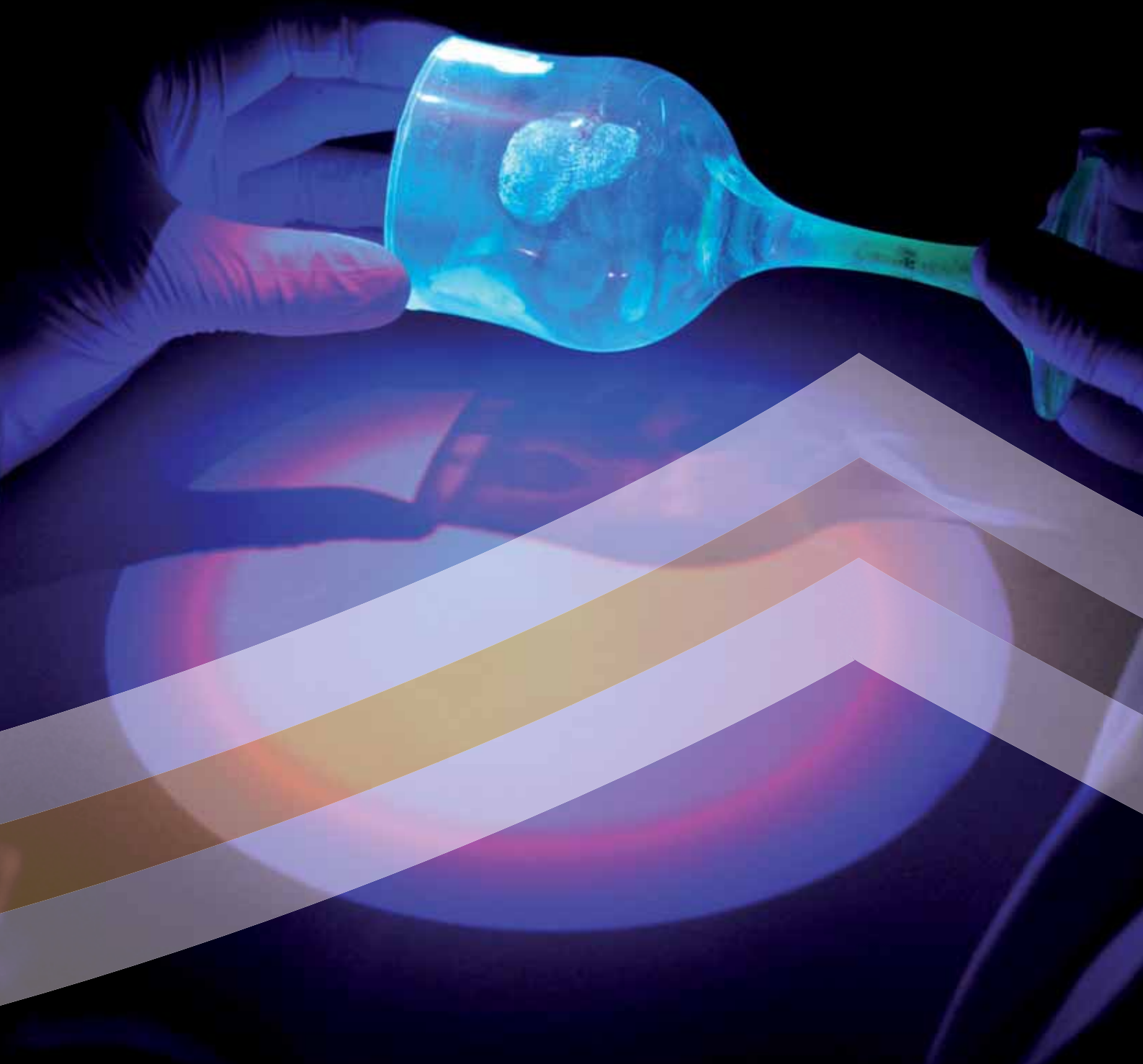




THE EUROPEAN INVESTIGATOR

TARGETING CRIMINALS ACROSS BORDERS



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More information on Europol is available at <http://www.europol.europa.eu>

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INTRODUCTION

Have you ever had an investigation that came to a dead end? Perhaps there was a missing link? All your leads led nowhere? Have you had cases where your suspect was working with international criminals across the border?

Europol could have helped you in all of these cases. Europol supports investigators in the 27 EU countries to prevent and combat all forms of serious international crime and terrorism. Europol officers have no direct powers of arrest. Their task is to support law enforcement colleagues working across Europe by gathering, analysing and disseminating criminal intelligence and coordinating international police operations. Europol's partners use this input to prevent, detect and investigate crimes, and to track down and prosecute the criminals.

Europol delivers a unique set of operational services for the European Union, acting as the:

- support centre for law enforcement operations
- criminal information hub and
- centre for law enforcement expertise.

The European investigator provides a succinct overview of how EU law enforcement officers can benefit from Europol's operational support. Each chapter illustrates the different kind of assistance offered by Europol:

- Operational analysis
- Mobile office — on-the-spot support
- Forensic and technical support and
- The benefits of employing a Joint Investigation Team.

If you think your investigation could benefit from Europol's assistance, please contact your Europol national unit.



OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

From an Austrian investigator:

'The first report came into our unit at the Austrian Federal Police in Innsbruck late one November evening. Ram-raiders had smashed open an electrical retailer and got away with a large haul of electronic goods.

We soon started to see a pattern emerging, as four Austrian electronics stores from the same chain were systematically robbed in exactly the same way. Modus operandi: The gang took a stolen vehicle and drove it right through the front of the store, sometimes first using a stone cutter to destroy the protective concrete bollards outside the shop. During the ram-raids, up to five people would rush into the store and, in under 90 seconds, they would bag loads of high-value electronics such as cameras, mobile phones, notebooks and MP3 players. All of this action was captured by the in-store CCTV cameras.

Based on evidence gathered, we soon realised that we were dealing with a Lithuanian organised criminal group. This international link prompted us to get Europol involved. We got straight in touch with our Europol national unit to start the process. We began the information exchange by providing any intelligence we already had on the gang which included data on their Lithuanian mobile phones being used in Austria. This data was fed into Europol's information system and Europol's analysis report came back, telling us there were links to Belgium, France, Italy and Sweden. The suspects had been police checked on the road and at border crossings in several countries — luckily, their ID and vehicle docu-

ment data had been recorded in many cases, making it possible for us all to tap into this information through Europol.

Europol then hosted an operational meeting where the affected police authorities could discuss intelligence, tactics and future operations. The Lithuanian authorities were obviously a key part of this international team of investigators from six countries.

Intelligence revealed that this criminal group had organisers who were instructed by their Lithuanian bosses as to which shops they should target and what they should steal. The organisers would then travel with their 'soldiers' to selected countries and would visit the stores in advance to check the store layout and exact locations of the goods they wanted. They carried out the ram-raids in Austria, Belgium, France, Italy and Sweden — targeting the same two multinational chains of electronics shops. This gang had been responsible for at least 20 ram-raids throughout Europe, clocking up damages alone estimated to be around EUR 1.5 million.

The Lithuanian authorities gave the highest priority to solving this case and, as a result, we planned our day of action in Lithuania at a co-ordination meeting hosted by Eurojust. One April morning, 55 Lithuanian police officers, supported by colleagues from Austria and Sweden, carried out 16 house searches to catch the suspects and gather potential evidence. Two Europol officers were on the spot to provide further support to the investigators.



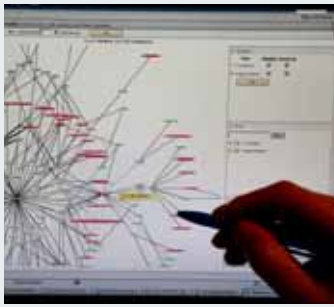
Ram-raiders rob the shop and bag their loot in under 90 seconds.

We had a successful day of action, delivering a major blow against the gang by putting 18 people behind bars. This was a perfect example of how effective international cooperation can be. Europol, and its network of liaison officers, supports and builds trust between European law enforcement authorities

to successfully tackle cross-border organised crime together.

After the event, the electrical retailer affected by these crimes informed us that, since the arrests, no further ram-raids had been carried out in Europe, so it was an excellent result all round.'

ANALYTICAL SUPPORT



Analysis is at the core of Europol's activities. It employs more than

100 criminal analysts, who are among the best trained in the world and use state-of-the-art tools to uncover the activities of some of the most dangerous organised crime and terrorist networks operating in Europe. The delivery of this work takes place within the framework of an analysis work file (AWF). The AWF is an instrument unique to Europol, in which analysts work together with organised crime and terrorism specialists to gather criminal intelligence. AWFs cover all

high-priority serious crime areas impacting the European Union.

Analytical support can be provided remotely from Europol premises, or in the field. AWFs offer a variety of operational and strategic products which are shared among participants. Within an AWF, a specific target group or Joint Investigation Team can be set up to meet the needs of a group of Member States and to tackle a common criminal phenomenon.

OPERATIONAL CENTRE 24/7



Europol provides a rapid and flexible response to ongoing international investigations. The Europol operational

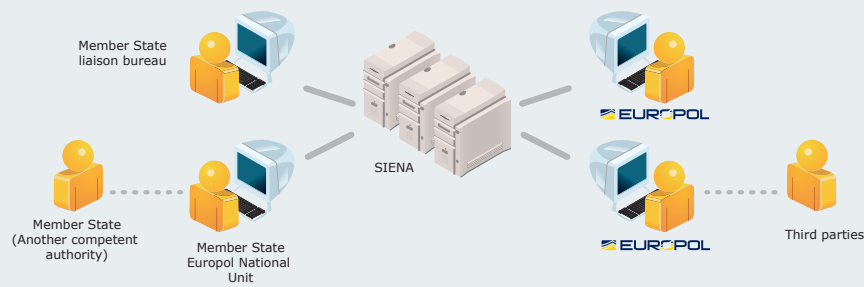
centre is a central point where criminal information from multiple sources and multiple countries is cross-checked.

The main aim is to support law enforcement agencies in their ongoing international investigations and to be the single point of contact for receiving operational requests and information. This enables Europol analysts to run an overall search of all the Europol data systems, to search for any missing links in ongoing investigations. Europol's operational coordination and support centre operates on a 24/7 basis. Europol supports more than 12 000 serious crime and terrorism cases per year, with this number increasing every year.

SECURE INFORMATION EXCHANGE NETWORK APPLICATION (SIENA)

Europol liaison officers, analysts and experts use secure and innovative communication means in their work. SIENA is the new generation tool that meets the 21st century communication needs of EU law enforcement. It is used to manage the exchange of operational and strategic crime-

related information between Member States, Europol and third parties with which Europol has cooperation agreements. SIENA operates in a way that complies with all the legal requirements of data protection and confidentiality. It ensures the secure exchange of sensitive information.



Europol ensures a safe exchange of crime-related information via SIENA.

EUROPOL INFORMATION SYSTEM



The Europol information system allows the storing, searching, visualising and linking of information related to transnational crimes. It allows law enforcement agencies across Europe to cooperate on international investigations. The system automatically detects any possible hits between different inves-

tigations and facilitates the sharing of sensitive information in a secure and reliable way. The information system is available in all official EU languages. Future versions of the system will provide functionalities to match biometric data such as DNA profiles, fingerprints and photographs.

EUROPOL LIAISON OFFICERS



Some 130 liaison officers are based at Europol headquarters. These liaison

officers are seconded to Europol by EU and non-EU law enforcement authorities. They guarantee fast and effective cooperation based on personal contact and mutual trust. The network of Europol liaison officers is a unique platform to group officers from over 30 countries together in a secure operational environment. The liaison officers actively participate in

all analytical projects, facilitating the exchange of strategic and operational information. They participate in operational meetings and coordinate controlled deliveries and cross-border surveillance in a 24/7 call system. They have also an advisory role and liaise with their national experts to support the establishment of Joint Investigation Teams.





MOBILE OFFICE — ON-THE-SPOT SUPPORT

Reports come in of four jewellery shop robberies in Paris. Another one has been broken into on Boulevard Barceló in Brussels. And six jewellery shops have been robbed in a similar way in Austria (Vienna and Salzburg), by suspects from Estonia.



A typical jewellery shop targeted by the criminal gang.

To aid national investigators, Europol organises a preparatory meeting which is attended by investigators from Belgium, Germany, Estonia, France

and Austria. A joint police operation is set up and carried out in Estonia.

During the operation, all the suspects are arrested and searches are carried out at their residences. Many mobile phones, SIM cards, notes and other records are seized. Europol analyses this data to identify further international links. Physical evidence linking the suspects to the robberies is found.

Europol receives data — which have been analysed throughout the operation — from the countries involved. Several reports are issued to the Member States concerned. On the day of action, arrests and house searches are supported by a Europol team: specialists and analysts are present at the coordination centre set up in Tallinn and an on-the-spot mobile office is used to support the operation.

This particular operation has led to the identification and arrest of eight suspected members of Estonian-based gangs in Belgium, France and Austria.

Europol supports more than 12 000 cases per year. Many of them involve the Europol mobile office and on-the-spot Europol officers.



MOBILE OFFICE

The mobile office, staffed by Europol experts and analysts, can provide support for a wide range of activities such as ongoing investigations, major sports events, key international conferences and other occasions where a mobilisation of police cooperation is needed to provide security. The following services are provided:

- real-time, secure access to the different Europol computerised analysis systems; data on people and phone numbers can be checked while the mobile

office is deployed; the immediate result is invaluable when it comes to fast-moving investigations;

- the possibility to deliver on-the-spot analytical products such as reports, charts and other data;
- the possibility to deploy more mobile offices for the same operation in the case of simultaneous arrests in different locations;
- a satellite connection that increases the flexibility of the system.

OPERATION MONET V

Under the remit of Operation Monet V, live analytical support was provided via the mobile office to Spanish law enforcement authorities in Gran Canaria. One Europol analyst was present throughout the operation,

which targeted cash couriers within high-risk destination environments. As a result of the operation, the Guardia Civil seized EUR 402 090, 1.2 kg of cocaine and other illicit products.



FORENSIC AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

From an Italian investigator:

'It is five o'clock in the morning and my taxi is waiting outside. At this time of the day it is still dark, even though it is only the end of July. The air in The Hague is crisp and carries the salty scent of the sea. In a few minutes, I will arrive at Europol headquarters, as a national expert appointed by the Italian National Police to coordinate an international operation, code-named Creieur.



Let me turn back the clock to explain how I happen to be at Europol this morning. The Italian city of Pescara is suffering greatly from credit card skimming fraud. Evidence suggests the culprits are a Romanian criminal group. Investigations are authorised by the local prosecutor, and the police are able to use the usual methods — wiretaps, surveillance, translating and shadowing. This is a busy group of criminals and all efforts are made to ensure that they are unaware they are being tapped. The police team is experienced, talented and motivated.

It appears the criminals are well organised. They collect data and pass it back to Romania, where the fake credit cards are created and then sent back to the teams on the ground, across the continent. The whole EU is under attack. It is a very sophisticated operation. Leading operators in Romania manage the stolen data; technicians create the skimming devices and recover the data from them; and logistics specialists provide accommodation for operators on the ground, as well as transport to and from airports and sta-

tions. Of course there are also the soldiers — those in charge of collecting the credit cards. All have monthly 'targets'. Investigations lead to the first identifications and the first arrests. When we hear someone is arriving at an airport, we identify them. If we hear they are recovering skimming devices, we arrest them. Each time we operate using a different field officer to reduce the suspicion of a planned attack.

We work to piece together the route to identifying the leaders. Investigations gather pace: in a period of around two years, some 600 000 phone calls have been examined from 450 phones and a clear picture of the Romanian criminal organisation created. It is a successful gang, which is stealing millions of euros every year.

We deliver our final report to the Italian Judicial Authority: there are 36 people to arrest in five countries, and we do it discretely so as not to compromise the rest of the operation. The gang is all over Europe. European arrest warrants are prepared but many cannot be delivered. The prosecutor is determined and makes the most of his experience — he contacts Europol and Eurojust.



We meet, introduce ourselves and speak about what we want to do, what we need and which countries are involved. We share evidence and fix the next meeting. Now other police officers are participating and judicial authorities from the countries involved are present. We finalise operational details and decide on the date of action.

So, that's how I came to be in The Hague. Next, an operational centre is established at Europol headquarters. Wiretaps tell us that the criminals suspect something, so the prosecutor prepares for arrests. I enter the operational centre and see a team of Europol experts prepared and ready for action. A Europol mobile office is ready. I am at the heart of policing at Europol and connected to police teams spread across the continent.



Criminal evidence seized during Operation Creieur.

1 2

The day of action starts at 6 a.m. and arrests take place all over Europe. The news starts to trickle in from Italy, the Netherlands and Romania. Cooperation is excellent and phones are ringing. We manage to track down some criminals who had disappeared. People who should have been in Ireland are no longer there but they could be in Belgium. In minutes, we are in contact with a Belgian liaison officer. He tells us that three people are being held and two are on the wanted list — success! More are arrested over the next two days. Eventually, two thirds of the wanted criminals are apprehended. This is international teamwork at its best — we would never have had this success without Europol and Eurojust.

Europol didn't interfere. It said: "The investigation is yours, not ours." It gave us valuable help, competent resources and a positive attitude. We realised that, without assistance from our partners across Europe, it would have been impossible to achieve such a spectacular result. There is one more positive outcome — all Creieur operational data will be pooled in a dedicated Europol analysis work file (AWF), where it will be available to assist all other ongoing and future investigations.

Looking back, it was exciting to experience such a well-coordinated law enforcement operation, especially for me, visiting this cold city on the North Sea coast from my sunny Italian town.'

FORENSIC AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT



Europol provides forensic and technical support in the following areas:

- payment card fraud
- euro counterfeiting and the production of counterfeit goods
- cybercrime
- dismantling of illicit drug production, storage and dump sites.



Europol supports an investigation of the largest illicit drug laboratory ever found in the Netherlands.

DISMANTLING OF DRUGS LABORATORIES



The European Union is a significant region for the illicit production of synthetic drugs, particularly amphetamine and ecstasy. Each year around 60 to 90 large-scale production sites are identified, seized and dismantled. Storage sites for potentially dangerous precursor chemicals used in the drug manufacturing process are often discovered during investigations in Member States. Europol experts help to dismantle illicit production sites securely and collect evidence. They also carry out technical investigations on custom-made and industrial equipment seized in production and storage units.

The Europol Illicit Laboratory Comparison System (EILCS) comprises detailed

photographic and technical information on synthetic drug production, storage and dump sites. This enables the identification of matches between seized equipment, materials and chemicals. In addition, the Europol Synthetic Drug System (ESDS) includes information on modus operandi and significant seizures. This enables the identification of matches between seizures and helps to profile and target criminal groups.

The Europol Specific Means of Concealment (ESMC) contains information on the concealment methods used to transport cocaine.



Sample of photographic data stored in the Europol ESDS/ESMC: concealment of cocaine using animals.

THE CENTRAL OFFICE FOR COMBATING EURO COUNTERFEITING



Europol has been designated the European Union's central office for combating euro counterfeiting. This legal status qualifies it to act as a worldwide contact point for combating counterfeiting of the currency.

Acting in this capacity, Europol provides, among other things, forensic support to determine the origin of materials and devices used for the manufacturing of counterfeits. Additionally, Europol provides technical support and training on tactical and technical issues to protect the euro from counterfeiting.

TERRORIST FINANCING TRACKING PROGRAMME — A NEW COUNTERTERRORISM SERVICE

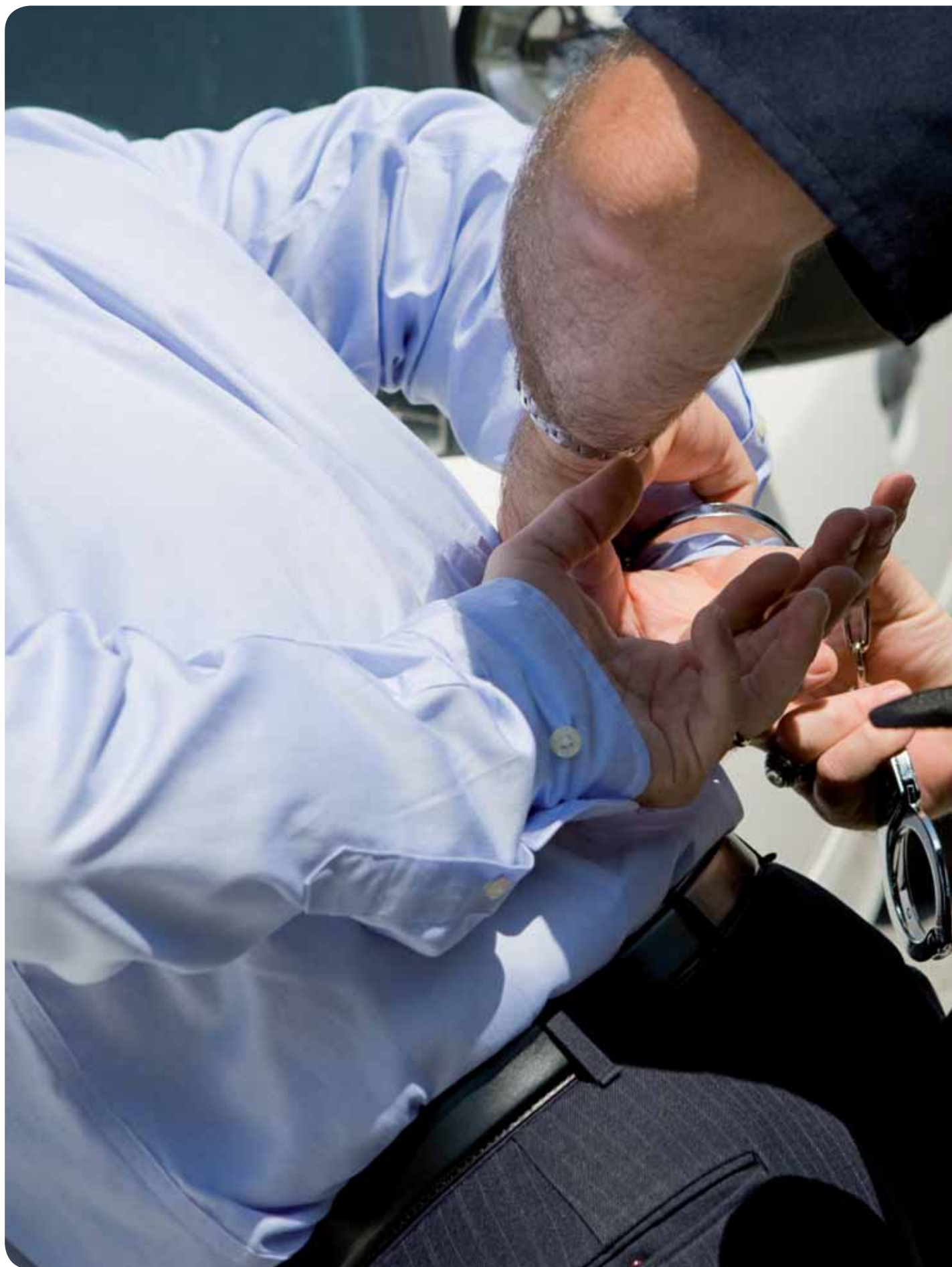
On 1 August 2010, an agreement entered into force between the United States and the European Union on the processing and transfer of financial messaging data from the EU to the USA to support the US Terrorist Financing Tracking Programme (TFTP). Europol has been entrusted with the new responsibility of verifying US requests for data transfers. It reviews such requests, ensuring that they are compliant with the terms of this agree-

ment, and the USA cannot receive any data unless and until this is verified.

The agreement enables Europol to receive intelligence leads from the US analysis programme and also allows Europol to generate European analytical requests to the US TFTP.

In order to accommodate the agreement, Europol has created a dedicated unit of experienced counterterrorism

financial specialists and analysts, who will actively engage with US authorities to provide a comprehensive, robust response which will focus the combined energies of the EU and US authorities in combating the financing of terrorism. Counterterrorist investigators in the EU Member States can access this significant US programme, for example to check the financial activities of terrorist suspects, through the dedicated unit at Europol.



THE BENEFITS OF EMPLOYING A JOINT INVESTIGATION TEAM

The benefits of a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) can be realised by all law enforcement agencies from the smallest to even the largest and most cosmopolitan of law enforcement organisations. One of the partners in Operation Golf — London's Metropolitan Police Service — is very experienced in international investigations. The largest police force in the UK, with a huge international reputation, it regularly investigates crimes and offences on the international stage, making full use of its own and its partners' resources. But even the Metropolitan Police found that the JIT they signed with the Romanian authorities, to deal with a specific human trafficking crime issue on the streets of the capital, brought great benefits to their investigation.

The JIT provided for the secondment of two Romanian police officers to London. This proved invaluable in enhancing the Metropolitan Police's understanding of the cultural, legal and operational challenges they faced working hand-in-hand with a foreign administration. The ability to initiate enquiries knowing that they could, and would, be pursued within Romania on their behalf without the necessity of formal letters of request was a great administrative relief. The availability of in-house exper-

tise, which extended to language, intelligence, local knowledge, information and national contacts back in Bucharest, made the whole operation run much more smoothly.

There is no doubt that the financial support offered by the European Commission helped to sustain the commitment to this operation. This financial support was used to fund operational meetings in England, Romania and Spain, and at Europol and Eurojust in The Hague. Such meetings allowed investigators to sit down alongside judicial authorities, Europol and other partners, to plan and coordinate the operation as it developed.



The support that Europol gave to the analytical work done on Operation Golf and operationally through the liaison bureaux, allied to the judicial support afforded by Eurojust, ensured that the full range of tools

available at EU level was utilised. This is even more relevant given that Operation Golf, with all its success, is not an investigation led by a national or specialist unit but was initiated by a city centre division, to deal with a problem which was having a major local impact but was clearly organised at an international level.



OPERATION GOLF



Operation Golf: A Romanian village where criminals source children for trafficking.

Operation Golf is a Metropolitan Police Service criminal investigation into Romanian-organised Roma crime networks and targets one of the largest human trafficking rings in Europe. The gangs specifically exploit children who are forced to routinely beg and steal across the UK and the rest of Europe. This operation is in partnership with the Crown Prosecution Service, the Romanian National Police, the UK Human Trafficking Centre, Europol and Eurojust. The partnership is a formal Joint Investigation Team (JIT) under EU law and was the first such JIT addressing this type of crime in Europe.

Operation Golf achieved the first conviction in the UK for both the trafficking of a child for criminal exploitation and 'internal' trafficking within the UK. Four members of the organised crime network were sentenced to a total of 24 years in prison. Operation Golf has been



In contrast, the villa of one of the criminal traffickers.

successful in receiving funding support from the European Commission, largely due to the unique work being carried out by the Joint Investigation Team.

Superintendent Bernie Gravett, the senior investigating officer at the Metropolitan Police, says: 'The JIT legislation has so many benefits for international

investigations. The ability to deploy Romanian officers alongside my own during searches and arrests proved invaluable. They have conducted criminal interviews with my investigators, and in addition they are able to easily recognise false documents and gather intelligence that a UK police officer would have missed. The formation of a JIT is recommended for any country that intends to mount a proactive operation to bring offenders to justice.'



Operation Golf identified 181 trafficked children.

OPERATION GOLF — STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

181 — Number of trafficked children identified by Operation Golf

GBP 20 000 — Average 'price' for a trafficked child in the UK

EUR 160 000 — Estimated annual illicit income for organised crime from a single trafficked child

GBP 400 000 — Value of the benefit fraud identified and stopped as a result of Operation Golf

ANNUAL STATISTICS ON TRAFFICKED CHILDREN

1.2 million — Number of trafficked children worldwide (Source: Unicef)

USD 12 billion — Global value of human trafficking (Source: Unicef)

200 000 — Number of trafficked individuals from eastern Europe (Source: OSCE)

USD 2 500–10 000 — Price range of a child trafficked to Italy





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