

**Brussels, 15 February 2019  
(OR. en)**

**5572/19**

**LIMITE**

**COSI 21  
JAI 121  
ENFOPOL 79  
ENFOCUSTOM 35**

**NOTE**

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**From:** Presidency  
**To:** Delegations

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**Subject:** Policing in a Connected World: Novel Actionable Information  
- Thematic discussion

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The opportunities offered by rapid technological developments and global connectivity are associated with growing challenges for public authorities in fulfilling their tasks in the virtual space. To keep up with the dynamics of the criminal environment in the digital age and also benefit from technological developments, it is necessary that all law enforcement authorities, including front line officers recognise, understand and use data in day-to-day work.

Since the 1990s there has been an exponential growth of data sharing and of ways to produce new data in an ever more connected world. Since the early 21<sup>st</sup> century there has been an explosion in the number of digital devices used, each generating more data, more diverse and complex types of data, and connections between data. Moreover, the rapid evolution of information and communication technology offers opportunities to process data quicker and more sophisticatedly.

Key challenges for law enforcement are i.a.:

- to give sense to data, i.e. turning raw data into information and intelligence;
- to identify the relevant data;
- to discover new patterns in data, i.e. create value from structured and unstructured data;
- to make use of the new opportunities offered by the volume and diversity of data;
- to combine, analyse and interpret data to generate operational actions;
- to ensure consistency in the way of working;
- to leverage the opportunities offered by new ICT in an appropriate manner, i.e. understand the role data and information should play in law enforcement work and apply it.

In this respect, the Presidency has initiated a discussion on the opportunities that **the exchange of knowledge** in handling data between law enforcement authorities can offer in addressing new realities. This exchange of knowledge should be supported by the establishment of a network of experts in (criminal) analysis and a technical platform for knowledge sharing and ICT collaboration on the handling of data by LEA.

At their informal meeting held in Bucharest on 7 and 8 February 2019, Ministers expressed broad support for the Presidency initiative and confirmed the necessity to harvest the benefits of the digital transformation and to invest in technological capacities. Further to this debate, the Presidency would like to bring further details on the concept of the Novel Actionable Information (NAI)<sup>1</sup> for discussion to COSI. The intention of the Presidency is to table Council conclusions on this matter with a view to adoption by June 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> NAI means creating added value to the available data. It is closely linked to (criminal) analysis which is defined as the rigorous process using different techniques to transform LE data and information into actionable intelligence.

In support of this process, on 30 and 31 October 2018, Europol organised a workshop with analysts and investigators from Member States to define the user requirements for improving (criminal) analysis. The outcome was presented to COSI Support Group on 10 December 2018.<sup>2</sup>

On 14 and 15 February 2019, another workshop for law enforcement analysts took place at Europol, under the guidance of the Romanian Presidency. The topics of discussions for the workshops were guided by the Member States' priorities to enhance (criminal) analysis. A questionnaire rolled out by the Romanian Presidency, clarifying the needs and the status of analysis in Member States, served as an input for the discussions. The preliminary outcome of discussions indicates that Member States aim at developing a platform on (criminal) analysis in order to share knowledge, initiatives, expertise and tools. More workshops are planned to be organised by Europol during 2019 to further define the role and scope of (criminal) analysis and enhance the collaboration and exchange of knowledge between Member States and Europol.

In view of the above, the Presidency submits hereby for the consideration of COSI the following elements that may form the basis for preparing such Council conclusions.

1. In a time of increasing digital transformation the necessity for innovation and cooperation is evident. The global and networked digital world is without borders and creates increasingly sophisticated threats and challenges to the internal security of the European Union, which is proving increasingly more difficult to be targeted from a national stance.
2. In this context, operational cooperation needs to incorporate not only information exchange but also knowledge exchange with a concept of "digital data: *learn to find and learn to use*".
3. Sharing *knowledge* on processes, best practices and the mechanisms to utilise data would benefit law enforcement authorities enabling and creating a more efficient, proactive and coherent working environment.
4. As a first step, a network of experts in (criminal) analysis should be created to share best practice, knowledge and standards on how the challenges can be addressed.

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<sup>2</sup> 15200/1/18 REV 1

5. This network needs to be supported by a technical platform for knowledge sharing and ICT collaboration on the handling of data by LEA. It could assist in a more efficient and proactive method to combat and prevent criminal activity by means of easy access to shared experience and expertise.
6. Implementing and managing a platform for knowledge sharing and ICT collaboration would enable Member States, Agencies and networks to:
  - a) align ways of performing (criminal) analysis between law enforcement authorities across the EU,
  - b) support sharing ICT resources in support of (criminal) analysis,
  - c) design, update and use procedures, methodologies, guidelines, manuals and software programmes on the topic of data handling,
  - d) share lessons learned, best practices and working scenarios referring to data handling,
  - e) post and search for competences and initiatives in various areas of expertise related to data handling.
7. The functionalities for the platform should be identified by the law enforcement community at workshops organised by the Presidency in cooperation with Europol. They should include at least the following pillars:
  - a) practitioner competences,
  - b) e-library (for procedures, guidelines, manuals, protocols, etc.),
  - c) toolbox platform (containing collection of software, algorithms and parameters, etc.)
  - d) initiatives (actions, projects related to knowledge development).

8. Taking into account and making best use of the already available Europol tools<sup>3</sup>, Europol would be in an advantageous position to develop and implement a platform for knowledge sharing and ICT collaboration.
9. All actors involved (Member States, Agencies and networks) would be invited to contribute to the development of initiatives on the platform for knowledge sharing and ICT collaboration by sharing, testing, promoting, making use and keeping up-to-date the content connected to (criminal) analysis, digitalisation and large volume data.
10. CEPOL would use the collaborative platform to select the most challenging topics thus contributing to a greater awareness and knowledge.
11. EUROJUST could use the platform whilst ensuring the synchronisation with other initiatives of magistrates.
12. EUROPOL would be invited to create a roadmap for the development of the technical platform for knowledge sharing and ICT collaboration building on its experience with knowledge sharing and expert platforms, e.g. the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE) and SIRIUS, which would be presented in COSI by the end of 2019.
13. The development of a platform for knowledge sharing and ICT collaboration requires the allocation of adequate resources, as called for by the European Council in October 2018<sup>4</sup>.

***COSI is invited to exchange views on the elements outlined above further detailing the NAI initiative with a view to prepare draft Council conclusions, as well as to suggest any other aspects that should be addressed therein.***

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<sup>3</sup> Work on the development of the platform should be based upon the concepts already available at Europol such as the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE) and SIRIUS. The possibility to make use of and further develop already existing tools should be taken into account in line with the user requirements for the new platform and available resources.

<sup>4</sup> 'Provide Member States' law enforcement authorities, Europol and Eurojust with adequate resources to face new challenges posed by technological developments and the evolving security threat landscape, including through pooling of equipment, enhanced partnerships with the private sector, interagency cooperation and improved access to data'.