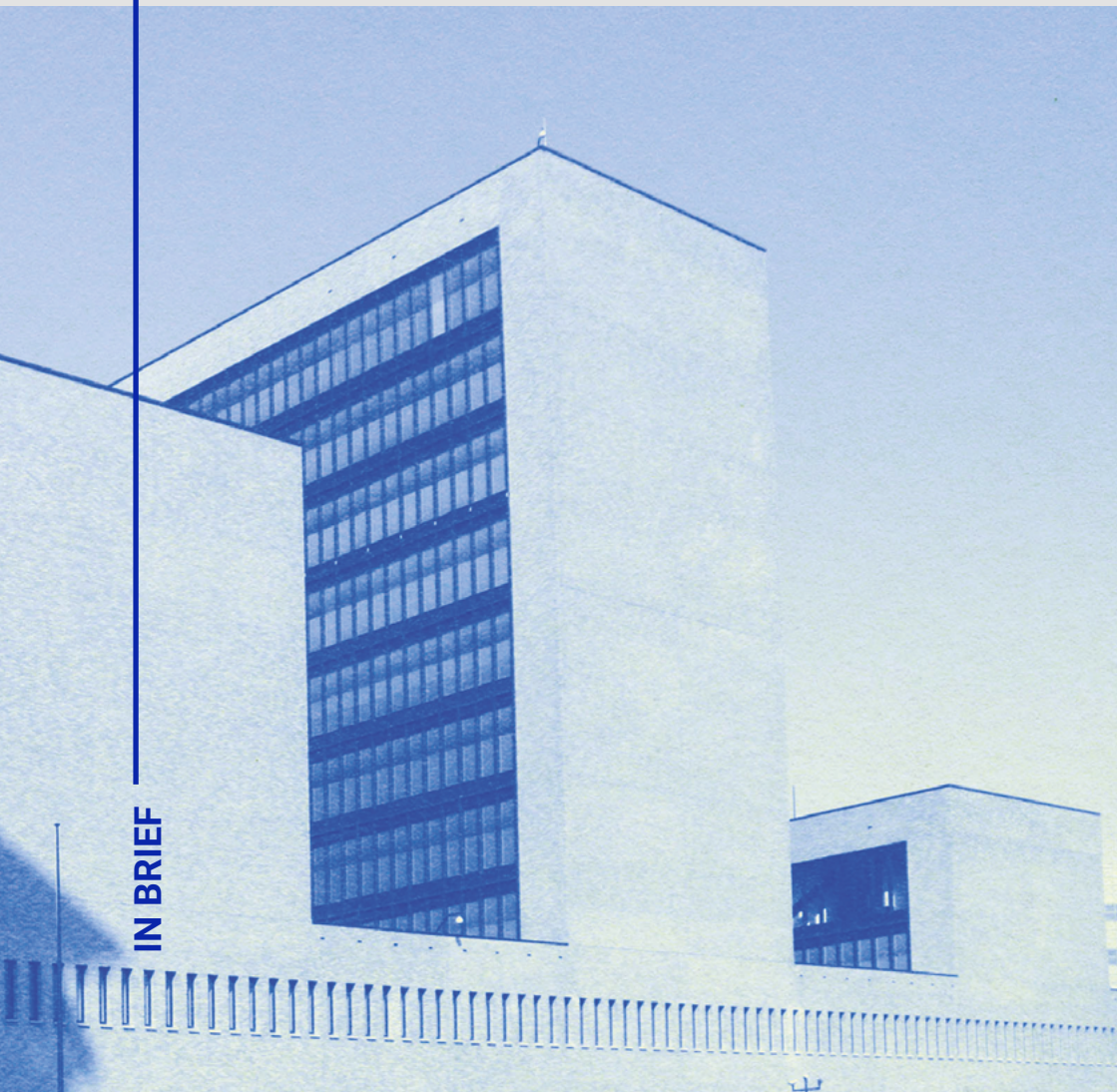
EUROPOL

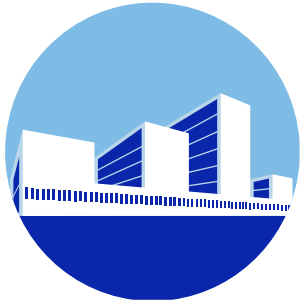
The European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation

IN BRIEF



How does Europol make Europe safer?

Europol's mission is to support EU Member States in preventing and combating all forms of serious international and organised crime, cybercrime and terrorism.



Headquarters in
The Hague
the Netherlands

over
1350
in Europol's workforce*

257
liaison officers from EU MS and Third Parties

EUR **192.3** million
budget for 2022

2 600
secure lines to competent authorities*

* This number includes staff with employment contracts with Europol, law enforcement liaison officers from Member States and third parties, Seconded National Experts, trainees and contractors.

* Competent authorities connect to Europol via SIENA. SIENA stands for the Secure Information Exchange Network Application.

At the heart of European security

Europol ensures an effective EU response to criminal threats by acting as the principal information hub, delivering agile operational support and providing European policing solutions in conjunction with a network of partners.

EUROPOL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Europol's five strategic priorities guide the organisation in implementing its main goals and vision, and in delivering a unique set of operational services to the EU.

- Be the EU criminal information hub
- Deliver agile operational support
- Be at the forefront of law enforcement innovation and research
- Be the model EU law enforcement organisation
- Be a platform for European policing solutions

When was Europol founded?

1991

Establishment of a Central European Investigation Office ('Europol') to fight international drug trafficking and organised crime

1993

The Europol Drugs Unit is established by ministerial agreement and it is decided that it will be based in The Hague

2001

Signature of the first cooperation agreements with Third Parties (Iceland and Norway)

2010

Europol becomes an EU agency

2013

Opening of the European Cybercrime Centre at Europol

2015

Establishment of the EU Internet Referral Unit

2016

Establishment of the European Counter Terrorism Centre and the European Migrant Smuggling Centre at Europol

2017

Europol's official name changes to European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation

2020

Europol launches the European Financial and Economic Crime Centre

The Operational and Analysis Centre is established at Europol

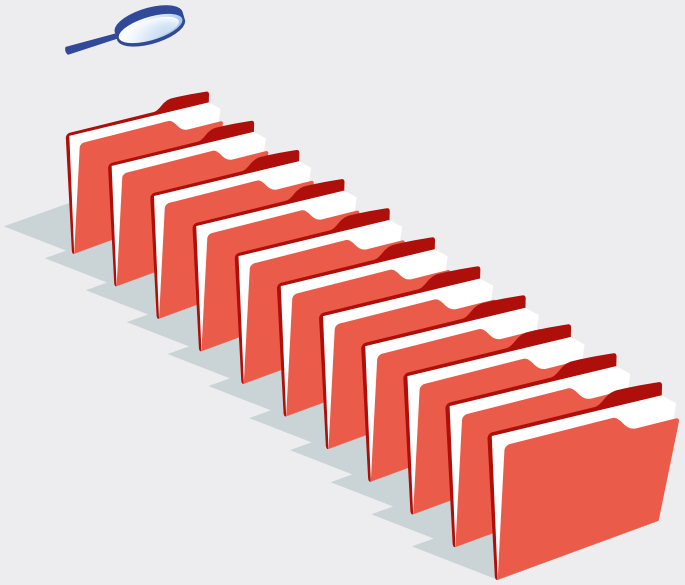
The European Serious and Organised Crime Centre is reorganised

2022

Legislation adopting the amended Europol Regulation comes into force

How does Europol decide which crime areas to focus on?

Europol exists to support and strengthen action and cooperation by Member States' police authorities and other law enforcement services in preventing and combating serious crime. This includes crimes affecting two or more Member States, terrorism and forms of crime which affect a common interest covered by an EU policy.



EMPACT and SOCTA

Europol's priorities are informed by the **Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA)**. This is one of Europol's flagship reports which updates Europe's law enforcement community and decision-makers on developments in serious and organised crime in the EU. It is published every four years. After reviewing the analytical findings of the SOCTA and considering other strategic papers, assessments and policies, the European Council decides on the priorities for the EU, and Europol, in the fight against crime.

In May 2021, the EU adopted its **priorities for the fight against serious and organised crime** until 2025.

Priorities 2022 - 2025

- **High-risk criminal networks**
- **Cyber-attacks**
- **Trafficking in human beings**
- **Child sexual exploitation**
- **Migrant smuggling**
- **Drugs trafficking**
- **Organised property crime**
- **Fraud, economic and financial crimes**
- **Environmental crime**
- **Firearms trafficking**

These priorities determine the operational work carried out in the framework of **EMPACT** for the next four years. EMPACT stands for the **European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Crime Threats.** It is a security initiative driven by EU Member States to identify, prioritise and address threats posed by organised and serious international crime. Like the SOCTA, it operates in four-year cycles and brings together the law enforcement authorities of the Member States, Europol and a wide range of partners.

How does Europol operate?

Europol provides operational support from its headquarters as well as on-the-spot support for law enforcement authorities.

Europol's specialised systems offer fast and secure capabilities for storing, searching, visualising and linking criminal information.

Law enforcement agencies contact Europol for information via the secure information exchange network.

24/7 OPERATIONAL CENTRE

Europol provides a first-level response to law enforcement and initiates relevant emergency protocols on a 24/7 basis.

Requests and messages from law enforcement agencies are analysed through **Analysis Projects.**

As part of these projects, Europol staff can use information from the messages to support investigations all over the world.

ANALYSIS PROJECTS

Analysis at Europol has both an operational and a strategic component. Analysis Projects focus on certain crime areas from a commodity-based perspective or criminal network approach.

The resulting information feeds into an intelligence cycle which may lead to the identification of evolving and emerging threats.

THE EUROPOL PODCAST

Learn more about some of Europol's most noteworthy operations on The Europol Podcast

From headquarters

Europol supports law enforcement agencies in different EU Member States from its headquarters in The Hague using sophisticated crime-fighting tools and technologies.

SECURE INFORMATION EXCHANGE NETWORK APPLICATION (SIENA)

When police in different countries seek Europol's help, they can contact Europol via the Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA). SIENA is an advanced messaging service provided by Europol to quickly exchange crime-related operational and strategic data between Europol and both EU and non-EU countries, as well as between Member States and third parties.

2 600
competent authorities
connected via SIENA in 2021

EUROPOL PLATFORM FOR EXPERTS (EPE)

The Europol Platform for Experts is a secure, collaborative web platform for specialists working in a variety of law enforcement areas. Its purpose is to facilitate and support the sharing of non-personal data on crime. It provides content management and communication tools such as wikis, blogs, messaging and file sharing.

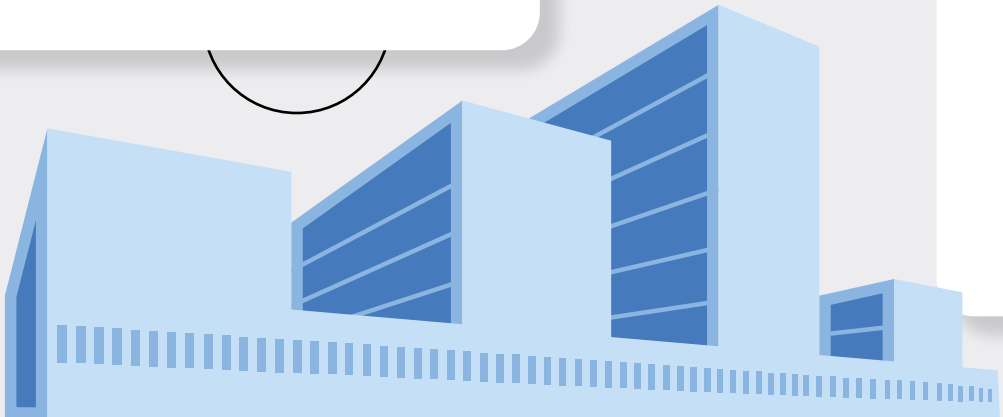
60
platforms

over
19 000
experts from law enforcement, private sector and academia

EUROPOL INFORMATION SYSTEM (EIS)

The Europol Information System (EIS) is Europol's main reference system that is in place to support Member States, Europol and its partners in their fight against organised crime, terrorism, and other forms of serious crime. It contains information on offences, individuals involved, and other related data linked to suspected and/or convicted persons.

over
1.5 million
objects currently in the database



On-the-spot support

Europol deploys analysts and specialists to support ongoing operations in Member States.

JOINT ACTION DAYS

Joint Action Days (JADs) target criminal networks affecting the EU. JADs are an intelligence-led initiative by Member States and are supported or coordinated by Justice and Home Affairs agencies (in particular by Europol and Frontex). JADs take place within the **EMPACT framework**.

741
suspects arrested
in 2021

OPERATIONAL TASK FORCES

An operational task force (OTF) is a **temporary** group of representatives from Member States and Europol. The group is formed to carry out a specific project. It coordinates intelligence and investigative efforts focusing on the criminal activities of one or more selected **high-value targets** and members of their criminal network.

14
new OTFs
in 2021

MOBILE OFFICES

Europol's staff are deployed to provide support for a wide range of activities on an ad hoc basis, such as **ongoing investigations, major sports events, international conferences** and other occasions where police cooperation is needed. In this scenario, they are equipped with a mobile office in order to connect to Europol's databases.

JOINT INVESTIGATION TEAMS

A Joint Investigation Team (JIT) is an international cooperation tool based on an agreement between competent authorities – **both judicial** (judges, prosecutors and investigative judges) **and law enforcement** authorities – of two or more states. It is established for a limited duration and for a specific purpose. It conducts criminal investigations in one or more of the states involved.

16
new JITS
signed by Europol in 2021

Data protection at Europol

ENSURING FREEDOM AND SECURITY

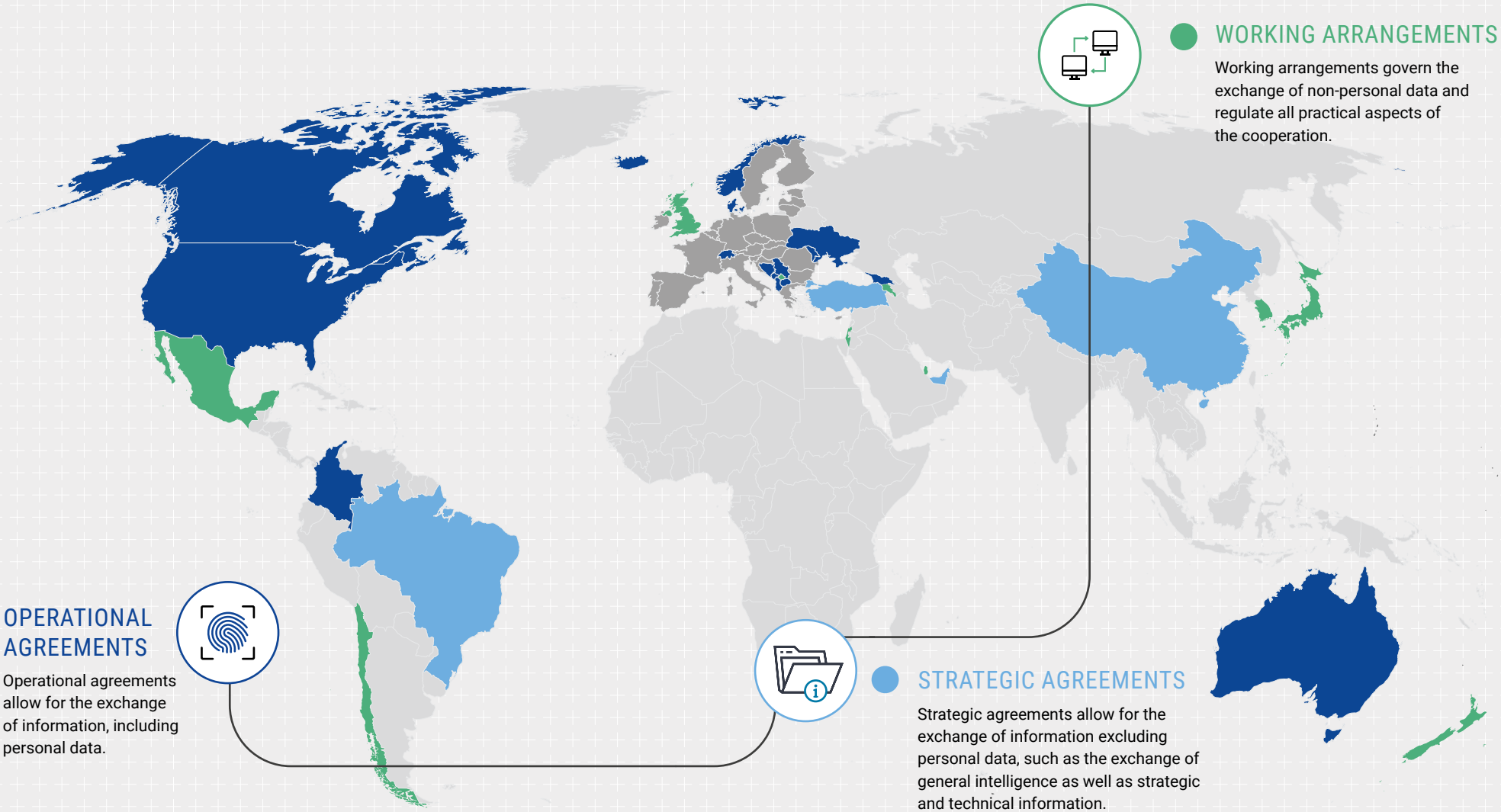
The **Data Protection Function (DPF)** is an integral part of Europol and the initial point of contact for all data protection issues. The DPF, which acts with functional independence, works closely with Europol staff.

DEFENDING EUROPEAN VALUES

The Data Protection Officer ensures that the applicable data protection rules are applied to all forms of personal data exchange.

The collection and processing of data, particularly personal data, are at the centre of Europol's activities. This requires the application of the highest standards of data protection and data security. Therefore, the agency has in place one of the most robust data protection frameworks in the world of law enforcement. This is both an asset and a responsibility as the tailor-made set of rules has to be duly applied to both the operational needs of Europol and the individual's fundamental right to effective data protection.

Partners and collaboration



WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Working arrangements govern the exchange of non-personal data and regulate all practical aspects of the cooperation.

OPERATIONAL AGREEMENTS

Operational agreements allow for the exchange of information, including personal data.

STRATEGIC AGREEMENTS

Strategic agreements allow for the exchange of information excluding personal data, such as the exchange of general intelligence as well as strategic and technical information.

For the latest developments, please consult the Europol website

Who works at Europol?

Europol's workforce consists of over 1350 people from 52 different countries in positions that cover a diverse range of areas. Europol hosts the world's largest network of 257 liaison officers from EU Member States as well as a variety of countries and agencies.

I am honoured to lead this fantastic organisation as Executive Director. Europol is full of enthusiastic, professional staff, working with an extensive network of partners including a growing and dedicated Liaison Bureaux community towards a common goal – making Europe safer.

Catherine De Bolle
/ Executive Director

over
1350

67% male

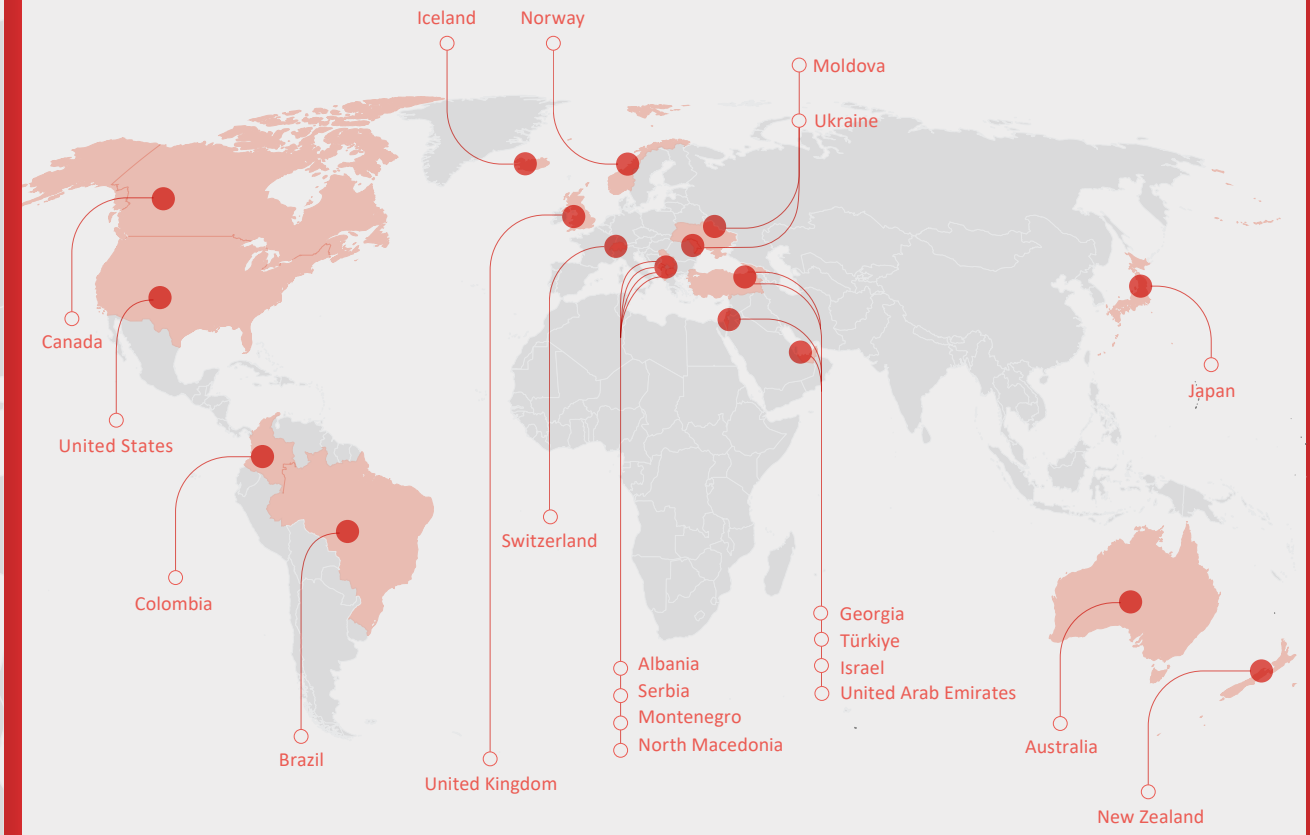
33% female

EU MEMBER STATES

257
liasion officers at headquarters

Liaison officers are law enforcement officials who are seconded to Europol from their home country or from international organisations. They build strong international networks on a daily basis and facilitate operational cooperation while representing the interests of their different countries.

THIRD PARTIES

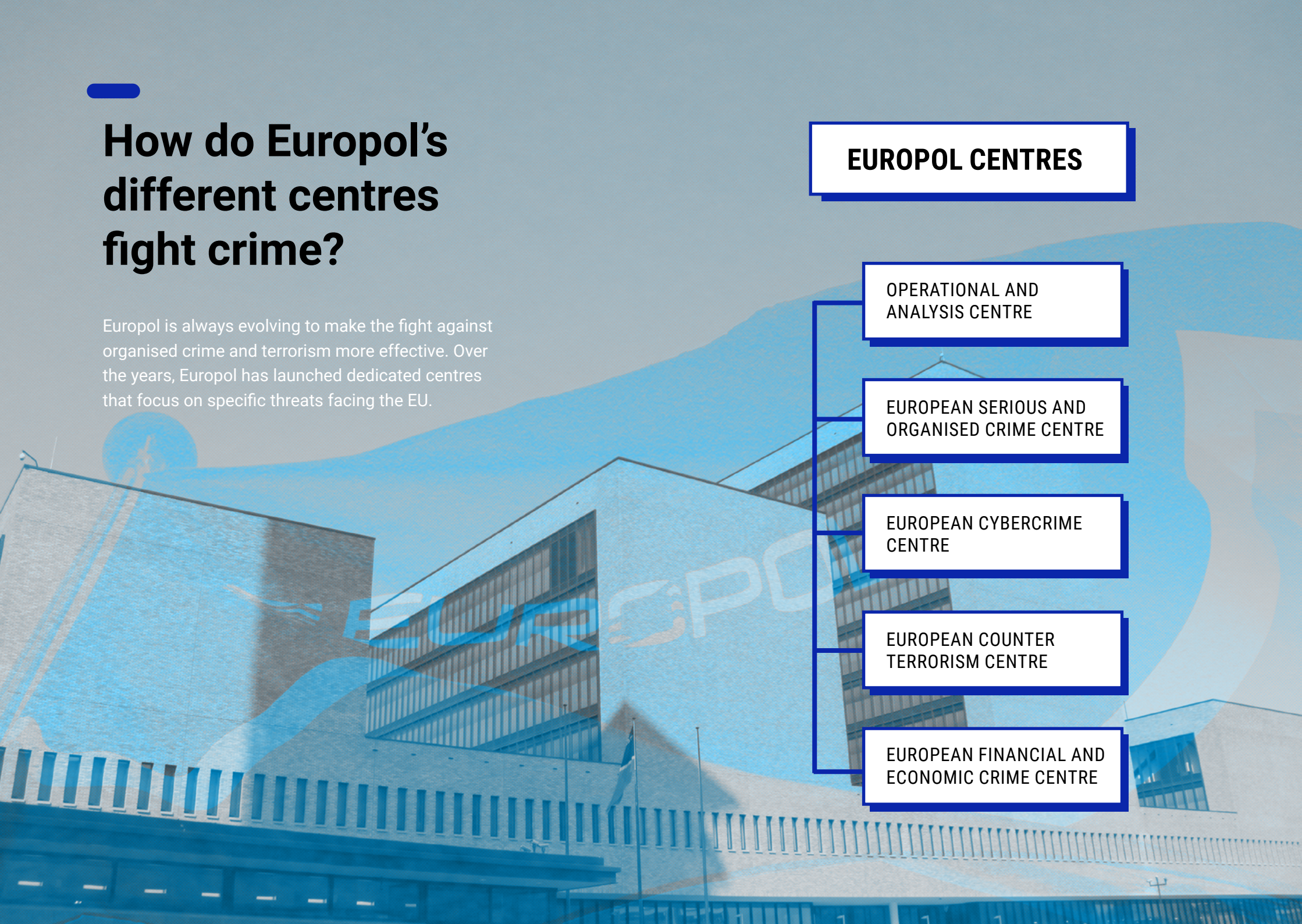


ORGANISATIONS

- Eurojust
- EU IPO
- EU-LISA
- EUNAVFOR MED
- Interpol
- OLAF

How do Europol's different centres fight crime?

Europol is always evolving to make the fight against organised crime and terrorism more effective. Over the years, Europol has launched dedicated centres that focus on specific threats facing the EU.



Operational and Analysis Centre

Europol's information hub

In the **Operational and Analysis Centre** Europol's analysts assess, process and analyse all incoming information. The centre monitors operations and developments on a 24/7 basis. It provides a set of cross-cutting services and capabilities to EU Member States and Europol's associated partners and internal stakeholders.

This centre also produces a number of Europol's flagship reports, including threat and risk assessments related to crime and terrorism, amongst other crime areas.

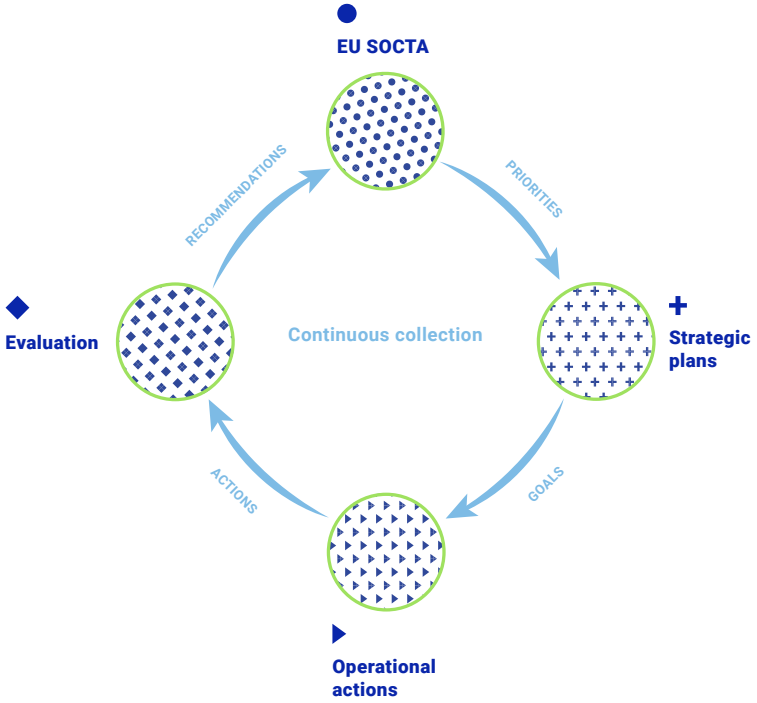
> **We work behind the scenes to connect law enforcement authorities in EU Member States and provide them with the best operational support available in order to protect their citizens.**

Julia Viedma / Head of Department, Operational and Analysis Centre

SOCTA REPORT

Serious Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA)

The Operational and Analysis Centre publishes the Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment every four years. It outlines the key threats to EU security. It provides information for practitioners, decision-makers and the wider public.



Key findings on criminal networks in SOCTA 2021

80% use legal business structures for their criminal activities

60% engage in corruption

40% are active in drug trafficking

European Serious and Organised Crime Centre

Dismantling criminal networks

The **European Serious and Organised Crime Centre (ESOCC)** at Europol aims to provide the most effective and agile operational support to the EU Member States' investigations in prioritised cases related to serious and organised crime.

high-risk organised crime groups

drug trafficking

illicit firearms trafficking

organised property crimes

facilitation of illegal migration

trafficking in human beings

environmental crime

European Migrant Smuggling Centre

As part of ESOCC, the European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC) targets and dismantles the complex and sophisticated networks involved in migrant smuggling. The EMSC brings together some of the best investigators in Europe to support police and border authorities in coordinating highly complex cross-border anti-smuggling operations.

2016
established

56
On-the-spot action days in 2021

26
High-value targets identified in 2021

28 758
SIENA messages received in 2021

We focus on the criminal networks posing the highest risk of serious and organised crime to the EU. By doing this, we provide continuous support to Member States in top priority operations.

Jari Liukku / Head of Department, European Serious and Organised Crime Centre

Europol coordinated the international law enforcement community, enriched the information picture and brought criminal intelligence into ongoing operations to target organised crime and drug trafficking organisations.

Jean-Philippe Lecouffe
/ Deputy Executive Director of Europol, Operations Directorate

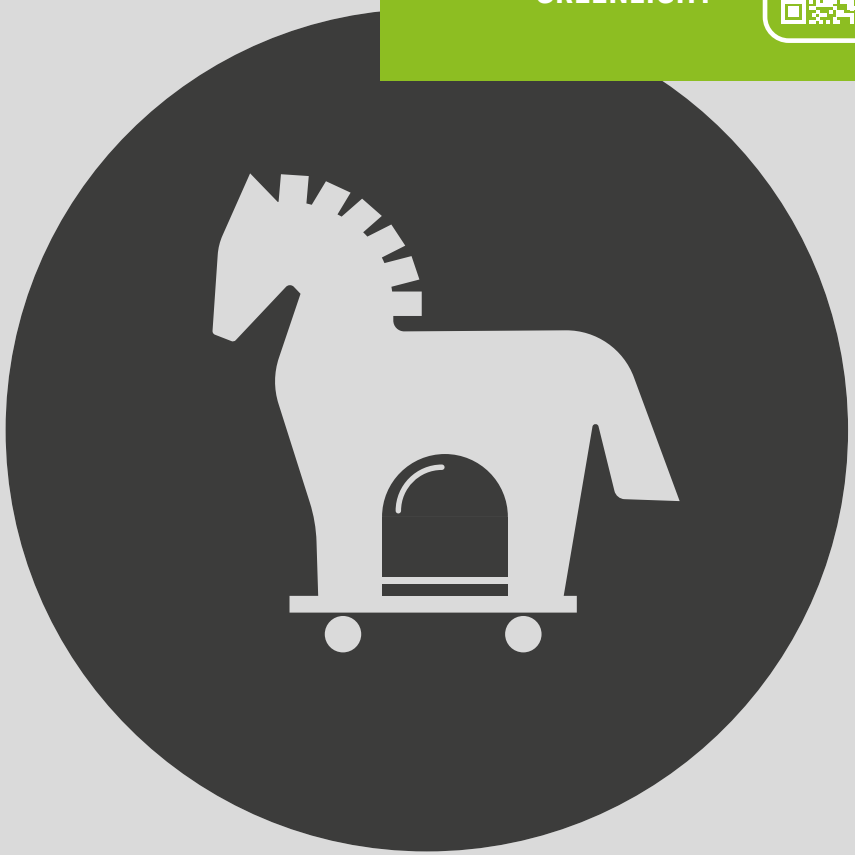
Operation Greenlight

Europol's European Serious & Organised Crime Centre has supported major operations in recent years to block the criminal use of encrypted communications, but among the most significant was Operation Task Force Greenlight.

The operation involved the strategic development and covert operation by law enforcement of an encrypted device company called ANOM. ANOM grew to service more than 12 000 encrypted devices and over 300 criminal syndicates operating in more than 100 countries.

As a result of the operation, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and 16 participating countries, supported by Europol and the US Drug Enforcement Agency, were able to exploit the intelligence from 27 million messages. This resulted in over 1 000 arrests and the seizure of illegal drugs, firearms and over EUR 48 million in various worldwide currencies and cryptocurrencies.

THE EUROPOL PODCAST: OPERATION GREENLIGHT



European Cybercrime Centre

Taking down cybercriminals

The **European Cybercrime Centre (EC3)** strengthens the law enforcement response to cybercrime in the EU, helping to protect European citizens, businesses and governments from online crime.

- **payment fraud**
- **child sexual exploitation**
- **cyber intelligence**
- **digital and document forensics**
- **cyber-dependent crime**
- **tackling criminality on the Dark Web and alternative platforms**

INTERNET ORGANISED CRIME THREAT ASSESSMENT (IOCTA)

The Internet Organised Crime Threat Assessment (IOCTA) is the European Cybercrime Centre's flagship strategic report on cybercrime.

Victim Identification Task Force

The Victim Identification Task Force (VIDTF) is a Europol initiative which gathers specialists and partner agencies to identify victims and offenders depicted in child sexual abuse material.

The VIDTF is the largest recurring operation of its kind in the world. It has inspired a number of similar initiatives at national and regional levels, from Italy to Australia.

2014
founded

290
specialists have taken part

over **35**
countries

over **533**
children safeguarded

182
offenders arrested

Cybercrime is becoming increasingly prevalent as a result of the digitisation of society, and by working together we have developed innovative and effective solutions to emerging threats.

Edvardas Šileris / Head of Department, European Cybercrime Centre

European Counter Terrorism Centre

Tackling terrorist threats

The **European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC)** is an operations centre and hub of expertise that reflects the growing need for the EU to strengthen its response to terrorism and to ensure an effective response to these challenges. While dealing with terrorist threats, the ECTC also investigates terrorism financing and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons and explosives.

terrorism

terrorist propaganda online

genocide/war crimes/crimes against humanity

racism and xenophobia

EU TERRORISM SITUATION AND TREND REPORT

The EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT) provides figures on terrorist attacks and terrorism-related arrests in the European Union.

European Union Internet Referral Unit

The EU Internet Referral Unit (EU IRU) is part of the ECTC. It detects and analyses terrorist and violent extremist content that is publicly available on the internet and flags this content to online service providers for their voluntary assessment. The Unit's mission is to not only restrict public access to terrorist propaganda, but also investigate the terrorist content to facilitate the attribution and prosecution of perpetrators. The EU IRU additionally provides support to Europol's European Migrant Smuggling Centre by flagging content related to the advertising of illegal travel services and counterfeit travel documents used by traffickers offering smuggling services to migrants and refugees.

pieces of content analysed in 2021

19 667
related to **terrorism** and **violent extremism**

1 758
related to **terrorism** and **migrant smuggling**

23
referral action days
organised since 2015

463
operations supported
in 2021

At Europol, we respect fundamental rights and freedoms within a robust legal framework. This is why we are trusted by the international community, the partners we engage with, and Member States. Developing trust and credibility are among our biggest achievements.

Claudio Galzerano / Head of Department, European Counter Terrorism Centre

European Financial and Economic Crime Centre

Following the money

The European Financial and Economic Crime Centre (EFECC) enhances Europol's operational and strategic support by preventing and combating financial and economic crime in the European Union. EFECC promotes the consistent use of financial investigations and asset forfeiture while forging alliances with public and private entities.

corruption

intellectual property crime

excise fraud/ VAT fraud

currency counterfeiting

money laundering

asset recovery

Intellectual Property Crime Coordinated Coalition (IPC³)

IPC³ strengthens the fight against intellectual property crime, counterfeiting and piracy online and offline.

IPC³ coordinated **Operation LUDUS I**, the first international law enforcement operation ever led against counterfeit toys. It was supported by the European Anti-Fraud Office and the European Union Intellectual Property Office. It took place between 19 October 2020 and 31 January 2021.

24
countries participated

nearly
5 million
illicit toys seized

11
Individuals arrested

over
EUR 16 million
value of seizures

Financial and economic crime are among the most pressing concerns for law enforcement. We work with experts in the field and use the best technologies available to support international financial crime investigations and the recovery of criminal assets.

Burkhard Mühl / Head of Department, European Financial and Economic Crime Centre

Innovation at Europol

UNLEASHING POTENTIAL

Innovation is one of Europol's strategic priorities. As part of this, Europol has established a dedicated Innovation Lab to support the law enforcement community in the area of innovation.

INNOVATION LAB

> **Our vision is to respond to the operational needs of the European law enforcement community, by creating innovative solutions based on emerging technologies and using them in the fight against organised crime and terrorism in the digital age.**

Grégory Mounier
/ Head of the Innovation Lab

THE INNOVATION LAB

The Innovation Lab aims to identify, promote and develop concrete innovative solutions in support of the EU Member States' operational work. These will help investigators and analysts to make the most of the opportunities offered by new technologies, for instance by finding new and better ways to analyse and visualise large amounts of data to support investigations.

Can you help us fight crime?

EU Most Wanted

Fugitives are published on the eumostwanted.eu website and citizens are asked to check if they recognise them. If they do, they can anonymously let law enforcement know by sending a tip via the website.

EU MOST WANTED FUGITIVES

Stop Child Abuse – Trace an Object

This online campaign lists objects which appear in the background of child sexual abuse material. These images are taken from cold cases. Individuals can anonymously submit information about objects to help law enforcement agencies identify both the offender and the victim.

TRACE AN OBJECT
STOP CHILD ABUSE

No More Ransom

Is your digital life threatened by ransomware? Scan the code to learn more about how to protect yourself.

NO MORE RANSOM

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