The European

Union Agency for

Law Enforcement

Cooperation

IN BRIEF

SEUROPOL



Who works at Europol?

Europol's workforce consists of over 1 700 people from 54 different countries in positions that cover a diverse range of areas. Europol hosts a network of over 300 liaison officers from EU Member States as well as from third countries and international organisations.



• >1 700



"

In an interconnected world of threats and evolving digital challenges, it is a privilege to lead Europol as Executive Director. Beyond its role as the European law enforcement agency, with an expanding network of international Liaison Officers, safeguarding the European Union and its citizens; Europol is also a high-tech organisation. This publication serves as a vital resource, offering comprehensive facts and figures that tell Europol's story. On the occasion of our 25th anniversary, we remain committed to our mission to deliver security in partnership.

> Catherine De Bolle / Executive Director

66% male

34% female

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.



The Hague the Netherlands



~ 300 liaison officers from EU MS and Third Parties







* 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 efficient and effective 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 six 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. including for data acquisition





operational support

Be at the forefront of law enforcement innovation and research



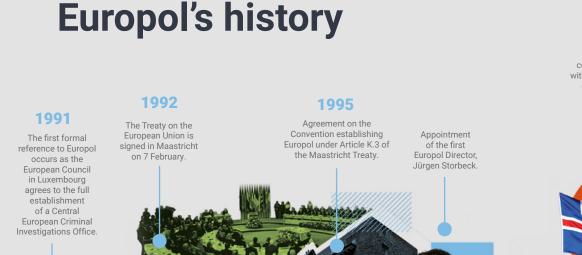
Be the model EU organisation for law enforcement cooperation



Be a platform for European policing solutions



Bring the relevant partners together for cross-border cooperation and joint action



2001

Signature of the first cooperation agreements with non-EU Member States (Iceland and Norway). 2005 Appointment of Max-Peter Ratzel as Director of Europol.

2010

Europol becomes a full EU Agency within the EU's competence under the Treaty of Lisbon.

1993

Europol Drugs Unit is established by ministerial agreement.

1994

Europol Drugs Unit starts its operations in The Hague with the mandate to assist national police forces in Criminal investigations.

1999

Europol becomes fully operational on 1 July 1999, following the ratification and adoption by all Member States of the legal acts provided for in the Europol Convention.

2002

Signature of the Cooperation Agreement with the United States.

2009

SIENA

Launch of Europol's Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA) and appointment of Rob Wainwright as Director of Europol.

Member States agree to police

cooperation on matters considered

as common interests (preventing and combatting terrorism, illegal

drug trafficking, and other serious

connection with the organisation of

a Union-wide information exchange

system within a European Police

Office (Europol).

forms of international crime) in

2011

Inauguration of the new Europol headquarters by her Majesty Beatrix, Queen of the Netherlands.

Europol supports Norway after a terrorist attack, marking the first time the Agency provides counter-terrorism operational support of this kind.

2013

Opening of the European Cybercrime Centre at Europol (EC3).

Establishment of the European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC) and the European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC) at Europol.

2016

2019

Europol is mandated by the Justice and Home Affairs ministers from all the EU Member States to create an Innovation Lab to support the law enforcement community in the area of innovation.

(1111111)

2021

Europol supports investigators in Belgium, France and the Netherlands in blocking the illegal use of Sky ECC encrypted communication by large-scale organised crime groups.

2023 Europol creates the the Integrated Operational Services Unit (within its Operational and

Services Unit (within its Operational and Analysis Centre) to provide cross-cutting support to internal and external stakeholders in relation to the EU interoperability agenda and travel intelligence.

Europol introduces the new independent advisory and monitoring function of the Fundamental Rights Officer (FRO), to produce reports and provide advice on human and fundamental rights.

2012

The States of Children of

WARRANT THE TRANSPORT

Europol supports the investigation into the terrorist attack at Burgas airport, Bulgaria.

2015

Europol sets up Task Force Fraternité after the terrorist attack in Paris in November, after which the Task Force continues its work when a terrorist attack takes place just a few months later in Brussels.

2017

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

2018

Appointment of Catherine De Bolle (Belgium) as Executive Director of Europol.

2020

Europol extends its global reach as, for the first time, Europol's agreements with third countries outnumber those with EU Member States.

Europol supports investigators in France and the Netherlands in blocking the illegal use of EncroChat encrypted communication by large-scale organised crime groups and launches the European Financial and Economic Crime Centre (EFECC).

2022

Europol launches its Digital Forensics Unit, significantly enhancing its ability to support Member States in processing and analysing digital evidence for law enforcement investigations.

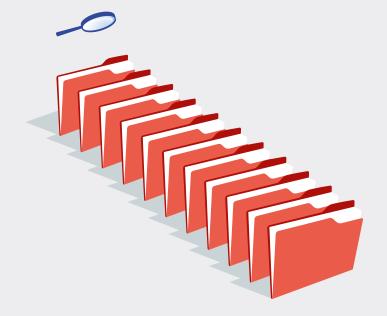
2024

The number of law enforcement authorities connected to Europol through SIENA exceeds 3 000, from more than 70 countries and international entities.

Europol appoints its first Artificial Intelligence Officer to steer the adoption of cutting-edge AI technologies, ensuring they align seamlessly with the agency's mission, as well as with strong data protection safeguards.

How does Europol decide which crime areas to focus on?

Europol supports and strengthens 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.



II EMPACT and SOCTA

Europol's priorities are informed by the Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA). This is Europol's flagship report, 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





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** **Criminal Threats.** It is a security initiative driven by EU Member States to identify, prioritise and address threats posed by organised and serious international crime. Linked to 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 application (SIENA).

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



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



As part of this process, 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 in 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)

over

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.



3 000 competent authorities connected via SIENA in 2024

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.



ms

22 000 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.



// On-the-spot support

Europol also 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**.



998 suspects arrested

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.

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.



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.



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21 new JITS supported by

Europol in 2023

JITS supported by Europol in 2023

33

// Fundamental Rights at Europol

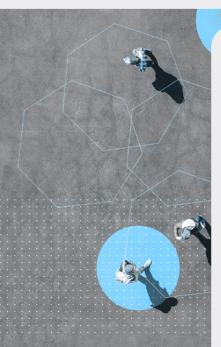
II Data protection at Europol



The amendments to the Europol Regulation introduced an independent **Fundamental Rights Officer (FRO)** to the Agency in 2023, to ensure strengthened safeguards and increased accountability.



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.



The FRO is responsible for supporting Europol in safeguarding the respect for fundamental rights in all its activities as the Agency executes its mandate. The FRO's tasks have a particular emphasis on the Agency's operational work and activities.

The FRO also produces fundamental rights assessments and reports on the development and use of new technologies, such as the ethical exploration of artificial intelligence.

The FRO also instils knowledge of fundamental rights to all Europol operational staff through comprehensive training.



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. The Agency therefore 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.

XQ.

// Partners and collaboration

WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

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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.

EU AGREEMENTS ON EUROPOL COOPERATION/ ADEQUACY DECISIONS

Agreements on the exchange and protection of 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.



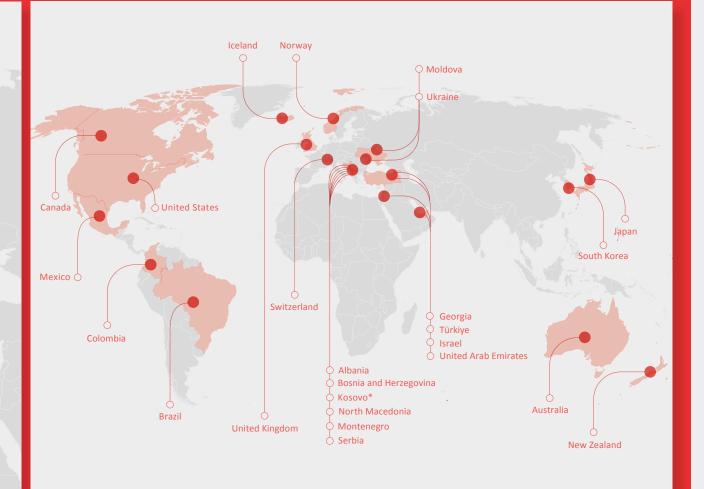
please consult the Europol website

20



> 300 Liasion Officers from all over the world

You may be able to hear over 60 languages when walking around Europol headquarters. As well as our colleagues from the European Union, we have liaison officers from all over the world. 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	—0
EU IPO	—0
EU-LISA	—0
EUNAVFOR MED	-0
Interpol	-0
OLAF	-0

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

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.

EUROPOL CENTRES



STREET PROPERTY IN

Operational and Analysis Centre

Europol's information hub

The **Operation and Analysis Centre** is the gateway of all information and intelligence channelled through Europol, via Member States and third parties. The centre provides a first-level response to law enforcement, monitoring 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 supports EMPACT, ENFAST and other stakeholders. It 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

DECODING THE EU'S MOST THREATENING CRIMINAL NETWORKS REPORT



Decoding the EU's most threatening criminal networks

All EU Member States and 17 of Europol's partner countries contributed data to identify the most threatening criminal networks in Europe. This resulted in a unique dataset of the most threatening criminal networks, with extensive information on all aspects that describe them and help assess their threat.



Key findings from the criminal mapping report:

50%

of the most threatening networks are involved in drug trafficking 71% engage in corruption 68%

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.

> drug trafficking high-risk organised crime groups organised illicit firearms property crime trafficking facilitation trafficking in of illegal human beings migration environmental crime

1 560 supported cases in 2023 by ESOCC **15 163** pieces of operational information on high-risk OCGS in 2023

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

19030 pieces of operational information on migrant smuggling in 2023

9

We disrupt the most-threatening serious and organised crime which pose the biggest threats to our security in the EU. These most threatening criminal networks are agile, borderless, controlling and destructive. That's why we work closely with Member States to carry out operations to stop these criminals in their tracks.

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

European Cybercrime Centre

Fighting against 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.







online child sexual exploitation

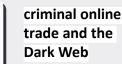




digital and document forensics







INTERNET ORGANISED CRIME THREAT ASSESSMENT (IOCTA)

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



The Joint Cybercrime Action Taskforce

Has cybercrime knows no boundaries, the **Joint Cybercrime Action Taskforce (J-CAT)** is composed of cyber liaison officers from various EU Member States, non-EU law enforcement partners and EC3.

Cybercriminals are constantly coming up with new ways to profit from their crimes at the expense of citizens, businesses and governments, across national borders and jurisdictions.

Police forces around the world thus encounter similar cybercrimes and similar criminal targets, and that calls for a coordinated, international approach to the problem.

The Taskforce members stimulate and facilitate joint identification, prioritisation, preparation, initiation and execution of cross-border investigations of high-profile cases and operations in a collaborative manner.

2013

founded

20 countries 24 law enforcement agencies



Cybercrime is becoming increasingly prevalent as a result of the digitisation of society. By working together we have developed innovative and effective solutions to deal with 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.





terrorist propaganda online

genocide/war crimes/crimes against humanity

terrorism



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.

> 20 000 total pieces of content analysed in 2023

operations supported in 2023

459

Europol provides a single system that connects all EU Member States with hosting service providers, known as **PERCI**. PERCI was launched in July 2023, this platform is a technical solution built by Europol and managed by the EU IRU to facilitate the implementation of the new regulation. Before this, the process to take down terrorist content online was entirely voluntary on the part of the tech companies.



Countering terrorism and violent extremism means considering a global perspective and being at the forefront of technological developments. We take a proactive approach in tackling the diverse phenomena that affect European security. We will continue supporting Member States and adding value to the fight against terrorism.

> Anna Sjöberg / Head of Department, European Counter Terrorism Centre

European Financial and Economic Crime Centre

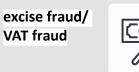
Following the money

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.





intellectual property crime



currency counterfeiting





asset recovery

Intellectual Property Crime Coordinated Coalition (IPC³)

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

EFECC coordinated:

The fourth edition of Operation Shield, a global effort to target the counterfeit and trafficking of illicit medicines. It involved authorities from 28 countries, OLAF, EUIPO, Frontex and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

28 countries (19 EU Member States) 52 organised crime groups investigated

1284 Individuals charged

EUR 64 million

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

Europol as a high-tech organisation

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.

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. Embracing AI as a game-changing technology, alongside other digital challenges, is critical to maintaining both our public safety and our social values. Europol, as an advocate of responsible AI use, has therefore taken the forward looking step to appoint a Chief AI Officer. Although we will certainly face digital challenges such as cloud transformation, and future quantum computing, we will continue to promote the responsible use of AI among law enforcement and stimulate innovation.

> **Didier Jacobs** / Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer, Head of Department ICT

DIGITAL CHALLENGES



Join us in the fight against 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.



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.



NO MORE RANSOM

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



// How to avoid falling victim to scams

Protect yourself, your family and your property by reading our crime prevention guides.







HOW TO AVOID ONLINE SCAMS

Cybercriminals are constantly looking for ways to make money at your expense. Individuals and organisations often fall prey to fraud that involve various forms of social engineering techniques, where the information required is garnered from a person rather than breaking into a system.



HOW NOT TO FALL FOR THE LOVER BOY SCAM

The 'lover boy' technique is widely used by criminals to recruit victims facing economic and social hardship into forced prostitution. The suspects prey on their victims' vulnerabilities, enticing them with expensive gifts or promises of a better life.

40





HOW TO SPOT FAKE JOB ADVERTS

Fake job adverts are deceptive schemes where scammers post job listings to lure unsuspecting jobseekers into exploitative situations. They do this by posting attractive job listings from fake companies or by misrepresenting the working conditions.





// EU Most Wanted

The EU Most Wanted list has achieved significant success in the past with a number of anonymous tips leading to actual arrests. The EU's Most Wanted was launched by the ENFAST community in January 2016 with the full support of Europol. Since then:

408 profiles of fugitives have been listed on the website 146 fugitives have been arrested

50 arrests came as a direct result of a fugitive profile being published on the website

cases successfully solved since the launch of last year's campaign in September 2023





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