

# Geographical Indications On- line Conference 25-26 November 2020



# OLAF Mission and Mandate

## Fight against illicit trade (=customs fraud, agricultural matters):

- Regulation (EU) 515/1997 of 13 March 1997 on mutual assistance between the administrative authorities of the Member States and cooperation between the latter and the Commission to ensure the correct application of the law on customs and **agricultural** matters
- Imported goods subject to restriction, prohibition
- Goods not compliant with EU standards

## Fight against IPR infringement:

- Regulation (EU) 608/2013 concerning customs enforcement of intellectual property rights (including infringements to protected geographical indications).



# OLAF investigative tools

- Investigation activities
  - Interviews (take statements)
  - Inspections of premises
  - On-the-spot checks
  - Forensic operations
  - Investigative missions in non-EU countries
  - Access to documents, computer data, budgetary, and accounting documents
  - Taking and checking of samples



# OLAF investigative tools

- **Coordination with Member States**
- **Coordination with third countries:**
  - Administrative cooperation arrangements concluded with more than 80 third countries
  - 3 OLAF liaison officers: China, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates

# OLAF investigative tools

- Intelligence (LEAs, Rightholders, Surveillance market authorities....)
- International intelligence and exchange of seizure data (cf. AFIS, RIF, EUIPO)
- Specialized database
- Monitoring the internet
  - OSINT (Open Source Intelligence)
  - Darknet marketplaces





# Investigations targeting counterfeit goods

32 on-going investigations covering a broad range of counterfeit products dangerous to the health:

- Alcoholic beverages (rum, brandy, whiskey, wines...)
- Food products
- Daily care products (i.e. razor blades, shampoo...)
- Household products (i.e. detergent)
- Mechanical parts (airbags, chainsaws, bearings...)
- Medical devices
- Medicines
- Refrigerant gas
- Pesticides
- Toys



# Example : Fake Prosecco



# Counterfeit Prosecco

- Fraud existing since August 2017 and still ongoing.
- OLAF has identified :
  - the site of production;
  - the logistic chain from warehousing to final clients in several EU Member States: the product, the trade name, the labels, the packaging and the delivery instructions are organised and carried out by the contracting company;
  - the companies acting as shippers, almost all linked to the same person concerned. The responsible for the illicit traffic has already been involved in alcohol frauds.
- Next steps:
  - Identification of the origin of the product. Unfortunately, due to COVID restrictions, on-site investigations are suspended.
  - On going cooperation with EU customs authorities, Food agencies and Consorzio Tutela Prosecco.



# Cooperation with EUROPOL - OPSON

- Targeted action on counterfeit wine and alcoholic beverages led by OLAF (December 2019 – May 2020)
- Results: over 1.2 million litres of alcoholic beverages seized
  - 1.158.199 litres of counterfeit wine, mostly Champagne

