

## **The new project on defending the EU financial interests presented in L'Aquila**

**Consiglio Regione D'Abruzzo c/o Palazzo dell'Emiciclo in Via Michele Iacobucci (Villa Comunale), sala**

**Ipogea & sala B. Croce**

**June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

The opening event of the project **ECO for PIF – Early Correcting Operations for Preventing Irregularities and Fraud through administrative measures and active learning** - which is coordinated by the **Service of Territorial Cooperation IPA of the Abruzzo Region**, **Head of Service Ms. Paola Di Salvatore**, and funded by the [EU Programme HERCULE III \(2014-2020\)](#) of [Olaf](#) (*EU Antifraud Office*) - takes place in L'Aquila on June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The general objective is to enhance the level of protection of the EU financial interests with a combined action at both administrative and training level, thus ensuring capillary cooperation in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Italy, with a **potential benefit extending to the Adriatic-Ionian Region as a whole**, and capitalizing the *best practices* of the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme.

ECO for PIF stems from the long-term experience gained with the programme management, also thanks to **the cycle of seminars** on countering irregularities and fraud at the detriment of the national and EU budgets held in Italy and the Balkan countries between 2015 and 2016 resulting from the complex work conducted by the Managing Authority. The intention is to transfer this relevant initiative to reduce the error rate in financial reporting of EU funds by the member States, enhanced by the added value of *e-learning* that reinforces its **extremely innovative character**.

The **President of the Abruzzo Regional Council, Lorenzo Sospiri** together with **Paola Di Salvatore**, the project coordinator, and the **Chief Prosecutor to the Chieti Office, Mr. Francesco Testa** open the works. The technical keynote speeches are given by **Ten. Col. Ugo Liberatore** of the **Antifraud Unit of the Guardia di Finanza** to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers – EU Policies Department, **Mr. Mauro Marchionni** of **Igrue – State General Accounting Office** of Italy's Ministry of the Economy and Finance, **Ms. Maria Ntziouni-Doumas** representing **Olaf – European Antifraud Office** that manages the Hercule III Programme, **Ms. Nicoletta Parisi**, **Member of the Board of the National Anticorruption Authority** and **Mr. Giacinto Dammico**, **Member of the Board of the Review Division for EU and International Affairs of the Italian Court of Auditors**.

The addresses by the **University of Shkoder (Albania)** and **Banja Luka (Bosnia-Herzegovina)** are of great scientific relevance to the two-day event – the universities together with the Antifraud Unit of the Guardia di Finanza, the Court of Auditors and the National Anticorruption Authority are **Associates of the project**. The participation of the [Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion](#) is of high added value. The project will work in synergy with the Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion network involving 33 member regions (the Abruzzo Region holds the Vice-Presidency), which geographically corresponds to the area covered by the [EUSAIR](#) strategy and the related [AI-NURECC](#) initiative (Adriatic Ionian Network of Universities, Regions, Chambers of Commerce and Cities).