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Answer given by Mr Reynders
on behalf of the European Commission
(22.9.2020)

1. According to the most recent estimations provided by Member States, the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) could have to deal with more than 6 000 cases when starting its operations. Since this estimated workload is much higher than originally expected, in June 2020 the Commission proposed a revised budget of EUR 37.7 million for 2021, which is an increase of 285% compared with the 2017 Legislative Financial Statement¹. This budget can cover the costs for 140 European Delegated Prosecutors, which was the number suggested by the European Chief Prosecutor. However, reliable figures on the number of cases can only be obtained once the EPPO will have become operational. The comparison with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) staffing and case levels is less relevant as the remit, legal setting and powers of the two Offices are different.

2. Given the very recent re-assessment of the future workload of the EPPO and associated increase of its budget and staffing, the EPPO is now equipped for starting its operations. Of course, the Commission will follow the evolution of the actual workload.

3. As a general rule, the expenditure of EU agencies is included in the respective operational heading rather than the heading on the expenditure of EU institutions. For reasons of consistency, the EPPO is included under Heading 2, thematic Cluster 7 'Investing in People, Social Cohesion and Values', together with other EU agencies such as Eurojust, rather than Heading 7. This choice does not affect the EPPO's independence. In accordance with Article 6 of Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939², the EPPO is independent and its members shall neither seek nor take instructions from any person external to the EPPO, any Member State or any institution or body of the Union.

¹ Revised Legislative Financial Statement on the EPPO file, WK 10189/2017, Brussels, 26 September 2017.

² OJ L 283, 31.10.2017, p. 1.