SECURE INFORMATION EXCHANGE NETWORK APPLICATION (SIENA)

Ensuring the secure exchange of sensitive and restricted information

In an organisation like Europol, which facilitates and relies on the exchange of information, the secure and swift transmission of sensitive and restricted data is essential.

The Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA) is a state-of-the-art platform that meets the communication needs of EU law enforcement

The platform enables the swift and user-friendly exchange of operational and strategic crime-related information among:

- Europol’s liaison officers, analysts and experts
- Member States
- third parties with which Europol has cooperation agreements.

Launched on 1 July 2009, the following year the following entities and countries started using it:

- EU law-enforcement agencies
- cooperating partners such as Eurojust and Interpol
- cooperating states outside the EU, such as Australia, Canada, Norway, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Switzerland and the United States.

Access continues to be extended in 2017.

EXTENDING ACCESS

In more recent years, access to SIENA has also been afforded to asset-recovery offices (AROs), which use it to exchange information about assets to be seized, frozen or confiscated in EU countries.

A tool was added to SIENA that allowed it to handle restricted content on counter terrorism. In response, counter terrorism units connected to the platform, thus enhancing the exchange of information and intelligence in this key area. By the end of 2016, with 90% of all Member States and 46 counter-terrorism authorities were connected to dedicated SIENA counter-terrorism environment.

Europol's Strategy for 2016-2020 calls for the further development of SIENA as the system of choice for the secure exchange and communication of law-enforcement information.

SIENA is key to making Europol the EU information hub on crime. It brings Europol closer to the front line of law enforcement, particularly when it comes to promoting and enhancing the exchange of information on counter-terrorism.

DATA PROTECTION

SIENA is compliant with all the legal requirements for data protection and confidentiality.

Under a pilot programme agreed between Europol and the German Federal Criminal Police Office in 2015, SIENA is being rolled out to the central police offices in all federal states in Germany.

Future plans include rolling out the system to regional initiatives such as the following:

- the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre – Narcotics
There are also plans to provide machine translations of SIENA messages into other EU languages.

Information exchange via SIENA in 2017:

- 66,113 new cases were initiated (a 42% increase over 2016).
- 1,000,000 operational messages were exchanged (16% more than in 2016).
- 1,200 competent national authorities from 47 countries and 10 international partners
- There were 5,531 SIENA users (a 17% increase over 2014).

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