



**Tercer ejercicio – Primera parte**  
**Examen inglés – Promoción interna**  
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**European Public Prosecutor's Office**

This new Europe-wide body tackles large-scale, cross-border crime against the EU budget. It started operating in June 2021 in the participating 22 EU countries.

The European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) is the EU's first independent and decentralised prosecution office. It has the power to investigate, prosecute and bring to judgment crimes against the EU budget, such as fraud, corruption or serious cross-border VAT fraud.

OLAF (*European Anti-fraud Office*) plans to become a trusted and privileged partner for the EPPO.

Participating countries

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Slovenia.

Why do we need a European-level prosecution office?

The creation of the EPPO marks a fundamental development in the fight against crimes affecting the EU's budget. It is also an important step towards creating a common criminal justice area in the European Union as a whole.

Before, only national authorities could investigate and prosecute fraud against the EU budget. But their powers stop at national borders and their tools to fight large-scale financial fraud in more than one country are limited. The EPPO is able to act quickly across borders without the need for lengthy judicial cooperation proceedings. This should lead to more successful prosecutions and help to recover defrauded money more efficiently.

Such intervention is needed to tackle the billions that organised criminal gangs make every year by circumventing national and European rules. In 2018, for example — in addition to VAT fraud — national authorities reported fraud against the EU budget worth some 1197€ million.

How does the Office work?

The EPPO operates as a single office across all participating EU countries. It is not part of the existing EU institutions and it combines European and national law-enforcement efforts in a unified, seamless and efficient approach.

It is fully independent, acting in the interests of the EU — and it neither seeks nor takes instructions from either EU or national authorities.



EU & national roles

The EPPO operates on 2 levels:

Level	Role
<b>Central office at EU level</b>	Supervise the investigations and prosecutions in each participating EU country – to ensure independence, effective coordination and a uniform approach throughout the participating countries.
<b>Decentralised level</b> – consisting of European delegated prosecutors, located in each participating EU country	Carry out investigations and prosecutions in each country, using national staff and generally applying national law.

If the EPPO takes up an investigation, national authorities stand back from making their own investigation into that crime. They also have to report any relevant criminal conduct to the EPPO.

However, the EPPO prosecutes the criminals involved in the relevant national courts.

What is OLAF's role?

The EPPO is responsible for criminal investigations.

OLAF continues its administrative investigations into irregularities and fraud affecting the EU's financial interests, in all EU countries. In doing so, it consults and coordinates closely with the EPPO.

This division of responsibilities ensures the widest possible protection of the EU budget.

Setting-up phase

In November 2017, the EU adopted Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 to set up a European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO). Its creation has been a major policy priority for the European Commission, mainly for the Directorate-General Justice and Consumers and for OLAF. The Commission was responsible for the EPPO during the setting-up phase, until it had the capacity to implement its own budget.

The Commission also consulted an expert group composed of representatives from the participating countries.

Important activities in the setting-up phase included:

- Establishing the seat of the EPPO in Luxembourg
- Various internal and administrative activities, such as the design of the case management system



- Preparing drafts of implementing rules (Internal Rules of Procedure and Conditions of employment of the European Delegated Prosecutors) to facilitate the work of the European Chief Prosecutor.

#### Appointments

In 2018, the EPPO selection panel was established to assess and bring forward a list of qualified candidates for the positions of European Chief Prosecutor and European Prosecutors. In January 2019, the panel presented the European Parliament and the Council the list of shortlisted candidates for the European Chief Prosecutor position. In September 2019, the European Parliament and the Council agreed to appoint Ms Laura Codruta Kövesi as the first European Chief Prosecutor. Her term is of seven years, non-renewable. Ms Kövesi is in charge of organising the work of the European Public Prosecutor's Office: representing it, directing its activities and taking care of its effective functioning.

#### What types of crime can you report to us?

The EPPO is competent to bring to judgment crimes affecting the financial interests of the EU. These are intentional acts – the so-called 'PIF offences' such as fraud, corruption, money laundering and misappropriation – that may have a negative impact on EU taxpayers' money. These PIF offences are listed in Directive (EU) 2017/1371, as implemented by national law.

The EPPO is also competent for offences regarding the participation in a criminal organisation – if its focus is to commit a PIF offence.

#### Who can report a crime to us?

Everyone (EU citizens or non-EU citizens, private individuals or legal entities) can report a crime to the EPPO, as long as there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a criminal offence affecting the EU's financial interests has been committed.

#### When should I report a crime to the EPPO?

As soon as you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a criminal offence has been committed against the financial interests of the EU, you must report it to the EPPO. You are not required to provide supporting evidence if it is not available.