



Analysis

A new player in Security Research: the European Network of Law Enforcement Services (ENLETS)

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A major source for fattening Europe's emerging security-industrial complex is the EU security research programme (ESRP), which the European Commission will fund with €1.4bn until 2013. The early preparations for this programme were heavily influenced by a few European arms and high-tech industry giants such as BAE Systems, EADS, Thales and Finmeccanica, which were co-opted by a small community of policy makers interested in both Europe's industrial competitiveness and arming European security and defence policy. However, public-private dialogues on the future direction of EU security research have opened the arena to agenda-setters with other backgrounds [1]: academics and research institutions; companies maintaining major infrastructures; national interior ministries and key agencies for civil protection and policing. Police forces felt that they were under-represented in these fora and were worried that their voice would not be heard among a cacophony of interests.

In February 2008, less than one year after the ESRP was officially launched as part of the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technical Development (FP7) in Berlin, the French Police Cooperation Working Party delegation of the EU Council of Ministers proposed "set[ting] up an informal network of heads of departments responsible for implementing new technologies in police departments." EU member states were invited to submit contacts and join the first networking event

on 1 October 2008 in conjunction with the third Security Research Conference (SRC) organised by the French EU presidency in Paris. Twenty-two delegates from 18 nations responded to this invitation to discuss the potential and mission of a "European Network of Law Enforcement Technology Services" (ENLETS). Supported by politicians, national homeland security officials, the European Commission and industry representatives gathering at SRC '08, the delegates welcomed the French initiative for ENLETS as a promising framework to exchange experiences. [2]

However, it took two years and another four meetings until the network developed a work programme. While it was clear from the beginning that ENLETS should facilitate the exchange of information on experiences with new technologies, ongoing R&D projects and "blank spaces", the methods it would use to do this were contested, as was the role of the network in the pre-existing institutional landscape of European security research. In its early formative phase, it was noted that ENLETS should not enter into competition with the European Security Research & Innovation Forum (ESRIF) but instead identify the needs - and potential solutions - of national police forces or groups of states. [3] Discussions focussed on the details of setting up an "electronic bulletin board" for the "systematic pooling of knowledge" [4] and on funding opportunities offered by the European Commission to maintain such permanent

infrastructures and pay for travel costs.

Dr Strangelove in Blue?

The tone has changed since ESRI submitted its final report in December 2009. In the first semester of 2010, the Spanish Presidency proposed to increase the involvement of the European Commission in ENLETS' activities because of its responsibility for defining work programmes for the FP7. The Spanish delegation also lobbied for ENLETS to function as a platform to improve dialogue with suppliers from the "academic world" and industry. These ambitions were endorsed when ENLETS met for the fourth time at the Security Research Conference at Oostende in September 2010. Delegates from 15 countries plus representatives from the Commission, Europol and the EU Border Agency Frontex agreed that ENLETS should not limit its activities to the sharing of experiences and analyses of demands. Rather the network's main objective should be "to find new synergies with the European agencies to avoid overlaps and to point out common goals." Ideas for new projects should be developed and "taken into consideration" by the Commission when drafting FP7 calls for 2011. [5]

One month later ENLETS met again, in Brussels, to hammer out a mission statement:

The opportunities offered by the new technologies outdate the old investigation methods and often challenge the legal framework in which law enforcement and justice have to operate. Law enforcement agencies therefore have to analyse the impact of technological change in these areas.

Due to the limited size and fragmentation of the market for law enforcement technology, the document also states, "new technology developments are often dictated by suppliers rather than end-users." Therefore, ENLETS should "identify operational security needs" and "participate in security-related research and help as (an end-user) to develop innovative processes and products." As a "proactive group" the network should:

- *raise police awareness in the use of new technologies,*
- *act as an effective platform for exchange of information,*
- *contribute to standardisation,*
- *encourage interoperability,*
- *become a sounding board for the Commission and the law enforcement supply base "by verifying, when asked, whether their work programmes and priorities meet end-users' needs,*

become a force for proposals based on expressed end-users' needs, and

help to bridge the gap between the needs of law enforcement agencies and industrial and academic providers of technology.

Despite these ambitious goals, those meeting in Brussels were well aware that representatives from 12 EU member states were missing. To involve them was seen to be extremely important - not least because the long-term vision is seen as a "formally structured collaboration." Meanwhile, key instruments to organise ENLETS' work are said to be, first, a database with information on needs, relevant projects and their progress reports, a "technology watch" with an events calendar and notices about relevant evaluations and publications, and relevant contacts and documentation on ENLETS itself; second, biannual meetings prepared and chaired by a trio of past, present and incoming EU presidencies. [6]

In January and February 2011, the mission statement and work programme were reported to the EU Council's Law Enforcement Working Party and the Customs Cooperation Party, and all member states were provided with a questionnaire to identify needs and to update or name their contact points for ENLETS. [7] However, the process has not been as dynamic as expected when the optimistic vision for ENLETS' future was drafted by the team in Brussels. In early April, the Hungarian Presidency informed the Law Enforcement Working Party that the deadline for replies to the questionnaire had been extended and that it was considering postponing the next ENLETS meeting because of limited feedback. [8] Which member states caused these obstacles is unknown. All EU nations, except Romania, Norway, Iceland and Switzerland had appointed "national contact points" by the second ENLETS meeting in Prague in 2009, but delegates from major EU nations such as the UK, Spain and Italy were absent from this meeting (see table). Meanwhile Europol, Frontex and the EU's Joint Research Centre (JRC) have become involved and are expected to contribute to the information exchange. [9]

The reasons for some nations' lack of response remains unclear. Perhaps the initiative is lacking substantial support from national police services, or possibly it is because English is the only working language at ENLETS meetings and no translation is provided. [11] The issue of the Commission's funding of travel costs has not been resolved which might also be decisive in an era of austerity.

Thus, it remains to be seen if ENLETS will evolve into a comprehensive European network with the

authority to influence the agenda of European security research policy. Whatever the future of ENLETS is, the launch of the network has enrolled new players in EU security research. Other police factions less obsessed with counter-terrorism and border security but interested in countering crime and public order policing might now raise their voices. [12] However, it is doubtful that this will “civilise” security research. The decision to host ENLETS meetings in conjunction with annual Security Research Conferences and its “partnering events” has contributed to the co-option of ENLETS members by the emerging European security-industrial complex. In ESRP projects such as IMSK, launched in 2009 to develop a mobile surveillance and detection system to protect major events, ENLETS members such as the French Technologies Service for Internal Security (STSI) and the Swedish National Police Board, were developing applications with “internationally recognised defence companies” such as Selex, Diehl and Thales. [13] Thus, it is likely that technologies with military origins such as drones, the plethora of high-tech sensor systems or new generations of command-and-control-centres, will diffuse further into areas of policing.

Endnotes [and see Chart on page 4]

1. These public-private dialogues were the Group of Personalities (GoP, 2003/2004), the European Security Research Advisory Board (ESRAB, 2005/2006) and the European Security Research and Innovation Forum (ESRIF, 2007-2009)). See B. Hayes (2009) *NeoConopticon. The EU Security-Industrial Complex*. Amsterdam: TNI/Statewatch, pp. 9-27

2. Council of the European Union (2008): Doc. 14669/08, 23 October 2008

3, EU Council doc. 6211/09, 9 February 2009

4. After early ideas to utilise CEPOL or EUROPOL platforms for the electronic bulletin board the third ENLETS meeting chaired by the Swedish Presidency in October 2009 in Stockholm opted for services of the Commission’s Communication and Information Resource CIRCABC. EU

Council doc. 14415/09, 13 October 2009

5. EU Council doc. 16250/10, 15 November 2010

6. Annex to EU Council doc. 16250/10, 15 November 2010

7. EU Council docs. 5760/11, 27 January 2011 and 7181/11, 3 March 2011

8. EU Council doc. 8982/11, 13 April 2011

9. Annex to EU Council doc. 16250/10, 15 November 2010

10. Annex to EU Council doc. 10573/09, 4 June 2009

11. Annex to EU Council doc. 16250/10, 15 November 2010

12. In the ESRAB and ESRIF dialogues police forces from many EU member states had no voice; national interests were represented by industrialists and military officials or others with a similar background. Police forces of member states such as Germany, for instance, were represented by agencies leading in counter-terrorism. In contrast, ENLETS members seem to represent institutions with an interest in police technology in general and in IT in particular.

13.

<http://www.imsk.eu/Partners/tabid/57/Default.aspx>

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ENLETS Members in April 2009 [10]
(* those who took part at Prague meeting on 29-30 April)

INSTITUTIONAL CONTACT POINTS

COUNTRY

Austria *	Bundesministerium für Inneres Österreich I/Büro für Sicherheitspolitik
Belgium *	Commissaire de Police Service d'Appui à la Gestion Contact point for national and international new technologies
Bulgaria *	Communication and Information Systems Directorate Ministry of Interior
Cyprus *	Technical and Scientific Support Department (D) Director of Telecommunications Department
Czech Republic	Police Presidium of the Czech Republic
Denmark	Danish National Police National Investigation Department
Estonia *	Head of Administrative Department Ministry of Internal Affairs
European Commission *	EC DG JLS, Unit F1 Counter Terrorism & Preparedness
Finland *	Police Technical Centre
France *	Service des Technologies de la Sécurité Intérieure (STSI) Direction Générale de la Police Nationale (DGPN)
Germany *	Polizeitechnisches Institut (PTI) Deutsche Hochschule der Polizei (DHPol) + Referat ÖS I 1, Bundesministerium des Innern
Greece	Technology Division of the Hellenic Ministry of Interior Hellenic Police Headquarters
Hungary	No department or unit specified
Iceland	Director of Finance and IT, Icelandic Police
Ireland *	IT Section, Garda HQ
Italy	Directeur Technique Principal de la Police italienne Ministère de l'Intérieur
Latvia *	Head of European Affairs Unit of State Police Ministry of Interior Republic of Latvia
Lithuania	Informatics and Communication Division at the Police Department
Luxemburg *	Premier commissaire divisionnaire, Directeur Organisation et Méthode et Emploi (DOME) Direction Générale de la Police Grand Ducale
Malta	Malta Police Force General Headquarters
Netherlands	Directorate General for Security Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
Norway	Head of ICT Division The Norwegian Police Computing and Material Service
Poland *	Wydz. Zaa wansowanych Technologii Biuro Kryminalne Komendy Główniej Policji
Portugal	Internal Security Systems
Slovakia	Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic Scientific and Technical Development Department
Slovenia	Head of Material and Technical Division, Logistic Office
Spain	Subdirección General de Sistemas de Información Comunicaciones para la Seguridad, Ministerio del Interior
Sweden	Swedish National Police Board Department for Police Affairs