



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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European Commission and Transparency International join forces for better spending of EU investments

Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina Crețu will launch today in Berlin a joint pilot project "Integrity Pacts" with Transparency International to ensure Regional Policy funds are well spent for the real benefit of the people. This is one in a series of new measures the Commission is taking to help Member States, regions and cities effectively manage EU investments.

The Integrity Pact was developed by Transparency International to support governments, businesses and civil society to improve trust and transparency in public procurement. The Commission now aims to pilot Integrity Pacts for several EU co-funded projects by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund.

Commissioner for Regional Policy Crețu said: *"With this project we are further stepping up our efforts to safeguard EU funds from fraud and corruption. Our funds are a vital source of public investment in EU Member States; that is why I have zero tolerance for misspending. Our partnership with Transparency International in this field is a great opportunity to tackle this issue in a proactive and preventive way and we are committed to make this initiative a success!"*

Miklos Marschall, Deputy Managing Director of Transparency International added *"By increasing transparency and accountability, enhancing trust, contributing to the reputation of contracting authorities, bringing down costs and improving competition through better procurement, Integrity Pacts can play an important role in safeguarding EU funds against fraud and corruption."*

An Integrity Pact will be a legally-binding agreement between the contracting authority and the companies bidding for the public contracts that they will follow a transparent and efficient procurement process. To ensure greater accountability, those Integrity Pacts will include a monitoring system led by a civil society organization.

Member States are strongly encouraged to make use of this initiative following a call for expressions of interest to be launched in May 2015. On 5 May, Transparency International is also organising a conference in Brussels to promote the Integrity Pacts. The experiences of these pilot projects will then be shared and disseminated among public authorities across Europe.

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Background information

Integrity Pacts are a tool developed by Transparency International during the 1990s to help governments, businesses and civil society committed to fighting corruption in the field of public procurement. It has been implemented on the ground across the globe.

Integrity Pacts promote cost efficiency and good governance, and can also encourage institutional changes, such as the increased use of e-procurement systems, simplified administrative procedures, improvements of regulatory environments and promotion of good governance.

The overall project for safeguarding EU funds is split into two phases. The first phase started on 1st January 2015 and will run for 9 months. This is the initial preparatory phase to secure participation of national authorities and civil society organisations in different EU Member States, and to identify potential projects for Integrity Pact implementation. The project will also develop a monitoring mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the Integrity Pacts in enhancing transparency and accountability.

[Transparency International](#) with more than 100 national chapters worldwide and an international secretariat in Berlin has become the leading civil society organisation fighting corruption with significant expertise and experience in designing applied research tools, conducting evidence-based policy and advocacy initiatives, and coordinating complex multi-country projects.

More information:

[Integrity Pacts](#)

[Website Page "Better Spending"](#)

[Website page "Efficient Public Administration"](#)

[Transparency international](#)

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