

Joint Statement by the European Police Chiefs on the Future Development of Europol

Krakow, 29 April 2025

Europol plays a vital role in supporting European law enforcement agencies in combating serious international and organised crime, cybercrime and terrorism. While significant progress has been made in recent years to enhance Europol's capabilities, further efforts are necessary to keep pace with the rapidly evolving landscape of cross-border crime.

We, the Police Chiefs of the European Union, the Schengen Associated Countries and the United Kingdom, believe that Europol's success is largely attributed to its role as a central hub for exchanging and analysing crime-related information. To build on this success, it is essential that Europol be provided with the necessary conditions and resources to expand and bolster its capacities.

Given the complex and multifaceted nature of criminal threats to internal security in Europe, as well as the increasing demands on national law enforcement agencies, it is crucial to further develop Europol as the European central agency for information, analysis and operational support in criminal matters. However, we emphasize that Europol should remain a supportive coordination centre, rather than evolving into a command centre. Faced with the increasing threats to our security and Europol's limited budget, Europol is currently unable to optimally fulfil its supporting role for the Member States. Therefore, it is essential to allocate appropriate resources to optimize Europol's support activities. We call on the European Commission to take this into account when conducting the legally required evaluation of Europol.

Strengthening Europol's Operational Capacities

It is important to note that sovereignty as well as investigative and operational powers reside with each Member State. Thus, Europol should maintain its original role in supporting the law enforcement bodies of Member States in their operational endeavours and should obtain neither coercive nor autonomous investigative powers. A detailed analysis of the powers that can be conferred upon Europol without compromising the national competencies of Member States is necessary, but must remain within the legal framework of Article 88 TFEU.

We acknowledge the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) and Operational Task Forces (OTFs) as exceptionally valuable instruments in combating prioritized crime areas. Consequently, we firmly support strengthening Europol's role in facilitating the effective utilization of specific operational tools and mechanisms. However, EMPACT must remain flexible and adaptable to our varying needs and circumstances. An increase in resources for EMPACT and OTFs as well as for other collaborative instruments would be beneficial, as we see that flexible funding is crucial for effectively addressing ever-evolving criminal threats.

We, the European Police Chiefs as well as the Schengen associated countries and UK, recognize the urgent need for closer law enforcement cooperation in the fight against criminal emerging threats which combine various types of means and pose a serious challenge to European security. Closer cooperation could include common situational awareness, the close information exchange and a coordinated approach between law enforcement agencies. Therefore, and within the framework agreed between the Member States, Europol should be enabled to support and strengthen the Member States in their collaboration and enhance Europe's resilience against such threats. In this case the different responsibilities of national competent authorities in the Member States must be taken into account or shall remain unaffected, with full respect of EU primary law and especially Article 4.2 of the TEU which stipulates that national security is the sole responsibility of the Member States.

Improved Information Management and Efficiency

Europol should strengthen its support of a common information management approach and implement an overarching Information Management strategy, ultimately establishing itself as *the* EU Information Hub. This would enable Europol to effectively collect, process, and analyse information from various sources, which is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of crime fighting.

To achieve this goal, it is essential that more information be shared with Europol. Technical and legal obstacles to information sharing and analysis must be overcome, especially in relation to the processing of large or uncategorised data sets. Ultimately, information collected and processed by Europol should be readily accessible to national law enforcement agencies, thus facilitating efficient collaboration and information utilization. The need to adapt the Europol Regulation or other legal acts must be part of the ongoing political process to strengthen Europol in the future.

In this context, Europol's role in the Schengen framework and cooperation with the UK is also critical. The implementation of the interoperability agenda by Europol is paramount, as it enables the seamless exchange of information between law enforcement agencies across the EU. We explicitly support the projects which have been prioritized as crucial to operational effectiveness. Europol's strong involvement in the European criminal data landscape and Union-level systems must remain a focus, including the complete integration of the Schengen Associated Countries and an enhanced role for the UK to avoid any gaps.

Furthermore, Europol's role as a hub for information sharing can also extend to private entities. Europol could serve as a vital gateway for obtaining information from private entities, such as online service providers, financial institutions, and cryptocurrency exchanges. It is imperative that the seamless integration of data from these entities will be guaranteed, while ensuring compliance with all applicable data protection regulations. By facilitating the exchange of information between public and private entities, Europol can play a key role in enhancing the effectiveness of crime fighting and promoting a safer and more secure Europe.

Innovative Solutions and Tools

In light of the rapid development of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and quantum computing, Europol must position itself as *the* European centre at the cutting edge of technology in criminal investigations. In this capacity, it should further strengthen its foresight capabilities and provide support to our agencies in harnessing innovations. The further development of the Europol Innovation Lab is essential for bolstering Europol's analytical capabilities, effectively processing large and complex datasets and promoting the sharing of best practices among us all. Prioritizing investment in a shared IT infrastructure and the establishment of an AI Lab and specialized analysis centres is critical for achieving these objectives.

Future Financial and Human Resources

To adequately address the demands of its current core tasks and meet future challenges, Europol requires substantial financial and human resources. However, the ability of Europol to acquire the necessary specialized expertise is inherently limited by the impact this may have on Member States' capabilities.

Given the particularly constrained financial circumstances Europol is currently facing, this issue demands focused attention and thorough assessment by all Member States and the European Commission. We emphasize that it is essential to consider the resources Europol currently requires to fulfil its core tasks and legal obligations instead of making additional resources contingent solely upon future changes and legislative developments.

Signed by

The Police Chiefs of the European Union, the Schengen Associated Countries and the United Kingdom

**Annex of the Joint Statement by the European Police Chiefs
on the Future Development of Europol**
Krakow 29 April 2025

Strengthening Europol's Operational Capacities

- Europol should focus on large and complex data sets to provide timely insight for Member States, to enhance collaboration tools (Joint Operational Analysis Case, QUEST+, etc.), to strengthen capacities for countering financial crimes and the acquisition of illicit assets (including cryptocurrencies) and to improve access to telecommunications and banking data of private parties while extending retention periods and intensifying cooperation with online service providers.
- The Police Chiefs strongly support the implementation of the recommendations of the High-Level Group on access to data (HLG).
- Strengthen Europol's cooperation with other EU agencies to avoid duplication, international organisations (e.g. the UN, Interpol) and third countries to enhance data pools.
- Expand Europol's role in crime prevention within its mandate by becoming a centre of excellence and best practice for preventing relevant crimes, fostering research partnerships and increasing public awareness.
- Improve the support provided by Europol to Member States by proactively identifying emerging threats and optimizing the allocation of EMPACT funds.

Improved Information Management and Efficiency

- Europol should strengthen its role as a central service provider by making law enforcement tools available to all Member States (e.g. SIENA and Quest+).
- Ensuring EU interoperability is crucial, taking into consideration the agency's key role in the crime data landscape. Therefore, it is important to implement EU interoperability plans and ensure Europol's access to Union-level systems (e.g. ETIAS, EES, Eurodac, EPRIS). Likewise, concerted efforts should be made to exploit the full potential of existing and future regulatory frameworks concerning crime-related information processing and exchange (e.g. Information Exchange Directive, PRÜM II Regulation, Regulation on the screening of third-country nationals at the external borders).
- Ensure and strengthen both automated and biometric data processing with high standards of data protection by developing automated data exchange systems, such as the Forensic Automation Framework, in line with EU legislation.
- Enable rapid, standardized data transfers as well as responses to Member States' queries.

- Enhance Europol's capacity to support law enforcement in responding to emerging threats surrounding 'new' technology (e.g. AI, quantum technologies, large language models, metaverse, facial recognition, drones, surveillance systems, advanced evidence analysis tools).
- A secure EU infrastructure (cloud) that law enforcement agencies can easily connect to in order to manage our police data within the EU.
- Make information accessible to third parties in line with an agreement with Member States, tailored to their needs, to foster mutual benefits and build a strong law enforcement ecosystem, in accordance with EU legislation.

Innovative Solutions and Tools

- Expansion and financial support of the Europol Innovation Lab and the EU Clearing Board for useful operability of innovative tools and solutions.
- Making both Europol's innovative tools and professional competences in a wide variety of technical and scientific areas available to the Member States to stimulate operational effectiveness and efficiency improvement among them.
- Promote a well-developed AI Lab where law enforcement agencies, academia and the private sector collaborate around AI use cases.
- Expand AI use in analysis, operational support and internal management within the EU legal framework, strengthen decryption capabilities of Member States and further develop and integrate the Universal Messaging Format (UMF) with national IT systems of the Member States to achieve faster processing of data provided by Member States and private parties.
- Development by Europol of a secure European police cloud solution for data exchange and analysis, which can be accessed by competent law enforcement authorities.

Future Financial and Human Resources

- Support and strengthen analytical instruments and services with an increase in human and financial resources while assessing Member States capacities to appropriately second experts, enabling recruitment beyond law enforcement, promoting talent management and investing in attracting, training and retaining experts.
- Introduction of a training programme to increase the number of qualified analysts at Europol with a view to harmonizing the methodology and aligning operational capabilities in the Member States.
- Europol should develop specialized training for Law Enforcement Agencies (for instance by providing e-learning platforms), evaluate Europol's training capacity, streamline its relation with CEPOL and prioritize staff training through CEPOL.

Law Enforcement Agencies – Signatures (by country alphabetic order)

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| <p>Austria Dr. Franz Ruf Director General for Public Security Federal Ministry of the Interior</p> |  |
| <p>Belgium Eric Snoeck Commissioner General Federal Police</p> |  |
| <p>Bulgaria Miroslav Rashkov Acting Secretary General Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria</p> |  |
| <p>Czech Republic Martin Vondrášek Police President Police of the Czech Republic</p> |  |
| <p>Croatia Nikola Milina General Police Director General Police Directorate, Ministry of the Interior</p> |  |
| <p>Cyprus Themistos Arnaoutis Chief of Cyprus Police Cyprus Police</p> |  |
| <p>Denmark Thorkild Fogde National Commissioner of the Danish Police Danish National Police</p> |  |
| <p>Estonia Egert Belitšev Director General Estonian Police and Border Guard</p> |  |
| <p>Finland Ilkka Koskimäki National Police Commissioner of Finland National Police Board of Finland</p> |  |

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| <p style="text-align: center;">France Virginie Brunner Deputy Director General of Police Police Nationale</p> |  |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Germany Holger Münch President Federal Criminal Police Office-BKA</p> |  |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Greece Dimitrios Mallios Chief of Hellenic Police Hellenic Police</p> |  |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Hungary Csaba Tarcsa Operational Deputy High Commissioner Commander of the Rapid Response and Special Police Services of Hungary Rapid Response and Special Police Services of Hungary</p> |  |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Iceland Sigríður Björk Guðjónsdóttir National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police Icelandic Police</p> |  |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Ireland Michael McElgunn Assistant Commissioner Garda National Crime and Security Intelligence Service</p> |  |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Italy Rafaelle Grassi Deputy Chief of Police Central Criminal Police Directorate</p> |  |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Latvia Armands Ruks Chief of the State Police of Latvia The State Police of Latvia</p> |  |

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| <p>Liechtenstein Jules Hoch Commissioner Liechtenstein National Police</p> |  |
| <p>Lithuania Arūnas Paulauskas Police Commissioner General Police Department under MOI of the Republic of Lithuania</p> |  |
| <p>Luxembourg Pascal Peters Director General of the Luxembourgish Police Police grand-ducale</p> |  |
| <p>Malta Angelo Gafa Commissioner Of Police Malta Police Force</p> |  |
| <p>Netherlands Janny Corrinny Knol Chief of Police Netherlands Police</p> |  |
| <p>Norway Tone Vangen Deputy National Police Commissioner National Police Directorate (of Norway)</p> |  |
| <p>Poland Marek Boroń Police Commander-in-Chief National Police Headquarters</p> |  |
| <p>Portugal Luís Neves National Director Polícia Judiciária - Portuguese Criminal Police</p> |  |

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| <p align="center">Romania Benone-Marian MATEI General Inspector of the Romanian Police The Romanian Police</p> |  |
| <p align="center">Slovak Republic Jana MAŠKAROVÁ President Police Force</p> |  |
| <p align="center">Slovenia Jože Senica Assistant Director General of the Police Ministry of the Interior – Police</p> |  |
| <p align="center">Spain Francisco Pardo Piqueras Director General Spanish National Police</p> |  |
| <p align="center">Sweden Stefan Hector Deputy National Police Commissioner Swedish Police Authority</p> |  |
| <p align="center">Switzerland Simon Spörri Vice Director and Head of International Police Cooperation Federal Office of Police Fedpol</p> |  |
| <p align="center">United Kingdom Graeme Biggar Director General National Crime Agency</p> |  |