

Europol Strategy 2016-2020

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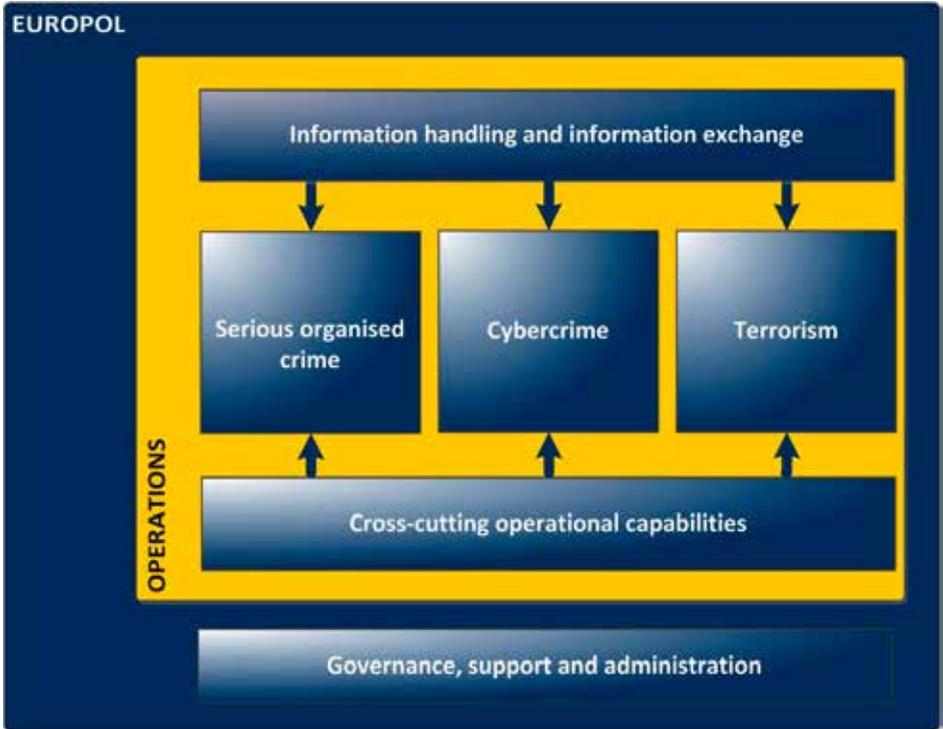
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Europol Strategy 2016-2020

Europol Strategy at a glance



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Introduction

Almost 6 years after the entry into force of the Europol Council Decision, Europol is now an integral part of the EU security architecture. During this period, Europol made significant progress in building its operational capabilities and responding to the increasing demand for its operational products and services, while realising efficiency gains and reallocating resources to new tasks and high-priority areas.

At the same time, the world has been accelerating; the complexity and scale of crime is increasing while cybercrime, serious and organised crime and terrorism are developing into significant pan-European threats. Technological developments have led to an ever-increasing volume of available data while the internet, social media and mobile technologies are changing the interconnectivity of the world, including its criminal landscape. In this climate, stepped-up efforts are needed to devise European solutions to address European problems.

In this context and from its unique position, Europol has proved that it is ready to be part of these European solutions; 2015 in particular has been a year of significant and rapid developments, especially in the areas of terrorism and migration.

The previous Europol Strategy 2010-2014 laid the foundation for Europol to become a trusted partner of law enforcement authorities, strengthening criminal information sharing and cooperation as the European criminal information hub and realising its role as a principal provider of operational support and expertise to Member States (MS) investigations.

In the next 5 years, Europol's core purpose and focus will remain unchanged; Europol will continue to support law enforcement authorities in their fight against serious and organised crime and terrorism, but the strategic emphasis of the organisation will progressively shift from laying the foundation of increased capability to one based on full-scale delivery of operational service and impact. Europol, in its new Strategy 2016-2020, focuses on consolidating all its capabilities and expertise to deliver the most effective support to MS investigations; the focus of Europol's work will therefore be placed on two fundamental themes:

- (a) making a significant contribution to criminal information management in the EU;
- (b) delivering maximum operational impact in its operational support to MS.

Rob Wainwright
Director of Europol

Methodology

In May 2015, the Management Board initiated the development of the new Europol Strategy 2016-2020.

As foreseen in the agreed process, the strategy has been developed following an in-depth analysis of the external and internal environment and extensive consultations with Europol's stakeholders.

As a first step, an evaluation of the previous strategy (2010-2014) was undertaken. Based on this and on a scan of the strategic environment, a future outlook was formulated, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that could affect the future direction of the organisation. An analysis of organisational capabilities was also discussed by the senior management of Europol to capture the essence of the organisation's mission and the ways Europol can respond to the strategic environment. A number of guiding principles and themes were developed from an analysis of a number of external factors influencing Europol, including the Council conclusions on the renewed EU Internal Security Strategy 2015-2020, the Agendas on Migration and Security and the new legal framework expected to be in place in 2016. A scan of European and global trends was also performed to form a picture of the world in the upcoming years.

The evaluation of the previous strategy and the guiding principles and strategic themes were discussed with the main stakeholders of Europol to capture different perspectives and expectations, to validate and challenge assumptions and to renew the shared commitment of Europol and the MS to a common approach in combating criminal threats. The following groups of stakeholders were involved: Europol's Management Board including the European Commission, the Management Board's Working Group on Corporate Matters and Heads of Europol National Units (HENUs), as well as representatives from third countries and partner organisations.

The strategy sets the overall framework in which Europol will operate in the next 5 years. The organisation's activities and objectives will be planned to ensure their full alignment with the strategy, while performance will be monitored through established and evolving performance management mechanisms to ensure maximum delivery. Each of the strategic goals over the next 5 years will be translated into multiannual objectives. These and more detailed annual objectives will be fully reflected in the newly established Europol Programming Document, including allocation of human resources and budget to ensure that the organisation's level of ambition and resources are aligned and invested in line with its core priorities.

Implementation of the strategy will be monitored via the performance management and reporting mechanisms established in the annual Europol Programming Document and, additionally, through progress reports submitted to the MB. Multiannual key performance indica-

tors (KPIs) will be used for this purpose. The Consolidated Annual Activity Report will formally record the rate of implementation.



Mission, vision and values

The mission, vision and values of Europol are directly linked to the objective of Europol as laid out in Article 88 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union i.e. ‘to support and strengthen action by the MS police authorities and other law enforcement services and their mutual cooperation in preventing and combating serious crime affecting two or more MS, terrorism and forms of crime which affect a common interest covered by a Union policy.’

Mission

Europol’s mission is to support its MS in preventing and combating all forms of serious international and organised crime and terrorism.

Vision

Europol’s vision is to contribute to a safer Europe by providing a unique and evolving set of operational products and services to support law enforcement authorities in the MS.

Values

In line with our vision and mission, we place importance on a set of organisation values which guide our conduct, activities and goals. Our values represent what Europol stands for, what is important and relevant for the work we do and what makes us distinctive. Our values represent our organisational culture and guide our behaviours and attitudes, both internally and towards our stakeholders, in particular the law enforcement authorities in the MS which we serve. Our values are:

- service
- integrity
- accountability
- initiative
- teamwork.



Strategic goals and multiannual objectives

Goal 1: Europol will be the EU criminal information hub, providing information-sharing capabilities to law enforcement authorities in the Member States

The information management capabilities of Europol lie at the heart of its mandate, as they allow for increased cooperation between the MS and Europol and are crucial in obtaining the necessary intelligence to tackle cross-border crime. Information management includes the access to and collection and organisation of the structure, processing and delivery of information from multiple sources and in multiple formats to the MS. To achieve its goal, Europol's work will focus on three axes: firstly, on re-evaluating the information architecture of the organisation, in particular in the context of the new integrated data management concept afforded by the new Europol Regulation; secondly, on the provision of fast, reliable and uninterrupted first-line response; and thirdly, on enhancing partnerships to develop a more comprehensive intelligence picture.

Benefits

- The law enforcement agencies of Europol's MS and other partners will utilise the organisation's unique information-sharing platform that connects over 500 agencies in Europe and elsewhere to access multiple relevant sources of information.
- Europol's core information-management capabilities will provide a fast, uninterrupted service for the cross-checking of information and identification of operational leads.
- The overall functioning of Europol as the EU criminal information hub will provide the principal basis by which MS can acquire a clear intelligence picture of pan-European internal security threats.

1.1. Develop the necessary information and communications technology capabilities to maximise the exchange and availability of criminal information

Europol will exploit **new technological developments** and **be a significant contributor to the increased integration and interoperability** of law enforcement systems in Europe.

The new legal framework of Europol is expected to remove emphasis from specific information and communications technology (ICT) systems and databases and introduce a new **integrated data management** (IDM) concept which focuses, first and foremost, on placing the business needs of the law enforcement community as the main driver of obtaining, storing and disseminating the information available. In concrete terms, the rules for information processing will be related to the data itself — rather than the systems or databases used to store it. As a consequence, Europol, in close consultation with MS, will have the opportunity to use this flexibility to modernise its system's architecture and information-management strategy to ensure the best ways to manage criminal information and enhance the analytical capabilities of Europol based on MS operational requirements. The integration of data will ensure that links across crime areas will be more easily identified and, therefore, analytical support will be of increased value. The implementation of this new

concept is likely to lead to an **evolution of existing systems such as the Europol Information System (EIS)** and the **development of new ICT solutions**.

Other major drivers behind information-exchange capabilities will be the **ever-increasing amount of available information** and new technological trends such as decentralised systems of information sharing. Europol will work towards providing MS with **optimal solutions** by examining and applying the most appropriate topologies (e.g. central collecting or connecting data, Automated Data Exchange Platform (ADEP) concept) to ensure the necessary access to information and the provision of a complete intelligence picture. The access to and cross-checking of data in external databases such as Prüm, Schengen Information System (SIS) II and Passenger Name Record (PNR) will also be considerations of the new design.

Europol will build on the success of the Secure Information Exchange Network Application (**SIENA**) and further develop it as **the system of first choice for secure law enforcement information exchange** and communication.

1.2. Provide effective and immediate first-line information exchange

The information **intake and data-handling** model will be reviewed in line with the new integrated data-management concept and will take into account the increasing influx of high-volume data.

Europol will respond to the needs of MS for **fast and uninterrupted service** in a number of ways. A **first-line 24/7 information hub** will become available to maximise intake, initial processing and availability of information to MS. In addition, **Europol will work with MS** to increase the quality of their cooperation, in particular as regards the quality of

information exchanged and the speed of response (e.g. through increased usage of the **Universal Message Format**).

Finally, Europol will further invest in **standardisation, automation of cross-matching, optimisation of information flows and flexible resource allocation** with a view to making more efficient use of human resources while managing to respond to all information processing requests in a timely manner.

1.3. Strategically enhance partnerships with cooperation partners

An **enhanced multidisciplinary approach** is becoming increasingly more relevant for Europol in delivering its mission, bringing together necessary expertise and information from an expanding range of partners.

Europol will continue to promote and further develop its cooperation with **all competent law enforcement authorities** including **customs** and **counter-terrorism services** in the MS. At the same time, Europol will aim to further strengthen its partnership with **third states** (e.g. United States, Mediterranean countries, western Balkans) through initiatives which preserve Europol's operational nature and its support function to MS. In view of the global challenges the EU is facing, for example in the area of cybercrime, migration and terrorism, cooperation with **Interpol** will remain particularly relevant and will be enhanced through closer alignment and setting of common strategic actions.

EU agencies (e.g. Frontex, Eurojust) will remain important partners and cooperation will be further enhanced on the **basis of complementarity**. In particular, Europol and Frontex will closely cooperate in matters related to irregular migration while Europol and Eurojust will continue strengthening their cooperation through joint investigation teams and in the area of cybercrime. The work of Europol on intellectual prop-

erty crime will be enhanced through its cooperation with the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)⁽¹⁾. Cooperation with other agencies, especially in the area of justice and home affairs (e.g. the European Police College (CEPOL), eu-LISA and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)), will be developed as needed for initiatives of common interest.

In addition, and more significantly than in the past, Europol's **ability to cooperate with the private sector will be key** in achieving the best operational results; the provisions of the **new Europol Regulation will largely determine the extent** to which Europol will cooperate with private partners.

A new **external strategy** and an **improved mechanism for monitoring and evaluating cooperation agreements** will define the steps to enhancing cooperation.

(1) Formally the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM).

Goal 2: Europol will provide the most effective operational support and expertise to Member States investigations by developing and employing a comprehensive portfolio of services

Europol will provide high-quality operational support to MS investigations in **three key priority areas**, aligned with the **European Agenda on Security**, namely **serious and organised crime, cybercrime and counter-terrorism**.

In order to achieve **maximum impact and operational results**, Europol will **dynamically adjust its operational delivery models** and use of **human resources**. Existing and new operational capabilities and expertise will be employed as required to tackle the challenges in each of the key crime areas. Europol's focal points will support MS investigations in the area of serious and organised crime within the **priorities set in the EU policy cycles** (2013-2017 and 2017-2021), while **special focus** will be placed in the area of facilitated irregular migration. The European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) will continue to **drive and support intelligence-led actions** and provide **specialised forensic and technical** support. In the area of **counter-terrorism**, Europol will focus on promoting and facilitating cooperation and information sharing with a view to **improving the intelligence picture and increasing operational support** to MS. In all priority areas Europol will provide an effective platform for the coordination of operations carried out by MS.

A number of **cross-cutting operational capabilities** will also be used to support the MS. Europol will further develop and adjust Europol's **analytical products** to

Benefits

- Dismantling of serious and organised crime networks, with an increased focus on migrant-smuggling networks.
- Increased operational results in the area of cybercrime.
- A more coherent European operational response to terrorism.
- An evolving portfolio of projects and services for operational support.
- Enhanced quality and innovative methods of operational delivery.
- An enhanced intelligence picture.

match the needs of the MS. Europol will further support the **EU policy cycle** and aim to increase its impact on the set priorities. The embedment of FIU.net at Europol and the work on **asset recovery** will aim to increase the use of **financial intelligence** in all crime areas while access to **PNR** data will allow for identifying further criminal links. Europol will also continue **sharing its expertise** and building capacity at MS through its **training and special tactics** capabilities.

Europol will continue to deliver in select areas and as required by the MS **central capabilities and expertise** that are not available widely at national level, to provide cost-effective and enhanced support where a common European response to threats is required.

Europol will be **prepared to swiftly adjust its response as required by MS** and work more closely with **front-line** investigators, providing **on-the-spot, real-time** information exchange and expertise. Europol will aim to support MS by using the **most suitable, tailor-made operational delivery models**. Based on the assessment of MS needs, Europol's response could include

short- and longer-term **deployments** of Europol experts (e.g. through EU mobile investigation support teams or through the deployment of Europol experts to European External Action Service (EEAS) missions), forming a **situation centre** to coordinate a response to major security events and crises, creating a **task force** or support the formation of multinational teams to intensify efforts and achieve immediate operational results in areas demanding attention. Finally, Europol will establish the required connections and develop standard operating procedures or protocols to be able to **respond to emerging incidents**.

2.1. Support Member States investigations in the area of serious and organised crime

Europol has largely embedded the principles of intelligence-led policing in its structure, processes and resources. The EU policy cycle priorities will be the main driver for operational support provided to MS in the area of serious and organised crime. Therefore, until 2017 at least, operational support will focus on **facilitation of irregular migration, trafficking in human beings, cocaine and heroin, synthetic drugs, organised property crime, illicit firearms trafficking, excise and missing trader (MTIC) fraud, counterfeit goods and cybercrime** (elevated to one of the priority areas of the Security Agenda). Additionally, Europol will support MS efforts in tackling hierarchically structured, polycrime organised crime groups ('Mafia-type' groups). The work on intellectual property crime will also be enhanced through a cooperation agreement with EUIPO. Europol will continue its work of providing **operational analysis, coordination and funding of operational meetings. Large-scale operations and joint action days** will be coordinated from Europol headquarters with the aim of achieving operational results. The clustering and reduction of the number of focal points and the exchange of best prac-

tices between them will serve to achieve consistent results and optimum allocation of human resources. From 2018 onwards, Europol will support MS in **tackling the priorities** defined in the new **EU policy cycle 2017-2021**.

As part of the EU efforts to respond to the migration crisis, and at the explicit request of the Justice and Home Affairs Council, Europol will **establish** and develop the **European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC)** in early 2016, which will provide increased operational support to MS in their fight against organised people-smuggling networks. The EMSC will utilise a **combination of operational capabilities** to ensure the best operational support; the existing **focal points, Joint Operational Team (JOT) Mare** and **regional task forces** deployed at migration hotspots will be further strengthened with **EU mobile investigation support teams**, providing **on-the-spot operational and analytical support**. The expertise of the **EU Internet Referral Unit** will also be used to identify and refer online content relating to the provision of irregular migration services.

2.2. Support Member States investigations in the area of cybercrime

In the area of cybercrime, one of the most dynamic and challenging threats faced by MS, Europol will deliver **operational support to cybercrime investigations**, in particular addressing those crimes, (i) **committed by organised groups**, particularly those generating **large criminal profits** such as online fraud; (ii) which cause **serious harm to their victims**, such as online child sexual exploitation; and (iii) **affecting critical infrastructure** and information systems in the European Union.

The EC3 will **continue pioneering operational capabilities such as advanced digital forensic, technology tools and platforms** supporting the MS in protecting society by providing a collective EU response to cybercrime. The EC3 will also enhance its **victim identification** capabilities, in particular with regard to child sexual exploitation, and continue its work in delivering prevention material.

The EC3 will continue engaging with the law enforcement community, supporting models like the **J-CAT** and key partners such as Interpol's Global Complex for Innovation (ICGI), **to identify, prioritise and coordinate operational action against cyber threats**, becoming the EU reference for cybercrime investigators.

Increased cooperation with the private sector, academia and non-governmental organisations will be pivotal in acquiring **multidisciplinary expertise**, promoting innovation and keeping up with the **latest security and technological developments** that act as facilitating factors for cybercrime.

2.3. Enhance cooperation in the area of counter-terrorism

In the area of counter-terrorism, more work is required to achieve better cooperation and sharing of information. Europol will work towards an **intelligence-led**, user-driven and **sustainable** approach to **collaboration** amongst EU MS, partners and Europol on counter-terrorism issues.

The **European Counter-Terrorism Centre (ECTC)**, operational from 2016 at Europol, will bring together Europol's existing capabilities to promote and build the necessary infrastructure to **enhance information exchange** and the ability to provide **analytical and operational support**.

The **EU Internet Referral Unit (IRU)** will be used to **tackle online radicalisation**, while the increased capabilities afforded by the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (**TFTP**) and the **FIU.net** will be used to **enhance the intelligence picture on terrorism financing**. Trafficking in fire-

arms continues to be an enabler of various forms of serious and organised crime and has also emerged as a key concern in the wake of recent terrorist attacks. Europol will increase its support to MS in the fight against trafficking in firearms. Similarly, it will continue in its efforts to help MS to combat violent extremism, including in relation to the protection of vulnerable communities.

Europol will apply **secure, tailored solutions** within its **EIS and SIENA** systems to promote and enhance information exchange in the area of counter-terrorism.

Additionally, in case of a major terrorist incident, Europol will be able to provide a **First Response Network** to best support MS investigations.

2.4. Develop and manage high-quality analytical support and an evolving portfolio of cross-cutting operational capabilities

Operational and strategic analysis will remain **the basis of Europol's operational support**. Analysis products will evolve in order to remain relevant with the aim to make **best use of the information available** to Europol to provide unique and valuable intelligence to MS. This will include **identifying the needs of MS** in terms of the type of analysis needed (e.g. tactical, strategic or operational), investing in the **training of Europol analysts**, further **developing and maintaining quality standards for analytical support** and exploring new methods such as **big data analysis**. Focus will also be placed on identifying and assessing future developments of crime. The new opportunities afforded by the **integrated data management** will ensure the provision of high-quality value-adding analytical products.

Europol will step up its **contribution in all stages of the EU policy cycle**. This will involve taking into account lessons learned and recommendations from the evaluation of the EU policy cycle 2013-2017. Europol will further improve the Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (**SOCTA**), **based on the updated methodology**, to ensure that its recommendations **capture the most important threats**. Europol will support the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal

Threats (**EMPACT**) priorities with the aim to **improve the operational focus** of operational actions; efforts will also be placed in **securing the funding required** to support the implementation of the operational action plans. Finally, the **coordination of cross-border investigations** within the Empact priorities, including highly complex operations involving numerous operational actions, will be refined in order to identify the best ways to achieve operational impact.

The successful completion of the integration of **FIU.net** into Europol in 2016 will present significant opportunities to increase the engagement of national Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) in Europol's activities and to make better use of financial intelligence in national and international investigations in all priority areas.

Additionally, the use of **financial intelligence**, in combination with other information such as **PNR** records, can **enhance the intelligence picture** and provide the missing links to MS **in all priority areas**; in this respect, Europol will assume an active role in PNR information exchange.

Goal 3: Europol will be an efficient organisation with effective governance arrangements and a positive reputation

Almost 6 years after the entry into force of the Europol Council decision, Europol has successfully transitioned into an EU agency with an excellent record of compliance with EU accountability arrangements.

As any organisation, in particular in the continuing climate of economic austerity in the EU, Europol aims at achieving the **most efficient and effective use of all its resources** (human, financial, facilities, ICT, infrastructure and services). As a public organisation, Europol will continue adhering to the **highest accountability and governance standards** and will strive to introduce **further efficiency gains** in its processes.

Benefits

- Sound administration and cost-effective use of resources.
- Increased visibility for EU law enforcement cooperation results.

Europol will continue to build its profile as **a trusted partner in EU policing** and **promote the results of cross-border law enforcement cooperation** in the EU. Finally, Europol will continue **advocating for the needs of the European law enforcement** community.

3.1. Ensure effective, efficient and accountable management of Europol's resources

In 2016 and 2017 Europol, as a priority, will make the adjustments necessary for the implementation of the new Europol Regulation, with a view to ensuring a smooth transition from the Europol Council Decision.

Europol will remain vigilant in managing its human and budgetary resources in the most efficient way with a view to providing maximum operational support to MS.

Further efficiency gains will be introduced through streamlining of reporting, processes and monitoring of resource allocation (human resources and budget).

ICT and building requirements will be adjusted to support the vision and strategy, at the same time adhering to the strict

security and data protection standards of Europol. A new ICT delivery strategy will ensure the optimisation of the delivery of ICT systems in line with business needs.

Europol will maintain its high accountability standards by addressing audit and evaluation recommendations and by adhering to its internal control standards. In line with the European Union's policy, Europol will continue enhancing the transparency of its activities by facilitating access to documents through a public access register.

In order to best support MS, Europol will continue to identify and develop the right staff competencies and skills and strive to obtain the best resources.

3.2. Promote the added value and achievements of EU law enforcement cooperation to stakeholders and EU citizens

Europol will continue to build its profile as a trusted partner in EU policing and promote the benefits and the value added from cross-border law enforcement cooperation to relevant stakeholders.

Based on ongoing efforts Europol will take further actions to raise awareness about its services and the advantages of cooperation to law enforcement actors, decision-makers in the area of police matters and partners from other sectors.

As an EU agency fostering European cooperation and integration, Europol also carries the responsibility to communicate the added value of its activities to the wider European public.

The joint work of the law enforcement authorities in the EU delivers results which are hard evidence for the added value and benefits that EU cooperation offers to citizens; success stories of EU police cooperation become an indispensable contribution to the positive shaping of citizens' perceptions towards law enforcement, the European Union and its activities.

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