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ESStIF EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL
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JOURNAL

• Real-Life On-the-Spot Visits: How to Detect and Combat Irregularities and Fraud in ESI Funds, AMIF/ISF and IPA Funds

Master Class with On-the-Spot Approach | 25-27 August 2021 | Maastricht



Expert: Jo Kremers

*Former Senior Audit Manager,
Ministry of Finance,
The Hague, Netherlands*

Jo Kremers worked in the Audit Authority for EU Funds at the Ministry of Finance in the Netherlands until May 2019. He is certified public auditor as well as certified IT auditor. For the past 30 years he has been working in the Dutch Tax and Customs Administration as external auditor, fraud investigator and internal auditor. Furthermore, he has gained vast experience as project leader and expert in Information Security Audits and Integrity Audits. He is lecturer, trainer and speaker at national and international institutes. Working as an expert in many international, EU and World Bank funded projects, he has gained notable experience in strengthening the internal control and audit function in the public sector in several (candidate) EU Member States.

Day 1: Innovative Approaches to Verifications and Audits

- Discussion of innovative approaches to verifications/audits
- Preparation for on-the-spot verifications/audits
- Set-up of checklists and questionnaires before visiting the projects

Day 2: On-the-spot Visits and Reporting

- Testcases to improve your skills and the use of instruments
- On-the-spot visits of four real projects in the Netherlands
- Report writing and discussion of reports
- Visit of the Government of Limburg

Day 3: Group Working Day – The Winner Takes it All!

- Presentation of the results of the “behind the desk work” of the first day
- Discussion of the results of the “on the spot work” of the second day
- Roles games: Discussions between the European Commission and Member States
- Hints about fact finding, reporting, evidence, risks of reputation damage for the EC, EU Funds and national authorities

The participants will be actively involved in various exercises and group works during the course. This **round-table format** will offer a platform to learn how to prevent, detect and combat irregularities and fraud in ESI Funds, IPA Funds, Migration and Security Funds.

During the event participants will have the opportunity to visit Limburg’s Government buildings, where they will have the opportunity to **view the Maastricht Treaty**, the constitutional basis of the European Union.

Please contact: Ms Anya Zuschke



+49 (0)30-81 45 06 21



zuschke@lexxion.eu or visit: www.lexxion.eu

General Information

Overview

Irregularities and fraud on project or programme level can lead to **withdrawals, repayments and financial corrections**. If the lead partner does not succeed in securing repayment of any amount unduly paid as a result of an irregularity or fraud, the member state on whose territory the beneficiary causing the error is located is obliged to reimburse the amount. Therefore, it is **crucial for national authorities to implement all measures, aimed at preventing, detecting and combatting irregularities and fraud at any stage of management of EU Funds**.

Topics and Methodology

We would like to introduce our brand new format: **Master class with on-the-spot approach**. The **Chair of the Master Class** is **Jo Kremers**, former Senior Audit Manager at the Ministry of Finance in the Netherlands. Our approach during this unique, attractive and highly interactive event includes the **set-up of a well-structured risk analysis**, focused on gathering **evidence, fact finding**, based on **professional scepticism**, by the **use of the internet, open sources, data analysis and sophisticated software**, and not to forget the use of your most important instruments, combined with a more **innovative way of thinking**. Under professional coaching and guidance, enthusiastic teams are competing for the best results and a real reward.

On the first day, we will train you on innovative methods and approaches to audits and verifications and will prepare you for on-the-spot control of real projects, which will take place on the second day of the master class.

During the second day we will visit four real projects in the south of the Netherlands and will write reports on our observations. These reports will be discussed and analysed during the third day. In the afternoon we will visit the Government of the Province of Limburg and will have several unforgettable moments, incl. visiting of the real Maastricht Treaty.

The third day will be organised in form of competition. We will work in subgroups and discuss & summarize the results of the first and second days. The afternoon session will be devoted to problem-solving: **Just send to us your cases and questions in advance!** We will discuss them and look for solutions during the master class.

Target Group

- Representatives from public authorities in charge of financial management, control and audit, especially from:
 - Managing Authorities
 - Responsible Authorities
 - Certifying Authorities
 - Audit Authorities
 - Intermediate Bodies
 - Delegated Authorities
- EU Funds experts from regional and local authorities and experts involved in ETC Programme
- Beneficiaries of EU-funded projects, i.e.: Private and public companies, associations, research institutes
- Public and private banks
- International, national and local associations and networks
- Consultants

How to Get to Maastricht from Amsterdam Airport?

From Amsterdam Airport (Schiphol) you can take the intercity train to Utrecht Centraal, and from there a direct intercity train to Maastricht. To check the exact connection, please use the [Dutch railways](#).



Programme Day 1

Chair of the Master Class:

Jo Kremers,

Former Senior Audit Manager, Ministry of Finance, The Hague

Day 1: 25 August 2021 Innovative Approaches to Verifications and Audits

08:45 Registration and Welcome Coffee
09:00 Welcome Note by Lexxion and Introduction Round

09:30 **Use of Innovative Sources and Innovative Instruments for Your Controlling Activities: Risk Management and Risk Analysis, Verifications, Audits** (including 30 minutes Coffee Break)

- Combating Fraud and Corruption, related to the Anti-Fraud Cycle in general and specific for EU Funds
- What can help you to get acquainted with the project and understand it better?
- Examples and first practice in risk analysis, use of data analytics and sophisticated software
- Cases regarding Risk management, Fraud Risk management, including risks of non-integrity
- Effective use of your most important instruments, such as:
 - social media,
 - internet
 - EU databases
 - analytical review and data analytics
 - official certification marks
 - frameworks set up by accredited renowned institutions
 - internal audit in an effective way
 - self-assessments and SATooling and many other instruments
- How to innovate your way of thinking
- How to innovate your approach to verification and audit of operations and the assessment of the system

13:00 Lunch Break

14:00 **Live Demonstrations: Exercises on How to Use Sophisticated Audit Software to Detect Irregularities and Fraud**

For these exercises, please bring your laptops and we will show you different IT tools, for example how possible electronic manipulations can be detected, how plagiarism can be detected with a special software, as well as many other very useful IT tools.

15:00 Coffee Break

15:30 **How to Best Prepare for the On-the-spot Visits**

- Preparation for on-the-spot visits
- Set-up of checklists and questionnaires before visiting the projects
- Investigative interviewing during management verifications and audits
- Writing reports in an attractive and understandable way

18:00 **Common dinner with all the participants and speaker in the unique location in the largest indoor ski village in Europe, situated 30 km away from Maastricht**

22:30 End of Day 1



Programme Day 2 & Day 3

Chair of the Master Class:

Jo Kremers,

Former Senior Audit Manager, Ministry of Finance, The Hague

Day 2: 26 August 2021

On-the-spot Visits and Reporting

08:30 The second day of our Master Class will be devoted to on-the-spot controls of real projects. Jo Kremers will give you best practice recommendations on how to prepare for the on-the-spot verifications/audits. Together we will set up checklists and questionnaires for the upcoming on-the-spot visits. Afterwards we will visit four real projects in the south of the Netherlands by bus. During our bus tour you will receive the last recommendations for the fulfilment of all the requirements for the successful on-the-spot controls. After visiting the projects you will write reports, discuss them in groups and analyse the results of your on-the-spot controls together with the chair of our Master Class Jo Kremers.

15:00 In the afternoon we will visit the Government of the Province of Limburg and will have several unforgettable moments:

- Presentation of the Commissioner about the importance of EU subsidies (the Commissioner is invited)
- Guided tour in the Gouvernement of Limburg, incl. visiting of the real Maastricht Treaty, which is the cradle of the European Union and therefore very important for us, citizens of the EU
- Welcoming coffee and tea in the Government of Limburg with the famous Pie of Limburg

17:30 Dinner with all the participants and speaker in one of the restaurants in the heart of Maastricht

22:00 End of Day 2

Day 3: 27 August 2021

Group Working Day – THE WINNER TAKES IT ALL!

08:30 **During the last day we will work in groups and spend the day with the following issues:**

- Presentation of the results of the “behind the desk work” of the first day
- Discussion of the results of the “on the spot work” of the second day
- Further assessment of the results of the second day
- Hints about fact finding, reporting, evidence, risks of reputation damage for the EC, EU Funds and national authorities
- New cases to be solved in subgroups: cases from day-to-day practice on detecting and combatting of irregularities and fraud
- Introduction of and glimpse into the newest edition of the Anti-Fraud Game Edition 2020

12:00 Lunch Break

13:00 **Case Analysis & Advice on Possible Solutions for the Problems raised by the Participants**

This session is devoted to the discussion of cases submitted by the participants. The lessons drawn from the review of the first and second days will be used to analyse the problematic aspects of submitted cases and identify possible solutions.

14:30 Summary & Closing discussion

15:00 End of the Master Class and Distribution of the Certificates

Transportation and catering during the whole Master Class will be organised by Lexxion!



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Master Class with On-the-Spot Approach | 25-27 August 2021 | Maastricht

Register

Venue

AMRÂTH GRAND HOTEL de l'EMPEREUR
Stationsstraat 2
Maastricht, Netherlands
Phone +31 (0)43 321 38 38
reservering@hotel-empereur.nl

Participation fee

- YES, I would like to participate for the reduced fee for public authorities **EUR 2.430,00** (excl. VAT).
- YES, I would like to participate for the regular fee of **EUR 2.830,00** (excl. VAT).

21% Dutch VAT will be added where applicable.

The participation fees include the workshop material, drinks and snacks during the breaks and lunch. Transportation and catering during the whole Master Class will be organised by Lexxion and covered by the participation fee.

Newsletter subscription

- Please send me information about Structural and Investment Funds issues for free. I may unsubscribe from this service any time.

Cancellations

Cancellations should be made in writing per post or fax. Please note that the full fee will be charged for cancellations received after 11 August 2021. Nomination of a substitute remains possible. A cancellation arising by reason of too small a number of participants is effected no later than two weeks prior to the seminar. In this case the participation fee will be refunded. A requirement for reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses as well as loss of working hours is not possible, unless such costs result from wantonly negligent or deliberate behaviour on the part of the organiser. For more detailed information, scope and conduct of contract as well as cancellation policy, please check the Terms & Conditions on our website.

Please register with:



Anya Zuschke
Lexxion Publisher
Güntzelstr. 63 | 10717 Berlin, Germany
Phone: +49 (0)30-81 45 06-21
Fax: +49 (0)30-81 45 06-22
E-mail: zuschke@lexxion.eu
online: www.lexxion.eu/events

Name

Position, Department

Company Name

Address

Address

Phone, Fax

E-Mail

VAT Reg.-No.

Date, Signature

Upcoming Event

Intensive Online Course

Financial Management, Control and Audit of ESI Funds: Transitions Towards 2021-2027 13-15 July, Online

With the proposed regulations for the upcoming programming period 2021-2027, the European Commission aims to introduce a number of changes and new instruments that the Member States need to implement into their Operational Programmes. New regulations and requirements can be challenging for professionals dealing with financial management and control of ESI Funds. The upcoming Summer Course will provide you with first-hand information and expert guidance on financial management and control requirements, which are essential for the successful implementation of ESI Funds in this and in the next programming period.

For more information on any of our events please visit: www.lexxion.eu