

European Public Prosecutor's Office accepts six Romanian prosecutors selected by Justice Ministry

Romania has its first six European delegated prosecutors to work at the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), after the College of the EPPO agreed on Wednesday with all the proposals submitted by the Romanian Ministry of Justice, as a result of a selection procedure organised on January 29.

"We therefore have, at national level, the necessary tools to support this new independent body of the European Union, the only European body with criminal prosecution powers. We will now focus on the application of legal provisions, institutional, budgetary and professional training measures for all those who will support EPPO conducting its mission. Romania was one of the first member states to support the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office, both in the negotiation process of the EPPO Regulation and in the operational stages of the new judicial body of the European Union. EPPO will have a key role to play, including in terms of consolidating the rule of law in Europe, combating crime that may affect the financial interests of the European Union," reads a press statement released by the Justice Ministry.

According to the statement, EPPO's operational activity is expected to start soon, and its mission will be even more important moving forward as significant funds will be available from the EU's long-term budget for 2021-2027, amounting to 1,074.3 billion euros, and from the EU's Next Generation post-pandemic recovery package worth 750 billion euros.

On January 29, the Justice Ministry announced having selected six candidates for the position of European Delegated Prosecutor in Romania.

These are Dana-Manuela Ana, Camelia-Elena Grecu, Constantin Irina and Jean-Nicolae Uncheselu of the National Anti-Corruption Directorate (DNA), Dana-Cristina Bunea of the Prosecutor's Office with the Supreme Court of Justice, and Florin Bogdan Munteanu of the Prosecutor's Office with the Iasi Courthouse.

Delegated prosecutors will act on behalf of the European Public Prosecutor's Office in their countries and will have the same powers as national prosecutors with regard to investigations and prosecutions.

The European Public Prosecutor's Office, led by Laura Codruta Kovesi, a former DNA chief prosecutor, is an EU body established in April 2017 under the enhanced cooperation procedure. There are currently 22 participating member states, including Romania, according to www.consilium.europa.eu, more than 9 as required by EU legislation for a valid body under this procedure.

The role of this body is to work more closely together in the investigation and prosecution of crimes affecting the EU budget, such as fraud, corruption, money laundering, cross-border VAT fraud.

The European Public Prosecutor's Office will carry out cross-border investigations in cases of fraud involving EU funds of more than 10,000 euros or in cases of cross-border VAT fraud involving damages in excess of 10 million euros.

The European Public Prosecutor's Office consists of a European chief prosecutor, a college of prosecutors, European delegated prosecutors and permanent chambers.