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2019

Consolidated Annual Activity Report

Europol Public Information

Table of contents

Acronyms and abbreviations.....	3
Management Board’s analysis and assessment.....	4
Executive Summary	8
Introduction.....	11
Part I. Achievements of the year	13
1.1. Multi-Annual Strategic Priorities	13
Activity 1. Development of operational ICT capabilities.....	15
Activity 2. Information Hub.....	19
Activity 3. Combating Serious and Organised Crime.....	22
Activity 4. Combating Cyber Crime.	26
Activity 5. Counter-terrorism.	30
Activity 6. Provision of cross-cutting operational capabilities.	34
Activity 7. Governance, support and administration.	39
Part II. Management.....	42
2.1. Management Board	42
2.2. Budgetary and Financial management	42
2.3. Human Resources management	49
2.4. Internal Audit management	51
2.5. External Audit management	53
2.6. Follow up of recommendations and action plans for audits.....	55
2.7. Follow up of observations from the discharge authority	56
Part III. Assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control systems ...	57
3.1. Critical risks in the Programming Document 2019-2021	57
3.2. Risk Management.....	57
3.3. Compliance and effectiveness of the Europol Internal Control System	58
Part IV. Management assurance	60
4.1. Review of the elements supporting assurance	60
4.2. Reservations.....	60
Part V. Declaration of Assurance.....	61

Europol Public Information

Annexes

Annex I. Corporate Performance Indicators.....	63
Annex II. Activity Based Budgeting (ABB) and Costing (ABC)	69
Annex III. Establishment Plan and Human Resources Management	70
Annex IV. Organisational Chart.....	75
Annex V. Provisional Accounts	76
Annex VI. Main issues discussed and decisions taken by the Management Board.....	82
Annex VII. Overview of audit recommendations issued by the IAC.....	85
Annex VIII. De-prioritised Work Programme initiatives and actions.....	89

Europol Public Information

Acronyms and abbreviations

ABB	Activity Based Budgeting	IAM	Identity and Access Management
ABC	Activity Based Costing	ICF	Internal Control Framework
AP	Analytical Project	ICS	Internal Control System
AST	Assistant	ICT	Information and Communications Technology
BPL	Basic Protection Level	IRMA	Internet Referral Management Application
CAAR	Consolidated Annual Activity Report	ISF	Internal Security Fund
CBCC	Cross Border Crime Checks	JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear	JPSG	Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group
CEPOL	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training	JRC	EU Joint Research Centre
CMR	Cross-match reports	LEA	Law Enforcement Agency
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy	MENA	Mediterranean and North African
CT	Counter-Terrorism	MS	Member State
ECTC	European Counter Terrorism Centre	MTIC	Missing Trader Intra-Community
EDPS	European Data Protection Supervisor	NEO	New Environment for Operations
EEAS	European External Action Service	OAP	Operational Action Plans
EES	Entry-Exit System	OSINT	Open Sources Intelligence
EFECC	European Financial and Economic Crime Centre	OSP	Online Service Providers
EIS	Europol Information System	OTF	Operational Task Force
ELO	Europol Liaison Officer	PNR	Passenger Name Record
EMPACT	European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats	QUEST	Querying Europol's systems
EMSC	European Migrant Smuggling Centre	SHN	SIENA hit notifications
ENISA	European Network and Information Security Agency	SIENA	Secure Information Exchange Network Application
EPE	Europol Platform for Experts	SIS	Schengen Information System
ESOCC	European Serious and Organised Crime Centre	SNE	Seconded National Expert
ETIAS	European Travel Information and Authorisation System	SOC	Serious Organized Crime
EUIPO	EU Intellectual Property Office	TA	Temporary Agent
EUIRU	European Internet Referral Unit	TF	Task Force
EUNAVFOR	European Union Naval Force	TFTP	Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme
FITE	Forensics IT Environment	THB	Trafficking of Human Beings
FR	Financial Regulation	TP	Third Party
HENU	Heads of Europol National Units	UMF	Universal Messaging Format
HVT	High Value Target	USE	Unified Search Engine
IAC	Internal Audit Capability	VIS	VISA Information System
		WB	Western Balkans

Management Board's analysis and assessment

The Management Board of Europol (MB) takes note of the Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) for the financial year 2019, submitted by the Executive Director of Europol in accordance with Article 16(5)(g) of the Europol Regulation (ER) and Article 48 of the Financial Regulation applicable to Europol.

In analysing and assessing the CAAR 2019, the MB makes the following observations:

- The report contains a comprehensive account of the activities carried out by Europol in implementing its mandate during 2019.
- The broader category of Corporate Performance Indicators provides a consolidated overview of the results achieved at activity level in relation to the objectives deriving from Europol's strategy and the key performance indicators set in the Work Programme 2019, and allows for a consistent impact assessment of Europol's performance in several areas.
- The MB notes, with respect to the overall implementation of the Work Programme 2019, that:
 - o According to their feedback, users' satisfaction with Europol's products and services and with how Europol's work contributed to achieve operational outcomes, is very high, like in 2018, thereby confirming the continued trust of Member States in Europol's ability to support their action in preventing and combating serious organised crime and terrorism;
 - o Overall, Europol delivered successfully, as the results achieved under each activity mostly reached or exceeded the targets, or performance was at least better than in the previous year, while cooperation with private partners features amongst the few areas under which results failed to achieve the target and were worse than in the previous year;
 - o The new Internal Control System (ICS) adopted by the MB in 2018 has been assessed as present and functioning in an integrated manner across the organisation, thanks to regular qualitative and quantitative monitoring of its components in 2019;
 - o Europol continued, with a budget increased by € 8.1M compared to 2018, to accomplish excellent financial resources implementation levels pertaining to the commitment rate (99.4%), the payment rate (86.6%) and a 90.8% implementation of carry-forwards, i.e. only slightly below the levels reached in 2018;
 - o The percentage of late payments, however, came up to 21.3%, although such payments represented 4.6% in terms of value, which is below the 5% 2019 target;
 - o While progress was achieved with regard to gender representation, with a percentage of female staff moving up to 34% (33% in 2018), various factors have influenced the vacancy rate and the percentage of staff turnover, which were both much higher than in 2018.
- The MB notes the important results achieved by the Agency in its operational activities and with regard to its core operational systems. Such results illustrate Europol's prominent role as the EU information hub and leading operational support centre for Member States' competent authorities, and as the key agency in the EU's internal security architecture. The MB underlines, amongst others:
 - The significant amount and quality of services and products - often at an increased level compared to the previous year - provided to the national competent authorities by the Europol Operational Centre, the Europol Serious and Organised Crime Centre (ESOCC), the European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) alongside the Joint Cybercrime Action Taskforce (J-CAT), the European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC); the European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC);

Europol Public Information

- The importance of Europol's High Value Targets (HVT) and Operational Task Forces (OTF) approach is illustrated by the operational successes experienced in 2019, in support to Member States' investigations against individuals and criminal organisations constituting the highest serious and organised crime threats to the national and common security;
- The increasing results achieved by the European Internet Referral Unit (EUIRU), for instance relating to the volume of assessed content related to migrant smuggling, or the volume of content relating to terrorism and violent extremism, exceeding the 2019 target, although, due to technological limitations of the IRMa platform, the rate of successful removals could not be measured;
- The observed increase in Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) data exchange and the substantial growth in the number of requests received by Europol from FIUs compared to 2018, as a result of Europol's efforts in spite of the uncertainties linked to the hosting of the FIU.net;
- The growing results achieved in cross-horizontal services, as reflected for instance by the number of organised Action Days and of strategic and operational reports - which largely exceeded targets and were facilitated by the introduction of a new automated data extraction tool -, as well as the significant number of deployed mobile offices, to enable agile handling of operational information and cross-checking on the spot, including mobile device examination kit, whose number exceed the 2019 target;
- The significant increase in the number of SIENA messages exchanged - and in the number of cases initiated - by Member States, Third Parties and Europol, as well as the delivery of the new SIENA 4.0 version, which has brought information management improvements of key importance to all SIENA users;
- The overall increase use of the Europol Information System (EIS), as reflected by the number of objects, searches and Cross-Border Crime Checks, evidencing the continuous confidence across the Member States' competent authorities in the value of sharing information with and through Europol;
- The rollout of a new version of the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE), improving user-friendliness and providing new functionalities, the steady increase in the number of EPE users, and the opening of new platforms in response to users' needs, such as the CONAN platform to support exchange of practice and expertise in the area of crime analysis;
- The 'Europol Roadmap on EU Interoperability' endorsed by the MB, which aims to align and coordinate Europol's internal resources and efforts with developments linked to the EU Interoperability and related information systems, such as SIS, VIS, Eurodac, ETIAS, EES, and SIRENE. In 2019, amongst others, progress was made towards enabling Europol's searches in SIS II and its access to VIS, with eu-LISA's support.
- The high amount of operational contributions received from third States, reflecting - amongst other indicators - the increasing operational value of Europol's cooperation with external partners in light of the External Strategy 2017-2020; further, Europol's network of external partners was widened by the conclusion of two new working arrangements, with the New Zealand Police and EMSA (European Maritime Safety Agency);
- The significant operational results achieved by Europol in cooperation with the other JHA Agencies and the concrete steps taken to strengthen coordination, for instance with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (EBCGA) and eu-LISA. Further, the positive contribution provided by the JHA Agencies Network chaired by Europol in 2019 through the preparation of a strategy paper on the future of the EU Security Architecture and the role of JHA agencies.

Europol Public Information

- The MB also notes that, in 2019, the European Parliament granted discharge to the Executive Director of Europol with respect to the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2017, and the discharge proceedings in relation to the financial year 2018 were well underway at the end of 2019. Further, no critical or very important audit findings were pending at year-end in relation to the ECA, the IAS or the European Ombudsman, and there was good progress concerning the follow-up to IAC audit recommendations.
- The MB assesses that Europol has established a stable and positive relationship with the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group (JPSG), thereby enabling the latter to exercise its democratic control and parliamentary oversight on the Agency activities in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the ER. Further, pursuant to Article 14(4) of the ER, and in line with the scenario set out by the MB, designated JPSG representatives participated as observers in two MB meetings, in February and September 2019.
- The MB takes note of the efforts to improve key operational, financial and human resources aspects mentioned in the CAAR and recommends Europol to continue this work, particularly with regard to:
 - o Progressing with the consolidation of Europol's forensics capabilities and, more specifically the Forensics IT Environment (FITE) in compliance with the applicable security and data protection requirements, and to pursuing the development of smart and innovative capabilities for further exposure to the Member States;
 - o Maintaining the achieved overall outstanding financial and human resource management level, while improving the payment rate of Europol's budget, reducing the level of late payments, and decreasing the vacancy rate;
 - o Taking appropriate measures to mitigate the staff turnover rate and to monitor sick leave, for both indicators are key to assess and secure Europol staff working conditions and well-being;
 - o Consolidating and further promoting Europol's appearance in the media (e.g. written press, TV, radio broadcasting) with a view to increasing public awareness about the Agency's contribution to the Union's internal security, thereby consolidating and strengthening its visibility.
- The MB notes that, in some areas, cooperation with private partners could not materialise at the expected level, or had to be deprioritised, due to the limitations arising from the current legal framework. In this context, the Board wishes to recall that, on 2 December 2019, in its conclusions on "Europol's cooperation with private parties", the JHA Council acknowledged the urgent operational need for Europol to request and receive data directly from private parties, while pointing out that any Member State concerned by the data transmitted to Europol by a private party must be informed through its Europol National Unit (ENU) as soon as possible.
- Therefore, the MB welcomes the Commission's initiative to issue a new legislative proposal "*Strengthen the Europol mandate in order to reinforce operational police cooperation*" by the end of 2020. Further, the Board looks forward to the upcoming preparatory consultations to ensure that the ER recast responds to the actual Agency's needs, reflects its expertise, and benefits from the national practitioners' perspective.
- The MB notes with concern that, notwithstanding the excellent results achieved in 2019, a number of important projects and activities had to be deprioritised, thus they could not materialise, since the budget and establishment plan allocated to the Agency for 2019 were significantly lower than the initial estimates and required an in-depth revision of the annual Work Programme. Similarly, the actual budgetary and staffing levels for 2020 have affected the annual Work Programme, thus leading, this year as well, to deprioritising a number of activities and to reducing the level of ambition of others. Further, the Commission's request to reduce the staffing levels for Contract Agents (CAs) has compounded the budget and

Europol Public Information

human resource challenges faced by the Agency, since Europol deferred the recruitment of all CA vacancies in 2019, thus affecting business continuity in horizontal support areas.

- Looking further into the future, notwithstanding its full understanding of the exceptional challenges posed by the COVID-19 outbreak to the Union and its Institutions, the MB wishes to reiterate its concerns regarding Europol's 2021-2027 financial outlook. As crime threats remain dynamic and organised crime groups capitalise on new emerging opportunities, it is essential to enable the Agency to fulfil its mission in support to the Security Union by providing it with a sustainable budget for 2021 and the years to come.
- The MB takes note that the Europol Executive Director, Ms Catherine De Bolle, has no critical issues to report, which would affect the presentation of the annual accounts for the financial year 2019 to the discharge authority.
- The MB congratulates the Executive Director on the progress made in 2019 towards the implementation of the Europol Strategy 2020+. Amongst others, preparations included the setting up of the Strategy Implementation Steering Committee (SISC), a task force in charge of designing the organisational structure of the new European Financial and Economic Crime Centre (EFECC), a Task Force on crime analysis, and a Programme Board responsible for designing a common vision of information management at Europol.

The MB attaches this assessment to the CAAR 2019 for submission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission, the Court of Auditors, the national parliaments and the JPSG, in accordance with Articles 11(1)(c) and 51(3)(d) of the ER, and Article 48(2) of the Financial Regulation applicable to Europol.

For the Management Board,



Andrei Linta
Chairperson

Executive Summary

Strategy 2020+

- A Strategy Implementation Steering Committee (SISC) was established to support the Executive Director overseeing the different streams of work.
- Significant progress was made in the different task forces and programmes related to the Strategic Priorities: preparatory work for the re-organisation of the European Serious and Organised Crime Centre (ESOCC) and for the establishment of the European Financial and Economic Crime Centre (EFECC), reinforcement of Europol's Analysis Capabilities, creation of a Finance Unit, adjusting the Strategy and External Affairs Unit, and further defining the scope and activities for the Information Management and Innovation work streams.

Operational activities

- Europol's Operational Centre continued to improve its speed of response to EU MS information requests and, on average, replied to first line requests in 6.6 days. Additionally, the number of operational contributions to process was above 80k (+8% compared to 2018) and more than 9,300 operational reports were produced by staff in the Operational Centre. Europol deployed a total of 353 Mobile Offices in 2019, 42 of which on permanent basis to the hotspots.
- The European Serious and Organised Crime Centre (ESOCC) received and processed almost 55,000 operational contributions and produced more than 5,300 operational reports, together with another 178 reports of strategic and thematic nature related to SOC. A total of 726 operational cases were supported by ESOCC in 2019. Moreover, ESOCC organised and coordinated 15 Operational Task Forces (OTF) and identified 24 High Value Targets (HVT). Additionally, ESOCC organised and financially supported 412 operational meetings with close to 3,000 participants and coordinated 187 Action Days during the year.
- The European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) supported almost 400 operational cases and accepted more than 6,700 operational contributions. More than 1,000 operational reports were produced, together with 88 strategic and thematic reports. EC3 organised and financially supported 37 operational meetings involving close to 300 participants and coordinated 25 Action Days. In 2019, EC3 performed more than 1,600 forensic jobs and the Forensic Lab was deployed on 10 occasions. Two Operational Task Forces (OTF) on high-profile cybercrime cases were organised by the EC3, in addition to the annual established ones.
- The European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC) supported 632 operational cases and processed more than 6,000 operational contributions, reaching almost 1,900 operational reports produced. ECTC coordinated 18 Action Days during 2019. The number of SIENA messages exchanged by CT units increased by around 20% compared to 2018 and the number of objects in EIS related to CT almost reached 735k. Guest Officers were deployed to the hotspots for more than 13k man-days. The number of hits (1,285) following secondary security checks was four-fold compared to the previous year.
- In the area of financial intelligence, Europol supported 205 operational cases and produced more than 1,100 operational reports, with over 5,200 operational contributions received and accepted.
- In terms of cross-horizontal services, 251 Action Days were organised and more than 260 operational training activities. In total, Europol delivered 313 reports of strategic and thematic nature and financially supported more than 500 operational meetings. EMPACT grants for a total of € 4M were managed by Europol.

Europol Public Information

Core Operational Systems

- The uptime of core systems was well above the target set and reached 99.6%.
- Regarding core operational project delivery, 82% of the re-planned milestones were achieved.
- More than 1.2M SIENA messages were exchanged and almost 85k SIENA cases initiated in 2019. SIENA 4.0 was delivered according to the planned timeline.
- The total number of objects in EIS was almost 1.5M, with the number of person objects at 241k and more than 5.4M searches performed. The number of CBCC was 2,736 during 2019.
- A total of 5 EU MS were connected to QUEST and more than 2.1M searches were performed in QUEST during the year, triggering more than 5,000 hits.
- A new version of EPE was installed and the total number of users was above 17k, with 58 active platforms.
- At the end of 2019, Europol's analytical systems contained more than 75M entities.
- A significant amount of resources were allocated to further develop Europol's Forensics Capabilities and, more specifically the Forensics IT Environment (FITE).
- Europol continued introducing smart and innovative capabilities (e.g. automated cross-checking, automated entity extraction, etc.) throughout the year.
- The first iteration of the central data repository (*data lake*) for unstructured data was delivered in the framework of the NEO programme.

Financial and Human resources

- Europol's budget in 2019 increased by € 8.1M compared to the previous year and came to €138.3M.
- At the end of 2019, the implementation of commitment appropriations was 99.4% while the overall payment rate was 86.6%.
- The implementation rate of the carry forward from 2018 to 2019 (€ 17M) was 90.8%.
- An amount of € 17.7M was carried forward to 2020.
- A total of 25 budget transfers, for a total amount of almost € 7M, were made during the year.
- The percentage of late payments in 2019 came to 21.3% (4.6% in terms of value).
- A number of factors influenced the vacancy rate, which at year-end was 3.6% (or 21 posts from a total of 591 establishment plan posts), just above the target of 2%, with a turnover rate of 11.7%.
- The percentage of female staff moved up to 34% with 16% of female staff in Head of Unit or higher positions.

Audit Management and Internal Control

- At the end of March 2019, the European Parliament granted discharge for the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2017.
- In October 2019, the ECA issued the overall assurance statement, comprising a positive opinion in relation to the reliability of the 2018 final annual accounts, as well as the legality and regularity of the underlying financial transactions.
- The Internal Audit Capability (IAC) performed several audit engagements concerning the operational analysis, Europol's grant management process, user access rights to ABAC and the annual ISO 17020:2012 audit of the Europol Forensic Laboratory. Additionally, a risk assessment on operational processes and a follow-up exercise on past audit recommendations issued in the period 2010-18 was conducted in 2019.

Europol Public Information

- The Data Protection Function (DPF) continued working on reviewing the compliance of Europol's processing operations with the applicable legal regime and facilitated the annual inspection performed by the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) in June 2019. The EDPS performed a dedicated inspection on the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (TFTP)
- The Internal Audit Service (IAS) conducted an audit on IT Security at the end of 2019.
- Europol implemented 95% of the critical or very important recommendations planned to be implemented during 2019. No critical or very important audit recommendations issued by the ECA, the IAS or the Ombudsman were pending to be implemented.

Introduction

Europol's mission

Europol is the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation whose main goal is to help achieve a safer Europe for the benefit of all EU citizens by supporting law enforcement authorities through the exchange and analysis of criminal intelligence. Europol's mission is to support the Member States in preventing and combating all forms of serious international and organised crime, cybercrime and terrorism.

Europol, with its headquarters in The Hague (Netherlands), works closely with law enforcement agencies in the EU Member States and in other non-EU partner states.

The agency uses its unique information capabilities and the expertise of its staff to identify and track the most dangerous criminal and terrorist networks in Europe. Law enforcement authorities in the EU rely on this intelligence work and the services of Europol's operational coordination centre and secure information network. This has led to the disruption of many criminal and terrorist networks, to the arrest of dangerous criminals, to the recovery of millions of euro in criminal proceeds, and to the saving from harm of hundreds of victims, including children trafficked for sexual exploitation. Europol also acts as a major centre of expertise in key areas of law enforcement and as a European centre for strategic intelligence on organised crime.

Legal Basis

This report covers the period from **1 January to 31 December 2019** and presents the progress made to achieve the objectives deriving from Europol's Strategy and, mainly, in the implementation of the 2019 Annual Work Programme¹. An overview of the budget implementation and human resources, audits, risks and internal controls management activities are also included in this report.

The Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) has been prepared following the template provided by the European Commission² and it is submitted on behalf of the Executive Director of Europol to the Management Board for assessment, in accordance with article 16 (5)(g) of the **Europol Regulation** and article 48 of the **Financial Regulation** applicable to Europol.

According to article 11 (1)(c) of the Europol Regulation, this report shall be adopted by the Management Board which shall send it, with its assessment, by 1 July 2020 to the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission, the Court of Auditors and the national parliaments. Europol shall transmit the CAAR to the Joint Parliamentary Supervisory Group (JPSG) in accordance with article 51 (3)(d).

¹ Included in Europol's Programming Document (PD) 2019-2021

² Communication from the Commission on the guidelines for programming document for decentralised agencies and the template for the Consolidated Annual Activity Report for decentralised agencies, 16 Dec 2014, C(2014) 9641 final

Europol Public Information

Note on the de-prioritisation of activities in the Work Programme 2019

The draft Europol Programming Document 2019-2021 was adopted by the Management Board (MB) in January 2018. The approved draft Work Programme 2019 was elaborated based on the resource assumptions of the draft estimate budget, which came to € 143.3M and included a net increase in posts of 43 Temporary Agents (TAs).

As a result of the budgetary process, Europol received a final budget of € 138.3M and an increase of 15 Temporary Agents (overall establishment plan of 591 posts), 5 of which related to the COM's interoperability proposal.

During its 13-14 December 2018 meeting, the MB adopted the final Europol budget and establishment plan for 2019 and **noted with concern the budgetary and staffing shortfall** compared to the draft 2019 estimate adopted by the Board.

Based on the above, a number of Work Programme objectives and/or actions were de-prioritised for 2019, or their level of ambition was reduced to the extent that available resources allowed.

The full list of relevant Work Programme objectives and/or actions that were de-prioritised in 2019 can be found in the [Annex VIII](#).

Part I. Achievements of the year

1.1. Multi-Annual Strategic Priorities

In December 2018, the Management Board endorsed the **Strategy 2020+**, focusing on an improved delivery of services to EU law enforcement authorities and setting **five strategic priorities** for the coming years:

- Be the EU criminal information hub making full use of data from an extensive network of partners;
- Deliver agile operational support;
- Be a platform for European policing solutions;
- Be at the forefront of innovation and research for law enforcement;
- Be the model EU law enforcement organisation with robust performance, good governance and accountability, promoting diversity and staff engagement.

The successful realization of those strategic priorities required adjusting Europol organisational structure to maximise existing resources and optimise cross-departmental cooperation.

In order to conduct a regular and systematic **monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy**, a Strategy Implementation Steering Committee (SISC) was established to support the Executive Director overseeing the different streams of work.

The progress made in 2019 towards the implementation of these priorities is briefly described in this section, although complementary details can be found in the pertinent sections of this report.

- **European Financial and Economic Crime Centre (EFECC)**: An internal dedicated task force was established in September in order to define the objectives, activities and deliverables of this centre. Other tasks allocated to the task force included the design of the centre (organisational structure, resources) and the drafting of an implementation plan. Progress was made in 2019 regarding the mapping of current activities performed at Europol and the definition of the structure of the centre, split in two units (operations and expertise/stakeholder management). Engagement with key partners of the centre already started before the end of the year.
- **Re-organisation of the ESOC**: as a result of the new centre (EFECC), ESOC's structure will consist of the EMSC, a drugs unit and an organised crime unit (with particular focus on poly-criminality and high-risk OCGs). Some of the existing AP will be transferred to EFECC. It is foreseen that ESOC will also have a Strategy and Outreach capability to ensure consistency in the three units and provide strategic support.
- **Reinforcement of Europol's Analysis Capabilities**: a task force (TF Analysis) was created to address the most urgent challenges in terms of analytical output, in order to enhance the quality of Europol's analytical products and services. Significant progress was made by the TF in terms of standardisation of the analytical processes. The TF also reviewed the list of products and services and streamlined it, making the necessary adjustments in SIENA. An EPE platform (CONAN), specific for analytical purposes, was launched. A sub-platform for the co-creation of analytical tools by the EU LE Agencies (GITLAB) was in the pipeline at the end of the year, with 4 EU MS participating in a pilot project. Work was done on the redefinition of analytical profiles, training needs and analytical tools to be used in the future.
- **Creation of a Finance Unit**: within the Capabilities Directorate, this work stream made most progress in 2019. The new unit received staff from O Directorate Finance, ICT Finance and Procurement. A new Grant Administration team was established within the new unit and Terms of Reference were drafted for all the areas. The definition of new financial workflows was almost completed at the end of 2019.

Europol Public Information

- **Strategy and External Affairs Unit:** The Strategy and External Affairs Unit was established within the Department Corporate Services (G2). In September, the HENU Secretariat moved from the Operations Directorate to the new Unit and the MB approved through a written procedure the inclusion of the Head of Strategy and External Affairs Unit in the list of restricted posts. Subsequently, the recruitment procedure for the new Head of Unit – Strategy and External Affairs was launched and was ongoing at the end of 2019. The Strategy and External Affairs Unit supported the Executive Director in the establishment of the Strategy Implementation Steering Committee (SISC) and is providing regular advice and coordination support to the SISC, including by: 1) providing its Secretariat; 2) ensuring regular monitoring and reporting of the taskforces work; and 3) supporting the Chair in coordinating the work of the SISC. The Unit also assists in the implementation of all the organisational adjustments by analysing and adjusting the relevant internal processes in cooperation with other departments. Following the appointment of the new Deputy Executive Director Governance and the new Head of Department Corporate Services in November 2019, a further assessment of the changes implemented will be made in 2020 with a view to finalising the re-organisation of the Unit and ensuring the strengthening of the Strategy and External relations areas as endorsed by the MB.
- **Information Management (IM):** a programme board was established to create a common vision of information management at Europol, including the scope of activities to be undertaken, identification of best practices, developing guiding principles and assessing business needs, amongst other tasks. The scope and objectives were presented to the EU MS at the HENU meeting in August and, following the meeting, invitations to join the programme board were sent to the presidency countries, IM portfolio holder, EDPS and European Commission. Best practices were identified and other meetings were organised to agree on the common vision of information management, processes and initiatives related to it. At the end of the year, it was expected that a task force would be established in 2020 to undertake subsequent steps.
- **Innovation:** a project was set-up to develop Europol's innovation strategy, including organisational changes required. This Strategy was adopted by the Executive Director in November, containing four strategic goals to focus on: technology, workforce, data and ethics. Europol proposed the establishment of an EU Innovation Hub, hosted at Europol, and this proposal was strongly supported by the JHA Ministers. The implementation of an Innovation Lab at Europol started, with the main goal to deliver the Innovation Strategy approved. The concept of an EU Observatory on Emerging Technologies and Innovation within Law Enforcement will be integrated in the Innovation Lab and governed by Europol and the JRC. An implementation team was set-up.

Activity 1. Development of operational ICT capabilities

In 2019, Europol successfully delivered and implemented its **core business project milestones**. At the end of the year, 82% of the re-planned milestones were achieved, compared to 77% in the previous year. The re-planning is a regular process undertaken by ICT in close consultation with the business that takes into account any necessary adjustments to the initial ICT Work Plan agreed. In particular, the delivery of the Forensics IT Environment (FITE) caused an impact on Europol's initially agreed priorities, involving re-prioritisation of initiatives that affected around 40% of the project milestones.

The **uptime of core systems** was, again in 2019, well above the target set and reached 99.6% of the time.

With regards to the use of the secure messaging tool for exchange of operational information (**SIENA**), more than 1.2M messages were exchanged and almost 85k cases initiated in the course of 2019. The total number of operational mailboxes at the end of the year reached 1,744. With regards to the number of SIENA messages containing structured data, a distinction should be made between those received (only 13% contained UMF data) and those received and accepted (close to 20% contained UMF data).

As per the use of the Europol Information System (**EIS**), the total number of objects was slightly below the target of 1,5M but still 11% above the number of objects at the end of 2018. The number of person objects reached 241k, just above the target of 240k. The amount of searches went up to 5,4M which is 53% above the target. The number of Cross Border Crime Checks (CBCC) on persons was above the target and reached 2,736. The number of *dataloaders* in use was still below the target and went even below the level set in 2018. Around 30% of the EIS MS' targets (on objects, searches and persons) were achieved. The number of EIS users was 8,587 at the end of 2019.

At the end of the year, a total of 5 EU MS were connected to **QUEST**, compared to only one in 2018. More than 2,1M searches were performed in QUEST during 2019, out of which 1.6M only in the last quarter, triggering more than 5,000 hits.

A new **EPE** version was installed and the total number of user accounts went above 17k, well above the target, with 58 active platforms and 44% of active users (i.e. connecting at least once per quarter).

A.1.1 – Advance the implementation of the new information management architecture and continue improving operational capabilities and tools by focusing on automation and modernisation.

This work programme objective encompasses different capabilities relevant for Europol's core business. Ranging from data management, analysis or information sharing and exchange to the provision of technical infrastructure to enable these capabilities. It should be noted that many of the initially planned activities were de-prioritised due to the budget shortfall, as indicated in [Annex VIII](#).

In 2019, ICT sustainment costs were reduced from € 22.6M to € 18.6M as a result of postponing technical replacements and carefully considering the associated risks. The resulting envelope after this exercise (€ 4.7M) was devoted to capability development activities.

Data Management

The first iteration of the central data repository (*data lake*) for unstructured data was delivered as planned in the NEO programme and will be further extended to structured data. The Unified

Europol Public Information

Search Engine (USE) was connected to it and enhanced the search capabilities in different systems: SIENA, EIS, EAS, VIS, SIS and selected indexes of the CFN. At the same time, progress was made towards completing Europol's ontology, which is a pre-requisite for the Entity Management System. Access to selected information systems from a multi-security level infrastructure (QUEST BPL) was granted to EU MS. Europol managed to raise awareness and increase the use of UMF for information exchange, receiving and accepting around 15,000 SIENA messages containing structured data.

Analysis

The aim of this initiative was to review the analysis and visualisation tools used by Europol for operational analysis. This initiative had to be re-prioritised to 2020 due to work on other initiatives, such as FITE.

Messaging

SIENA 4.0 was delivered according to the planned timeline (July 2019). This release included relevant developments such as data migration, change to a micro services based architecture, new authorisation and authentication systems, changes to centralised monitoring and logging, new search features, integration with data lake, processing pipeline, etc.

The incidents detected by users within the first weeks of used were resolved. Work on compliance with data retention and data quality was postponed.

Additionally, Europol made preparatory arrangements regarding the impact of Brexit in Europol's systems. A bulk download of SIENA messages from UK was performed in April.

Data Sharing

The redesign of the data sharing capability had to be re-planned and postponed, due to resources being allocated to other priorities. Nonetheless, progress was made in other related initiatives:

- SIENA 4.0 enabled the possibility for MS to perform hit follow-up via *webservices*.
- A fuzzy search mechanism on persons in QUEST was delivered in May. However, the statistics module to monitor the usage of QUEST was postponed to 2020.
- The IRMa Project Board endorsed the change in the scope of the initial project to integrate Check the Web (postponed) to favour improvements in the robustness and scalability of the current IRMa solution. However, the project in its new scope had to be postponed to 2020 due to resources allocated to other initiatives.

The decision to enable TP to directly load data in EIS is still on hold.

Analytics and Reporting Implementation

This initiative, aiming at designing and implementing a corporate reporting and analytical platform taking into account the new data repository, had to be re-planned for 2020. Nonetheless, the infrastructure of the analysis tool was upgraded and a new tool was installed to graphically visualise the searches from USE.

Forensic Capability

A significant amount of resources were allocated in 2019 to further develop Europol's Forensics Capabilities. The Forensics IT Environment (FITE) taskforce was established to design and deliver the way forward to integrating the Computer Forensics Network (CFN) into the Operational Network. A number of activities were carried out on the New Forensic Environment (NFE) including team mobilization, domain blueprints and designs, procurement of hardware and software and Cross Domain Solution proof of concepts. In addition to these tasks, a specific call data analysis tool was decommissioned from the old Forensic Network and moved to the target environment, as the first step of the transition to the new model.

Europol Public Information

SMART Capability

Europol continued introducing smart and innovative capabilities crucial for processes like automated and pseudonymised cross-checking, effective processing of large and diverse volumes of data, etc. In this respect, Europol's search capabilities were enhanced and so was the automated entity extraction, both released already in the first quarter of the year. Progress was made for the new automated translation functionalities and face recognition capability with their go-live planned for early 2020.

Technical Infrastructure

Europol's technical infrastructure was further developed and progress was made to upgrade the IAM backend, completed in Q2 2019, after intense cross-departmental work gathering requirements and meeting with different vendors. Due to other priorities, the planned IAM roadmap had to be postponed.

A new version of EPE (4.0) was successfully released to the EPE community at the end of November. The Operational platform (ONEP), was also successfully deployed to production and ready for migration and go-live in early 2020.

Other operational

The Virtual Command Post solution was procured, tested and put in production.

The AMAQ2 operation was supported by ICT and the solution was built, tested and deployed in a relatively short period of time, in full compliance with security requirements and making use of components of the NEO architecture.

Improvements to the **Europol Malware Analysis Solution (EMAS)** were successfully implemented early in 2019 and provided significant added value to the end users, both in terms of performance and quality of reports.

A.1.2 - Advance interoperability and connectivity with information management systems at EU level to enhance information exchange.

The "Europol Roadmap on **EU Interoperability**" was presented and endorsed by Europol's Management Board with the clear objective of aligning and coordinating Europol's internal resources and efforts with the developments of the EU Interoperability initiatives, such as SIS, VIS, Eurodac, ETIAS, EES, SIRENE, etc. In this respect:

- Europol, with the support of eu-LISA, managed to integrate searches in **SIS II** into **USE** user interface. Also with the support of eu-LISA, progress was made towards establishing access to VIS, pending EDPS approval to complete the process.
- The setting up of a **SIRENE office** within Europol, linked to resources for interoperability that did not materialise in 2019, was postponed to 2020.
- Europol staff attended the **Eurodac** Advisory Group in Q2 but the recast of the Eurodac regulation was yet to be adopted and all the activities linked to this initiative were put on hold.
- With regards to **ETIAS**, Europol staff attended the meetings of the Smart Borders Committee, ETIAS Expert Group and ETIAS Advisory Group. A report on the implementation of ETIAS at Europol was submitted to the European Parliament and Council in October. Preparatory work for hosting the two Turn Key Access Points and two National Uniform Interfaces in Europol's headquarters started before the end of the year while all technical requirements were internally reviewed.
- The **EES** Advisory Group meetings were attended by Europol staff but no further progress was made regarding the detailed analysis of requirements for its implementation.

Europol Public Information

- Europol continued to support the **ADEP** network and participated in several meetings. Germany produced relevant papers that were reviewed by all partners and who also agreed to deploy and test a new release of the ADEP software. Germany submitted a proposal to the European Commission for an EPRIS pilot project, which is expected to start in March 2020.
- The European Commission organised two workshops to support the drafting of the “Next generation **Prüm** feasibility study”, to be presented in January 2020.

Activity 2. Information Hub.

Europol continued to improve its **speed of response** to EU MS information requests. On average, Europol responded to first line requests in 6.6 days, compared to 6.8 in 2018 and achieving the target set. Additionally, Europol had to deal with an 8% increase in the number of **operational contributions** to process (more than 80k), compared to the previous year. As a side effect of this, the **backlog**³ at the end of the year was at around 5,000 messages and well beyond the objective of 1,500. Nonetheless, it should be noted that as a result of the technological changes implemented in Europol's systems (see [A.1.1](#)), all contributions are assessed within an hour and searchable regardless of their processing status.

The quality of the contributions also improved compared to previous years and led to a 9.6% **hit rate** (i.e. number of operational reports produced per 100 contributions). At the end of 2019, Europol's analytical systems contained more than 75M **entities**.

In terms of **information exchange with third parties**, more than 176k messages were exchanged, which is 11% above the number of messages in 2018. The target set was not met due to the fact that UK's Brexit did not materialise, as initially expected, in the course of 2019. This also affected the number of operations supported involving cooperation partners, below the target for the same reason stated before but showing a 2% increase when compared with 2018.

On the other hand, Europol's participation in **operations involving private partners** significantly decreased (by around 70%).

A.2.1 - Broaden the information processing capabilities of Europol's Front Office.

In 2019, the Operational Centre at Europol coordinated and supported a total of 19 **Action Days** and produced **daily and weekly operational monitoring reports** for Management. In total, 4,154 **operational reports**, most of which cross-match reports (CMR) and SIENA hit notifications (SHN), were produced by staff in the Operational Centre.

In the first quarter of the year, an **automated data extraction tool** for structured and unstructured data was released to the operational centre and, later on, implemented within the whole Operational Directorate. Around 20,000 operational contributions containing unstructured data were extracted using this new tool.

In 2019, a total of 353 **Mobile Offices** were deployed on the spot, compared to 370 in 2018. Of these, 42 were deployed on a permanent basis, 54 on long-term basis and 257 on a short-term basis. The policy on the use of mobile offices was reviewed in order to improve their effectiveness.

The coordination among stakeholders during **Joint Action Days** was ensured by the Operational Centre, who supported all departments in the Operations Directorate during the planning of these events.

Europol actively provided support in the preparation to host the **UEFA 2020 coordination centre**, being a permanent member of its working group. The operational action plan was co-drafted by Europol and the first draft of the internal cross-directorate operational plan was published, establishing an internal task force who will work closely with all involved parties in the early stages of 2020.

³ Due to the technological changes (NEO programme), Europol reviewed the definition of backlog and this will affect the way it will be measured in 2020.

Europol Public Information

A.2.2 - Utilise the newly acquired access of Europol to the Schengen Information System.

Europol continued to develop **internal and external procedures** related to the information exchange and processing of SIS II data for analytical purposes. In this respect, several study visits were performed (Dutch, Austrian, Czech and German SIRENE Bureaux), combined with participation in the Working Party on Schengen Matters, SIRENE subgroups, etc. Europol further developed use case scenarios.

Around 150 staff members from Operations Directorate participated in an **awareness session** on the changes on the SIS regulation and how those affected Europol, how to handle the data and about the possibilities to search SIS data by means of the **USE** user interface. Additionally, two staff members from the Information Hub received **SIRENE basic user training**.

A **workshop with the Heads of SIRENE Bureaux** was successfully organised at Europol's headquarters, with the main focus on enhancing cooperation and addressing practical challenges on the implementation of the new regulatory framework and Council conclusions.

The Finnish presidency drafted a paper on how to step up the **use of SIS in counter terrorism**. This paper considered the possibility for Europol to insert specific alerts in SIS in the future and was presented and discussed at the SIS/SIRENE meeting in July. This was also further discussed at the WP SIS/SIRENE meeting in November.

A.2.3 - Implement an effective cooperation process with external partners on the basis of Europol's External Strategy 2017-2020.

In 2019, Europol accepted almost 12k **operational contributions from third countries**. 24 new associations of third countries to Europol's AP materialised in the course of the year, including 5 new SIENA connections. The number of EIS objects stemming from third countries was above 700k.

In view of Brexit and its initial timeline, during the first quarter of 2019 Europol explored all possible opportunities to maintain effective **operational relationships with the UK** as a third party, including measures to exchange operational data on the basis of article 25.6 Europol Regulation (ER).

With regards to the framework for cooperation with **MENA countries**, a revised model of the working arrangement was adopted by the MB in October, after extensive consultations with the EDPS and MB Working Group. Support was provided to the European Commission, in a technical advisory capacity, in the negotiations of operational agreements with Turkey, according to article 218 TFEU. Europol continued to support projects led by or involving MENA countries, mainly in the area of weapons and explosives, migrant smuggling and counter-terrorism.

Limited progress was made regarding the enhancement of cooperation with **high-priority third countries** and partners, as listed in Europol's External Strategy 2017-2020. The list of countries was reviewed at the MB meeting in December.

Europol's **Western Balkans (WB) Liaison officers (ELOs)**, either deployed or working from Europol's headquarters, made efforts to improve cooperation and increase information exchange, mainly related to serious organised crimes and migrant smuggling networks. In this respect, the ECTC, the EMSC, AP Weapons and Explosives and AP Copper met and briefed WB ELOs about several on-going operational cases and discussed on how to enhance cooperation. WB ELOs represented Europol in various meetings taking place in the WB countries. The EU IRU organised a series of workshops for WB to become familiar with their activities. More than 1,700 operational contributions were received from WB countries in 2019 and 94 operations were

Europol Public Information

supported by Europol involving these countries. The number of SIENA cases initiated by WB countries was 542, with almost 6k messages exchanged.

A.2.4 - Utilise new opportunities for cooperation with EU institutions and agencies.

In 2019, Europol chaired the **Justice and Home Affairs Agencies Network** (JHAAN) and organised a series of meetings with the clear objective of preparing a strategy paper on the future of the EU Security Architecture and the role of JHA agencies.

Several rounds of negotiation were arranged with **OLAF** in order to conclude the working arrangements which was successfully completed in Q1 2020.

Europol's ED met the newly appointed European Prosecutor in December 2019 and discussed, among other issues, about a future working arrangement between Europol and **EPPO**.

Cooperation with **Eurojust** was intense during 2019. A meeting between Europol's AP and Eurojust's Contact Points was organised in October to increase coordination between the two agencies. In the area of cybercrime, the collaboration with Eurojust continuously improved thanks to the embedded Cyber SNE from Eurojust to EC3 and the Joint Cybercrime Action Taskforce (J-CAT). Additionally, the Europol-Eurojust Steering Committee for Strategic Matters met in two occasions and made progress towards the preparation of the business case to enable indirect hit/no hit access to data held by the agencies. A total of 697 messages were exchanged between the two EU Agencies in 2019. Europol supported 17 operational cases in which Eurojust was involved.

A working arrangement with **EMSA** was signed during the second quarter of the year with the aim to utilise geospatial information from the European maritime vessel traffic monitoring and information system for analytical purposes.

Additionally, Europol cooperated closely with the **EEAS**, mainly via the ELO in Brussels and within the area of cybercrime, as well as with the **EU Delegations**, in order to continue embedding the law enforcement component into CSDP missions.

A Joint Action Plan was drafted and signed with **Frontex** during 2019. Representatives from both agencies met in Warsaw in March and discuss how to further enhance cooperation in strategic and operational matters. Cooperation at strategic level was frequent between the liaison offices of both agencies in Brussels. Europol is still considering the possibility to deploy LO to Frontex. During the fourth quarter, a staff exchange programme was launched and evaluated. A total of 2,378 messages were exchanged between the two EU Agencies in 2019.

Europol continued to work in close cooperation with **eu-LISA** and Frontex regarding the Interoperability Regulations, ensuring alignment in the work of the three agencies regarding ETIAS, EES, or SIS II.

The strategic cooperation between Europol and **EASO** was kept at a very high level, mainly performed via the LO of both agencies in Brussels and via the JHAAN. Europol is currently waiting for the legislative changes of EASO's mandate to conclude the working arrangement. Cooperation with regards to migrant smuggling was mainly of strategic nature, mainly through the development of joint reports and products.

A report on the functioning of the Europol **Liaison Office in Brussels** was presented to the MB in October and was positively received.

Activity 3. Combating Serious and Organised Crime.

Europol Serious and Organised Crime Centre (ESOCC) received and processed almost 55,000 **operational contributions**, which represents an increase of 12% compared to 2018. At the same time, the number of **operational reports** produced moved from 4,636 in 2018 to 5,322 in 2019, close to a 15% increase and leading to a 9.2% hit rate. Another 178 reports of **strategic and thematic** nature were produced in 2019 related to SOC.

With regards to the number of **operations supported**, the centre assisted countries in 726 cases, slightly below the target set at 800. Nonetheless, ESOCC organised 15 **Operational Task Forces** (OTF), identified 24 **High Value Targets** (HVT) and arrested another 35 HVT. 215 **mobile offices** were deployed by the centre, involving 2,054 man-days of staff on-the-spot. The satisfaction with the operational support provided was evaluated by 162 investigators involved in 102 cases and reached an average score of 8.9/10, measured by the quarterly online surveys distributed by Europol.

In 2019, ESOCC organised and financially supported 412 **operational meetings** and hosting close to 3,000 participants. The total amount funded increased 7% compared to 2018 and reached € 900k.

On top of this, ESOCC coordinated/supported 187 **Action Days**, leading to the arrest of almost 4,000 suspects and the seizure of assets with a total value above € 125 M.

84 **training activities** were organised for EU MS and TP law enforcement experts.

A.3.1 - Improve procedures and operational approach to foster Europol's support to MS investigations against organised crime.

The evaluation of the **High Value Targets** (HVT) and **Operational Task Forces** (OTF) concept clearly indicated the operational added value of this type of support for MS, with several operational successes. However, this activity remains at risk given that MS demands and expectations are very high while the resources provided to Europol to take this task on-board are limited, which could lead to Europol's credibility being damaged. The lack of a proper OTF working environment (i.e. temporary teams consisting of representatives of MS and Europol, based on a multi-disciplinary approach) was perceived as counter-productive for this type of support.

During the year, ESOCC supported several MS led **EU-financed projects** (mostly ISF funded) targeting the identification, infiltration and dismantling of mafia-type organised crime structures and networks, namely Eurasian Organised Crime Groups (OCG), ONNET project (focused on Italian and Albanian speaking OCG and other OTF).

Europol prepared an Operational Action Plan defining Europol's response to organised crime affecting EU MS from the **Western Balkans** and EMSC and AP Weapons & Explosives financially supported investigations in line with this Plan.

A.3.2 - Ensure the implementation of the objectives of the Malta Implementation Plan in the fight against organised crime related to migrant smuggling and THB.

EMSC actively supported MS in the **identification of HVT** involved in migrant smuggling activities, with up to 5 HVT identified as a result of this action. Staff from EMSC were **deployed on-the-spot** during more than 1,000 man days and supported 155 operational cases throughout

Europol Public Information

the year. EMSC received and accepted more than 17k operational contributions and close to 900 **internet contents related to migrant smuggling** were assessed by the EU IRU.

The **Rotating Expert Model** (i.e. short-term, flexible deployments of EMSC experts) to support EU MS organised migrant smuggling and THB cases linked to third countries, in close cooperation with the EEAS and CSDP mission, was only put in place in the fourth quarter to support EUBAM Libya. Very few opportunities to apply the concept were deemed appropriate.

The mandate of **EUNAVFOR MED** was extended to September 2019 with no naval assets at sea. The **Crime Information Cell** was, therefore, moved to the Operation's headquarters in Rome and EMSC remotely provided support from Europol's headquarters, to make a more efficient use of resources. This situation led to a gradual decrease in the quality of information received by EMSC. Europol still hosted a LO from EUNAVFOR MED deployed at EMSC. AP Weapons & Explosives exchanged some information with EUNAVFOR MED on vessels related to illicit trafficking of weapons.

EMSC was actively involved in the **Information Clearing House (ICH)**, which now benefits from the expertise of Frontex, Interpol and EUNAVFOR MED, and several actions and products were supported and produced in a joint effort. AP Weapons & Explosive also benefited from an increased information exchange with the ICH.

Regarding EMSC activities in **embarkation points** and the coordination of action days together with actors like Frontex or Interpol, there was not much progress to report. Italy's embarkation points were closed which made the focus shift towards Greece (Evros mainly) and secondary movements in the WB area.

The support to **Regional Cooperation and Implementation Platforms (RCIPs)** in the MENA countries was provided by Europol at the launch of the project by the EU Commission. However, no tangible results were triggered due to the lack of operational and working agreements with the targeted countries.

Several **training and awareness raising** activities in selected MENA countries, such as Egypt, were provided by EMSC, looking at possibilities to enhance cooperation in the field of migrant smuggling and THB.

A.3.3 - Undertake and support further improvements in the strategic and operational approach followed by the MS and Europol in targeting the reduction of drugs supply.

A reorganisation of ESOCC, as part of a wider reorganisation of the Operations Directorate, was approved by the Executive Director in December and contained a proposal for the establishment of a new **European Drugs Unit** within Europol that will be fully implemented in 2020. Europol's drug unit supported 117 **operations related to drugs** and accepted more than 9,000 **operational contributions** in 2019.

As in previous years, cooperation with **EMCDDA**, who is currently a member of Europol's Drug Supply Reduction Programme Board, was very effective. As a result of this cooperation, the EU Drug Market 2019 report and the EMCDDA-Europol situation report on drugs were produced and published.

The implementation of the **Action Plan for Enhancement of Drug Crime Investigations** progress as planned, despite initial difficulties linked to some MS not wanting to fully cooperate with Europol.

The initiative to publish a **handbook on chemicals used in the production of drugs** had to be cancelled due to the lack of funds.

Europol Public Information

Not enough added value materialized in terms of operational cooperation and intelligence gathering with and between the main European ports affected by drug trafficking. Enhanced cooperation and information sharing, in particular with the **ports of Antwerp and Rotterdam** being the most targeted ports by criminal organizations in recent years, will be further pursued by Europol.

Several **OTF** to conduct joint investigations and operations on high prioritised drug cases were supported by Europol during 2019.

With regards to assessing Europol's role in **EU funded projects** related to the development of technological solutions for forensic and surveillance services in drug trafficking operations, ISF funded project @ON was supported. However, EC3 played the main role with regards to assessing and monitoring technological developments in this area.

Another initiative that had to be deprioritised in 2019 was related to the set-up of a public-private partnership with relevant **EU courier or parcel companies** for the exchange of intelligence regarding trafficking of drugs or precursors. This mainly had to do with the lack of legislation in this respect, raised by Europol in many occasions and fora.

Europol organised a conference on Drugs in December 2019 and also, jointly with CEPOL, delivered training to raise awareness to combat this phenomenon.

A.3.4 - Strengthen the fight against counterfeiting and intellectual property crime.

Europol's IPC3 supported 61 **operational cases related to counterfeiting and intellectual property crime** in 2019, which is above the target set at 45 cases, and accepted almost 2,500 operational contributions.

The implementation of the grant signed with **EUIPO**, to further enhance the fight against intellectual property crime, was evaluated during the year and notable progress was recorded. **IPC3** representatives attended the EUIPO Observatory Working Group in Brussels and a new grant agreement was signed in December for a period of four years.

Experts from IPC3 regularly provided their expertise to support **investigations in the area of intellectual property crime**. For instance, by facilitating UFED⁴ extractions in the context of various operations, participating in the Cyber Patrol Action organised by EC3, utilising OSINT investigative techniques to de-anonymize certain illicit online vendors, supporting investigations in the areas of counterfeit medicines and doping substances, deploying mobile offices and cooperating with customs. Several training and awareness raising activities took place in 2019, namely on IPTV, substandard food types, illicit pharmaceuticals, OSINT investigative techniques, DarkNet investigations, etc. A training course, in cooperation with **CEPOL**, and a study visit took place in October at EUIPO's headquarters.

In the first quarter of 2019, AP Copy launched an EU-wide operation, involving MS but also private sector companies, with the clear objective of **taking down online sites selling illicit or counterfeit products**. During 2019, more than 30,000 online sites were referred and seized.

IPC3 cooperated with **public and private sector agencies and academia** (e.g. IFPI, DG SANTE, JRC, University of Trento, UNICRI, Pointer Brand Research, EURID) for different purposes related to intellectual property enforcement and awareness raising. Additionally, a Europol-EUIPO joint threat assessment report on intellectual property (IP) rights, trends and issues, was published in June. Europol attended the Enforcement Database (EDB) steering group and the IP Enforcement and Data Exchange technical group at EUIPO.

⁴ Universal Forensic Extraction Device.

Europol Public Information

With regards to initiating cooperation with the **European Central Bank** to enhance the fight against euro counterfeiting, preparatory work was performed in the first quarter followed by an exchange of messages between the two parties to conclude the arrangements of the service level agreement. This agreement could not be concluded at the end of 2019.

A.3.5 - Strengthen the fight against organised crime groups involved in fraud activities.

Europol's fraud team supported a total of 104 **operational cases related to fraud**, above the target of 100 set for 2019, and accepted almost 9,000 operational contributions.

AP MTIC initiated a project, under an EMPACT Operation Action, to monitor, identify and report **Alternative Banking Platforms** (ABP) used to funnel proceeds of MTIC fraud out of the EU. A total of four meetings were organised in the context of this project and more than 300 entities were identified and sent to the concerned MS to determine whether these contained possible suspicious transactions.

A letter of intent was signed between Europol and the Intra-European Organisation of Tax Administration (**IOTA**) to enhance cooperation in the field of fraud prevention and detection. The next step will be the signature of a Working Arrangement – already drafted but awaiting formal approval from Europol's MB.

Regarding the joint project with EUIPO and AP Apaté to counter **frauds targeting Intellectual Property Offices** in the EU, a service level agreement was signed with EUIPO in Q2 and a SNE was recruited only in Q4 2019, with the new resource still being trained at the end of the year.

AP Sports Corruption enhanced its capacity to receive intelligence from **sports monitoring agencies** by signing a MoU with the International Olympic Committee. On top of this, AP Sports Corruption continued receiving bi-weekly reports from the Global Lottery Monitoring System and regular reports from UEFA and Sportsradar.

AP Envicrime and Frontex worked closely under an EMPACT Operational Action on cross-border crime related to marine pollution.

A.3.6 - Strengthen the fight against organised property crime.

Europol' property crime team supported a total of 98 **operational cases organised property crime**, surpassing the target of 90 cases set for 2019, and accepted almost 12,000 operational contributions.

Several **think tank meetings** were organised to counter specific organised property crimes, such as ATM attacks (co-organised with EUCPN), GPS thefts on agricultural vehicles, etc.

Europol used **innovative technologies**, such as jammer detectors, in various action days to support MS in their investigations.

A **Joint Action Day**, targeting the detection of stolen cars and vehicle parts, was successfully supported in Q4. More than 400 stolen cars were detected. Europol also supported the Joint Police Operation (JPO) targeting motor vehicle crimes.

On the other hand, a project to facilitate a swifter identification of stolen vehicles by providing MS access to the **Forensic Aid for Vehicle Identification** (FAVI) had to be postponed due to some objections raised by the data protection office.

A **conference on pickpocketing** was successfully hosted and organised by Europol in May 2019, with more than 170 participants from 23 countries.

Activity 4. Combating Cyber Crime.

In 2019, the European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) provided **operational support** to 397 cases, almost doubling the target set and surpassing by large the 257 cases supported in 2018. The **satisfaction with the operational support and analysis**, measured by the quarterly online surveys sent to lead investigators in the MS, was rated 9.0/10. In the case of investigations led by EC3, Europol collected feedback from 41 operations and 78 investigators.

The Centre accepted and processed 6,731 **operational contributions** and produced and delivered no less than 1,084 **operational reports**, with a hit rate of 13,1% (well above Europol's average), and 88 **strategic and thematic reports**.

In addition to the established annual Victim Identification Taskforces (VIDTF), Global Airline Action Days and Cyber Patrol Action taskforces, EC3 organised two **Operational Task Forces** (OTF).

18 **Mobile Offices** were deployed for a total of 121 days. EC3 organised and financially supported 37 **operational meetings**, with close to 300 participants from different countries and a financial contribution of more than € 111k. Additionally, EC3 coordinated or supported 25 **Action Days** targeting different crime areas.

At the end of 2019, 18 law enforcement agencies from 16 different countries were part of the **Joint Cybercrime Action Taskforce** (J-CAT), with Finland joining on a temporary basis. The J-CAT was involved in three Joint Investigation Teams (JIT), six umbrella operational projects and 59 high-profile cases. Six J-CAT-EC3 Roadshows, with more than 580 attendees, and four CEPOL webinars in four languages were successfully organised and resulted in increased operational contributions.

The different teams in EC3 performed 1,646 **forensic jobs**, compared to a target of 2,000. It should be noted that the definition of forensic jobs was reviewed in the course of the year to more accurately capture the support provided while the target was not accordingly adjusted. The **Forensic Lab** was deployed on 10 occasions while technical examinations on printing devices were performed 788 times. The Forensic team supported the dismantling of three printshops. The Document Laboratory maintained, for third year, the **ISO 17020:2012** accreditation concerning forensics examinations on Euro counterfeited banknotes and provided 4 forensic reports with the accredited method.

Regarding the use of the Europol Malware Analysis Solution (**EMAS**), there were 1,068 users at the end of the year and close to 500,000 files submitted for analysis, with around one third of them being malicious.

Additionally, EC3 organised 6 **prevention campaigns** (e.g. e-Commerce, EMMA, Youth Day, Dark Web) and supported another 29 (e.g. Codefest, Get Safe Online, Safer Internet Day). Relevant progress was made regarding the *Trace an Object* and *NoMoreRansom* projects. At the end of the year there were close to 22,000 followers to EC3's Twitter account. The EPE SPACE community accounted for more than 6,000 active users and 38 sub-communities in 2019.

EC3 signed 5 **cooperation/working arrangements** with the private sector and organised 32 **training activities** for MS and TP LE experts.

OSINT and **crypto-currency** analytical capabilities were notably enhanced during 2019.

Europol Public Information

A.4.1 - Accelerate Europol's capabilities to provide support to MS' investigations in the area of cybercrime-related EU Policy Cycle priorities 2018-2021.

EC3 supported a total of 66 operations related to the criminal **use of the Dark Web**. 47 **child abuse victims** were identified in the course of investigations targeting child sexual exploitation. 14 operations were supported in the framework of the **Victim Identification Task Forces (VIDTF)**, leading to 263 identified individuals.

In order to enhance the intelligence picture on key targets related to the **Travelling Child Sex Offender** crimes and drawing upon the **EU PNR Directive**, AP Twins and Europol's Travel Intelligence unit discussed possibilities for cooperation, particularly in the context of the Global Airline Action Days. Another project in this regard involved the exchange of PNR data between AP Terminal, Hungary and the Travel Intelligence unit in order to identify High Value Targets.

With regard to **cyber-facilitated business compromise** (e.g. CEO payment fraud), several cases were supported in 2019 by the EC3 in close cooperation with AP Apaté and the Joint Cybercrime Action Taskforce (J-CAT) and further cooperation was discussed at the Joint Advisory Group meeting with private sector partners.

EC3 assessed the requirements for new tools on **malware virology, malware DNA and reverse engineering**. The different proposed solutions were assessed by ICT and procured and implemented before the end of the year.

In Q1 2019, the EDPS confirmed that Europol had no legal basis to build a platform for EU LEA to connect to the non-public **WHOIS** database. However, the EDPS indicated that Europol could provide authentication on behalf of EU LEA. In this respect, Europol worked closely with ICANN Technical Group to ensure the viability of this option and interoperability with Europol's existing technical solution for authentication.

The Document Forensic team actively participated in the **EMPACT document fraud horizontal priority** and raised awareness of different tools available in the Document Lab. Flyers to support investigators in relation to Document Fraud cases were being prepared. Members of the Document Lab participated in several meetings of the High Expert Groups (HEG) and provided on-the-spot support in multiple occasions.

Forensic **solutions to recover criminal data from vehicles and digital video recorders (DVR)** were procured and tested. Additionally, chip-off equipment to **recover data from damaged or destroyed portable devices** was also acquired. Relevant training was provided to make appropriate use of the new equipment. Before the end of the year, these solutions were already used in several cases supported by the Forensic team.

On the other hand, the **Dark Web Annual Expert Meeting** and **Strategic Expert Conference** had to be cancelled due to lack of resources.

A.4.2 - Further develop Europol's capability for recovering encrypted criminal data and utilise the agency's potential to perform as a European centre of expertise on decryption.

Europol and the JRC finalised a service level agreement (SLA) which covered the design, procurement, installation, configuration, maintenance and administration of a **High Performance Computing decryption platform** at Ispra (Italy). The first meeting of the Steering Committee took place in June and the first equipment and tests were scheduled for Q4, with the go-live planned for Q1 2020. However, due to some challenges the JRC was facing with the contractor working on the building integration the go-live of the project was delayed to Q2

Europol Public Information

2020. The current decryption platform was used in 59 occasions, with a 39% successful decryption rate.

Europol and Eurojust released the first Observatory Function report on encryption, with a second one planned for 2020, with the aim to monitor **new trends in the use of encryption by criminals**. A position paper on challenges related to the 5G technology was released by Europol. EC3 held three meetings on 5G in 2019 to discuss the challenges for lawful interception and to formulate a potential response.

Cooperation between EC3 and **ENISA** was close and fruitful in the course of 2019. To name a few initiatives, EC3 contributed to a conference organised by ENISA on the use of artificial intelligence in cyber security incidents, collaborated to prepare and conduct the first-ever LE Emergency Response Protocol (ERP) table-top exercise and co-organised and participated in the conference for Internet of Things (IoT) organised by ENISA.

Capacity building for the law enforcement community continued and three training courses on Hashcat were organised and delivered by the Forensic team to (24) MS representatives. Additionally, an internal course on applied Python programming was delivered to Europol staff by members of the Forensic team.

Two **decryption expert groups** were created in 2019. The first one for practitioners who attended the Hashcat training course delivered by Europol and the second one (End-to-End Encryption - E2EE) for those experts who attended the Encryption Network meetings organised by the Forensic team.

Europol acquired **new tools** to enable the extraction of data from password protected mobile devices. More than 1,750 **data storage devices** were examined during the year.

A.4.3 - Foster international cooperation and identify joint activities to address common challenges in the cybercrime and cyber-enabled crime area in a unified manner.

In 2019, EC3 expanded its **operational and strategic collaboration** on payment fraud migration and card-not-present fraud with countries such as Senegal, as part of the EMPACT OAP on Non-Cash Payment Fraud.

A delegation of representatives from **CERT-EU** and the European Defence Agency (**EDA**) visited EC3 in June, as part of a staff exchange programme to share strategic and tactical knowledge. This visit was planned as part of the Roadmap developed by the joint MoU partners CERT-EU, EDA, ENISA and EC3. On top of this, **ENISA**, EDA and CERT-EU participated in EC3's Programme Board meeting in November.

EC3 organised a simulation for EU LEA and key partners in the cyber security arena to test the **EU Law Enforcement ERP**, as described under A.4.2. This simulation was co-organised with ENISA and took place in October, with a preparatory workshop in Athens hosted by ENISA. An evaluation of the exercise was performed and the preliminary findings were very positive. Additionally, EC3 participated in the table top exercise within the Horizontal Working Party on Cyber Issues that was organised by the **EEAS**.

Europol was involved in the preparations of the **Cyber Europe 2020 Pan-European cyber exercise**. Also, Europol was invited to participate in the **CyberEast project** which aims at adopting legislative and policy frameworks compliant to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime and related instruments, reinforcing the capacities of judicial and law enforcement authorities and interagency cooperation.

The biennial **expert meeting on technical investigations on printed materials** took place in the second quarter of the year at Europol's headquarters. EC3 organised other **events** such

Europol Public Information

as the LEA-CSIRT workshop, the Europol Interpol conference, the meetings of the Advisory Groups, Forensic Expert Forum, etc.

Due to lack of resources, EC3 could not further enhance its engagement with key **cyber intelligence centres** and cyber operational international taskforces. Nonetheless, an effort was made to send an expert from the Centre to attend the National Cyber Forensics & Training Alliance (NCFTA) in May 2019. In the context of Dark Web investigations, Europol could not establish partnerships with key energy and automotive industry players due to limited resources.

Activity 5. Counter-terrorism.

During 2019, Europol supported a total of 632 different **operations in the area of counter-terrorism**, surpassing the target set at 500. A significant improvement could be observed regarding the satisfaction of EU MS investigators with the operational support provided by Europol, moving from a satisfaction level of 8.0/10 in 2018 to 9.1/10 in 2019. ECTC coordinated a total of 18 **Action Days** in 2019.

Although the number of **operational contributions** decreased compared to 2018, from 6,642 to 6,075, the number of **operational reports** produced related to CT exceeded the target of 1,700 and reached almost 1,900. It should be noted that even if the amount of contributions have decreased, larger volumes of data were contained in these contributions, heavily affecting the workload for the analysts in CT.

The number of CT units connected to **SIENA** did not improve and stayed at 47, as in the previous year. However, the number of SIENA messages exchanged by CT units (66,393) significantly increased, by around 20%.

With regards to **EIS**, the number of objects related to CT continued to grow and reached almost 735k objects (64.6k of which person objects), while more than 1,500 CBCC on person objects related to CT were found in 2019. However, the number of CT units connected to EIS did not reach the expected target of 25 units.

ECTC was present in the hotspots with the **Guest Officers** concept, where the number of arrivals exceeded 73,000. ECTC deployed GOs for a total of 13,196 man-days. The number of persons referred for checks (3,676) was well below the target. Nonetheless, the number of hits (1,285) was four-fold compared to the previous year.

In the context of the **TFTP** agreement with the US, almost 200 article 10 searches were requested by the EU.

A.5.1 - Promote and facilitate greater information exchange in the area of counter-terrorism and provide better and extended operational support to Member States' investigations.

ECTC continued to actively support EU MS with **on-the-spot deployments** in the context of action days, on-going investigations, sport events and other high-level political events.

No specific activities were undertaken during 2019 regarding the extension of **CT SIENA** connection to interested EU MS and further promotion of using CT SIENA for exchange of information up to EU Confidential level.

Europol's **CBRN-E** team priorities in 2019 were mainly focused on supporting EU MS investigations, strategically and with on-the-spot support, with particular emphasis on the online illicit sale of chemicals and precursors and the use of explosive precursors to make improvised explosive devices (IED). The team also put emphasis on monitoring online jihadist propaganda messages and tutorials on how to perpetrate CBRN or explosives attacks. Cooperation with CEPOL, the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was intense in the terms of training activities. Additionally, the team continued to update and promote the use of tools like EPE's EEODN (639 users) and EBDS (12 users) databases. CBRN-E team represented Europol and organised, co-organised and participated in various projects and meetings (e.g. EEODN annual conference, ISP-Police EEODN Activities – in partnership with Estonia, EU-US Explosives Experts seminar, NATO EOD workshop, CBRN-E Advisory Group, Standing Committee of Precursors, DG JRC – RCSMT and others).

Europol Public Information

The **Counter Terrorism Joint Liaison Team** (CT-JLT) concept was further developed and supported a series of action days, joint high-priority operations and meetings. A new EU MS was welcomed into the CT-JLT and, at the end of 2019, 17 EU MS and 3 TP were part of it.

Further cooperation with the **Counter Terrorism Group** (CTG) members was established in the course of the year and several workshops were organised and hosted by ECTC: a workshop on open sources exploitation and removal of illicit content (March) and another workshop on face and pattern recognition (June). In December, a technical working session on face recognition capabilities was organised at Europol.

Regarding enhancing cooperation between ECTC and **third countries** relevant progress was made, particularly in these regions:

- **Western Balkans** (WB): ECTC actively supported the implementation of the Joint Action Plan on CT for the WB and joined DG HOME, EEAS and the Office of EU CTC on a regular basis. The situation of Europol's Liaison Officers (ELO) to the WB countries differed from country to country. The ELO for Albania was deployed in June but the ELO for Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina were recruited but not yet deployed. Serbia ratified the agreement in November.
- **MENA**: support to these countries was provided in many different ways (e.g. intelligence analysis regarding foreign fighters) and ECTC participated in many meetings and workshops. For instance, ECTC participated in the UNODC Regional Seminar on effective counter terrorism investigations and prosecutions (Morocco), ECTC hosted a high-level visit from the Tunisian Pole Securitaire (PS) and hosted experts of the future threat analysis and incident response working group, ECTC attended EU-Israel and EU-Tunisia CT Dialogues, representatives from EMSC attended the Algiers Joint Workshop on Risk Analysis and Cross-Border Crime (organised by Frontex for AFRIPOL countries), ECTC supported a training activity organised by EUROMED in Jordan, and many others.

No progress was made regarding the temporary embedding of ECTC staff into the **Crime Information Cells** or any other **multi-agency platform** dealing with CT related matters (e.g. TF Blue Sentinel or Operation Gallant Phoenix).

Finally, ECTC supported the activities of the **Counter Terrorism Programme Board** (CTPB). The Plenary meeting took place in June and progress made by the CTPB was presented, followed by a lively discussion on the way forward. The second plenary meeting took place in November and the CTPB work plan was presented by the CTPB's Chair and co-Chair (France and Belgium, respectively). A CTPB EPE, restricted to European counter-terrorism units, was established with the aim to act as the repository for CTPB activities, meetings, deliverables and other supporting documents.

A.5.2 - Expand the scope of the Cross Border Access to Electronic Evidence (SIRIUS) Project.

Several **face-to-face training events** were organised in the framework of the SIRIUS project, in order to improve MS law enforcement and judicial authorities capabilities to produce relevant information requests to OSPs. More specifically, 3 events in Budapest, one in Amsterdam, one in Paris, one in Lisbon and one at Europol's headquarters, totalling 171 participants. Another 350 participants attended the **SIRIUS Conference** and the total number of **SIRIUS platform members** exceeded 3,900 at the end of 2019.

The **SIRIUS Codefest** was organised in the fourth quarter of 2019 with the main aim to coordinate the development of **new ICT tools** (in cooperation with experts from MS) to support Internet investigations. Additionally to this event, new tools were regularly uploaded to the SIRIUS platform and the total number of downloads went up to 7,727 for the 14 available tools.

Europol Public Information

A joint Europol-Eurojust delegation participated in a **study visit to US OSP** in June to collect information for the development of guidelines and training materials on how to collect electronic evidence. Outreach activities with US OSP continued as planned (see also in the context of EU IRU in the next objective). Weekly **meetings with Eurojust** were held in order to strengthen cooperation with regards to the SIRIUS project.

A **strategic report** on the state of play, trends and challenges in the field of cross-border access to electronic evidence was drafted during the year, after collection and analysis of data, and published in December.

A.5.3 - Enhance Europol's internet referral capabilities for prevention and investigation in the context of the EU Internet Forum Action Plan to Combat Terrorist Online Content.

In 2019, **EU IRU** systematically monitored more than 360 online platforms and assessed more than 25,000 online contents, with a referral rate of 99%. Due to current technological limitations of the IRMa platform, the rate of successful removals could not be measured accurately in 2019.

The **EU IRU** established regular communication with **online service providers** (OSP), large and small, to raise awareness of terrorist's behaviour online through their platforms and build resilience against their exploitation. This was done by means of regular conference calls, workshops, joint webinars, leaflets and other visual materials, etc. Several visits to Silicon Valley were conducted in the course of 2019, accompanied by the EU Commission and MS delegations, in the context of the **EU Internet Forum** and aftermath of Christchurch attack. The need for a crisis response protocol was presented and discussed. The EUIRU was tasked to prepare a first draft of said protocol, involving EU MS and integrating their input. A first table-top exercise to test the multi-stakeholder response to viral content in the aftermath of simulated terrorist attacks was conducted in September.

Four additional national IRUs were granted access to **IRMa application**, followed by relevant training of the key users. Members of the network of national IRUs regularly participated in the seven **Referral Action Days** (e.g. one organised in the context of AMAQ operation) organised throughout the year by the EU IRU. A first **Head of IRU meeting** was organised by Europol in June.

No additional human or financial resources were provided to Europol for the development of the EU platform to tackle illicit content (**PERCI** project) through the merger of IRMa and Check the Web capabilities into a new technical environment. The high-level requirements of the project were used for the estimation of additional resources required and the EU Commission and Parliament were timely informed on the details of the project.

The EUIRU contributed to enlarge the **strategic and thematic knowledge** on terrorist propaganda by delivering 11 reports and 314 intelligence packages covering this matter. The EUIRU supported 45 operational cases in 2019.

A.5.4 - Implement the affiliation of the ATLAS Network of Special Intervention Units within the structure of Europol.

The implementation of this work programme objective was subject to the 2019 budgetary discussions (as indicated in [Annex VIII](#)) and additional funds to support this initiative did not materialise. Negotiations between the EU Commission and Europol on the matter continued during the whole 2019.

Despite not having received the necessary funding for the establishment of the **ATLAS Support Office** (ASO), Europol managed to make some progress, according to the Terms of Reference

Europol Public Information

(ToR) agreed between ATLAS and Europol. Austria provided a temporary cost-free SNE while Europol launched a selection procedure leading to a reserve list for the appointment of a Head of the ASO.

A **SIENA mailbox was established** in the third quarter, as a subgroup under ECTC. Cooperation between ECTC and the ATLAS network was intense, with many **strategic reports** being shared and participation in relevant meetings and conferences by the cost-free SNE.

An *EPE platform for ATLAS* was created within the operational network in order to ensure effective information exchange between members of the ATLAS community. Some problems linked to the lack of access of SIUs to the operational network were identified and solutions proposed at the HENU meeting in November.

Additionally and following the ToR, the **ATLAS Annual Work Programme for 2020 and 2021** were delivered.

Activity 6. Provision of cross-cutting operational capabilities.

Europol coordinated a total of 251 **action days** in different countries and 266 **operational training activities** were organised during the year, with a satisfaction rate of 9.0/10. Europol was involved in 46 **JITs** in the course of operations supported and formally signed 27 Joint Investigation Team (JIT) agreements in 2019. More than 500 **operational meetings** were financially supported by Europol in 2019.

With the integration of the EMPACT Delegation Agreement into Europol's regular budget, following the implementation of the Europol Regulation, and in the framework of the EU Policy Cycle, Europol continued to financially support actions under the **EMPACT Operational Action Plans** (OAPs).

In this respect, Europol implemented a scheme encompassing a **two-track manner of awarding grants**, namely partly following a traditional call for proposals with a fixed deadline for submission of applications and partly through grants awarded in an open-ended procedure. Accordingly, EU Member States could apply for either high-value grants (HVG) for both operational and strategic activities, or for low-value grants (LVG) for purely operational activities.

In 2019, the initial budget equaled € 4 M, out of which € 3 M were reserved for the HVGs and € 1 M for the LVGs. Following the submission of funding applications by Member States and the use of the returned unspent 2017 funds, the final budgetary division was as follows:

- 13 HVGs were awarded for a total budget of € 2.6M, granting support to strategic and operational activities set in 12 OAPs. Only one OAP did not request any HVG support in 2019.
- 52 LVGs were awarded for an overall amount of € 1.5M. Nearly all the OAPs (12 out of 13) made use of the LVGs. A higher allocation of funds than initially foreseen was possible thanks to the transfer of the non-requested HVGs (€ 349k) and the funds not spent by Member States under 2017 grants (€ 172k of internal assigned revenue).

A.6.1 - Contribute to the development of a common EU view on criminal analysis.

In order to facilitate the establishment of **standard EU definitions and quality criteria for analytical products**, a meeting was organised with EU MS in February. Progress was made in the drafting of the **Europol ontology**, in light of the Integrated Data Management implementation, and a new data model, in the framework of the NEO programme, was finalised. In 2019, Europol produced a total of 262 **Operational Analysis Reports** (OAR) and user satisfaction with the Europol's operational analysis was 8.9/10.

COSI made a decision on the need to set up a network for criminal analysts in the EU to exchange knowledge and expertise. As a result of this decision, **EPE CONAN** was set up by Europol to enable exchange of information and knowledge among EU MS experts in the area of analysis and, at the end of the year, 1,200 users were registered in the platform. Significant progress on the definition of standards, templates for operational products, processes and a full revision of analytical products was made by the **Task Force Analysis**, a temporary multi-disciplinary team established for this purpose. Additionally, work was performed to **review the quality** of operational reports produced by some AP.

Europol organised in July the first **Summer School** with a main focus on criminal analysis. Planning for 2020 (expected in May 2020) was completed and invitations to the EU MS experts were sent before the end of the year. On top of this, **internal training of analysts** continued with the OIAT programme, reviewed in the course of the year and delivered in modules. An operational training needs analysis was performed for the whole Operations Directorate.

A.6.2 - Strengthen Europol's capabilities to deliver quality strategic reports.

In terms of **strategic and thematic analysis** Europol produced a total of 313 reports – 166 strategic and 147 thematic. The satisfaction with strategic analysis was rated 8.7/10.

The **methodology** used for the production of the SOCTA went through a review process in 2019. A working group was established within the SOCTA Advisory Group and met in several occasions during the year, supported by the Task Force Analysis. The **data collection process** was fully reviewed and new a questionnaire was drafted. The development of methodologies for broader scope is expected to be continued in 2020.

A **training needs** analysis for strategic analyst was completed and relevant training provided. One staff member from the strategic analysis team was temporarily allocated to the Travel Intelligence Unit to explore possibilities to make use of **travel information in the context of strategic and thematic analysis**.

A mid-term review report on the **new, changing and emerging threats in the EU crime landscape** was completed in the first quarter of the year. The report was shared with the EU MS for review and subsequently forwarded to the EU Council in May.

A.6.3 - Develop Europol's capabilities in the area of travel intelligence in line with the Travel Intelligence Roadmap.

The implementation of this work programme objective was marked as one of the objectives with a reduced level of ambition, due to the prioritization process followed by Europol (see [Annex VIII](#)) after the final budget was known.

Europol made a total of 56 requests for **PNR data**, according to art. 10 PNR Directive, leading to 1,054 hits. EU MS PIUs provided spontaneously provided information to Europol in 127 instances. In total, Europol examined almost 415k PNR entities. Additionally, Europol's **Travel Intelligence** provided support to 41 operations and delivered 124 operational reports.

Considering this and the increasing number of requests and ongoing pilot projects to cross-check information from EU MS PIUs, the amount of **operational analysis reports** in the area of travel intelligence was very limited.

Nonetheless, relevant progress was made with regards to the development of **rule-based targeting**. In this respect, Travel Intelligence attended a workshop in Brussels on the subject and was recognised by EU MS PIUs as a relevant partner for sharing and analysis of targeting rules, modus operandi, patterns and trends. Several specific awareness sessions on targeting rules were organised internally at Europol.

Europol conducted two workshops with Liaison Bureaux representatives to discuss on criteria for future **deployment of liaison officers** to the travel intelligence unit and a document outlining the outcomes of these workshops was presented and discussed with the HENU and MB (including its Working Group on Corporate Matters).

A **conference on Travel Intelligence** was planned for 2019. In order to prepare for this conference, a "Future Group" concept was introduced (by EU Commission in January, at DAPIX in February and to the PNR Community in June) and focused on elaborating operational scenarios and flows within the larger scope of travel intelligence. This Future Group, co-organised with Frontex, had planned 6 meetings which resulted in the Travel Intelligence Conference being moved to 2020. The first meeting of the Group took place in September and two other meetings in October and December.

Europol Public Information

On the other hand, cooperation with **private partners** for the collection of travel intelligence didn't progress as expected, due to the lack of resources.

Europol maintained its central role in the **IWG-PNR** and organised 4 meetings of this Working Group at Europol's headquarters, with more than 100 participants in each meeting. Different topics were presented and discussed, like the Future Group, PIU.net, operational activities, travel intelligence strategy, blueprint and roadmap, SIENA connections, etc. Europol also attended various Application meetings on the EU PNR Directive and a SIS-PNR meeting.

EPE Rover continues to be actively used and, at the end of 2019, the platform had almost 500 active members.

Travel Intelligence at Europol participated in the **ETIAS**-related meetings, such as expert sub-groups, Smart Borders Committee, meetings with Frontex, inter-agency meetings, etc.

With regards to **training on travel intelligence**, Europol has led the EU-level PNR training development. Europol has co-chaired the Head of PIU meeting focused on training and prepared materials for several CEPOL training courses and webinars.

A.6.4 - Reinforce the provision of horizontal support to investigations by advancing the development of specialist law enforcement techniques.

A new media campaign for the **EU Most Wanted List** (EUMWL) was initiated in 2019, with relevant input from ENFAST, and planned for October 2019. Contributions from 22 EU MS were received and more than 400k unique visitors were logged in the first 14 days of the campaign. As a result of it, 9 suspects were arrested. In 2019, a total of 40 new suspects were added to EUMWL.

In the course of 2019, the following **EPE platforms** were set up and relevant training to platform managers provided: cold cases, disaster victim identification and behavioural investigative advice. It is expected that in the near future a platform on missing persons will be created.

The **Special Tactics** team continued to actively support the work of the European Network of Advisory Teams (**EuNAT**) in their ongoing projects for cyber enabled extortion and mass hostage taking. Based on the data collected and analysed from questionnaires sent to MS experts, draft guidelines were drafted, pending the final approval. Moreover, the Special Tactics team provided support to 7 operations.

No decision was made regarding the tool to be used for de-confliction of online **undercover investigations** and it is still under evaluation.

The agreement between Europol and the European Maritime Safety Agency (**EMSA**) for the utilisation of maritime geospatial images for analytical purposes was concluded in 2019. Several staff members from Europol were trained by EMSA and the new capabilities have been used to support ongoing cases. Additionally, Europol's participation in the **GOVSATCOM project**, enabling the use of secure governmental satellite communication for law enforcement needs, was under review, at the end of the year. The project's kick off was expected in Q1 2020.

Europol continued to roll-out the **European Tracking Solution** (ETS) and operational tests were successfully performed with 5 EU MS. Data protection recommendations were received and mitigation measures were discussed in that respect. A working agreement template was approved and sent to some MS for signature.

The work on **covert and real time use of automotive data** was taken over by **ENLETS** but actively supported by the Special Tactics team. EC3 is involved from the forensic point of view. Discussions were ongoing regarding the set-up of an EPE platform for the matter.

Europol Public Information

A.6.5 - Increase the provision of comprehensive financial intelligence to MS regarding money laundering, asset recovery, corruption and terrorism financing, including possible links to other criminal areas.

Europol supported a total of 205 **operational cases** related to financial intelligence and produced more than 1,100 **operational reports** related to that crime area, both above the set target for 2019. The **satisfaction with the operational support and analysis delivered** in the course of the year was rated at 8.1/10, which is slightly below the target set (8.5/10).

During 2019, AP Sustrans and AP Asset Recovery received and accepted 5,267 **operational contributions** and supported 18 Action Days, providing cross-departmental support in the majority of the cases. 24 operational meeting, financially supported by Europol, were organised related to this crime area.

The number of countries contributing cash declarations and cash seizures has increased in 2019, as a result of the **Pan-European platform for suspicious transactions**.

Several difficulties arose with regards to the future of the FIU.net. During most of 2019 (as the EDPS only provided its final position in December 2019), doubts grew as to the nature of the **data exchanged by FIUs through the FIU.net** and as, a consequence, Europol was considered by EDPS as processing non-suspect data through its technical administration of the system. This created strong uncertainties as to the legal possibilities of embedding FIU.net into SIENA, even though this evolution had been planned and foreseen since the embedment of FIU.net in 2016. Nonetheless, Europol continued to search opportunities for cooperation by **creating filters**, e.g. on High Value Targets, from some AP. A total of 13 Ma3tch filters were in place at the end of 2019. Those filters involved 4,184 entities and represent an increase of three filters and a six fold of the number of entities inside the filters compared to 2018.

In terms of **FIU data exchange**, more than 257k cross border reports were exchanged between FIUs and almost 20k FIU to FIU requests were exchanged via FIU.net – representing an increase of 6.5% compared to 2018. The number of **requests received by Europol from FIUs** in FIU.net in 2019 increased substantially compared to 2018, including TFTP requests- from 24 requests in 2018 to 53 requests in 2019. Europol's efforts to increase this cooperation paid off as the number of requests was doubled in spite of the uncertainties linked to the FIU.net situation.

A report on FIU to FIU cooperation was released by the European Commission in the summer and the possibility to create an **EU FIU mechanism** was mentioned in the report. However, the report did not clarify the shape, mandate or location of this system.

On 20 December 2019, Europol received the letter of the EDPS: The EDPS puts a ban on all processing by Europol of data related to individuals who are not classed as "suspects" under the applicable national criminal procedure law in the context of the technical administration of FIU.net. The EDPS suspends the ban for the period of one year, in order to allow Europol to ensure a smooth transition of the technical administration of FIU.net to another entity.

Cooperation with financial institutions to increase prevention, detection and reporting on suspicious transactions continued through the **Europol Financial Intelligence Public Private Partnership** (EFIPPP). Cooperation with **anti-corruption authorities** was regular, mainly through AP Asset Recovery who provided support to major scale corruption cases and attended regular meetings with anti-corruption authorities.

Europol engaged, on a structured basis, with the **Financial Action Task Force** (FATF). For instance, Europol started contributing to a FATF project on wildlife trafficking that will continue

Europol Public Information

in 2020, followed closely a project on asset recovery via the CARIN⁵ Secretariat and joined a project on Trade Based Money Laundering (TBML). Europol also engaged with **Egmont group** in various projects and a presentation of the new **European Financial and Economic Crime Centre** (EFECC) was planned for early 2020.

The 3rd **Conference on virtual currencies and criminal finances**, an event for more than 250 experts from both the private and public sector, was hosted by Europol and co-organized with Interpol and the Basel Institute.

The **BeCaNet project** was supported by Europol. Staff members participated in the project meetings organised and co-chaired the expert meeting that took place in March. Europol experts attended a workshop in the USA of one of the project partners and delivered a presentation on Europol's analytical tools. Europol actively contributed to the planning and training-related activities of this project.

The adoption of the **Directive for the use of financial and other information** is, in particular, the conclusion of discussions initiated in the ARO platform co-chaired by Europol (ECAB).

A decision on the future establishment of an **EU system for tracking terrorism financing**, outside the EU-US TFTP agreement, was still pending at the end of 2019.

Europol continued ensuring successfully the **CARIN** and **AMON**⁶ Secretariat and organised both Assembly General meetings (AGMs). The AMON AGM hosted experts in money laundering coming from 37 jurisdictions. In addition, the Asset Recovery Inter Agency Networks (ARIN) secretariats (8 networks representing more than 120 countries) met in Europol, gathering for 2 days. The CARIN Secretariat in Europol helped preparing the annual general meeting and drafting recommendations sent to the EU Commission on beneficial ownership in offshore jurisdictions, virtual assets and asset management.

Two sessions of the **Financial Intelligence Training** (FIT) were delivered for internal and external experts from different countries.

⁵ Camden Assets Recovery Interagency Network

⁶ Anti-Money Laundering Operational Network

Activity 7. Governance, support and administration.

Although described in more detail in [section 2.2](#) of this report, Europol managed to successfully implement **2019's budget** with a commitment rate of 99.4%, well above the target set at 95%, and a payment rate of 86.6%, below the target set at 90% and at a similar level as in the previous year. All in all, the **budget outturn** was of 1.5%, which is within the tolerance level set at maximum 2%.

Europol did, however, not manage to comply with the target of maximum 5% of **late payments** and deviated with a rate above 21% of late payments. Despite the high amount of late payments, it should be noted that late payments only represented 4.6% in terms of value, which is below the threshold of 5%.

Europol ended 2019 with a **vacancy rate** of 3.6%, therefore above the target of 2%, and with 21 pending vacancies. This unusual outcome (0% vacancy rate from 2015 to 2017 and 0.5% in 2018) was the result of several factors impacting the recruitment process along the year, such as the implementation of new HR policies related to the implementation of article TA 2(f) of the Staff Regulations and a higher-than-expected **turnover rate** (11.7%, compared to 8.7% in 2018, mainly explained by the lower number of contracts ending in 2018 than in 2019).

With regards to the **sick leave**, similarly to the previous year, Europol could not monitor this indicator due to technical limitations in the system managed by the external contractor. It is expected that with the insourcing of the medical service, this indicator will again be available.

On a different matter, Europol managed to implement 95% of the pending **critical and very important audit recommendations** planned for 2019. Europol's **corporate risk** reporting contained a total of 82 risks at the end of 2019 (74 threats and 8 opportunities).

From a communication point of view, **Europol appeared in the media** in more than 81,000 occasions, well below the targeted 130k appearances.

A total of 312 **public access requests** were received in 2019.

A.7.1 - Continue optimising Europol's corporate functions.

The new **Financial Regulation** was approved by MB in October, with retrospective effect of 1 July 2019. The implementing rules on grants were repealed and new models for grants were prepared for approval, taking stock of relevant lessons learned.

In 2019, Europol ensured that all **prioritised processes** for new initiatives were in place. In total, 38 processes were signed and approved while 4 are in the approval phase and 6 on-going.

HR policies were adjusted in accordance with article TA 2(f) of the Staff Regulation, and more specifically the policies on contract duration, internal selection procedures, contract renewal, recruitment process (from TA 2(f) point of view) and decision on recruitment of middle management.

Regarding **electronic management of documents and records**, testing, training and validation of the digital signature was completed in September but implementation was postponed. A proof of concept (PoC) for electronic management of documents and records was completed.

The **Facility Management Information System** (FMIS) was upgraded and tested in development environments. Digital workflows were implemented within the FMIS.

The scope of the existing **e-recruitment tool** was successfully expanded to cover restricted posts too.

Europol Public Information

In 2019, the **e-tendering tool** was used for all open procedures above the EU threshold. However, the award of the ICT consultancy tender experienced some delays.

The implementation of **SYSPER** was delayed due to an adjusted time schedule by the Commission. At the end of 2019, the migration of the career data was completed (originally planned for April 2019). The organisational chart module was working and fully updated, including the last organisational changes. Preparatory work was under way for other relevant modules. The implementation of SYSPER was delayed to the first months of 2020 and, therefore, the feasibility study for the implementation of the Missions Integrated Processing System (MiPS) could not be performed in 2019.

Significant progress was done regarding the alignment of Europol's archiving of official documents with the **EU Archive Regulation** 2015/496. Work was mainly performed to improve the quality of archival storage, the completion of the file level inventory and definition of criteria for the different historical periods.

In 2019, Europol received 312 requests for **public access** to Europol's documents.

Regarding the set-up of an environmental management system, compliant with ISO 14001 and the EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (**EMAS**), relevant progress was made. In particular, the roles and responsibilities and governance structure were agreed, the annual performance report for the year 2018, together with the environmental objectives and Action Plan for 2020-2022 were endorsed by Europol's MB. Also, the report on the Environmental compliance audit performed in 2019 was presented. Europol completed the process description for three related processes and awareness sessions for all Europol staff were organised to promote environmental sustainability.

Europol implemented a new framework for **Learning & Development**, in force since January 2019. All in-house training courses were timely published on Europol's intranet and subsequently evaluated. The training plans for all Directorates were implemented in 2019 and those of 2020 intensively discussed with the respective areas. A new framework contract for language classes was launched and finalised in 2019.

The **Staff Survey** planned for 2019 had to be postponed, due to the launch of a Leadership and Management Programme to enhance managerial skills within the organisation.

Europol submitted a draft proposal of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the EEAS for the provision of **security services** to staff travelling. The proposal was reviewed by both parties and a final response from EEAS is expected.

The insourcing of Europol's **medical service** progressed as planned with the recruitment of the company doctor, the initiation of the procurement of equipment and identification of software requirements. Facilities initiated the accommodation of the medical service, within the headquarters and vacancies for recruiting two nurses were published.

Europol implemented a solution to enable staff to **telework** and launched a pilot project for occasional teleworking. The procurement of supplementary VPN laptops was completed in Q4.

In October 2019, Europol and Eurojust formalised a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the usage of the Temporary Satellite Building. Some of the **shared services** discussed included the common use of facilities (e.g. meeting venues), security and medical services. A joint tender procedure was launched for services related to car leasing.

A.7.2 - Progress towards the rationalisation and expansion of Europol's capabilities in order to accommodate the growth of the agency.

As of 4 November, the **Temporary Satellite Building**, designed to accommodate up to 170 staff, was officially delivered and fully operational ensuring a smooth transfer of staff. At the

Europol Public Information

same time, Europol explored the very limited possibilities for a **second temporary building** in the vicinity of Europol's headquarters. This second temporary building is needed in order to temporarily outplace staff from the headquarters' building while construction works linked to the mid-term housing solution are performed. The Host State proposed a housing solution that was presented to the MB but negotiation was on-going at the end of 2019.

The Host State market consultation on the solution for the **plank floor slabs** was completed in May and the proposed solution was approved by the MB. Work will start as part of the mid-term housing solution.

With regards to the **long-term housing solution** and the need for an additional permanent building, Europol concluded the drafting of the functional programme of requirements which were endorsed by Europol's senior management and sent to the Host State for evaluation. Europol started drafting the technical programme of requirements and it is expected that the project is kicked off in January 2020.

ICT successfully ordered all the necessary equipment and licences for the **decryption platform** at the JRC premises in Italy. The installation of the equipment and software is expected for 2020. From the physical security side, some delays were observed particularly in the connection with Europol's control room.

The upgrade of the **audio-visual** (AV) installation was completed in Q1. All equipment was successfully migrated to permanent racks in the control room and the AV recording system and management tool were installed.

The existing **Crisis Management Plan** (CMP) was evaluated, in view of the new building developments. No particular issues were identified and the CMP was considered fit-for-purpose.

The initiative related to the new **ICT delivery model** (software factory) and based on virtualisation, had to be cancelled due to other operational priorities requiring ICT expertise (e.g. AMAQ2 and IRMA).

A **Business Impact Assessment** was launched in Q1 and relevant input was collected from all departments, including critical activities and services, impacts of disruptive incidents, etc. This exercise was a pre-requisite for the Business Continuity Strategy to be finalised in 2020.

A.7.3 - Establish a new strategy for effective awareness raising on Europol's products and services to law enforcement stakeholders.

Europol organised a **conference with internal communicators and trainers** from MS law enforcement authorities. During the conference, different ideas on how to further promote Europol within the law enforcement community were discussed and relevant input was provided so that Europol could better adapt the messages to their needs.

Due to lack of resources, Europol could not implement a **train-the-trainer concept** to have a pool of trainers in the MS who are knowledgeable about Europol's products and services. However, Europol introduced its **Summer School** concept with a similar purpose.

In the first quarter of 2019, Europol liaised with the **Heads of the Liaison Bureaux** to gather ideas on how to raise awareness of international cooperation. Some of the Liaison Bureaux, who were particularly interested in this initiative, provided very useful insights and clarified their expectations from Europol.

Regular contact was kept with **CEPOL**, particularly with regards to the webinars. Four different webinars were produced in close cooperation with CEPOL: on how to get financial support from Europol, a general overview of Europol, Europol 24/7 capabilities and careers at Europol. The webinars were promoted by both CEPOL's and Europol's social media channels.

Part II. Management

2.1. Management Board

The Management Board (MB) constitutes, along with the Executive Director, the administrative and management structure of Europol in accordance with Article 9 of the Europol Regulation. It is the **Agency's primary governance instrument** and its most important stakeholder environment. It ensures strategic guidance, oversees the implementation of Europol's tasks and performs other functions as mandated by the Europol Regulation. It comprises one representative of each EU Member State and one of the European Commission. As a general rule, it takes decisions by simple majority, with each member having one vote.

During 2019, the MB met four times. Out of those four meetings, three were held at Europol's Headquarters and one took place in Bucharest at the invitation of the Romanian EU Presidency.

The **MB Working Groups on Corporate Matters** (WGCM) and **Information Management** (WGIM) held three and four meetings respectively. The MB Complaints Committee, established by the MB in 2017 to address the complaints lodged by persons to whom the EU Staff Regulations apply in view of acts of the Executive Director affecting them adversely, met on four occasions to review nine cases in total.

In the context of the scrutiny of Europol's activities by the European Parliament (EP) together with national parliaments, the MB Chairperson participated in two meetings of the **Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group** (JPSG), respectively in Bucharest on 24-25 February and in Brussels, at the EP's Headquarters, on 23-24 September. On both occasions, the MB Chairperson reported on latest MB activities and replied to the questions raised in discussion by the JPSG.

Pursuant to Article 14(4) of the Europol Regulation and in accordance with the related scenario adopted by the MB in 2018, Ms Oana-Consuela Florea, Co-Chair of the JPSG and Head of the Romanian Delegation to the JPSG, and Mr Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Chair of the EP's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), and Co-Chair of the JPSG, respectively attended, in an observer capacity, the MB meetings held on 23-24 May and 10-11 December. They attended for specific agenda items, for instance in relation to planning, budgetary, and strategic-related matters.

The activities of the MB in 2019 are presented in [Annex VI](#), which outlines the main matters tabled for MB discussion and the main decisions taken by the Board at each meeting. Furthermore, this annex includes a list of the main decisions taken by the MB through written procedures.

2.2. Budgetary and Financial management

2.2.1. Revenue

The revenue of Europol was almost fully covered by the Community subsidy (fund source IC1), amounting to € 138.3M in 2019. Out of that total, € 2.3M related to the subsidy for the European School.

In addition, the budget was amended by € 3.3M (under fund source IR1) for the contribution from Denmark for the budget year 2019 (€ 2.7M) and for the extension and adjustment of activities of the grant for cross border access to electronic evidence (€ 630K).

Europol Public Information

Item	Source	Heading	Published budget		Established Revenue	Cashed Revenue	Outstanding amount
			Initially adopted	Amending budget			
9000	IC1	Regular subsidy from the Community	136,032,458		136,032,458	136,032,458	-
9001	IC1	Subsidy for European School	2,273,000		2,273,000	2,273,000	-
9200	IC41	Other internal generated revenue carried over from previous year			399,154	398,291	863
9200	IC4	Other internal generated revenue established in the current year			1,102,222	719,254	382,968
9010	IR11	Other subsidies and grants carried over from previous year			496,706	496,706	-
9010	IR1	Other subsidies and grants established in the current year		630,000	487,715	487,715	-
9101	IR1	Contribution Denmark		2,684,998	2,684,998	2,684,998	-
9200	IR1	Other revenue established in the current year			1,640	1,640	-
Total revenue			138,305,458	3,314,998	143,477,893	143,094,062	383,831

The budget in 2019 increased by € 8.1M compared to the budget in 2018 (€ 13.1M if the one-off amount of € 5M for the Decryption Platform is excluded) and came to € 138.3M. In addition to this, an amount of € 26.1M was carried forward from 2018 for other fund sources and an amount of € 4.8M was newly established and cashed to add up to a total € 169.2M of financial resources in 2019.

2.2.2. Expenditure

The final outcome of the financial KPIs for the year 2019 is as follows:

- The implementation of commitment appropriations was 99.4%.
- The overall payment rate was 86.6%. The target was not met due to transfers within the budget that were made relatively late in the year, followed by commitments for which the payments are only expected in 2020.
- The cancelled carry forward commitments amounted to 9%. A total of € 1.6M was not used and was incorporated in the final budget result. This was largely due to de-committing remaining amounts for provisional commitments, and, in addition, for unused funds for EMPACT grants (€ 429K) returned pre-financing by Member States).

The commitment implementation rate at the end of December was 99.4%, which is 0.5% below end of last year (99.9%). The payment rate amounted to 86.6%, which was slightly lower than the year before (86.9%).

Heading	Budget (a)	Commit (b)	Payments (c)	Comm Rate (b/a)	Paym Rate (c/a)	Carry Forward to 2020 (a-c)
T1 - STAFF	82,158,808	82,060,734	81,433,629	99.9%	99.1%	627,105
T2 - OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE	12,883,950	12,440,115	6,737,939	96.6%	52.3%	5,702,176
T3 - OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES	43,262,700	42,996,151	31,618,854	99.4%	73.1%	11,377,297
Total Budget 2019	138,305,458	137,497,000	119,790,422	99.4%	86.6%	17,706,508

Europol Public Information

Title 1 – Staff related expenditure

The Final Budget under Title 1 amounted to € 82M with an implementation rate for commitments of 99.9% and for payments of 99.1%. These results were almost at the same level as last year: Commitments were 0.1% lower while Payments were 0.1% higher than 2018.

A number of transfers from Title 1 (Staff) amounting to € 2M were made to Title 3 (Operational Activities) in order to re-use the savings generated from vacancies (both Temporary Agents and Contract Agents), together with the delayed recruitments caused by the adoption of the new HR legal framework (TA2f).

An amount of €98K remained unused and 1.2% or € 627K of the budget under Title 1 was carried forward to 2020, mainly for staff related expenditure (e.g. recruitments, medical and training expenses) and expenditure relating to facilities (e.g. catering, removal services, audio-visual support and hospitality services).

Title 2 – Other administrative expenditure

The Final Budget under Title 2 amounted to € 12.9M with an implementation rate of 96.6% for commitments and of 52.3% for payments. The Commitments performance was 3.4% lower than the year before mainly due to unused funds for building related expenditure, transport equipment and other administrative expenditure. Payment performance was also lower than previous year (19.7%) due to the involvement of (sub-) contractors before the Host State can issue invoices, which slowed down the related payment process.

During the year, the budget under Title 2 decreased by € 1.2M, mainly due to the agreement of the Host State to cover the majority of expenses for the Satellite building.

An amount of € 444K remained unused, while € 5.7M was carried forward to 2020, representing 44.3% of the budget under Title 2.

Title 3 – Operational activities

The Final Budget under Title 3 amounted to € 43.3M, with a 99.4% commitment rate and a 73.1% payment rate.

Commitments implementation was 0.6% lower than the year before mainly due to unused funds for missions. Payments implementation under this Title was 7.1% higher than the year before thanks to a tight payment control of ICT expenditure.

34.3% or € 14.8M of the budget available under Title 3 was used to support operational activities (of which € 3.5M for operational and other meetings, € 2.8M for missions, € 3M for deployments and € 4M for EMPACT grants). 54.8% or € 23.7M of the budget was implemented for ICT operational activities (e.g. FITE project and ICT sustainment costs). Another 10.3% or € 4.5M was used for other operational activities (e.g. SNE costs, European Police Chiefs Convention (EPCC) and HENU meetings).

The budget under Title 3 was increased by € 3.3M transferred savings from Title 1 and Title 2 which have been used to pay back leasing costs incurred in previous years as well as to replace ICT Host Servers end of life.

An amount of € 267K lapsed, while an overall amount of € 11.4M was carried forward to 2020, representing 26.3% of the budget under Title 3.

2.2.3. Budget Implementation of assigned revenue

With regard to the implementation of assigned revenue, there is a distinction between funds established in 2019 and funds carried forward from 2018. Part of the funds under fund source R0 refer to grants which are usually multi-annual. The amount carried over in respect of fund source R0 includes also non-committed amounts to be used in future years.

Europol Public Information

The implementation of assigned revenue was 70% at the end of 2019, with a payment rate of 63%.

C4 (Internal assigned revenue cashed in 2019): During the year 2019, an overall amount of € 1.1M was established and cashed. An amount of € 38K was implemented and the remaining budget was carried over to fund source C5 and will be implemented in 2020.

C5 (Internal assigned revenue carried over from 2018): Appropriations carried forward from 2018 amounted to € 728K and were fully cashed and implemented. The unpaid amount of € 39.9K was carried forward (to fund source C8) and will be implemented in 2020.

R0 (External assigned revenue): the total amount for R0 came to € 12.1M.

- € 3.1M was carried forward from 2018 for the further implementation of the Europol Pension Fund surplus after the Fund's closure. € 177K was paid and the remainder amounting to € 3.0M was carried forward to 2020.
- € 2.9M was carried forward from 2018 for a delegation agreement that entrusted Europol with support tasks during a part of the EMPACT policy cycle 2015-2018. In addition, an amount of € 497K previously paid out as pre-financing to Member States was reimbursed to Europol. Unspent funds, amounting to € 3.4M, were paid back to the European Commission.
- Following the agreement between Europol and Denmark, a contribution amounting to € 2.7M was received in 2019. The full amount was used under budget item 1100 – Basic salaries (€ 2.7M).
- Also under fund source R0, three grant agreements were implemented, EUIPO, SIRIUS and Western Balkans (WB), all carried forward from previous years: at the end of December 2019 the implementation of grants cashed was 93%, reaching a payment rate of 64%.

2.2.4. Implementation of carry forward from 2018 to 2019

The carry forward to 2019 came to a total of € 17M to cover existing commitments (including € 5M in fund source C3 for the decryption platform). The final implementation rate of the carry forward was 90.8%, 0.8% lower than in 2018. The cancelled carry forward commitments amounted to 9.1%. A total of € 1.6M was not used and was incorporated in the final budget result. The unused funds were related mainly to the following:

- € 117K related to Title 1, which is 15% of the amount carried forward under this Title (€ 807K); the unused funds in this area corresponded to staff expenditure (e.g. trainings and recruitment) and external services (e.g. move and hospitality services).
- € 231K related to Title 2, for building related expenditure, administrative telecommunication costs and statutory expenditure in this area. This represented 8% of the total amount carried forward under this Title (€ 3M).
- € 1.2M related to Title 3, which is 9% of the amount carried forward under Title 3 (€ 13.2M). This was mainly coming from EMPACT grants (€ 429K), missions (€ 260K), ICT expenditure (€ 173K) and Meetings (€ 108K).
- The non-automatic carry forward (C3) of € 5M for the Decryption Platform was implemented at 97.5% and the remaining amount (€ 123K) lapsed.

Europol Public Information

Carry forward from 2018 (C8 + C3)	Carry forward (a)	Commitments (b)	Payments (c)	Available for paym (a-c)	Pay Rate (c/a)
T1 - STAFF (C8)	806,645	749,656	689,625	117,020	85%
T2 - OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE (C8)	3,018,077	2,861,067	2,786,727	231,350	92%
T3 - OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES (C8)	8,169,443	8,048,804	7,083,857	1,085,585	87%
T3 - DECRYPTION PLATFORM (C3)	5,000,000	4,878,393	4,876,729	123,272	97.5%
Total CF C8 +C3 from 2018	16,994,165	16,537,920	15,436,938	1,557,227	90.8%

2.2.5. Carry forward to 2020

With regard to the carry forward of appropriations from 2019 to 2020, there is a distinction between the funds corresponding to carry forward of payment appropriations related to the current budget, carry over of appropriations corresponding to internal assigned revenue and carry over of appropriations corresponding to external assigned revenue. All appropriations have been carry forward in accordance with Article 12 of the Europol Financial Regulation.

An amount of € 17.7M of payment appropriations covering existing commitments was carried forward from fund source C1 to C8. This represented 13% of the overall budget (€ 138.3M). Out of the € 17.7M carried forward:

- € 627K concerned Title 1 (Staff), which was 0.9% of the total Title 1 budget (€ 82.2M).
- € 5.7M concerned Title 2 (Administrative Expenditure), which was 47.7% of the total Title 2 budget (€ 12.9M).
- € 11.4M concerned Title 3 (Operational Expenditure), which was 26.9% of the total Title 3 budget (€ 43.3M).

For internal assigned revenue an amount of € 1.1M under fund source C4 was carried over to 2020 as fund source C5. In addition, the outstanding payment appropriations of fund source C5 to cover existing commitments of € 40K were carried forward to C8.

For external assigned revenue, € 3M of commitment appropriations were carried over and € 946K of payment appropriations were carried forward to 2020.

- € 3M relates to the Europol Pension Fund,
- € 183K relates to the grant agreement for EUIPO,
- € 545K relates to the grant agreement for WB,
- € 293K relates to the grant agreement for SIRIUS.

2.2.6. Budget Outturn

The overall budget result for the financial year 2019 came to € 2.4M. This includes the following:

- An amount of € 808K of the 2019 budget that was not committed and lapsed;
- An amount of € 1.6M of appropriations carried forward from 2018 to 2019 that was not used.
- An exchange rate difference of -€ 2K (loss).

2.2.7. Budget Transfers

Throughout the year, a total number of 25 transfers (14 less than in 2018) were made for a total amount of almost € 7M (or 5.1% of the budget).

Overall, the budget under Title 3 (+€ 3.3M) was increased by transfers from Title 1 (-€ 2.1K) and Title 2 (-€1.2M).

Europol Public Information

It was possible to transfer funds to Title 3 (operational activities) due to the underspending in Title 1 (Staff) generated from the late implementation of the new TA2f contracts as well as from the vacancies for Temporary Agents and Contract Agents. Moreover, the decision of the Host State to cover the majority of costs for the JWF⁷ Satellite Building allowed transfers from Title 2 (other administrative expenditure).

For Title 3 (operational activities), the budget was increased in particular in the area of ICT, in order to finalize new activities related to a re-planning. In particular, a need of new funds materialized in order to launch the Forensic IT Environment (FITE) project, the replacement of existing Hosts Servers end-of-life and to close some IT leasing costs incurred in previous years.

All transfers were approved by the Executive Director in accordance with Article 26(1) of the FR.

2.2.8. Accrual rate

The accrual rate in 2019 decreased to 37% (compared to 39% in 2018), with € 6.6M accrual (amount of products/services already delivered in 2019 but not yet paid) and a total carry forward commitments of € 17.7M. The target for the accrual was set at 60%, which has proved to be extremely challenging and was never achieved in the past years.

Similar to previous years, the need for caution and flexibility due to the late decision on the salary adjustment (only known in the last quarter) led to some delays in implementation and resulted in a number of transfers in the last quarter of the year.

2.2.9. Late payments

The percentage of late payments in 2019 decreased from 22.5% the previous year to 21.3%, which is well above the set target of 5%. The percentage of late payments was particularly high in the fourth quarter, mainly due to the increased number of invoices received and a shortage in terms of human resources.

Europol made a total of 10,305 payments, around 1,700 less than in the previous year and the average number of days to pay moved from 22.4 in 2018 to 21.9 in 2019.

In terms of value with a set target of less than 5%, late payments represent 4.6% of the total payments made in 2019, compared to 3.8% in 2018.

In 2019, a total of € 1,625 were paid to cover interest costs related to late payments. In order to reduce the risk to incur interest for late payments, high value invoices were prioritised. For over 90% of the late payments, the amount was lower than € 1K.

2.2.10. Procurement

Pursuant to Article 74.10 FR, each authorising officer by delegation must draw up a list of the negotiated procedures under points 11.1 (a) to (f) of Annex I FR, i.e. negotiated procedures without publication of a contract notice and, if the trend shows an increase of this type of procedures, to report on measures taken to reverse such a trend. The report on negotiated procedures shall be annexed to the summary of the Consolidated Annual Activity Report.

In 2019, the total number of negotiated procedures under points 11.1 (a) to (f) of Annex I FR was lower - in terms of number and in terms of value - compared to the last two years 2017 and 2018.

⁷ Johan de Wittlaan.

Europol Public Information

In addition, point 3.2 of Annex I FR stipulates that the negotiated procedures under points (g) (building contracts) and (i) (contracts to be declared secret) of point 11.1 shall be included/annexed to the Consolidated Annual Activity Report.

The other grounds of negotiated procedures referred to in points 11.1 (h), (j), (k), (l), and (m) of Annex I FR are subject to separate publication (i.e. publication in the Annual List of Contractors on Europol's website). Therefore, these procedures are not included in this Briefing Note.

No contracts under points 11.1 a, 11.1 c, 11.1 d, 11.1 f or 11.1 g were concluded in 2019.

The following table contain information on the contracts concluded in 2019 under articles 11.1 b, 11.1 e and 11.1 i:

Point Annex I FR	Brief indication of the circumstances justifying the use of procedure	Subject of the tender	Procedure ref.	Maximum value	Contractor
point 11.1 b	Where the works, supplies or services provided only by a particular economic operator for technical reasons or for reasons connected with the protection of exclusive rights	Training for Europol security officers	1909/C5/N	€ 24,623	Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security
point 11.1 e	For new services consisting in the repetition of similar services or works entrusted to the economic operator to which the same contracting authority awarded an original contract	Inclusion of the Europol Temporary Satellite Building in the Material Scope of the Framework Contract G3-CO-949874	1915/C28/N	€ 0 ⁸	Sodexo B.V.
point 11.1 i	For contracts declared secret or for contracts whose performance must be accompanied by special security measures	COSEC (Combating Sexual Exploitation of Children) training Course for EC3	1910/O/N	€ 47,430	Landesamt für Ausbildung, Fortbildung und Personalangelegenheiten der Polizei Nordrhein-Westfalen (LAFP NRW)
		PCF (Payment Card Fraud) Training course for EC3	1901/O/N	€ 24,210	Fundación Policía Española

Pursuant to Article 163(3) FR, publication of certain information on a contract award may be withheld where its release would impede law enforcement or otherwise by contrary to the public interest, would harm the legitimate commercial interest of economic operators or might prejudice fair competition between them. Europol did not identify any reason to withhold information based on Article 163(3) FR.

⁸ The overall contract ceiling of the framework contract G3-CO-949874 was not increased as a result of this negotiated procedure.

2.3. Human Resources management

2.3.1. Staff figures and Establishment Plan

The 2019 Establishment Plan had a total number of 591 TA posts. Compared to the 2018 Establishment Plan (576 TA posts), this represented an increase of 15 TA posts in line with the adopted 2019 budget.

On 31 December 2019, the total number of staff employed by Europol was 756: 549 staff in Establishment Plan (TA posts) and 207 Contract Agents. The number of non-Europol staff (Seconded Experts, Liaison Officers and staff of Liaison Bureaus, Trainees and Contractors) was 543.

During 2019, 89 new staff joined Europol (54 Temporary Agents and 35 Contract Agents), while 89 staff left the Organisation (60 Temporary Agents and 29 Contract Agents).

2.3.2. Vacancy rate

The vacancy rate at year-end 2019 was 3.6% (549 out of 591 posts were in post and 21 offer letters were sent), while the target was a vacancy rate of maximum 2%. The vacancy rate in 2018 was 0.5%.

The high vacancy rate was mainly due to the adjustments needed to implement the new rules on TA 2(f) and a higher turnover rate than in previous years. Mitigation measures were taken to reduce the vacancy rate to the lowest possible, e.g. increasing the pace of publishing vacancy notices, using reserve lists, etc.

2.3.3. Gender representation

At the end of 2019, female staff represented 34% of all staff working for Europol and occupied 28% of established (TA) posts filled. This compares to 33% and 29%, respectively, in the previous year. Women occupied 17% of staff in Senior Specialist / Senior Analyst positions (i.e. 27 out of 157 staff in these posts), compared to 16% in 2018. The percentage of female staff members in Head of Unit and equivalent or higher positions was 16% (5 staff members), compared to 12% in the previous year.

The aspect of equal opportunities for women and men is emphasised by Europol in all vacancy notices. This is also highlighted in the Europol Recruitment Guidelines, published on Europol's website. Women, in particular in the law enforcement sector, are encouraged to apply for posts at Europol.

2.3.4. Member States representation

The countries with the largest representation among staff were Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, Greece, Romania, Germany, France, Portugal and Belgium.

Comparing Europol's staff nationality share to the EU MS population share, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Poland are still underrepresented⁹ while the Netherlands, Greece, Romania, Spain, Portugal and Bulgaria are overrepresented.

Detailed graphs can be found in [Annex III-d](#).

⁹ With a gap $\geq 2\%$ when comparing the population share in Europol and in the EU

Europol Public Information

2.3.5. Annual Assessment and reclassification

The annual Appraisal exercise 2019 was launched on 14 January 2019 and closed on 3 May 2019 with a completion rate of 94%, compared to 86% in 2018.

The Europol Reclassification exercise 2019 was launched through an Administrative Notice published on 20 May 2019, following the closure of the annual Appraisal exercise 2019.

The budgetary limit for the Reclassification exercise 2019 was set at a maximum of 15% of eligible Temporary Agent staff and 20% of eligible Contract Agent staff, taking into account reclassification targets per grade (on average over 5 years) defined in Annex IB of the EUSR, the Staff Establishment Plan and the financial resources available. The exercise was completed by the end of the year and the total number of staff reclassified was 53 (31 AD, 1 AST and 21 CA) which is 7% of the staff population (posts filled at year-end).

2.4. Internal Audit management

2.4.1. Internal Audit Capability (IAC)

In 2019, the IAC completed the following audit engagements:

- Audit engagement on **operational analysis**: The purpose of this engagement was to provide reasonable assurance on the adequacy of internal controls related to the conduct of operational analysis performed by Europol to support Member States' investigations. While several strengths were observed, the IAC identified areas for improvements and issued twenty-five recommendations (2 rated as critical; 12 very important; 10 important; 1 desirable).
- Audit engagement on the **grant management process**: In line with Art. 61(2) of the Europol Regulation, Europol can support Member States' competent authorities in the fulfilment of tasks stemming from its mandate in the form of (i) high- and low-value grants to support the implementation of the EU policy cycle for serious and organised crime (SOC) for EMPACT activities and (ii) grants to activities supporting the combatting of Euro-counterfeiting. The IAC assessed the adequacy of internal administrative controls related to the grant management process and while it acknowledged a number of key strengths in some of the existing management controls in the grants management process, it also identified some significant risks. Fifteen recommendations were issued (7 rated as very important; 7 important; 1 desirable).
- **Validation of user access rights granted in ABAC**: In accordance with the internal rules on the implementation of the general budget of the EU, the European Commission requested the Executive Director to validate that the user access rights granted in the ABAC (Accrual Based Accounting) system are in line with the delegations entrusted to the staff under her responsibility. The purpose of this audit was to provide reasonable assurance regarding the compatibility between the ABAC authorisations granted under Europol's financial rules and the actual responsibilities entrusted to its users, as well as the adequacy of the financial roles assigned under the *Guide to missions and authorised travel* and the relevant authorisations in the IT system managing the mission expenses of Europol staff. The IAC concluded that the controls facilitating the business objectives in scope of the engagement are managed at a strong level and issued only one recommendation, rated as important.
- **ISO 17020:2012 audit of the Europol Forensic Laboratory**: The IAC performs an audit of the Europol Forensics Laboratory on an annual basis, in accordance with the requirements of the International Standard (ISO) 17020:2012 (Conformity assessment – Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection). The objectives of the audit are to determine whether the activities in the Laboratory are in conformity with 17020:2012, and whether the Laboratory's Quality Management System (QMS) is adequately maintained. Non-conformities were not identified and three observations were noted, one of which qualifies as opportunity for improvement.

A **risk assessment on the operational processes** of Europol and a **follow-up exercise on past recommendations issued by the IAC (2010-2018)** which were part of the 2019 Work Programme of the IAC, were initiated in the last quarter of 2019 and will be finalised in the first quarter of 2020.

Finally, as part of its consultancy role, the IAC, conducted an **assessment of Europol's internal and external advisory groups**, including their contribution to the objectives of the Agency, and provided a number of advices and recommended practices for consideration by Europol's management.

Europol Public Information

2.4.2. Data Protection Function (DPF)

The DPF's workload remained high in 2019 also due to the continued implementation of the new administrative data protection legal framework introduced by Regulation 2018/1725. Other factors impacting the DPF workload included the increase of data processed by Europol, the continued high number of recommendations provided by the EDPS in various business areas in the context of inspections, inquiries and prior consultations as well as the increased work in dealing with data subject access requests.

In the operational domain, the **assurance activities in 2019** included, among others:

- Checks on the EIS data loader;
- On-the-spot check of Europol Seconded National Experts deployed in Copenhagen, Denmark;
- Europol's face recognition application;
- Digital Forensics databases;
- Virtual Command Post (VCP);
- Operation Dirty Oil;
- Data processing operations related to the terrorist attack in Sri Lanka;
- Follow-up of a compliance check performed in 2018 in connection to the Strasbourg terrorist attack.

In addition, the DPF regularly took care of **data subjects' requests** (Art. 36 requests). Article 36 ER grants the right to any data subject, at reasonable intervals, to obtain information on whether personal data relating to him/her are processed by Europol. During 2019, Europol received a total of 321 requests which is approximately the same number of requests received in 2017 and a decrease in comparison to 2018.

According to Article 39 ER, new types of operational processing operations that include processing of sensitive categories of personal data and/or data that present a specific risk for the fundamental rights and freedoms of data subjects, and that have been launched or substantially changed after 1 May 2017, are subject to **prior consultation by the European Data Protection Supervisor**. The prior consultation shall be carried out by the EDPS following receipt of a notification from the DPO. Since the entry into force of the Europol Regulation, the DPF has extensively worked on establishing the prior consultation process at Europol. This included creating the Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) template as well as the complete actual process of implementation of the provision. DPIA as a process is designed to describe the processing, assess its necessity and proportionality and help manage the risks to the rights and freedoms of natural persons resulting from the processing of personal data by assessing them and determining the measures to address them.

The **Europol Data Protection Experts Network (EDEN)** within the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE) is an online collaboration platform which has been developed with the aim of involving stakeholders from various backgrounds including law enforcement as well as representatives of relevant private parties, academia and NGO. EDEN is used as a channel to present projects, best practices and events linked to data protection in a law enforcement context. EDEN is an invitation only network and not suitable for the exchange of operational personal data or classified information. It currently has more than 570 members which represents more than 40% growth since 2018.

The main focus throughout 2019 was to prepare and host the third **EDEN Conference**. The event was the first external EDEN Conference hosted by the Danish National Police (POLITI) in Copenhagen on 19-20 September 2019. As in previous years the conference was co-organised with the Academy of European Law (ERA) which is a centre of expert knowledge and debate in European law that provides individuals with the opportunity to learn, discuss and network with top speakers about the ever-changing legal framework. ERA covered the main costs of the conference.

Europol Public Information

The third EDEN Conference saw 20 external speakers and more than 165 participants from various sectors including law enforcement, the data protection community, private industries, NGOs, academia, the legislator and others interested in topics relating to law enforcement and data protection. The EDEN conference was considered by participants as the only large-scale data protection event of the year dealing with the right to data protection in a law enforcement context.

The title "PARADISE LOST? – Policing in the Age of Data Protection" reflected a misperception sometimes still seen in law enforcement, namely that data protection would hinder effective law enforcement. On the other hand, many in the data protection/fundamental rights community seem to believe that law enforcement would work towards a totalitarian surveillance society.

The concept of the conference was to bring together a very diverse group of representatives from different sectors, both on stage and within the audience, which usually speak a lot about each other – but hardly ever exchange views directly. Speakers were selected and invited based on their proven professional knowledge and expertise in the various subject matter areas. Particular focus was put on their ability to convey their respective message in an informative but also entertaining way. This approach worked well in the sense that it triggered lively and at times even passionate debates amongst panellists but also the audience.

2.5. External Audit management

2.5.1. Internal Audit Service of the European Commission (IAS)

On the basis of the risk assessment covering Europol's process landscape performed in 2017, the Europol MB endorsed the IAS Strategic Internal Audit Plan (SIAP) 2018 – 2020 in October 2017. While none of the 36 reviewed process areas was graded in the category "Enhance risk mitigation", the following audit topics were identified in the strategic audit planning:

- HR Management
- IT Security
- Contract management
- Anti-fraud strategy and ethics as a reserve topic

HR Management and ethics-related topics were audited in 2018 and the final audit report arrived in 2019. The overall objective of the audit was to assess the design and effectiveness of the HR management processes and the Europol ethics package, including **anti-fraud measures**. The IAS audit report concluded that "the Agency's processes for managing HR (performance appraisal and reclassification, recruitment, planning and allocation of human resources) and anti-fraud and ethics-oriented policies and procedures are adequately designed and effective and comply with the existing regulatory and legal framework."

The audit on **IT Security** commenced at the end of 2019. The audit findings for the IT Security are to be received in 2020 and the remaining audit topic of **contract management** will be addressed by the IAS in 2020.

The IAS assessment on the status of the two remaining audit recommendations graded as important from the 2016 audit on stakeholder management was pending at the end of 2019. Both recommendations were reported implemented to the IAS by Europol in 2019.

Accordingly, by the end of 2019, there were **two pending recommendations**, graded as important, from the audit performed on **HR management and ethics** (the third recommendation related to the appraisal process was reported completed in 2019). The implementation of these two recommendations, concerning Europol's administration of case files and ethics training, is ongoing and envisaged for completion by end of 2020. A third recommendation, graded as important, on the performance appraisal procedure was addressed in 2019.

Europol Public Information

2.5.2. European Court of Auditors (ECA)

The audit activities concerning the annual accounts of Europol for the year 2018 were performed by the ECA, supported by an independent external audit as described in Article 104 of the Financial Regulation (FR) applicable to Europol, in the period comprised between December 2018 and March 2019.

Europol received a **positive audit opinion on the financial implementation of the provisional annual accounts with respect to the financial year 2018**. The corresponding preliminary observations of the ECA to the discharge authority on the provisional annual accounts were issued by the ECA in May 2019.

In June 2019, the Europol MB adopted the opinion on the final annual accounts for 2018, which - together with the final annual accounts 2018 - was submitted to the ECA, the European Commission's Accounting Officer, the discharge authority (Council and the European Parliament), and national parliaments in EU Member States.

In October 2019, the ECA issued the **overall assurance statement**, comprising a positive opinion in relation to the **reliability of the 2018 final annual accounts**, as well as the **legality and regularity of the underlying financial transactions**.

In relation to the financial year 2019, in January 2020 the ECA carried out the regular financial audit, in relation to the aspects of regularity and legality of the financial transactions including the review of a sample of transactions. Additionally, the ECA conducted an **audit on externally contracted services by Europol** in November 2019, a horizontal topic addressed by the ECA across EU Agencies.

The aspect of the reliability of the information provided in the provisional accounts 2019 is planned to be scrutinised by an external auditor in March 2020, as provided for in Article 104 of the Financial Regulation (FR) applicable to Europol.

All audit activities performed in relation to the financial year 2019 will, subsequently, be reviewed by the ECA, with a view to expressing a formal opinion on the closure of the financial year 2019, for the final accounts to be issued by 1 July 2020, including an opinion of the MB on the final accounts, as per the respective process set out in the FR applicable to Europol. At the end of 2019, **no issue of a material nature had been identified in relation to the closure of the financial year 2019**.

Further to the audit activities on the annual accounts, the ECA has reached out to Europol in 2019 - directly as well as via the EU Agencies Network (EUAN) - concerning **five (5) performance related audits¹⁰ activities** on the following topics: (a) Are EU Agencies performance driven? (horizontal theme), (b) Migrant smuggling and human trafficking, (c) Financial and economic crime including money laundering in the EU, (d) Rule of law (and fighting against corruption) in Ukraine, and (e) Environmental crimes, including illicit (plastic) waste management. The audit engagements are part of the ECA Work Programmes 2019 and 2020 and Europol is in close contact with the ECA to facilitate the audit work.

2.5.3. European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS)

In 2019 the cooperation with the EDPS remained intense. Regular working level meetings addressed topics such as:

- FIU.net;

¹⁰ Performance auditing is concerned with the audit of economy, efficiency and effectiveness", ISSAI Performance Audit Guidelines

Europol Public Information

- New developments regarding the analytical capabilities evolution of EAS and the related data lake concept;
- Data transfers based on Art. 25(6) ER;
- Preparation and follow-up of the regular EDPS annual inspection and dedicated TFTP inspection.

The Europol template used for submission of prior consultation was fine-tuned according to EDPS recommendations. Two dedicated meetings took place concerning the specific topic of prior consultation (one meeting in March, a call in September and a dedicated meeting at the EDPS premises in December).

One of the topics receiving special attention of the EDPS was the **processing of data for forensic purposes** and the challenge of **Big Data** for an organisation such as Europol. This topic was covered throughout the entire year and several improvements are expected under the new architecture of the Europol Analysis System (EAS).

The EDPS, furthermore, emphasised the importance of mandatory submission of statistics on special categories of data (Art. 30(6) ER) and information about special categories of data and data on special categories of data subjects stored for more than 5 years (Art. 31(3) ER).

The DPF also facilitated the **2019 EDPS annual inspection**, which took place from 3-6 June 2019 at Europol. The EDPS inspection focused on data processing activities that were not covered in previous inspections and/or that were brought to the attention of the EDPS in the course of its supervisory activities conducted during the previous year of supervision. This included transfers to Union bodies and third countries, data processing in the context of the Analysis Projects (AP) Sustrans and Terrorist Finance Tracking Program (TFTP) with the exception of Europol's role under Article 4 of the TFTP Agreement as well as data processing in the context of the Computer Forensic Network (CFN).

The EDPS technical team focused on CFN, information security management systems, encryption methodologies and applied encryption as well as on data processing in the context of AP Dark Web.

As regards administrative data processing activities, the EDPS verified Europol's anti-harassment procedures and the status of implementation of previous recommendations.

2.6. Follow up of recommendations and action plans for audits

In 2019, Europol diligently responded to the audit findings of the different assurance providers. **No critical or very important audit findings were pending in relation to the ECA, the IAS or the European Ombudsman.** Further follow-on actions concerning the IAC recommendations were on-going.

There was one comment from the 2018 financial year audit performed by the ECA, not affecting the assurance statement on the 2018 annual accounts, namely on the prolongation of the duration of a framework contract for the provision of business travel services, concerning which Europol holds the view that proper contract management and ex ante controls were applied. In response to the ECA comment from the 2017 financial year audit, Europol publishes vacancy notices on the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) website.

By the end of 2019 and in relation to recommendations issued by the **IAS**, there were **two pending recommendations**, graded as important, which are planned for completion in 2020 (see [section 2.5.1.](#)).

The **IAC** issued **41 new recommendations** and one opportunity for improvement in 2019. Overall during 2019, good progress was noted in relation to the follow-up of IAC audit recommendations with **95% implementation rate of critical and very important recommendations** that were foreseen for completion in 2019.

Europol Public Information

In **2019**, the IAC issued **two critical recommendations on operational analysis**, which have been duly implemented by Europol in the course of 2019.

From an overall perspective, the **IAC** has issued **four critical recommendations** as part of the **audit on learning, training and development** of which three have been addressed with the adoption and implementation of Europol's framework for learning, training and development. The steps necessary to implement the **single remaining pending critical IAC recommendation** are being taken in line with the agreed action plan. This critical IAC recommendation relates to the completion of the evaluation of the practical implementation and effectiveness of Europol's Learning and Development Policy which was adopted in December 2018. In line with the policy, this evaluation is foreseen at the end of a period of three years following its adoption, thus by the end of 2022.

Notwithstanding the formal assessment by the IAC, the implementation rates for all the recommendations of the IAC audit reports are assessed by Europol as set out in [Annex VII](#).

Europol will continue to address the recommendations of the IAC as part of the regular business planning of the organisation and monitors the progress made for the implementation of the recommendations made by all of Europol's assurance providers. **Regular reporting is provided to the MB on the follow-up status of audit recommendations.**

2.7. Follow up of observations from the discharge authority

At the end of March 2019, **the European Parliament granted discharge** to the Executive Director of Europol with respect to the **implementation of the budget for the financial year 2017**. The discharge proceedings in relation to the financial year 2018 were well underway at the end of 2019.

In September 2019, Europol provided an update to the European Parliament concerning the follow-on actions taken by Europol in relation to the European Parliament's discharge decision taken in March 2019 for the financial year 2017, in line with previous reporting to the MB.

In response to two general questionnaires (addressed to all EU agencies) and Europol-specific questions from the Standing Committee on Budgetary Control (CONT) of the European Parliament, Europol explained the response of the Agency concerning the observations of the ECA on the financial year 2018, the status of Europol's response to the resolution of the European Parliament (accompanying the discharge decision taken in March 2019), and provided further information on horizontal governance, as well as Europol specific topics.

On 18 February 2020, the Council adopted the recommendation to the European Parliament to give discharge to Europol in respect of the implementation of the budget for the **financial year 2018**.¹¹ On 19 February 2020, the Budgetary Control (CONT) Committee adopted the draft resolution accompanying the discharge decision by the European Parliament on the **closure of the financial year 2018, including the proposal to grant discharge to Europol**, which was adopted by the EP Plenary on 13-14 May 2020.¹²

¹¹ Council recommendations on the discharge to be given to the bodies set up under the TEU and the Euratom Treaty in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2018, adopted by the Council (Economic and Financial Affairs - ECOFIN) on 18 February 2020, Council Secretariat file no. 5761/20 ADD1 FIN 59 PE-L5, dated 6 February 2020; 6130/20 PRESSE 9 PR CO 9, 18 February 2020

¹² Report on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) for the financial year 2018 (2019/2088(DEC))

Part III. Assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control systems

3.1. Critical risks in the Programming Document 2019-2021

For the year 2019, a list of five critical¹³ threats and opportunities was provided in Annex VIII of the Programming Document 2019-2021. Among this list of threats and opportunities, the following risk descriptions materialised:

- **Strained availability of operational resources** at Europol, in particular in view of continuously increasing information flow and evolving criminal activities landscape, negatively affected the capability to effectively and efficiently process and analyse contributions from MS and TP. From an overall perspective, risk management activities allowed for the operational demand to be responded to.
- **Europol was approached by various stakeholders** (including the political level) **to contribute to and take on new tasks** (e.g. concerning EES, ETIAS, PNR, Decryption platform, etc.) while preparation activities for the implementation of the Europol Strategy 2020+ were being initiated including the establishment of taskforces for analysis, financial and economic crime, an Information Management Programme Board and Innovation project.
- **Tight human resources levels, especially in ICT**, combined with an increasing volume of high priority ICT demand and an overall **high vacancy rate** particularly for specialised posts, resulted in the **re-prioritisation of relevant core systems developments**, the full Integrated Data Management Concept implementation and other projects, causing Europol to rely on **outsourcing of business delivery** with the increased risk profile that this implies.

Concerning the opportunities, the further profile and awareness boost for **Europol as the key agency in the EU's internal security architecture** was exploited through proactive awareness measures, including to the general public (e.g. through prevention campaigns, and continuous reporting about Europol's activities). The opportunity of a significant increase of resources allocated in the area of internal security, to recognise its importance to uphold cohesion and solidarity across the EU in times of political fragmentation, will depend on the developments in the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027.

3.2. Risk Management

In 2019, risk management activities at Europol focused on addressing audit requirements from Europol's internal (IAC) and external audit activities (ECA, IAS) as well as **enhanced security and data protection requirements**, in particular in light of the governance provisions under the Europol Regulation and the operational needs of the organisation. Additional activities focused on further optimising the risk management process - including exploring ICT solutions for corporate risk and audit management - and enhancing awareness of risk management through internal communication and training. Risk management reporting was also further streamlined to full integration in the regular performance reporting processes.

Beyond the regular risk management activities, in 2019 **Europol took the lead in the risk assessment peer review among JHA Agencies**. The EU Agencies peer exercise was run by the EU Agencies Network (EUAN) - following a the request Directorate General (DG) Budget and the Secretariat General of the European Commission - and as part of the consultation with the representatives of the agency clusters, Europol's methodology served as the baseline input to the template for the exercise across all agencies. Four cross-agency critical risks were identified

¹³ 3 threats and 2 opportunities with severe impact and high probability were identified, see Europol Programming Document 2019-2021, pages 116 - 123

Europol Public Information

in the JHA Agency cluster and the agencies shared and discussed mitigation measures, as well as risk management best practices.

At Europol, mitigation activities primarily concerned the risks affecting the **core business objectives** set for the 2019 Work Programme, in particular in relation to the further development and management of high quality analytical support, and supporting architecture, and an evolving portfolio of cross-cutting operational capabilities.

Europol's 2019 corporate risk profile was characterised by:

- Key change endeavours and their governance, as well as assimilability of change, including the implementation of the new Financial Regulation and preparation for the implementation of the Europol Strategy 2020+ and establishment of future-proof capabilities. The implementation of the Europol Strategy 2020+ requires a resource investment to ensure the full benefit realisation of the envisaged enhancements of products and services, while at the same time carry out process rationalization, and re-prioritisation of existing resources.
- The **changes required to implement the Europol Strategy 2020+**, particularly affecting the core business with work for the establishment of the EFEC and the overall evolution of the organisational set-up and processes in the Operations Directorate, as well as the modifications to the ICT work plan, given that the **New Environment for Operations (NEO) Programme** was enlarged to include a new design for the **Computer Forensics Network (CFN)**, next to the ongoing efforts to build a future-proof "data lake" solution on the basis of a single common data repository platform for all core business data,
- Budget and human resources challenges: Considering the high ICT demand and that staff allocation was prioritised to operational support activities in recent years, the workforce to support the core business in infrastructure areas was under continuous pressure in order to achieve a **high-level implementation of business delivery and assigned budget**. The impact of Europol's operational activities was further compounded by the developments concerning the **staffing levels for Contract Agents (CAs)**. Taking into account the position of the European Commission on the CA levels, Europol deferred the recruitment of all upcoming CA vacancies in 2019 with the knock-on effect on business continuity in horizontal support areas;
- The risk of an overall impact on Europol's reputation: Reduction of Europol's support responsiveness due to an **enlarged mandate and increased volume of information for cross-checking and analysis**.

3.3. Compliance and effectiveness of the Europol Internal Control System

Based on the Internal Control Framework (ICF) of the European Commission, issued in April 2017, and the original Committee of Sponsoring Organisations (COSO) integrated internal control framework, the **Europol Internal Control Framework (ICF)**, translating the five ICF internal control components and 17 principles into the organisational context, was **adopted by the MB in December 2018**.

Based on the analysis of the internal control components and principles which have been monitored in the course of 2019, using both quantitative and qualitative elements, the **Europol Internal Control System (ICS)** is assessed as **present and functioning** in an **integrated manner across the organisation**.

This assessment is based on all **five internal control components** having been evaluated as **present and functioning, with minor improvements needed**. Refinement measures to uphold and enhance the ICS as a whole are taken forward in 2020 as part of the corporate planning and performance activities. In 2019, Europol received positive IAS audit assurance regarding the effective design of **Europol's anti-fraud and ethics-oriented framework**, and

Europol Public Information

no cases of suspected fraud were identified. In line with the envisaged anti-fraud measures, red-flags for the common fraud scenarios defined by OLAF were elaborated for implementation in the course of 2019. An update to the Europol anti-fraud strategy will be submitted for adoption by the MB in 2020¹⁴.

The corresponding declarations of assurance by the Executive Director and statement by the Deputy Executive Director Governance – in charge of risk management and internal control – are included in [Part V](#) of this CAAR.

¹⁴ In line with the internal control indicators for Principle 8 of the Europol ICF (“Europol considers the potential for fraud in assessing risks to the achievement of objectives”)

Part IV. Management assurance

4.1. Review of the elements supporting assurance

Europol's building **blocks of assurance** are founded on 6 key elements:

1. A **strong financial model**, with: (a) up-to-date appointment authorisations of financial actors, (b) a charter for authorising officers which promotes transparency and informed decision-making, (c) a central financial verification function and (d) clear guidance to all staff on the expected behaviour (Code of Conduct etc.).
2. A robust **planning and performance measurement capability** at corporate level, covering all aspects of Europol's delivery, including core business performance and the related stakeholder management, with regular reporting and management supervision at Directorate level.
3. A **central contact point** for ensuring that the guidance by **external assurance providers** (in particular the ECA and the IAS) and the discharge authority are communicated and followed up within the organisation.
4. A **Data Protection Function** (DPF) which upholds the highest standards of data protection, in particular in view of Europol's role as a law enforcement agency, alongside the **Europol Security Committee** in terms of information security assurance.
5. An experienced **Accounting Officer**, supported by a team of two staff members, who is functionally independent to perform the respective duties foreseen by the Financial Regulation (FR) applicable to Europol.
6. An **Internal Audit Capability** (IAC), which provides an additional element of assurance to the Authorising Officer (AO) of Europol throughout the year.

Europol's overall assessment is that Europol's building blocks of assurance provide sufficient input for the **Executive Director's statement of assurance** as well as the **statement of assurance of the Deputy Executive Director in charge of risk management and internal control** as contained in this consolidated activity report.

4.2. Reservations

No issues requiring a reservation were identified by the end of the financial year 2019.

Part V. Declaration of Assurance

Declaration of Assurance of the Authorising Officer (AO)

I, the undersigned, Executive Director of European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), in my capacity as Authorising Officer (AO) for Europol, as defined in the Financial Regulation (FR) applicable to Europol,

- Declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view;¹⁵
- State that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the Europol Internal Control System (ICS), including the control procedures put in place, gives the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.
- Confirm that I am not aware of anything not reported here which could harm the interests of Europol.

This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgement and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of the assessment of the Europol Internal Control System (ICS), performance monitoring including financial verification controls, the work of the Internal Audit Service (IAS), the Internal Audit Capability (IAC) of Europol and the reporting of the European Court of Auditors (ECA), including for years prior to the year of this declaration.

I hereby certify that the information provided in the present Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) of Europol, and in its annexes, for the financial year 2019 is, to the best of my knowledge, and on the basis of the assurance given to me, accurate and complete



Catherine De Bolle
Executive Director

¹⁵ True and fair in this context means a reliable, complete and correct view of the state of affairs in Europol.

Europol Public Information

Statement of the Deputy Executive Director in charge of risk management and internal control

I, the undersigned, Deputy Executive Director in charge of risk management and internal control, declare that with reference to the Europol Internal Control Framework (ICF), adopted by the Management Board of Europol at the end of 2018, my assessment - on the basis of internal management reporting available to me and my professional judgement - is that the elements of the Europol Internal Control System (ICS), seen as whole, are effective to enable Europol to achieve its objectives. A full annual assessment of the ICS was performed on the financial year 2019.

I hereby certify that the information provided in the present Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) of Europol, and in its annexes, for the financial year 2019 is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and complete.



Jürgen Ebner

Deputy Executive Director

Europol Public Information

Annex I. Corporate Performance Indicators¹⁶

EUROPOL ACTIVITY	CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	END 2018	END 2019	TARGET END 2019	
A.1. Development of operational systems	Operational Stability - Uptime of Core Systems	99.7%	99.6%	✓	98.0%
	Core business project delivery (% of milestone points achieved for projects that entail a core business component)	77%	82%	✓	75%
	Number of organisational sub entities SIENA mailboxes in MS and TP connected to SIENA	1,445	1,744	!	1,800
	Number of SIENA messages exchanged by MS, TP and Europol (incl. PCCC)	1,110,962	1,242,403	✓	1,190,000
	Number of SIENA cases initiated by MS, TP and Europol	77,303	84,697	!	88,000
	% of all SIENA messages received by Europol containing structured data	14%	13%	✗	15%
	Number of objects (all types) in the EIS (MS+Europol)	1,310,120	1,453,186	!	1,500,000
	Number of person objects in the EIS (MS+Europol)	213,023	241,795	✓	240,000
	Number of EIS searches (MS+Europol)	4,062,974	5,356,135	✓	3,500,000
	Number of MS EIS data loaders installed and in use (incl. lightweight data loaders)	13	10	✗	17
	Number of Cross Border Crime Checks in the EIS related to persons (MS)	3,036	2,736	✓	2,000
	Number of active expert platforms on the EPE	52	58	✓	52
	Number of EPE user accounts	13,834	17,199	✓	15,000
	% of active users on the EPE (% of users who connected at least once per quarter)	47%	44%	✗	45%
Number of MS connected to QUEST production	1	5	!	6	
A.2. Information Hub	Speed of first-line response to MS requests (days)	6.8	6.6	✓	7.0
	Number of accepted contributions to be processed	75,198	80,896	✓	75,000
	Operational information backlog (number of operational contributions accepted and pending processing)	3,803	5,039	✗	1,500
	% of total SIENA messages exchanged outside of office hours (office hours = Mo-Fri 08:00 - 20:00)	6.0%	14.5%	✓	10.0%
	Hit rate (% of cross match reports and SIENA Hit Notifications per accepted contribution)	9.1%	9.7%	✓	9.0%
	Number of Mobile Office deployments by Europol	370	353	✗	400
	Number of SIENA messages exchanged by third parties (Total number of SIENA messages received and sent by Third Parties)	159,046	176,222	!	222,000
	Number of operations supported by Europol involving cooperation partners	696	711	!	780
Number of operations supported by Europol involving private partners	61	19	✗	72	

¹⁶ Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are marked in bold. For all the performance indicators, the following criteria apply:

- ✓ When the target is achieved or exceeded.
- ! When the target is not met but performance is better than in the previous year.
- ✗ When the target is not achieved and performance is worse than in the previous year.
- Performance was not available in 2019

Europol Public Information

EUROPOL ACTIVITY	CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	END 2018	END 2019	TARGET END 2019	
A.3. Combating Serious and Organised Crime	Number of operations supported related to SOC	758	726	✗	800
	Number of operational reports produced related to SOC (CMR, SIENA HN, OAR, other operational reports)	4,636	5,322	✓	4,600
	Satisfaction with operational support and analysis in the area of SOC	8.9	8.9	✓	8.5
	Number of cases where High Value Targets identified	71	24	✓	10
	Number of operations supported by EMSC (AP Migrant Smuggling and AP Phoenix)	163	155	✓	130
	On-the-spot support deployed related to EMSC (days) (inside and outside EU)	1,511	1,028	✓	700
	Volume of content assessed by IRU related to migrant smuggling	805	831	!	900
	% of successful referrals by EU IRU related to migrant smuggling	93%	-	●	75%
	Number of operations supported related to drugs	172	139	✗	200
	Number of operations supported related to OCGs	93	117	✓	100
	Number of operations supported related to weapons & explosives	66	54	✗	80
	Number of operations supported related to Counterfeiting	52	61	✓	45
	Number of operations supported related to fraud	102	104	✓	100
	Number of operations supported related to organized property crime	115	98	✓	90
A.4. Combating Cyber Crime	Number of operations supported related to cybercrime	257	397	✓	200
	Number of operational reports produced related to cybercrime (CMR, SIENA HN, OAR, other operational reports)	889	1,084	✓	1,000
	Satisfaction with operational support and analysis in the area of cybercrime	9.0	9.0	✓	8.5
	Number of forensic jobs performed by EC3	2,100	1,646	✗	2,000
	Number of forensic examinations on printed materials (e.g. euro banknotes, brand labels, identification documents,..)	10	5	✗	15
	Number of Europol Forensic Lab deployments on the spot by the EC3 Lab	14	10	✓	10
	Number of on the spot mobile device examination kit deployments in all crime areas	155	139	✓	100
	Number of files submitted to EMAS by MS	119,729	492,661	✓	200,000
	Number of malicious files identified through EMAS	57,548	165,544	✓	150,000
	Number of times the decryption platform is used	32	59	✓	20
	Number of decryption platform successes	12	23	✓	10
	Success rate of decryption platform (%)	38%	39%	!	50%
	Number of child abuse victims identified as a result of investigations supported by or contributed by Europol	51	47	✓	10
	Number of prevention campaigns organised	8	6	✓	6
Number of cooperation agreements, working arrangements, MoUs or ToRs concluded with the private sector	8	5	✓	5	

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EUROPOL ACTIVITY	CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	END 2018	END 2019	TARGET END 2019	
A.5. Counter-Terrorism	Number of operations supported related to CT	620	632	✓	500
	Number of operational reports produced related to CT (CMR, SIENA HN, OAR, other operational reports) (including EU IRU)	1,837	1,883	✓	1,700
	Satisfaction with operational support and analysis in the area of CT	8.0	9.1	✓	8.5
	Number of CT units configured to SIENA (MS + TP)	47	47	⚠	48
	Number of MS CT units connected to EIS	19	20	⚠	25
	Number of SIENA messages exchanged by CT units (MS/TP)	55,226	66,393	✓	55,000
	Number of accepted contributions related to CT	6,642	6,075	✗	7,000
	Number of EIS objects related to CT	666,738	734,092	✓	700,000
	Number of MS contributing terrorism (incl. foreign fighters) related objects in EIS	19	18	✗	26
	Number of persons referred for secondary security check (GR+IT)	7,118	3,676	✗	8,000
	Number of hits resulting from secondary security checks (GR+IT)	381	1,285	✓	300
	Number of platforms with suspicious internet content detected related to terrorism and violent extremism	-	361	✓	180
	Volume of content assessed by IRU related to terrorism and violent extremism	39,005	25,453	✓	20,000
	Volume of referrals of suspicious internet content related to terrorism and violent extremism sent to OSPs by EU IRU	37,835	25,086	✓	18,000
	% of decisions for referral by EU IRU related to terrorism and violent extremism (decisions for referral / total number of content assessed)	97%	99%	✓	90%
	% of successful referrals by EU IRU of suspicious internet content related to terrorism and violent extremism	79%	-	●	75%
Number of TFTP Art. 10 EU Requests for TFTP searches	170	198	✓	175	
A.6. Provision of cross-cutting operational capabilities	Total number of strategic analysis reports (incl. threat assessments, risk assessments, situation reports) produced by Europol	86	166	✓	40
	Total number of thematic analysis reports (incl. intelligence notifications, early warning notifications, knowledge products, dashboards) produced by Europol	279	147	✗	250
	Training activities for MS/TP	152	203	✓	85
	Satisfaction of participants with training provided by Europol to MS/TP (as measured via feedback surveys)	8.6	9.0	✓	8.5
	Number of Action Days supported/coordinated by Europol	198	251	✓	200
	Number of operations supported by Special Tactics	-	7	⚠	10
	Operations supported with Travel Intelligence products/services	-	41	✓	20
	Number of contributions accepted related to financial intelligence (AP Sustrans and AP Asset Recovery)	5,058	5,267	✓	5,000
	Number of operations supported by Financial Intelligence	154	205	✓	150
	Number of operational reports delivered related to financial intelligence (CMR, SIENA HN, OAR, other operational reports produced by AP Asset Recovery and AP Sustrans)	1,033	1,137	✓	950
	Satisfaction with operational support and analysis in the area of financial intelligence	8.6	8.1	✗	8.5

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EUROPOL ACTIVITY	CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	END 2018	END 2019		TARGET END 2019
A.7. Governance, support and administration	Administrative ICT project and workpackages delivery (% of milestones achieved)	76.0%	75.0%	✓	75.0%
	Uptime of administrative systems	98.8%	99.5%	✓	98.0%
	Commitment Rate Europol Budget	99.9%	99.4%	✓	95.0%
	Payment Rate Europol Budget	86.9%	86.6%	✗	90.0%
	Budget Outturn rate	0.8%	1.5%	✓	2.0%
	% of late payments	22.5%	21.3%	!	5.0%
	Vacancy rate	0.5%	3.6%	✗	2.0%
	Sickness rate	-	-	●	3.5%
	Turnover rate (Voluntary + involuntary turnover rate for Europol staff (TA+CA))	8.7%	11.7%	✗	10.0%
	% of pending critical/very important audit recommendations addressed within the agreed deadline	86%	95%	✓	85%
	% of Work Programme objectives implementation	80%	75%	✗	80%
	% Staff Engagement (via Staff Survey)	63%	63%	!	65%
	% Satisfaction with Europol's image (via User Survey)	81%	81%	✓	79%
	Appearance of Europol in the media (written press, TV, radio broadcasting,...)	103,509	81,286	✗	130,000

Explanatory notes on KPIs¹⁷:

1. **% of SIENA messages containing structured data:** only 13% of the messages received by Europol contained structured data, which is below the target set at 15%. However, when considering the *accepted* messages received by Europol, 20% of them contained structured data.
2. **Operational backlog:** The number of pending contributions was above 5,000 at the end of Q4 2019, when the target was set at 1,500. Mitigation measures were taken and included the redefinition of the backlog and focusing on closing legacy pending requests, as well as encouraging stakeholders to provide information in structured format. In the long term, is expected that the technology improvements implemented via the NEO programme, i.e. new environment for analysis, fully searchable contributed data, will improve the approach in handling the data intake.
3. **Number of operations supported related to SOC:** ESOC allocated a considerable number of resources to implement Operational Task Forces related to High Value Targets and this, inevitably, reduced the capacity to support other operational cases.
4. **Number of accepted contributions related to CT:** While the number of accepted contributions related to CT to be processed did not reach the target for 2019, the volume and complexity of the data per contribution increased considerably as big data dumps of multiple terabytes per investigation are becoming the standard procedure.
5. **% of successful referrals by EUIRU:** Due to technological limitations of the IRMa platform, the rate of successful removals could not be measured accurately in 2019.

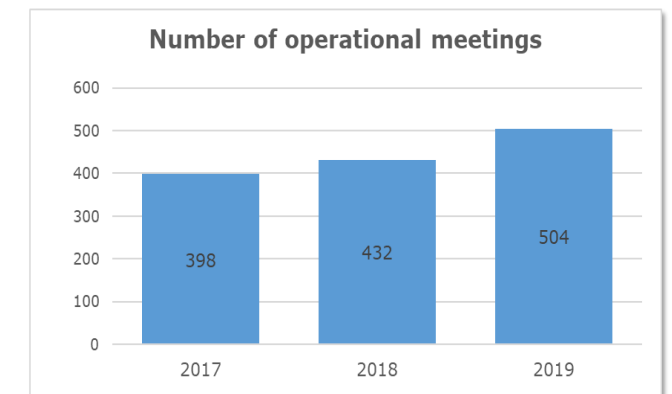
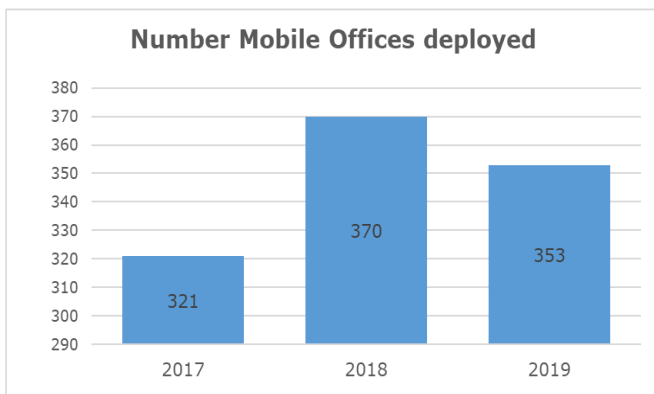
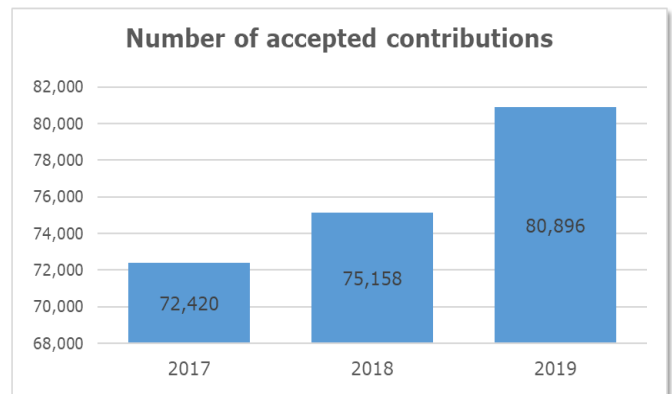
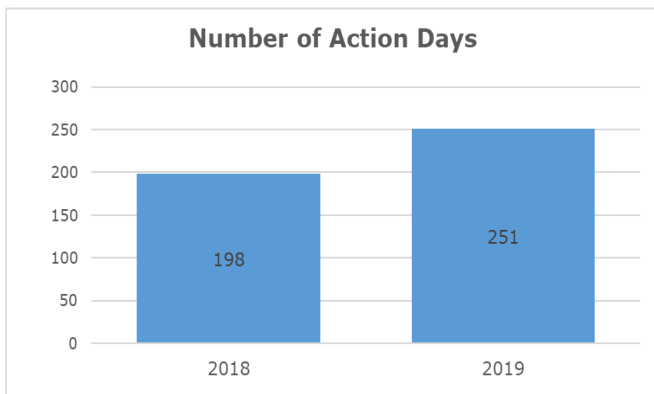
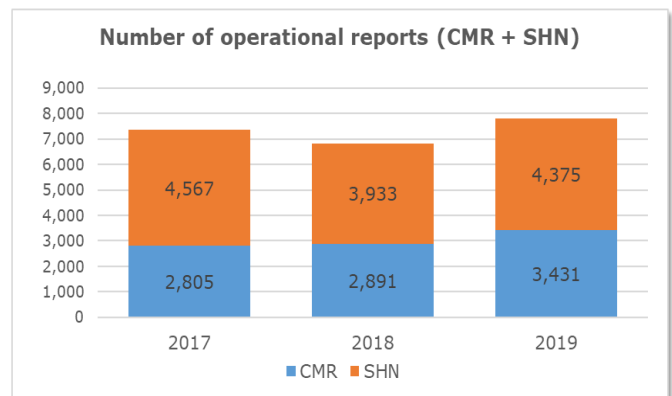
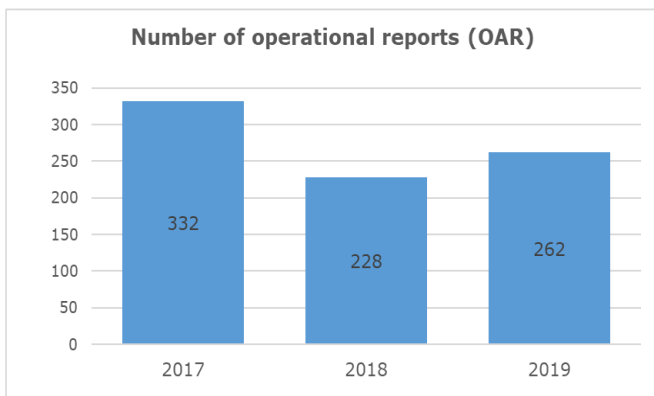
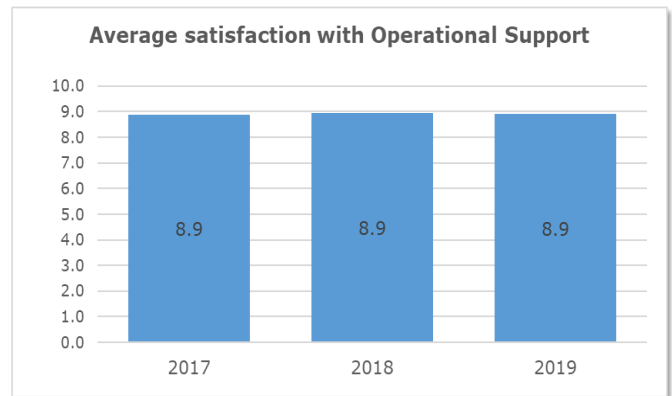
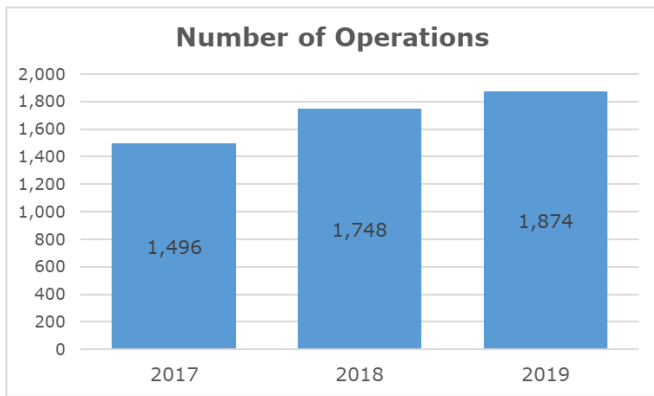
¹⁷ KPIs marked in red and grey only.

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6. **Satisfaction with operational support related to Financial Intelligence:** it should be noted that the size of the sample used to measure this satisfaction was very small and, thus, the margin of error is well above 2% (i.e. 10.3%). The real satisfaction within the population lies between 7.2 and 8.9 so this result is non-conclusive.
7. **Payment Rate:** The target was not met due to transfers within the budget that were made relatively late in the year, followed by commitments for which the payments are only expected in 2020.
8. **Vacancy Rate:** The vacancy rate was mainly affected by the adjustments needed to implement the new rules on TA 2(f) and the high turnover of staff, with many contracts ending in the year.
9. **Sickness Rate:** The HR system could not store data in a manner that all sick leave were reflected. The situation will be addressed by the implementation of SYSPER II and by the insourcing of the medical service.

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Historical evolution (2017-19) – Key operational figures



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Annex II. Activity Based Budgeting (ABB) and Costing (ABC)

The table below reflects the final implementation of the financial and human resources (ABC¹⁸) per Europol strategic activity, compared to the initially planned resources (ABB¹⁹) as outlined in the Programming Document 2019-2021.

At the end of 2019, 99% of all financial resources²⁰ were used by Europol to implement the different activities. At the same time, 827 staff were in post at the end of the year, which represents a staff implementation rate of 93%. Taking into account only resources related to the operational activities (Goal 1, Goal 2 and grants), nearly 70% of total staff resources (576 staff), and almost 78% of the total budget, were employed for Work Programme operational activities.

Goal	Europol Strategic Activities	STAFF			BUDGET			% of the total staff	% of the total budget
		Planned	In Post	Impl. Rate	Budget 2019 (subsidy + DK contribution + grants)	Executed budget 2019	Impl. Rate		
Goal 1	Europol will be the EU criminal information hub, providing information sharing capabilities to law enforcement authorities in the MS								
	A.1. Development of operational systems	142	113	80%	38,755,632	39,455,354	102%	67.5%	75.8%
	A.2. Information Hub	69	69	100%	11,072,737	11,061,323	100%		
	Total Goal 1	211	182	86%	49,828,369	50,516,677	101%		
Goal 2	Europol will provide the most effective operational support and expertise to MS investig. by developing and employing a comprehensive portfolio of services								
	A.3. Combating Serious Organised Crime	137	132	96%	24,285,805	24,942,522	103%	67.5%	75.8%
	A.4. Combating Cyber Crime	91	87	96%	12,331,967	11,739,057	95%		
	A.5. Counter Terrorism	96	91	95%	12,522,333	11,752,987	94%		
	A.6. Cross-cutting operational capabilities	72	66	92%	9,131,503	9,277,517	102%		
	Total Goal 2	396	376	95%	58,271,607	57,712,082	99%		
	TOTAL FOR OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES	607	558	92%	108,099,976	108,228,759	100%		
Goal 3	Europol will be an efficient organisation with effective governance arrangements and a positive reputation								
	A.7. Governance, support and admin	249	234	94%	29,925,706	28,934,905	97%	30.4%	22.4%
	Management Board Functions: Data Protection Function, Internal Audit Capability, Management Board, Accountancy Unit								
	Management Board Functions	17	17	100%	2,964,773	3,018,335	102%		
	Total Goal 3	266	251	94%	32,890,480	31,953,239	97%		
	TOTAL	873	809	93%	140,990,456	140,181,998	99%		
Grants	EUIPO	10	10	100%	1,275,084	1,193,391	94%	2.2%	1.9%
	WB	4	3	75%	933,582	933,582	100%		
	SIRIUS	7	5	71%	652,786	545,061	83%		
	Total Grants	21	18	86%	2,861,453	2,672,034	93%		
	TOTAL incl GRANTS	894	827	93%	143,851,909	142,854,033	99%	100%	100%

¹⁸ Activity Based Costing (ABC) shows the implementation of resources and measures how many resources were consumed by the activities.

¹⁹ Activity Based Budgeting (ABB) ensures coherence between the planned activities and available resources.

²⁰ The implementation includes an additional amending budget of € 2.7M for the contribution from Denmark and funds for received grants (RO).

Annex III. Establishment Plan and Human Resources Management

Annex III-a. Establishment Plan

Temporary Agents

Grade	Establishment Plan 2019	Posts filled 31/12/2019 ²¹	Posts vacant ²²	TOTAL ²³
AD 15	1	1	0	1
AD 14	1	3	0	3
AD 13	5	0	0	0
AD 12	11	7	1	8
AD 11	17	5	0	5
AD 10	28	14	0	14
AD 09	61	28	5	33
AD 08	94	67	0	67
AD 07	132	151	7	158
AD 06	171	260	7	267
AD 05	38	11	0	11
AST 08	3	0	0	0
AST 07	5	3	0	3
AST 06	6	2	0	2
AST 05	7	5	0	5
AST 04	7	8	1	9
AST 03	1	1	0	1
AST 02	3	4	0	4
TOTAL	591	570	21	591

Contract Agents

Grade	Posts filled 31/12/2019
FG IV	40
FG III	98
FG II	58
FG I	
TOTAL²⁴	196

Second National Experts

	FTE 31/12/2019
SNE	66.2
TOTAL²⁵	66.2

²¹ Offer letters sent counted as posts filled. Includes 21 vacant posts for which selections have been completed and offer letters have been sent.

²² Vacant posts are shown in the grade allocated to the vacancy or the grade allocated to the previous post holder in cases when a decision on recruitment has not been made yet.

²³ Discrepancies between the grades in the Establishment Plan and the grades actually filled result from the general approach to replace those staff members that leave in lower (entry) grades.

²⁴ Planned maximum of 235 heads. Excluding 11 CA funded by grants.

²⁵ Annual average FTEs excluding SNEs funded by grant agreements, cost-free SNEs and Guest Officer SNEs.

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Annex III-b. Information on the entry level for each type of post

Types of post

Type of post	Function group / Grade	Post title
Director-General ²⁶	AD 15 – AD 16	Executive Director
Director ²⁷	AD 14 – AD 15	Deputy Executive Director Principal Adviser
Adviser or equivalent	AD 13 – AD 14	Adviser Senior Expert
Head of Unit or equivalent	AD 9 – AD 14	Head of Department ²⁸ Head of Unit
Administrator	AD 5 – AD 12	Senior Specialist/Senior Analyst ²⁹ Specialist/Analyst ³⁰
Senior Assistant	AST 10 – AST 11	Senior Assistant
Assistant	AST 1 – AST 9	Officer ³¹ Support Officer ³²
Secretary/Clerk	SC 1 – SC 6	Secretary/Clerk

Transitional types of post

Type of post	Function group / Grade	Post title
Assistant in transition	AST 1 – AST 9	Officer in transition Support Officer in transition Technical Officer in transition
Administrative Assistant in transition	AST 1 – AST 7	Administrative Assistant in transition

²⁶ This is without prejudice to a different classification of the head of the agency according to the founding regulation and/or the establishment plan.

²⁷ This is without prejudice to a different classification of the deputy head of the agency according to the founding regulation and/or the establishment plan.

²⁸ Posts of Head of Department are filled from grades AD 12 to AD 14.

²⁹ Posts of Senior Specialists/Senior Analysts are filled from grades AD 7 to AD 12.

³⁰ Posts of Specialists/Analysts are filled from grades AD 5 to AD 6.

³¹ Posts of Officer are filled from grades AST 4 to AST 9.

³² Posts of Support Officer are filled from grades AST 1 to AST 3.

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Annex III-c. Benchmarking exercise

Europol continues to strive towards being a **more operational** EU Agency. In 2019, the results of the job screening exercise showed a slight increase in the percentage of operational jobs and decreases in the percentage of administrative/coordination jobs.

The job screening exercise was performed in December 2019, according to the guidelines defined by the EU Agencies Network and based on all personnel working at the Europol premises on 15 December 2019. This not only includes Temporary Agents, Contract Agents and SNEs but also Europol Liaison Officers, Interns, Trainees and external service providers based at Europol's premises.

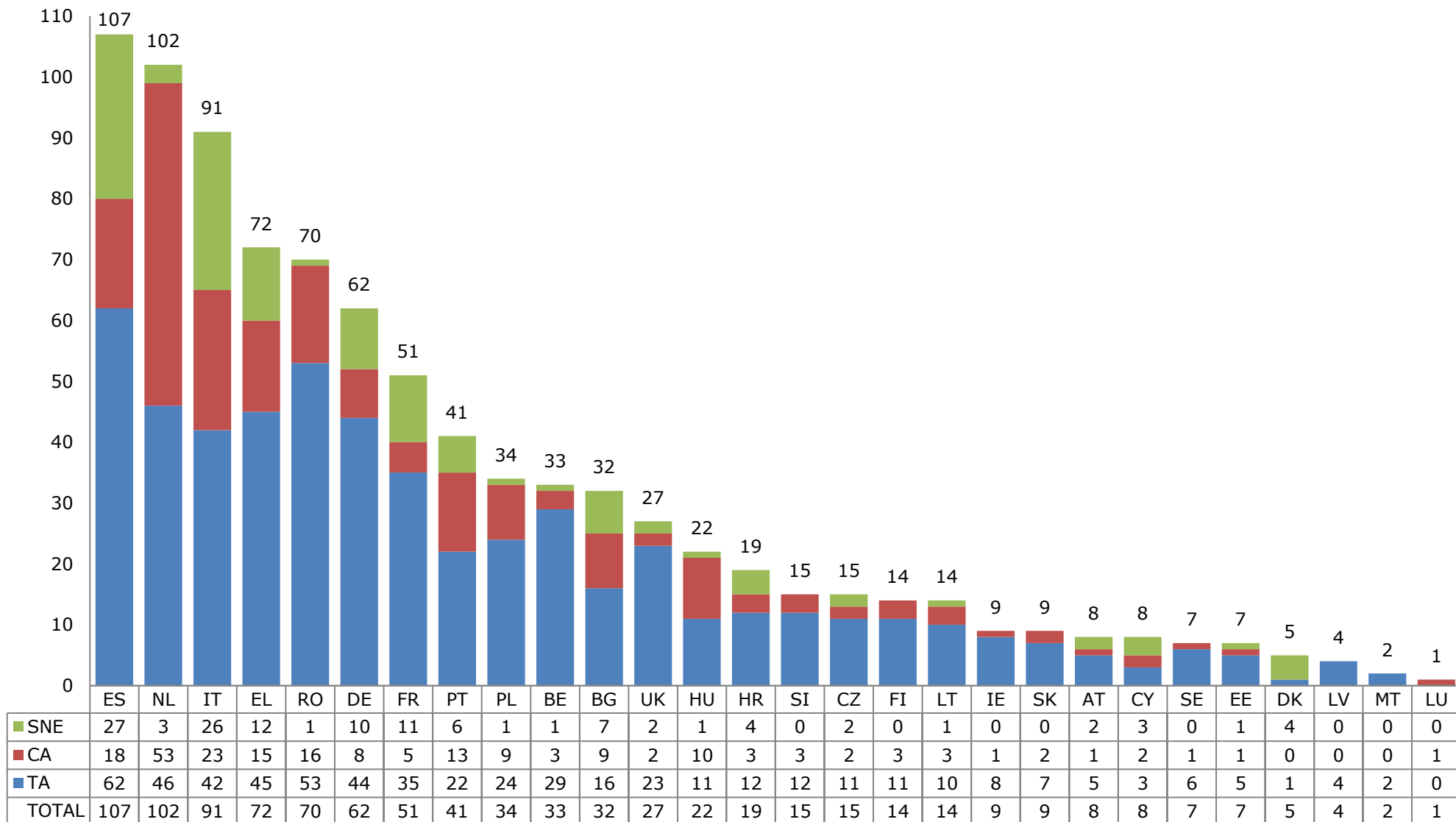
Compared to 2018, **the operational jobs increased by 0.9% points** to 79%. On the other hand, the jobs dealing with administrative support and coordination have decreased by 0.4% points, to 17%. Neutral jobs remained stable at 4%.

Job Type category	2018 Jobs	2018 (%)	2019 Jobs	2019 (%)	Δ 2019
Administrative support and Coordination	223	18%	222	17%	-0.36%
Administrative support	169	13%	168	13%	-0.29%
Coordination	54	4%	54	4%	-0.07%
Operational	977	78%	1,004	79%	0.90%
General Operational	741	59%	756	59%	0.25%
Programme Management	211	17%	217	17%	0.21%
Top level Operational Coordination	25	2%	31	2%	0.44%
Neutral	56	4%	50	4%	-0.54%
Finance	56	4%	50	4%	-0.54%
	1,256		1,276		

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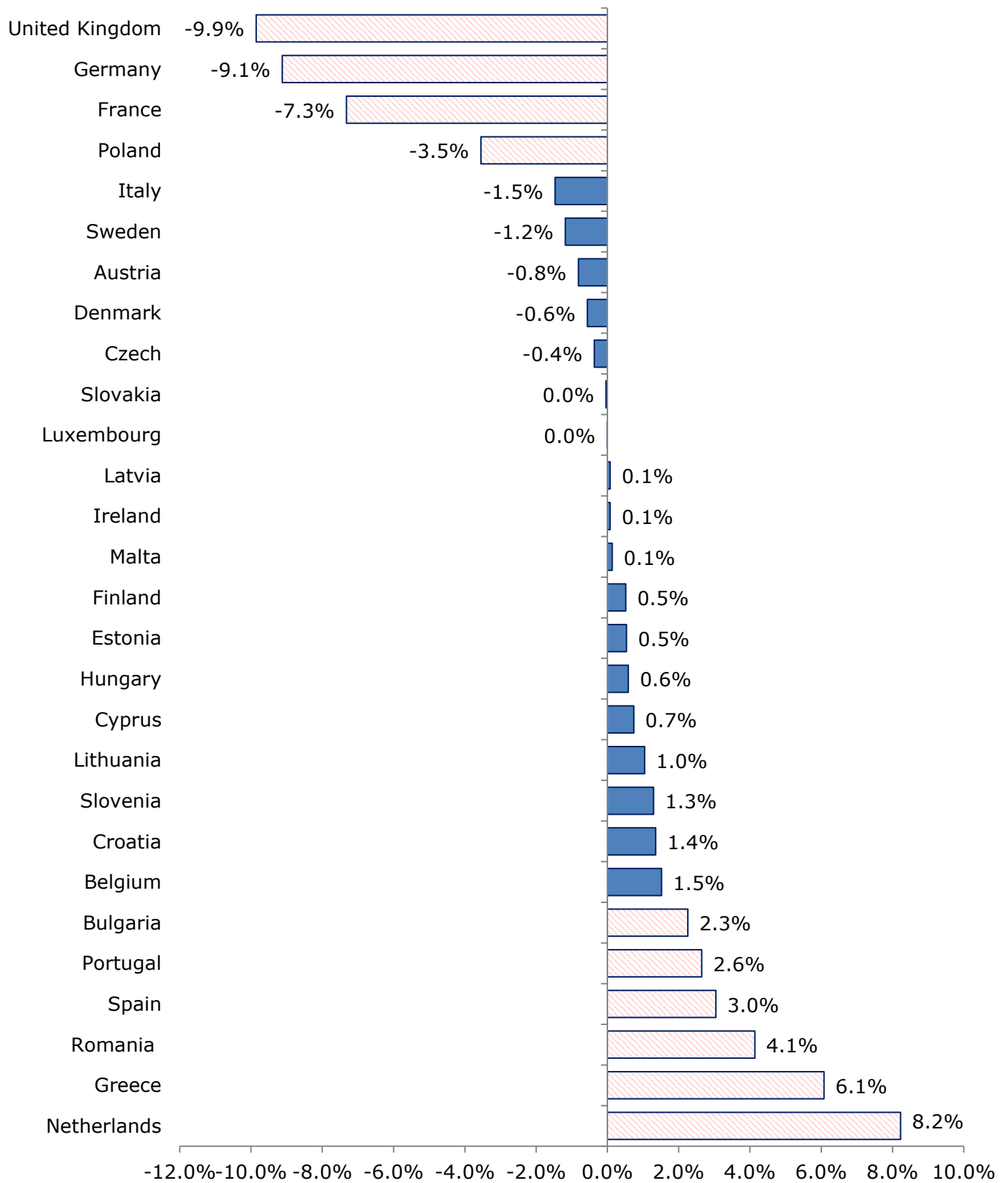
Annex III-d. Member States representation at Europol

A - Europol staff (in post) per nationality and type of contract



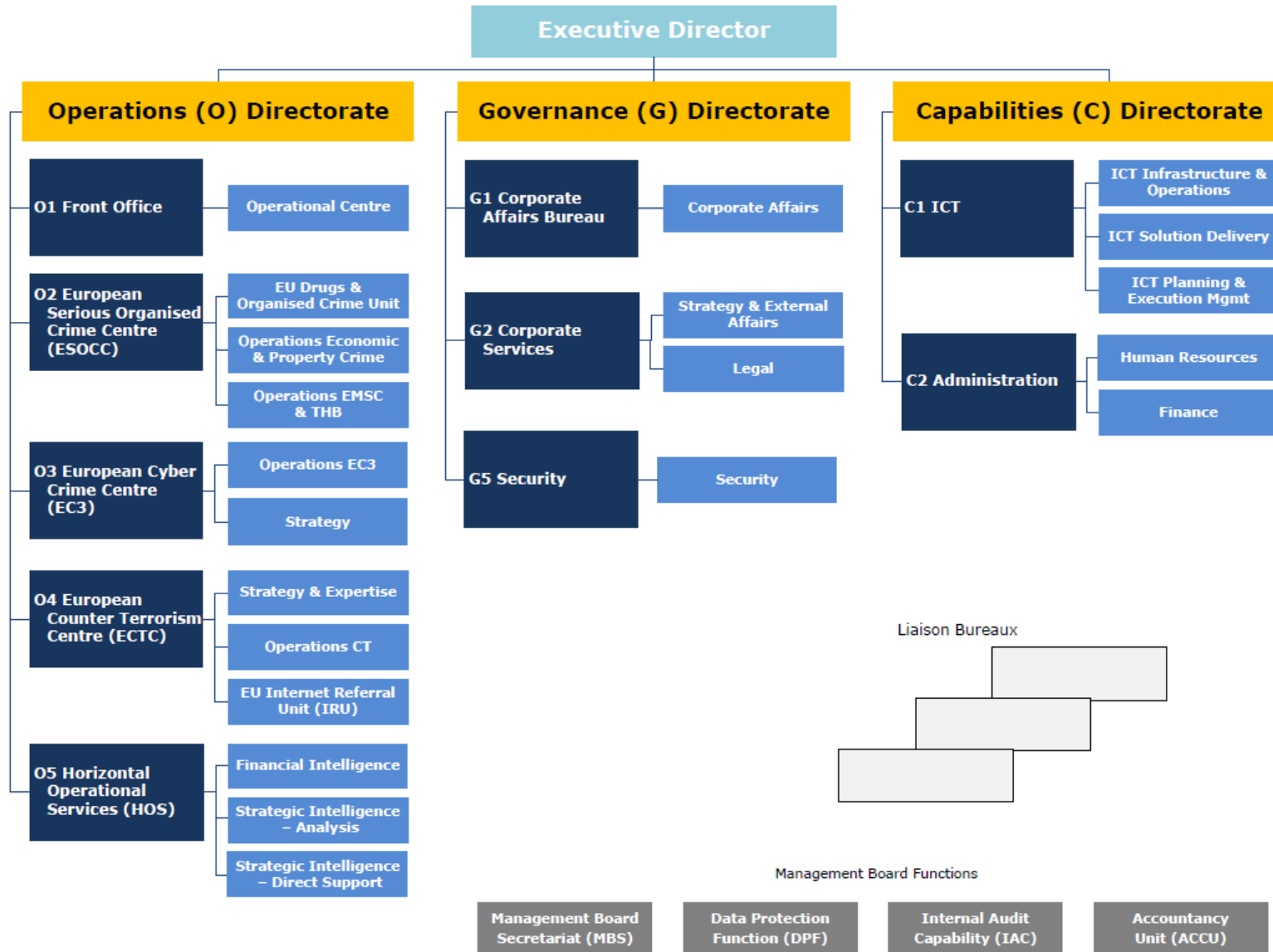
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B- Europol staff (in post) vs. EU population share per country



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Annex IV. Organisational Chart (Last updated on 01/10/2019)



Annex V. Provisional Accounts

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS	31.12.2019	31.12.2018
NON-CURRENT ASSETS	42,604,086	36,569,634
Intangible fixed assets	18,723,452	14,665,145
Computer software	8,021,678	4,562,240
Computer software under Financial lease	297,091	415,928
Under construction	10,404,683	9,686,977
Tangible fixed assets	23,873,719	21,897,574
Land and buildings	7,730,066	8,107,094
Plant and equipment	125,979	208,348
Computer hardware	6,737,799	6,675,601
Furniture and vehicles	2,022,303	1,898,752
Other fixtures and fittings	4,790,840	2,859,796
Assets under financial lease	2,466,732	2,147,983
Non-current receivables and recoverables	6,915	6,915
Long-term receivables	6,915	6,915
CURRENT ASSETS	33,508,539	36,818,216
Short-term pre-financing	849,634	3,668,008
Short-term pre-financing	3,293,287	5,006,458
Accrued charges on pre-financing	-2,443,653	-1,338,450
Short-term Receivables	9,251,826	7,473,783
Current receivables	2,076,385	2,712,374
Sundry receivables	481,132	215,262
Other receivables: Accrued income	20,086	32,880
Deferred charges ³³	6,672,212	4,481,058
Receivables with consolidated EU entities	2,011	32,208
Cash and cash equivalents	23,407,079	25,676,425
TOTAL ASSETS	76,112,624	73,387,850
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	5,216,038	5,796,762
Pensions and other employee benefits	3,371,330	3,199,584
Provisions for risks and charges	-	-
Other liabilities	1,844,708	2,597,178
CURRENT LIABILITIES	12,113,902	13,422,097
Provisions for risks and charges	10,000	17,000
Financial liabilities	402,617	632,081
Payables	11,701,284	12,773,017
Current payables	55,190	46,232
Sundry payables	802,775	335,695
Other payables: Accrued charges	7,021,982	5,316,154
Deferred income	10,338	15,871
Accrued charges with consolidated EU entities	206,879	178,341
Accounts payable with consolidated EU entities	3,604,120	6,880,724
NET ASSETS	58,782,685	54,168,990
Accumulated surplus/deficit	54,168,990	43,965,482
Economic result of the year	4,613,695	10,203,508
TOTAL LIABILITIES	76,112,624	73,387,850

³³ Includes deferred charges with consolidated EU entities.

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

	31.12.2019	31.12.2018
REVENUE	140,748,754	132,857,030
Non-exchange revenue	135,942,602	129,045,225
Recovery of expenses	691	-
European Union Contribution	135,941,910	129,045,225
Exchange revenue	4,806,152	3,811,805
Interest income on late payment	8,079	-
Revenue from consolidated EU entities	1,701,599	957,585
Exchange rate gains	678	2,291
Fixed asset-related income	-	25,537
Sales revenue	-7,177 ³⁴	32,203
Contribution from Denmark	2,684,998	2,491,501
Other exchange revenue	417,976	302,688
EXPENDITURE	136,135,059	122,653,521
Operational expenditure	25,539,339	23,799,103
Administrative expenditure	110,595,718	98,854,417
Staff expenses	76,387,531	72,280,056
Finance expenses	166,194	106,116
Fixed asset-related	9,765,459	12,359,453
Expenses with consolidated EU entities	9,068,577	4,398,023
Other: Administrative and IT expenses	8,903,140	7,364,346
External service provider (non- IT)	2,291,581	2,097,035
Rent	248,452	245,466
Building – maintenance, insurance and security	3,761,970	3,598,987
Exchange rate losses	2,814	3,923
SURPLUS/DEFICIT FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES	4,613,695	10,203,508
Extraordinary gains	-	-
Extraordinary losses	-	-
SURPLUS/DEFICIT FROM EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS	-	-
ECONOMIC RESULT OF THE YEAR	4,613,695	10,203,508

³⁴ Accrual reversal from year n-1 larger than income booked in 2019.

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CASH FLOW STATEMENT

	31.12.2019	31.12.2018
Economic result of the year	4,613,695	10,203,508
Operational activities		
Amortisation (intangible fixed assets)	1,727,388	1,255,689
Depreciation (tangible fixed assets)	7,483,902	7,504,776
Increase (-)/Decrease in provisions for risks and charges	-7,000	-
Increase (-)/Decrease in short-term pre-financing	2,818,374	-1,488,810
Increase (-)/Decrease in short-term receivables	-1,808,240	-2,104,759
Increase (-)/Decrease in receivables related to consolidated EU entities	30,197	-32,148
Increase(-)/Decrease in other long-term liabilities	-752,470	1,051,054
Increase (-)/Decrease in accounts payable	2,204,871	1,187,782
Increase (-)/Decrease in liabilities related to consolidated EU entities	-3,276,603	1,463,069
Other non-cash movements	-229,463	252,979
Net cash-flow from operational activities	12,804,650	19,293,140
Investing activities		
Increase (-) of tangible and intangible fixed assets	-15,245,742	-12,396,722
Proceeds from tangible and intangible fixed assets	-	40,278
Net cash-flow from investing activities	-15,245,742	-12,356,444
Increase/decrease (-) in pension and employee benefits liability	171,746	-131,401
Net increase/decrease (-) in cash and cash equivalents	-2,269,346	6,805,295
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	25,676,425	18,871,130
Cash and cash equivalents at year-end	23,407,079	25,676,425

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STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

	Accumulated Surplus/ Deficit	Economic result of the year	Net Assets (Total)
Balance as at 31 December 2018	43,965,482	10,203,508	54,168,990
Changes in accounting policies	-	-	-
Balance as at 1 January 2019	43,965,482	10,203,508	54,168,990
Allocation of the economic result of previous year	10,203,508	-10,203,508	-
Economic result of the year 2019	-	4,613,695	4,613,695
Balance as at 31 December 2019	54,168,990	4,613,695	58,782,685

**RECONCILIATION BETWEEN STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL
PERFORMANCE AND BUDGET RESULT**

Description	Amount
Economic result (Statement of Financial Performance) 2019	4,613,695
Accruals/deferrals 2019	397,555
Accruals/deferrals reversed from 2018	-908,126
Adjustment for 2018 carry forward appropriations assigned revenue	9,108,957
Adjustment to employee benefit liability	171,746
Cancellation of unused payment appropriations from 2018	1,557,227
Cashed balance sheet recovery orders issued in 2019	1,117,036
Cashed recovery orders issued before 2019	68,189
Closure of Delegation Agreement	-3,366,988
Depreciation and amortisation of fixed assets	9,741,744
Fixed asset acquisitions (excluding unpaid amounts at 31.12.2019)	-7,632,568
Fixed asset corrections	-12,763
Internally-generated fixed assets ³⁵	-5,785,695
Open pre-financing paid in 2019	-3,346,109
Open pre-financing received in 2019	2,851,262
Other general ledger corrections	524
Payment appropriations carried forward to 2020	-22,802,657
Payments 2019 in Statement of Financial Performance different year	-9,199
Payments made from carry forward 2018	15,436,938
Pre-financing given in previous year and cleared in 2019	1,665,644
Pre-financing received in previous year and cleared in 2019	-500,000
Provisions (impact of the year)	-7,000
Uncashed recovery orders issued in 2019	-34,088
Unpaid, but expensed, invoices at 31.12.2019	14,509
Value reductions (impact of the year)	23,715
Total = Budget result 2019	2,363,548

1. ³⁵ This is the total amount capitalised in 2019 and considered under construction.

Europol Public Information

BUDGET RESULT 2019

	2019	2018
REVENUE		
Union contribution, cashed	138,305,458	130,245,520
Other revenue, cashed	4,788,604	6,746,755
TOTAL REVENUE (a)	143,094,062	136,992,275
EXPENDITURE		
Budget Title 1: Staff		
Payments current year	84,299,365	81,611,543
Appropriations carried over to next year	3,596,071	3,941,257
Budget Title 2: Administrative		
Payments current year	7,077,975	7,925,304
Appropriations carried over to next year	5,835,877	3,358,112
Budget Title 3: Operational		
Payments current year	37,214,565	27,754,042
Appropriations carried over to next year	13,370,709	18,803,753
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (b)	151,394,562	143,394,012
RESULT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR BEFORE SPECIAL ITEMS (a-b)	-8,300,500	-6,401,736
Cancellation of unused payment appropriations carried over from the previous year	1,557,227	1,029,950
Adjustment for carry-over from the previous year – assigned revenue	9,108,957	6,480,224
Exchange rate differences	-2,137	-1,631
BUDGET RESULT	2,363,548	1,106,807

Annex VI. Main issues discussed and decisions taken by the Management Board

Meeting 28 February – 1 March 2019

At its first meeting of 2019, the MB discussed: the implications of Europol's final budget on the implementation of the Europol work programme for 2019, including with regard to the information management (IM) priorities endorsed by the Member States; Europol's preparations in connection to EU Interoperability and to the relevant new and/or recast information systems; the results of a pilot project aimed at enhancing data search and cross-checking capabilities of law enforcement authorities as well as current and upcoming activities pertaining to the Operational @ON Network project. Regarding Europol's external relations, the Board discussed the prospects for future cooperation arrangements with priority partners. Further, the MB was updated on the steadily increasing activities of Europol's dedicated centres of expertise, such as the European Counter-Terrorism Centre (ECTC) and the European Cybercrime Centre (EC3); welcomed the positive results of the User Survey 2018 and the Operational Support Surveys 2018; and was informed about the outcome of the latest auditing activities and inspections performed by the relevant actors and of Europol's responses thereof.

Main decisions:

- Europol Strategy 2020+: the MB endorsed the approach set out by Europol for the implementation of the Strategy.
- Europol Staff: the MB adopted a decision concerning the engagement and use of temporary staff pursuant to Article 2(f) of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the EU.
- Reporting officers: the MB adopted a decision designating the reporting officers responsible for the appraisal of the Executive Director for 2019 and 2020.
- Housing developments: the MB endorsed the new housing solutions proposed by the Host State as a permanent long-term solution to expand Europol's office space.
- Amending budget 2019: the MB adopted an amending budget to enable Europol to receive an extended grant from the Commission, aimed to support EU-US law enforcement cooperation and direct cooperation with US-based providers with a view to facilitating cross-border access to digital evidence.

Meeting 23-24 May 2019

The MB discussed: budgetary matters, namely the impact of deprioritised activities for 2019, the perspectives for 2020, and the Europol multiannual financial outlook (2021-2027); the annual report foreseen under Article 7(11) of the Europol Regulation, regarding the information provided by each Member State to Europol; Europol's approach concerning high value targets and operational task forces, and related Member States' experiences; and Europol's cooperation with Interpol and the US. Further, the Board received an update on Europol's cooperation with private parties, in particular in the area of cybercrime, and on the envisaged deployment of Europol Liaison Officers to some Western Balkan countries. Additionally, the Board took note of the annual report of the Data Protection Officer for 2018; the outcome of audits conducted by the Internal Audit Capability; and the preliminary orientations of the then incoming Finnish EU Presidency in the Justice and Home Affairs area.

Main decisions:

- Implementation of the Europol Strategy 2020+: the MB endorsed the organisational refinements proposed by the Executive Director, amongst which the establishment of a new European Financial and Economic Crime Centre at Europol.

Europol Public Information

- Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR): the MB adopted the CAAR 2018 and its own assessment thereof.
- Europol Staff: the MB adopted decisions concerning the types of posts and post titles as well as the function of adviser.
- Recruitment of a Deputy Executive Director: pursuant to Article 54(2) of the Europol Regulation, the MB adopted a reasoned opinion containing a shortlist of candidates for appointment as Deputy Executive Director and agreed to transmit it to the Council.
- EU Interoperability: the MB highlighted the importance of EU Interoperability for both Europol and national law enforcement authorities, and endorsed the Europol Roadmap on EU Interoperability.

Meeting 4 October 2019

The MB resumed discussions on Europol's budgetary perspectives for 2020 and the multi-annual financial outlook (2021-2027), emphasising the need to provide the Agency with appropriate resources to respond to increasing demands from all Member States, in the interest of the Security Union. Further, the Board discussed: the status of Europol's cooperation with Eurojust; the progress achieved by Europol in the implementation of its Roadmap on EU Interoperability; latest and upcoming developments in the national and European debate on data retention, in particular the feasibility of a data retention regime striking a balance between operational effectiveness and the respect of fundamental rights. The MB took note of the status of the negotiations between the Commission and a number of Middle Eastern and North African countries with a view to the conclusion of international agreements allowing for the exchange of personal data with Europol pursuant to Article 25(1)(b) of the Europol Regulation. In addition, it received an update on the process pertaining to the prior consultations of the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) in accordance with Article 39 of the ER.

Main decisions:

- Europol Staff: the MB adopted decisions laying down implementing rules on middle management staff, temporary occupation of managerial posts, contract agents, and law enforcement traineeships at Europol.
- Financial Regulation (FR): the MB adopted the new FR applicable to Europol.
- External relations: the MB adopted a revised Model for the conclusion of working arrangements pursuant to Article 23(4) of the Europol Regulation, resulting from consultations with the EDPS and the Europol Security Committee.

Meeting 10-11 December 2019

At the last meeting of the year, the MB discussed: latest and upcoming developments in the implementation of the Europol Strategy 2020+; the impact of the final budget 2020 on the implementation of Europol's annual priorities, inviting Europol to present an updated work programme 2020 to the ensuing MB meeting; the multiannual budgetary perspectives for 2021-2027, and the preliminary draft Programming Document for the period 2021-2023. Further, the Board discussed the progress made by Europol towards the implementation of its Roadmap on EU Interoperability, and the setting up of a corporate, overarching Information Management concept aimed to provide improved support to Member States. Relating to operational matters, the Board discussed: the findings of the latest Internet Organised Crime Threat Assessment (iOCTA 2019); latest developments concerning the EC3; and Europol's activities pertaining to travel intelligence. In addition, the Board took note of the priorities of the incoming Croatian EU Presidency in the area of Justice and Home Affairs.

Europol Public Information

Main decisions:

- Europol budget: the MB adopted the final Europol budget for 2020.
- Europol Staff: the MB adopted decisions laying down implementing rules on the reclassification of temporary and contract agents.
- Information Management: the MB endorsed the 2020 IM priorities concerning core operational systems available to Member States and Interoperability.
- Internal Audit Capability (IAC) Work Programme: the MB approved the IAC Work Programme for 2020.
- External relations: the MB adopted the reviewed list of priority partners with which Europol may conclude working arrangements.

Written procedures

December 2018 - February 2019

- The MB authorised the signing of the new Service Level Agreement with the competent services of the European Commission, namely the Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements (PMO), in order to sub-delegate certain powers to PMO as from 1 January 2019.
- The MB adopted an amending budget to enable Europol to receive the funds allocated by virtue of a grant agreement concluded with the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) to ensure the financing of the activities carried out under the Europol-EUIPO agreement on strategic co-operation, for instance actions pertaining to online infringements of intellectual property rights and online financial payment systems.

March - May 2019

- The MB approved the Working Arrangement establishing cooperative relations between the Europol and the New Zealand Police.
- The MB elected Mr Andrei Linta, Romania, as MB Chairperson until the end of the current 18-month period, i.e. until 30 June 2020.
- The MB adopted an amending budget 2019 to cater for the yearly financial contribution from Denmark.

June - October 2019

- Pursuant to Article 60(5) of the Europol Regulation, the MB finalised its opinion on Europol's annual accounts 2018, which were subsequently transmitted to the EP, the Council, the Commission, the Court of Auditors and the national parliaments.
- The MB adopted an amending budget to enable Europol to receive the funds allocated by virtue of a new Service Level Agreement with EUIPO to ensure the financing of the activities carried out under the Europol-EUIPO agreement on strategic co-operation, such as monitoring relevant trends in the field of acquisition fraud.

November - December 2019

- The MB adopted the draft Europol Programming Document 2020-2022.

Europol Public Information

Annex VII. Overview of audit recommendations³⁶ issued by the IAC

Year	Audit report	Audit recommendations																	
		Issued						Implemented up to end 2019						To be implemented in 2020 and beyond					
		Total	C	VI	I	D	O	Total	C	VI	I	D	O	Total	C	VI	I	D	O
2015	Consultancy engagement on review of systems laid down by the Authorising Officer 2015 – 1st Report Accountancy: 2014 consolidation process	4		2	2			2			2			2					
	Consultancy engagement on review of the systems laid down by the Authorising Officer 2015 – 2nd Report Validation of authorisations granted in ABAC	2				2		2					2					0	
	Report of internal audit of Europol Forensic Laboratory	6					6 ³⁷	6					6					0	
2015	Total	12	0	2	2	2	6	10	0	0	2	2	6	2³⁸			2		
								83%	-	-	100%	100%	100%						
2016	Review of the implementation of recommendations issued by the IAF in the period 2010-2014	24 ³⁹		13	11			18		8	10			3			3		

³⁶ Grading of recommendation, as per the table, follows these codes: C=Critical, VI=Very Important, I=Important, D=Desirable, O=Other, either "non-conformity" or "opportunity for improvement".

³⁷ Defined as non-conformities (4) and opportunities for improvement (2) in line with the terminology applicable to ISO 17020:2012.

³⁸ The two remaining recommendations are about the establishment of an organisational wide contract management database for which the implementation is envisaged in 2020. In the meantime, Europol makes use of specific repositories for key spending areas (e.g. ICT, Facilities), thus ensuring the monitoring of contract implementation.

³⁹ Of the 24 recommendations, 3 recommendations were assessed by Europol as "not intended for implementation".

Europol Public Information

Year	Audit report	Audit recommendations																	
		Issued						Implemented up to end 2019						To be implemented in 2020 and beyond					
		Total	C	VI	I	D	O	Total	C	VI	I	D	O	Total	C	VI	I	D	O
	Report on the review and assessment of the implementation of (ICS) at Europol	40 ⁴⁰	1	21	15	3		35	1	19	13	2		4		2	2		
	Review and assessment of the operational support provided by EC3	18		5	8	5		17		5	7	5		1			1		
	Audit on Europol Sports and Social Association (ESSA) regarding its accounts for the years 2012 to 2015	13 ⁴¹		3	9	1		10		3	6	1		0					
	Validation of user access rights granted in ABAC	15 ⁴²		4	8	3		14		4	8	2		0					
	Report of internal audit of Europol Forensic Laboratory	2					2	2					2	0					
2016	Total	112	1	46	51	12	2	96	1	39	44	10	2	8 ⁴³		5	3		
		86% ⁴⁴	100%	85%	86%	83%	100%												
2017	New operational support capabilities EU Internet Referral Unit (EU IRU)	9	1		6	2		8	1		5	2		1			1		
	Strategic analysis products and their alignment with the EU policy cycle	9	1	2	5	1		9	1	2	5	1		0					
	Missions' administration process audit	14		10	4			14		10	4			0					

⁴⁰ Of the 40 recommendations, 1 recommendation was assessed by Europol as "not intended for implementation".

⁴¹ Of the 13 recommendations, 3 recommendations were assessed as "no longer applicable" (IAC/2017/6).

⁴² Of the 15 recommendations, 1 recommendation was assessed as "no longer applicable" (IAC/2017/3).

⁴³ The remaining 8 recommendations are related to contract management, the review of sensitive functions, establishment of a stakeholder management tool as well as other internal policy documentation

⁴⁴ When considering the 8 recommendations assessed as "not intended for implementation" (4) and "no longer applicable" (4) the implementation rate is 92%.

Europol Public Information

Year	Audit report	Audit recommendations																	
		Issued						Implemented up to end 2019						To be implemented in 2020 and beyond					
		Total	C	VI	I	D	O	Total	C	VI	I	D	O	Total	C	VI	I	D	O
	Validation of user access rights granted in ABAC	5 ⁴⁵			4	1		4			4			0					
	Report on the ISO 17020:2012 Internal audit of the Europol Forensic Laboratory	1					1 ⁴⁶	1					1	0					
2017	Total	38	2	12	19	4	1	36	2	12	18	3	1	1 ⁴⁷			1		
								95% ⁴⁸	100%	100%	95%	75%	100%						
2018	Information Communication Technology (ICT) project planning, management and change	12		4	7	1		7		2	4	1		5		2	3		
	Assessment of the implementation of the Europol Regulation	14			10	4		10			8	2		4			2	2	
	Audit Report Learning, Training and Development	34	4	19	11			19	3	12	4			15	1	7	7		
	Audit Report Operational support on-the-spot	15		1	12	2		6			5	1		9		1	7	1	
	Validation of user access rights granted in ABAC	5		2	3			5		2	3			0					

⁴⁵ From the 5 recommendations, 1 recommendation was assessed as "no longer applicable" (IAC/2018/3).

⁴⁶ Defined as opportunities for improvement in line with the terminology applicable to ISO 17020:2012.

⁴⁷ This recommendation relates to the establishment of an efficient stakeholder management database which is considered partly implemented

⁴⁸ When considering the 1 recommendation assessed as "no longer applicable" the implementation rate is 97%.

Europol Public Information

Year	Audit report	Audit recommendations																	
		Issued						Implemented up to end 2019						To be implemented in 2020 and beyond					
		Total	C	VI	I	D	O	Total	C	VI	I	D	O	Total	C	VI	I	D	O
	Report on the ISO 17020:2012 Internal audit of the Europol Forensic Laboratory	2					2 ⁴⁹	2					2	0					
2018	Total	82	4	26	43	7	2	49	3	16	22	4	2	33 ⁵⁰	1	10	19	3	0
								60%	75%	62%	51%	57%	100%						
2019	Audit report on operational analysis	25	2	12	10	1		7	2	2	3			18		10	7	1	
	Audit Report Grants Management Process	15		7	7	1		0						15		7	7	1	
	Validation of user access rights granted in ABAC	1			1			1			1			0					
	Report on the ISO 17020:2012 Internal audit of the Europol Forensic Laboratory	1					1	0						1					1
2019	Total	42	2	19	18	2	1	8	2	2	4			34	0	17	14	2	1
								19%	100%	11%	24%	0%	0%						
		286	9	105	133	27	12	199	8	69	90	19	11	78 ⁵¹	1	34	37	5	1
								70% ⁵²	89%	66%	68%	70%	92%						

⁴⁹ Defined as opportunities for improvement in line with the terminology applicable to ISO 17020:2012.

⁵⁰ The remaining open recommendations relate to the implementation of the Learning, Training and Development framework, operational support on-the-spot, the implementation of the Europol Regulation, and ICT project planning, management and change. These recommendations will be addressed as part of the Europol Work Plan 2020 and in the context of the implementation of the Europol Strategy 2020+.

⁵¹ Excluding the 9 recommendations assessed as 'no longer applicable' (5) or 'not intended for implementation' (4)

⁵² When considering the 9 recommendations assessed as 'no longer applicable' (5) or 'not intended for implementation' (4) the implementation rate is 72%.

Europol Public Information

Annex VIII. De-prioritised Work Programme initiatives and actions

ACTIV.	WPO	Action	De-prioritised	Reduced Level of Ambition	Reasons / Notes
A.1	A.1.1	Start implementing the Analysis Capability, based on the overarching NEO design that will be completed by the end of 2018. The Analysis Capability will include - among other elements- the future of the current Europol Analysis System.			ICT resources. Preparatory steps will still be taking place in 2019, including business validation of proof of concept
A.1	A.1.1	SIENA access from BPL networks	✓		ICT resources.
A.1	A.1.1	Advance with enabling usage of the messaging capability for users of other Europol capabilities and systems such as the analytical system, LFE, EMAS and EU IRU	✓		ICT resources.
A.1	A.1.1	Explore the need and possibilities for setting up an operational collaboration environment for conducting joint analysis of a strategic or thematic nature among trusted expert communities	✓		ICT resources.
A.1	A.1.1	Expand the search self-service functionality by more advanced search mechanisms, offering immediate insight in validated entities and links between them, as available in the wider Europol data set, governed by appropriate user access privileges. These services will be offered as independent tools, and, as a bridging solution, be incorporated into EIS.	✓		ICT resources.
A.1	A.1.1	Expand QUEST functionality to include the search self-service functionality described above. Grant several pilot Member States access to Europol's Analysis Projects through the QUEST web service on a hit/no hit basis. Extend QUEST with searches for new object types (e.g. ID documents, means of transportation, means of communication and offences). Update QUEST to use UMF2.0	✓		ICT resources.
A.1	A.1.1	Significantly increase QUEST performance to cope with its wide roll out to the front-line law enforcement officers and its use for automated, system-to-system search and cross-checking.	✓		ICT resources.
A.1	A.1.1	Step up the creation of the Data Science capability in ICT to support techniques such as Image and video analysis, speech processing, Natural Language Processing, Biometrics, Sensor generated data, etc.)			ICT resources.
A.2	A.2.4	Implement the indirect access by OLAF, on the basis of a hit-no hit system, to information held by Europol	✓		ICT resources. Hit-no hit answers will be provided to requests by OLAF.
A.2	A.2.4	Provide Eurojust access to Europol data on a hit-no hit basis	✓		ICT resources. Hit-no hit answers will be provided to requests by Eurojust.



Europol Public Information

ACTIV.	WPO	Action	De-prioritised	Reduced Level of Ambition	Reasons / Notes
A.3	A.3.2	Information Clearing House at Europol: Set up the conditions allowing for increasing (near) live transmission of relevant data to Europol's databases.	✓		ICT resources.
A.4	A.4.1	Fully establish the Europol Dark Web Team at Europol – a new dedicated capability to deal with the growing number of investigations related to online trade in illicit goods and services with cross-crime elements			EC3 resources.
A.4	A.4.1	Develop new tactics, tools and techniques needed by EU LEAs to combat criminality on the Dark Web (e.g. improved data collection, analysis, network investigations, etc.)	✓		ICT resources.
A.4	A.4.1	Optimise the possibilities for EC3 to facilitate the law enforcement response to non-cash payment fraud, in line with the new Non-Cash Payment Fraud Directive[1] and the Europol Regulation provisions for cooperation with private parties			EC3 resources.
A.4	A.4.1	Assess the impact of cyber-facilitated business process compromise (e.g. malware driven CEO payment fraud) and identify operational support opportunities.			EC3 resources.
A.4	A.4.1	Enhance the capabilities of the Europol Malware Analysis Solution (EMAS) for ATM malware analysis. Assess the requirements for adding technical solution and expertise on malware virology/malware DNA and reverse engineering	✓		ICT resources.
A.4	A.4.1	Arrange for Europol's participation in the Malware Information Sharing Platform (MISP) in order to enrich the agency's intelligence picture with data collected by the Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs).	✓		ICT resources.
A.4	A.4.1	Develop an EC3 OSINT platform in order to enhance operational information with data collected from open sources.	✓		ICT resources.
A.4	A.4.1	Establish a cryptocurrency platform where LEA can query open source blockchain	✓		ICT resources.
A.4	A.4.1	Implement an accreditation system for EU LEA to connect to non-public WHOIS information database held by domain registries and registrars	✓		ICT resources. This action is subject to ongoing discussions with MS and EDPS.
A.4	A.4.1	Develop Europol's capability to recover criminal data from vehicles			EC3 resources.
A.4	A.4.3	Further engage with key cyber intelligence centres and cyber operational international taskforces (such as National Cyber-Forensics & Training Alliance, International Cyber Crime Operations Summit (ICCOS), etc.) in order to facilitate the alignment, de-confliction and operational cooperation			EC3 resources.

Europol Public Information

ACTIV.	WPO	Action	De-prioritised	Reduced Level of Ambition	Reasons / Notes
A.4	A.4.3	Initiate the establishment of a secure technical interface to enable bi-directional communication on non-cash payment fraud cases and exchange of crime-relevant information with key private sector partners, in line with the Europol Regulation.	✓		ICT resources.
A.4	A.4.3	Explore possibilities to establish partnerships with new industry sectors with a specialised focus on partners of relevance for Dark Web investigations, as well as energy and automotive. Create a fourth advisory group, if proved feasible			EC3 resources.
A.5	A.5.1	Explore possibilities to further reinforce the on-the-spot support to MS by utilising the Guest Officers concept and potentially extend its scope to other crime areas			Operations Directorate resources.
A.5	A.5.2	Increase SIRIUS's geographical scope by introducing guidelines on requesting data from OSPs based in countries other than the US	✓		Operations Directorate resources. The grant has been extended – however it will not cover this particular action
A.5	A.5.3	Establish regular communication with Internet companies and increase efforts to reach out to smaller companies in order to raise awareness of terrorists' behaviour online and to help them build up resilience against the exploitation of their platforms.			EU IRU resources.
A.5	A.5.3	Develop and test tools that allow for the detection of terrorist content across platforms.			ICT resources.
A.5	A.5.3	Support the network of national IRUs to promote cooperation, coordination and the exchange of knowledge and best practices on referral capabilities, making use of Internet Referral Management Application (IRMA) as a pilot for a limited number of MS			EU IRU resources.
A.5	A.5.3	Develop an EU platform to tackle illicit content online, through the merger of the IRMA and the Check the Web capabilities into a new technical environment applying new business rules. This platform should be accessible by all MS and relevant OSPs allowing for a real time two-way communication between the EU IRU, national IRUs and OSPs in the context of referrals and removal orders. Take preparatory steps if legal constraints have been waived and the necessary resources for this new task have been provided.	✓		ICT and Operations Directorate resources. Implementation could start if additional resources are made available through e.g. an amending budget or extra funds from the Commission. Depending on timing this could have an effect on the overall ICT planning.

Europol Public Information

ACTIV.	WPO	Action	De-prioritised	Reduced Level of Ambition	Reasons / Notes
A.5	A.5.4	Implement the affiliation of the ATLAS Network of Special Intervention Units within the structure of Europol.	✓		The Final Budget 2019 does not include support for the ATLAS network. Europol expects this activity to be funded through other means, such as an amending budget or transfer of funds from DG HOME.
A.6	A.6.3	Develop Europol's capabilities in the area of travel intelligence in line with the Travel intelligence Roadmap.			The development of Europol's capabilities in the area of travel intelligence can only take place at a lower level of ambition and/or will be delayed in time.
A.6	A.6.4	Progress with the elaboration of a sustainable solution for the High Risk Informant Database (HRIDB) subject to MS needs and further promote the tool's systematic use	✓		ICT Resources.
A.6	A.6.5	Increase the provision of comprehensive financial intelligence to MS regarding money laundering, asset recovery, corruption and terrorism financing, including possible links to other criminal areas.			The possibilities to reinforce the support to financial investigations will be limited in 2019.
A.6	A.6.5	Follow up on the roadmap for a future FIU.net application ("FIU solution")	✓		ICT Resources.
A.7	A.7.1	Develop an Analytics and Reporting capability to ensure high-quality and accurate corporate performance measurement and reporting.	✓		ICT resources. The analytics and reporting capability for corporate data is not part of the ICT work plan 2019. A first step - tackling statistics on operations-related data - will be delivered under the NEO program (under objective A1.1.).