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**NOTE**

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From:	Presidency
To:	Law Enforcement Working Party
Subject:	Results of a study on the costs of hosting and deploying visiting police delegations in connections with football matches (and other sports events) with an international dimension

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Delegations will find in annex a note from the Presidency presenting the outcome of a study on the average costs incurred when hosting and deploying visiting police delegations in connection with football matches with an international dimension. Delegations are invited to take note of the study findings and conclusions regarding the importance of all Member States continuing to work together on the basis of Council Resolution 2010/C 165/01<sup>1</sup>, inter alia by hosting and deploying visiting police delegations on the basis of a dynamic risk assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 165, 24.6.2010, p. 1.

**Results of a study on the costs of hosting and deploying visiting police delegations in connections with football matches (and other sports events) with an international dimension**

1. Over the past two decades, the Council has adopted a series of Decisions, Resolutions and Conclusions aimed at reducing safety and security risks in connection with sports events, in particular football matches with an international dimension. Each of these documents has focused on the importance of international police cooperation as a means of preventing and countering football-related violence and other misbehaviour in connection with international football matches and UEFA Champions League and Europa League matches involving one or more Member States.
2. The principle documents in this area are:
  - Council Decision 2002/348/JHA, as amended by Council Decision 2007/412/JHA of 12 June 2007<sup>2</sup>, which established the European network of National Football Information Points (NFIP) as the mandatory channel for sharing police and other information regarding football matches with an international dimension; and
  - Council Resolution 2010/C 165/01, to which is annexed the most recent version of the Handbook on international police cooperation in connection with football matches with an international dimension, containing established good practice on related matters, notably the importance of and practical arrangements for hosting and deploying visiting police delegations.

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<sup>2</sup> OJ L 155, 15.6.2007, p. 76.

3. The Handbook reflects established good practice, stressing the vital role of visiting police delegations in terms of providing:
- host police commanders with expert advice on the character and behaviour of visiting supporters and any associated risks;
  - key information crucial to ensuring an informed and appropriate dynamic risk assessment process;
  - assistance in the efficient management/deployment of police resources in accordance with risk assessment and police budget considerations;
  - personnel with the ability and experience in communicating effectively with visiting supporters and reducing any associated emerging risks; and,
  - in the event of any incidents, personnel able to identify visiting offenders.
4. While the deployment of such police delegations provides added value to the host policing operation, it is also of benefit to the visiting police and other authorities in terms of gathering evidence of any repeated misbehaviour by visiting fans, influencing events at domestic matches and enhancing their country's international reputation.
5. The value of hosting and deploying visiting police delegations has been universally endorsed by the authorities organising major sports events, in particular football tournaments and matches, and by around 350 front-line football policing practitioners who have participated in seven PE-FPTP (Pan-European Policing Football Training Project) events delivered as part of an EU-funded project and, in respect of the last two events, under the auspices of CEPOL.
6. Those training events and some anecdotal reports have highlighted an apparently increasing tendency on the part of some police and other authorities to decline to send or to host police delegations as a means of making budgetary savings in a challenging financial climate. The impact of this tendency on levels of European football violence and misbehaviour and on the effectiveness of international police cooperation in this important area has generated widespread concern among both European policy makers and front-line policing practitioners.

7. In response to these concerns, the European Think Tank of Football Safety and Security Experts decided at its meeting of May 2013, held in Vilnius, Lithuania, to conduct a survey among EU Member States (MS), members of the Think Tank and relevant third countries, with the aim of obtaining more information on the average costs currently incurred in connection with the deployment of visiting police delegations under the provisions set out in Council Resolution 2010/C 165/01.
8. On behalf of the Think Tank, a questionnaire was prepared seeking detailed information on the costs incurred in deploying and hosting visiting police delegations.
9. The questionnaire was distributed to the NFIPs of Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden and the UK.

## Study Findings

10. It was clear from the study that police forces across Europe share the view that visiting police delegations are highly valuable and contribute extensively to the overall policing operation. Whilst, in practice, the actual cost incurred by deploying and hosting a visiting police delegation varies according to the size, duration and distance involved in each deployment, it was agreed that the costs incurred are low when compared with the benefits gained by host police commanders. These benefits include expert advice to assist in determining a risk-assessment based deployment of police forces, understanding the culture and behaviour of visiting supporters, undertaking an informed dynamic risk assessment of any potential risks, and effective communication with visiting supporters.
11. The study revealed that the average size and duration of a visiting police delegation was two police officers ("spotters") deployed for two days, which involved one overnight stay in the host country.
12. The average cost incurred in hosting a visiting delegation was reported to be **EUR 282 per delegation**. This covers accommodation and internal travel costs.
13. The average cost incurred in deploying a police delegation was reported to be **EUR 850 per delegation**. This covers international travel costs and officer expenses.

14. Therefore, the average policing cost for hosting and deploying a visiting police delegation for the home and away legs of, say, a UEFA Champions League or Europa League match, is only around EUR 1 100 for each police authority.

## **Study Conclusions**

15. Based on the average costs involved in hosting and deploying visiting police delegations, and notwithstanding any variations in terms of distance travelled, size of delegation or duration of stay, the study reveals that the costs involved represent a modest investment compared with the scale of European policing budgets generally and the operational benefits to be derived from deploying and hosting police delegations.
16. Moreover, European experience demonstrates that deploying and hosting visiting police delegations can also be of benefit in terms of potential resource savings concerning football-related crowd management/public order operations, given the cost that would be incurred as a result of deploying additional host police resources to compensate for the absence of authoritative information on the number of visiting supporters and their behaviour, and the lack of expert advice and support in preventing the escalation of any emerging risks.
17. In the current financial climate there are expectations that policing costs will not be immune to cuts. This has resulted in some policing agencies exploring whether football clubs participating in European competitions should meet the costs of visiting police delegations. This may be an understandable reaction; however, it raises important ethical issues. Football-related violence is crime, and therefore the primary responsibility of governments and the police. Moreover, the financial and operational independence of the police must not only be free of the vested and commercial interest of football clubs, but must also be widely perceived as such.
18. Football-related violence continues to pose a threat to the safety and security of fellow football supporters and the wider community. For example, UEFA data reveals that incidents occur in connection with around forty per cent of all Champions League and Europa League fixtures, many of which are curtailed in severity as a result of the presence of visiting police delegations. The number and seriousness of these incidents would increase dramatically in the event of any reduction in levels of international police cooperation.

19. At present, UEFA club competitions alone involve 680 Champions League and Europa League matches played across Europe each year. This, coupled with the annual calendar of UEFA European Championship or FIFA World Cup qualifying matches and international friendly matches, involves millions of football supporters travelling across the Continent annually. The need to ensure maximum levels of international police cooperation is self-evident in terms of ensuring that the host police commanders have access to expert advice and support from visiting police delegations, both in respect of assessing threats and reducing risk levels through effective dialogue strategies with visiting supporters, and otherwise helping to create an inclusive and welcoming environment.
20. Looking ahead, France will be hosting an expanded Euro 2016 European Championships while the Euro 2020 tournament finals will involve football matches in London, Baku, Munich, Rome, Saint Petersburg, Copenhagen, Bucharest, Amsterdam, Dublin, Bilbao, Budapest, Brussels and Glasgow. Each of these major events will entail the travel of tens of thousands of football supporters across Europe and necessitate an unparalleled degree of police cooperation and the deployment of visiting police delegations.
21. The study reinforces the importance of the public authorities investing wisely and innovatively in the quality of policing football operations. Hosting and deploying visiting police delegations has proven to be a highly effective means of reducing football-related risks and associated policing costs. The study confirms that the modest financial investment involved represents a highly cost-effective method of maximising international police cooperation while making European football safe, secure and welcoming for the millions that attend football matches and the host communities that host the events.
22. In conclusion, it is important that all Member States continue to work together on the basis of Council Resolution 2010/C 165/01, inter alia by hosting and deploying visiting police delegations on the basis of a dynamic risk assessment.