

Call for applications for the selection of the Members of Advisory Group on Online Terrorist Propaganda of the European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC) appointed in a personal capacity.

Recent terrorist attacks and attempted attacks have brought into sharper focus how terrorist groups are using the Internet to radicalise, recruit and direct terrorist activity and glorify their atrocities.

In order to address the activities brought forward in the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council Conclusions of 20 November 2015, Europol established on 1 January 2016 the European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC), with the aim to enhance cooperation with the Member States (MS) in the area of counterterrorism and provide the most effective operational support and expertise to MS investigations.

The EU Internet Referral Unit (EU IRU) is a key capability of the ECTC and has been mandated to perform the following core tasks:

- To coordinate and share the identification tasks (flagging) of terrorist and violent extremist online content with relevant partners.
- To carry out and support referrals quickly, efficiently and effectively, in close cooperation with the industry.
- To support competent authorities, by providing strategic analysis and operational analysis.
- To act as a European Centre of Excellence for the above tasks.

Within the newly established ECTC, the EU IRU is envisaged to establish an active engagement with relevant industry partners and academic communities in order to ensure that it continuously develops and uses technologies, tools and methodologies that are at par with the developments of social media and digital communication.

To this end, the EU IRU, being the ECTC capability dealing with countering terrorism online, has identified a need to establish, within the wider context of the ECTC's activities, an **Advisory Group** on the abuse of online communication by terrorist groups for propaganda purposes and online recruitment. The establishment of this Advisory Group within the ECTC, coordinated by the EU IRU, serves to achieve one of the ECTC strategic goals, which is to become a centre of expertise in the realm of online terrorist propaganda and extremism. In addition, its activities will be aligned with the EU Internet Forum roadmap of actions.

The tasks of the Advisory Group are:

- Establishing an academic advisory network of experts – the ECTC Academic Advisory Network on online terrorist propaganda – to ensure that the EU IRU keeps pace with the latest developments in its field of expertise by sharing knowledge and best practices with academics and researchers; the network is conceptualised as a working advisory 'think tank' comprised of nominated trans-disciplinary subject-matter experts, tasked with informing on problems posed to security by terrorists and their exploitation of online communication.

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- Being in line with the ECTC strategy and the EU Internet Forum roadmap of actions, producing deliveries of a strategic nature (papers and reports) on key issues identified within the Academic Advisory Network, with a view to publication.
- Launching a yearly conference on topics related to terrorist ideology, online recruitment and law enforcement responses; the conference proceedings will be published online as a dedicated series on Europol's website.
- Providing input to the work of the EU IRU by contributing to the dedicated IRU platform of experts (IRU EPE¹) on online terrorist propaganda and extremism, which will structure and facilitate contacts with the academia and research centres, as well as manage the communication between stakeholders.

The EU IRU is tasked with establishing the Advisory Group and is therefore calling for applications with a view to selecting members of the Advisory Group.

The Group shall consist of up to 15 non-remunerated members appointed in their personal capacity. They shall be individuals of proven expertise and professional experience in online propaganda, recruitment and radicalisation, which is relevant to the fight against terrorism. The tasks of the group members will be:

- Participation in the preparation and attendance of Advisory Group meetings twice a year.
- Participation in the preparation and organisation of the yearly conference at Europol.
- Providing *ad hoc* expertise to Europol on request.
- Active participation in discussions in areas of their expertise, including on the IRU EPE.

The members shall be appointed for a maximum **three-year** renewable period. They shall give the Advisory Group an independent opinion, free from outside influence and respect the conditions of confidentiality set out in the Advisory Group's terms of reference. They shall undertake to act independently and in the public interest.

The ECTC may also consult the group on any matter relating to online propaganda developments with regards to the fight against terrorist and violent extremist online content. The Head of the ECTC has the option to suggest topics of research and propose subjects for reports to the Group.

The following criteria will be taken into account when assessing applications:

- (a) Proven competence, and a high level of professional achievement and experience (at least five years), including at European and/or international level, in activities concerned with online terrorist/extreme violent propaganda;
- (b) Demonstrated ability to work in English;
- (c) The need to strike a balance within the group of experts in terms of institutional and professional background, gender and geographical origin;

¹The Europol Platform for Experts (EPE) is a secure collaboration web platform for experts, which facilitates the sharing of best practices, documentation, innovation, knowledge and non-personal data on crime.

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(d) The need to ensure the required balance of expertise on online terrorist propaganda and the various aspects involved, such as—but not limited to—the development of projects and products, supervision or contribution to the research activities of public or private entities, assessment of use and needs for new products and services by the law enforcement community.

The above will be assessed on the basis of the completed curriculum vitae (CV) and the application form.

Applications may only be submitted using the model application form and should be accompanied by a CV. Applicants are asked to state clearly in their application the professional/research area in which they possess particular expertise.

The applications must be sent in by Friday, **12 August 2016**, either by e-mail to: O47@europol.europa.eu or by post to:

Europol
EU Internet Referral Unit (O47 – EU IRU)
P.O. Box 908 50
2509 LW - The Hague
The Netherlands

Where applications are sent by e-mail, the date of e-mail will be the date of sending. Where applications are sent by post, the postmark will be considered the date of sending.

Personal data will be processed in accordance with the principles of Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. These principles of Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 are laid down in the relevant decision of the Europol Director.

The application form and the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Groups are available on the Europol website. For any further information please contact the EU IRU e-mail: O47@europol.europa.eu.

Information on the results of the call for applications will be published on the IRU EPE and on the Europol website.