



eucrim congratulates OLAF
on its 25th anniversary

For your information and for distribution

Freiburg, 13 March 2025



eucrim 4/2024: European Law Forum: Prevention, Investigation, Prosecution

Dear Sir or Madam, dear Colleagues,

I am happy to present you with the most recent issue of *eucrim*.

It is available free of charge at: <https://eucrim.eu/issues/2024-04/>

Please also visit our website at: <https://eucrim.eu>

The items in each issue can easily be navigated by using the side bar of the pdf viewer or by clicking the links on the contents page.

I. The Current Issue

We are excited to celebrate the **25th anniversary of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)** with this special *eucrim* issue (no. 4/2024) in which OLAF officials and staff members provide insights into the Office's development and the challenges it has faced over the past quarter of a century. In the **guest editorial**, OLAF Director-General *Ville Itälä* recounts OLAF's remarkable success story. He underlines, *inter alia*, that, since its creation in 1999, OLAF has uncovered around €16 billion that would otherwise have been lost to irregularities or fraud, and the Office has considerably changed the way it handles cross-border investigations.

In the **article section** of this issue, OLAF staff members provide insight into various significant areas of OLAF's work over the past 25 years as well as on aspects on what lies ahead: contributions range from an overview of OLAF's trajectory, including the influential case law of the European Court of Justice; OLAF's digital transformation from its humble digital beginnings to today's "digital first" approach; the progressive evolution of procedural guarantees in OLAF investigations; and OLAF's unique activities in establishing international

relations. Last but not least, one article reflects on the successful history of the Hercule Programme, which has been financially supporting actions pertaining to the protection of the EU's financial interests for two decades and celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2024.

Learn more about the contents of the articles in the **fil rouge** written by *Frank Michlik* and *Selina Grassin* from OLAF on **page 300**.

In the **news section**, we would like to draw your attention to the **Spotlights**. This section captures important developments in the protection of the EU's financial interests and the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice – something we consider particularly worth reading. In this issue, the Spotlights include:

- The **new five-year programme** on future priorities in the fields of justice and home affairs adopted by the Council in December 2024 (→ news section “European Union > Foundations > Area of Freedom, Security and Justice”, pp. 265-266);
- The Opinion by the European Data Protection Board on **certain data protection aspects** related to the processing of personal data in the context of **Artificial Intelligence models** (→ news section “European Union > Foundations > Artificial Intelligence”, pp. 268-269);
- The proposed solutions by the High-Level Group on **access to data for effective law enforcement** (→ news section “European Union > Foundations > Digital Space Regulation”, pp. 270-271);
- The mapping and in-depth analysis of **high-risk areas of corruption in the EU** (→ news section “European Union > Specific Areas of Crime > Corruption);
- The new Regulation on the **transfer of proceedings in criminal matters** (→ news section “European Union > Cooperation > Judicial Cooperation”, pp. 290-293);
- The new legal framework on collection and **transmission of advance passenger information for law enforcement purposes** (→ news section “European Union > Cooperation > Law Enforcement Cooperation, pp. 294-295).

In addition, this issue includes chronological **overviews** of important recent developments in areas related to the protection of the EU's financial interest, such as the latest rule-of-law developments in Hungary and Poland (pp. 262-265), both countries being or having been under scrutiny following the “Conditionality Mechanism”; the continuing (political and financial) support of Ukraine against Russia's war of aggression (pp. 267-268); and the operational activities of OLAF and the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) during the past several months (pp. 275-276 and pp. 278-280).

II. Your Contributions – Call for Papers

We invite you to contribute to any of the next issues of *eucri*m. To find out about the **focal themes** for upcoming issues, navigate to

[We are also open to receiving articles/**contributions that go beyond the scope of the focal themes**: interesting contributions that provide information on unique developments in your country, debate on “hot issues”, comments on court decisions, reports on a conference/research project, etc. Submissions for articles are **accepted in English, French, and German**. Feel free to contact us at: \[- 2 -\]\(mailto:info@eucrim.eu</p></div><div data-bbox=\)](https://eucrim.eu/documents/51/eucri</p></div><div data-bbox=)

III. Evaluation

We aim to constantly improve *eucri*m by receiving feedback from you as readers and users of the journal. We invite you to take 5-10 minutes to fill out an evaluation form and share your thoughts on *eucri*m with us. The form is available on the *eucri*m homepage (> Tools & Feedback > Evaluation) or directly via the following link: <<https://survey.academiccloud.de/index.php/162758>>. You can be guided through the questions in German, English, or French (select language on the initial page). Questions take into account both *eucri*m as a journal and the online content on the *eucri*m website. You have the option of rating specific sections and leaving comments.

IV. Practical Issues

We encourage all recipients of this issue to distribute *eucri*m via email to other members of the Associations of European Lawyers and to any persons to whom it might be of interest. The concept of *eucri*m is at its best when the publication is supported and used by many legal scholars and practitioners from many European countries and institutions.

For further information on how to receive *eucri*m and stay up to date, please visit:

<https://eucri.m.eu/service/subscription/>

Enjoy browsing the *eucri*m website and reading this new issue!

Thomas Wahl

Managing Editor of *eucri*m