(English version)

Question for written answer E-000746/25
to the Commission
Julien Sanchez (PfE)
(19 February 2025)

Subject: Commission control of Recovery and Resilience Facility funds

The NextGenerationEU recovery plan was set up in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a budget in excess of EUR 800 billion. Its key instrument is the temporary Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), which has been allocated funding of EUR 723 billion: EUR 338 billion in grants and EUR 385 billion in loans ([1]) (2022 prices). It is used to finance the Member States' reforms and investments.

Direct control of the actual use of these huge sums seems to be almost non-existent at EU level.

1. How many employees did the European Anti-Fraud Office and the European Public Prosecutor's Office have on 1 January 2021, before the establishment of the RRF, and on 1 January 2024, at the peak of its operations?

2. Taking into account the fund's unprecedented financial implications, how many of those employees are specifically assigned on a full-time basis to monitor RRF expenditure? Does their assignment to that role come at the expense of other missions?

3. What other means have been established at EU level to ensure that the funds are carefully managed?

Submitted: 19.2.2025

Answer given by Mr Serafin on behalf of the European Commission
(9 July 2025)

On 1 January 2021, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) had 343 statutory posts, while on 1 January 2024, it had 313 statutory posts. For 2021, the authorised staff level for the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) amounted to 130 (95 statutory posts and 35 contract agents), while for 2024 it was 289 (232 statutory posts, 28 contract agents and 29 seconded national experts).

OLAF's investigative team on the expenditure side remain organised by geographical area and by management mode. OLAF does not have any employees allocated on a full-time basis to monitor Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) expenditure only. The Commission does not have information on the internal organisation of resources in EPPO.

The RRF control framework includes strict mechanisms to protect the EU's financial interests, including preventing, detecting and correcting fraud, corruption, and conflict of interest. Member States are primarily responsible for protecting these interests and ensuring compliance with EU and national law. In cases of serious irregularities affecting EU's financial interests that have not been adequately corrected by the Member State, the Commission can reduce proportionately the support under the RRF and recover any amount due to the EU budget.

Close cooperation with OLAF and EPPO strengthens further the EU capacity to effectively control RRF expenditure.

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[1] [1]European Court of Auditors special report 26/2023 on the Recovery and Resilience Facility's performance monitoring framework, p. 4.