIONS WITH INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES OF THE EU



The EPPO participated in several meetings with the **European Parliament** and the **Council of the EU**.

In particular, the European Chief Prosecutor was invited, in March, to a joint meeting in the European Parliament of the Committees on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) and on Budgetary Control (CONT), to present the EPPO's 2022 Annual Report. She also participated in meetings with the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Tax Matters in March, to discuss the fight against VAT fraud, and with the Committee on Regional Development in May, for more general discussions on how to improve the fight against fraud affecting the financial interests of the EU, specifically on the expenditure side. The EPPO hosted a delegation of the Committee on Budgetary Control in October 2023.

At the June meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council, the European Chief Prosecutor supported, in particular, a possible extension of the EPPO's competence as regards violations of EU restrictive measures, while at

the December JHA Council meeting, she highlighted the EPPO's role in combating serious organised crime. The European Chief Prosecutor also took part in the annual inter-institutional exchange of views with the Council of the EU, the European Commission and the European Parliament on the performance of OLAF.

The second annual high-level review of the cooperation between the EPPO and the **European Commission** took place at the end of September 2023. It addressed, among others, the following topics: EPPO notifications allowing the European Commission to take precautionary and corrective measures; suspicion of fraud reporting from the IBOAs; protection of the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility funds; and damage estimation methodologies.

Lastly, the EPPO concluded its negotiations for working arrangements with the EU's executive agencies, and continued its negotiations with the European Parliament and the European External Action Service.



EUROJUST

European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation

The EPPO and Eurojust agreed on the indirect access to information in their respective case management systems, on the basis of a hit/no-hit system (Article 100(3) EPPO Regulation, Article 50(5) of the Eurojust Regulation). The EPPO and Eurojust liaison teams met once during the reporting period. By the year's end, there were 26 ongoing cases supported by the Eurojust National Desks. The EPPO is continuing to participate in the 'US-EU expert group on obtaining electronic evidence via mutual legal assistance from the US', hosted by Eurojust.



EUROPEAN ANTI-FRAUD OFFICE

The EPPO had 284 exchanges of information with OLAF. Specifically, the EPPO replied to 32 hit/no-hit requests sent by OLAF, in order to avoid parallel investigations into the same facts. Moreover, OLAF complemented the EPPO's activity in 22 cases, whereas support was provided in 4 cases.



The EPPO has efficiently cooperated with Europol in various operational matters, under the aegis of the EPPO-Europol Steering Committee. In particular, Europol provided support (information exchange, analytical support, expertise, etc.) upon 47 requests from the EPPO. The EPPO is closely cooperating with the European Financial and Economic Crime Centre (EFECC), and is an associated party of the following Analysis Projects (APs): AP High Risk Organised Crime Groups, AP Corruption and AP MTIC, and is considering participation in additional APs. Through the specialised teams within its Operations unit, the EPPO has been actively contributing relevant operational experience and insight to these projects, enriching its own knowledge and capabilities in providing expertise.

Institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the EU: crime reporting statistics⁹³

| IBOA | EPPO crime reports | Exercised competence | NOT exercised competence | Pending |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| European Commission and Executive Agencies (via OLAF) | 7 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) | 72 | 38 | 7 | 27 |
| European Court of Auditors | 17 | 3 | 2 | 12 |
| European Investment Bank | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| Europol | 3 | 1 | n/a | 2 |
| Total | 108 | 49 | 12 | 47 |

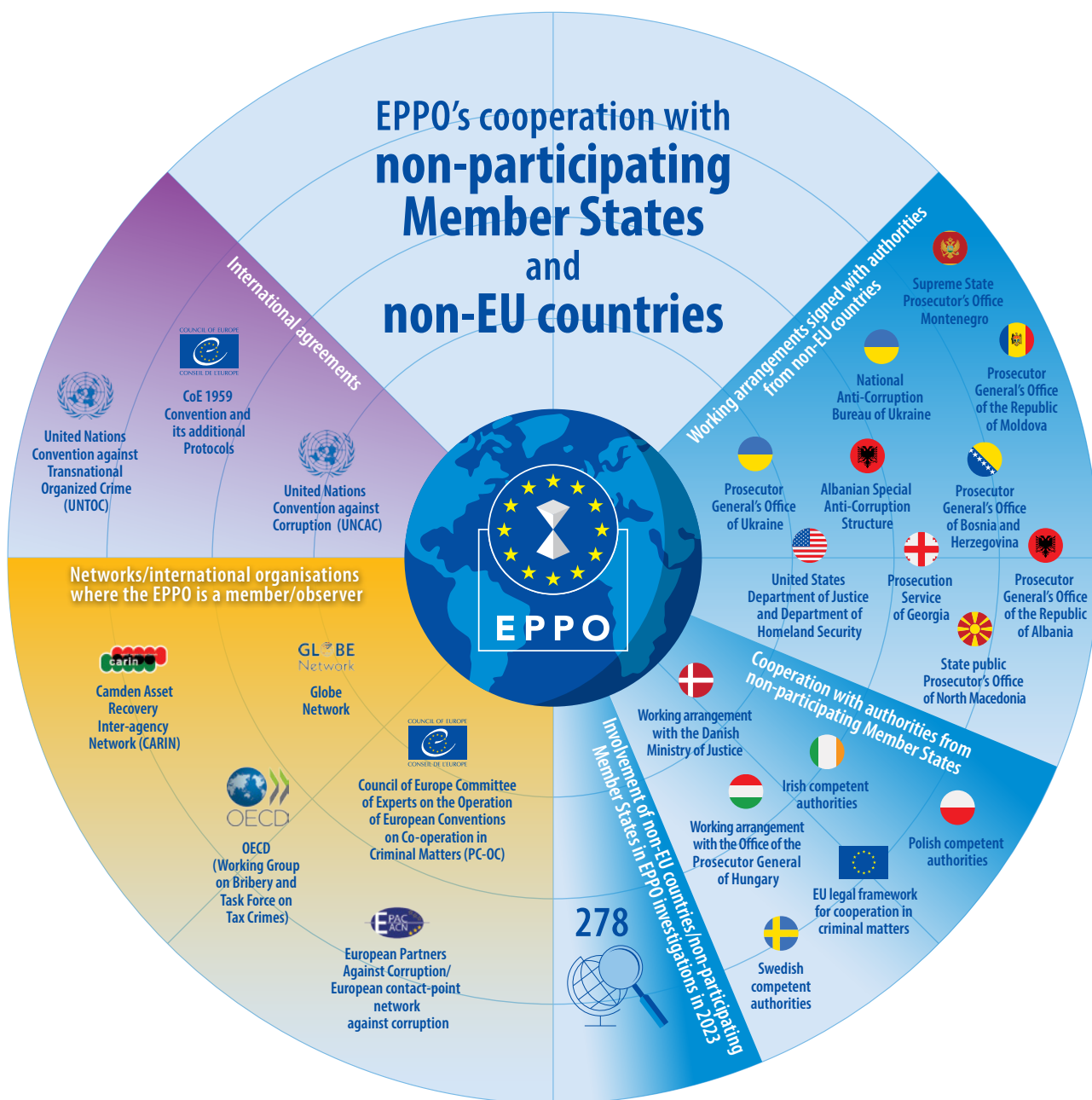
RELATIONS WITH NON-PARTICIPATING MEMBER STATES AND NON-EU COUNTRIES

As regards non-participating Member States, the year 2023 was marked by important developments: the effective start of cooperation with Poland and Ireland, as well as the signature of a working arrangement with the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of Denmark to facilitate cooperation.

The EPPO is committed, through the implementation of the signed working arrangements, to facilitating cooperation and sharing its expertise with authorities from all candidate countries to the EU⁹⁴.

As regards non-EU countries, the EPPO focused on candidates to EU accession. The EPPO concluded working arrangements with the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine, the Albanian Special Anti-Corruption Structure and the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

European Prosecutors, European Delegated Prosecutors and Central Office staff delivered regional training on the EPPO's financial investigations and tools to prosecutors from all Western Balkan candidate countries in November 2023.



HIGHLIGHTS – THREE OF THE EPPO’S INTERNATIONAL PRIORITIES DURING 2023

STRENGTHEN COOPERATION WITH UKRAINIAN PARTNERS

The EPPO’s support to our colleagues in Ukraine has resulted in meetings with the Ukrainian Prosecutor General’s Office to implement the working arrangement signed in 2022, and a new partnership with the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU). The European Chief Prosecutor attended the United for Justice Conference in March.

The EPPO also organised two dedicated training courses for Ukrainian prosecutors and NABU’s investigators in its premises, to share its expertise and present the EPPO’s unique tools in conducting cross-border investigations.

CONTRIBUTE TO THE COLLECTIVE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Through new partnerships and awareness-raising in various international formats, the EPPO contributed to the fight against corruption. The EPPO became a member of the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (Globe Network), having been designated in October 2022 as a competent authority for the application of the United Nation Convention against Corruption⁹⁵.

The EPPO contributed to OECD meetings and conferences, in particular the regional meeting held in Astana by the Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ACN). The EPPO also attended the fifth International Corruption Hunters Alliance (ICHA) Forum, organised by the World Bank in Abidjan.

CREATE AND STRENGTHEN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Based on its operational needs, and new fraud and money laundering trends, the EPPO focused on awareness-raising of its mandate and tools, in order to foster crime reporting and cooperation with new partners.

The EPPO has also organised bilateral meetings with its counterparts from, among others, Liechtenstein, the People’s Republic of China, Singapore, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Disclaimer: the below figures reflect links in our cases within these territories, and do not reflect the effective sending of requests for mutual legal assistance by the EPPO.

| | Non-participating Member States | Involvement in EPPO cases 2023 |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|  | Denmark | 3 |
| | Hungary | 80 |
| | Ireland | 3 |
| | Poland | 58 |
| | Sweden | 15 |
| | Total | 159 |

| | Involvement in EPPO cases, 2023 | | | Total cases |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---|-------------|
| | Place of criminal activity | Place of financial damage | Place of criminal activity and financial damage | |
| Algeria | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 4 | n/a | n/a | 4 |
| China | 16 | n/a | n/a | 16 |
| Curaçao ⁹⁶ | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | n/a | n/a | 1 | 1 |
| Egypt | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Guatemala | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Honduras | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Hong Kong ⁹⁷ | 5 | n/a | n/a | 5 |
| Indonesia | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Jamaica | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Jordan | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Kenya | 2 | n/a | n/a | 2 |
| Lebanon | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Malaysia | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Mauritania | n/a | n/a | 1 | 1 |
| Mauritius | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Moldova | n/a | n/a | 1 | 1 |
| Monaco | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Montenegro | n/a | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Morocco | 3 | n/a | n/a | 3 |
| Nigeria | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Norway | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Puerto Rico | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Republic of Korea | 2 | n/a | n/a | 2 |
| Russia | 2 | n/a | n/a | 2 |
| San Marino | 2 | n/a | n/a | 2 |
| Serbia | n/a | n/a | 1 | 1 |
| Sint Maarten (Dutch territory) | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Somalia | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Switzerland | 10 | n/a | n/a | 10 |
| Syrian Arab Republic | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Taiwan ⁹⁸ | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1 |
| Tanzania | n/a | n/a | 1 | 1 |
| Tunisia | 1 | n/a | 1 | 2 |
| Türkiye | 7 | n/a | n/a | 7 |
| Ukraine | 2 | n/a | n/a | 2 |
| United Arab Emirates | 4 | n/a | n/a | 4 |
| United Kingdom | 14 | n/a | 3 | 17 |
| United States of America | 5 | 8 | n/a | 13 |
| Zambia | n/a | n/a | 1 | 1 |
| Total | | | | 119 |

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES (NETWORKS, COMMITTEES AND SIMILAR STRUCTURES, ANTI-CORRUPTION ACTIVITIES)

EUROPEAN MULTIDISCIPLINARY PLATFORM AGAINST CRIMINAL THREATS (EMPACT)

The EPPO is participating in the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), and more specifically, in the operational action plans relevant to the EPPO's mandate: high-risk criminal networks, Missing Trader Intra-Community (MTIC) fraud and excise fraud, as well as Criminal Finances, Money Laundering and Asset Recovery (CFMLAR).

CAMDEN ASSET RECOVERY INTER-AGENCY NETWORK (CARIN)

The EPPO, as an observer, attended the most recent CARIN Annual General Meeting, which took place in Brussels from 3 to 5 May 2023, with a particular focus on asset recovery as a policy objective. The EPPO's two contact points participated in several working groups, notably on virtual currency, post-conviction asset recovery and victims' compensation. In 2023, the EPPO sent four requests for information to the relevant CARIN contact points.

EU FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE UNITS (FIUs)

In September, the EPPO was invited to take part in the 57th EU Financial Intelligence Units' Platform, hosted by the European Commission, to present its work and discuss potential avenues for cooperation between the FIUs and the EPPO in the fields of money laundering and asset recovery.

GLOBAL OPERATIONAL NETWORK OF ANTI-CORRUPTION LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES (GLOBE NETWORK)

The EPPO became a member of the GlobE Network, and took part in the plenary meeting in July among anti-corruption law enforcement practitioners, with whom the EPPO can cooperate, on the basis of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

EUROPEAN PARTNERS AGAINST CORRUPTION (EPAC) AND THE EUROPEAN CONTACT-POINT NETWORK AGAINST CORRUPTION (EACN)

The EPPO attended, as an observer, the General Assembly of the European Partners against Corruption (EPAC) and the European contact-point network against corruption (EACN) in November.

ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)

The EPPO, as an observer, attended the plenary meetings of the OECD Working Group on Bribery in International Business Transactions (WGB). Furthermore, the EPPO attended the meetings of the law enforcement officials (LEO) and the Global Network of Law Enforcement Practitioners against Transnational Bribery (GLEN) in June and December.

The EPPO participated in the 13th Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ACN) – Law Enforcement Network (LEN) regional meeting in Astana in September.

The EPPO also participated in OECD Taskforce on Tax and Crime (TFTC) plenary meetings and in the 6th OECD Forum on Tax and Crime in December 2023.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The EPPO, as an observer, participated in plenary meetings of the Committee of Experts on the Operation of the European Conventions on Co-operation in Criminal Matters (PC-OC).

Based on mutual assistance provided to the EPPO in its investigations by parties to the 1959 Convention and its additional protocols, the EPPO is recognised as a competent authority by their large majority.

The negotiation of a new binding legal instrument regarding the application of the 1959 European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (1959 Convention) on the relations with the EPPO, supported by some members, was considered not feasible.

EUROPEAN JUDICIAL NETWORK (EJN)

Three European Judicial Network (EJN) contact points at the EPPO have been designated, as decided by EJN National Correspondents in October 2023. The EPPO will participate in the next EJN meetings.

EPPO ACADEMY AND EXTERNAL TRAINING

In 2023, the EPPO launched the EPPO Academy training programme. In this regard, the EPPO signed working arrangements with Italy's Financial Police (Guardia di Finanza), the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL).



In order to work on cross-border economic investigations, which are mainly connected to organised crime, the EPPO – as a transnational prosecution office – needs the support of highly skilled and dedicated investigators in every participating Member State. Primarily in cooperation with the Guardia di Finanza, the EPPO plans to hold, at the Economic-Financial Police School of the Guardia di Finanza in Rome-Lido di Ostia, courses for financial investigators. They will be trained, in an international environment, on PIF crimes and the peculiarities of working on investigations for the EPPO.

The EPPO welcomed two EJTN study visits to its premises, which gave judges and prosecutors from all over Europe the chance to learn more about the EPPO. The EPPO deployed European Prosecutors, European Delegated Prosecutors and Central Office staff as trainers to EJTN and CEPOL training courses. EPPO staff also had the opportunity to attend some of their training sessions.

Finally, in terms of **external training**, the consortium of the Academy of European Law and the European Judicial Training Network provided 15 online professional-development training courses to EDPs and operational staff on different operational topics throughout the year.