Council of the European Union

NOTE

From:	Europol
To:	Delegations
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Subject:	Europol's updated contribution on its short-term activities in the implementation of the Roadmap on information exchange and interoperability

Delegations will find enclosed the updated contribution of Europol on its short-term activities in the implementation of the Roadmap to enhance information exchange and information management including interoperability solutions in the Justice and Home Affairs area.

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EUROPOL

The Hague, 15 September 2016
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Short-term activities by Europol in implementation of the Roadmap to enhance information exchange and information management including interoperability solutions in the JHA area

The Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU invited Europol to provide an overview of measures to be undertaken by the end of 2016 in implementation of the Roadmap to enhance information exchange and information management including interoperability solutions in the JHA area.[1]

Due account should be given to the fact that the business planning at Europol for 2016 had been completed prior to the adoption of the Roadmap by the Council on 10 June 2016 and that internal considerations with regard to the implementation of the Europol Regulation are still on-going.

The list below aims at providing the requested overview. Reference is made to the specific activities of the Roadmap (RM). Europol can provide more detailed information on the respective points, if required.

1. High-level expert group of the Commission (RM 1 and cross-cutting)

Europol is supporting the work of the high-level expert group and will contribute to all three sub-groups. It seeks to align the developments at EU level in the furthering of interoperability and enhanced information exchange with the internal evolution related to the implementation of the new data processing approach that the new Europol regulation will introduce in 2017, the so-called *Integrated Data Management*. To promote progress in the work of the high-level expert group Europol actively engages between the meetings with key partners, such as other JHA agencies and the Commission.

2. Interoperability solutions, "Universal Message Format" (UMF) (RM 4 and 5)

Europol is supporting the UMF-3 project to enhance and extend the implementation of a structured data format for exchanging cross-border law enforcement information that was established under the previous UMF projects. This includes the pilot project QUEST which will make it possible for Member States to also include Europol systems as part of integrated searches in (inter)national systems. Germany has offered to test it in practice as the first country. This is scheduled towards the end of 2016.

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[1] Council doc. 9368/1/16

Current discussions with the Commission and INTERPOL aim at agreeing on one data exchange format for firearms to be consistently used by all UMF partners. This would enhance interoperability of systems and subsequently facilitate the possibility for frontline investigators in MS to run searches on firearms in SISII, iARMS, Europol and national systems in one single search.

Discussions on launching a UMF-4 project will start in the 4th quarter of 2016. This should take into account the enhanced level of ambition for the development of interoperability solutions following the Roadmap as well as the progress that is made in the sub-groups of the high-level expert group.

3. Schengen Information System (SIS II) (RM 10, 11, 12, 22 and 25)

Europol is improving its technical capabilities to enable a systematic cross-matching of SIS alerts against Europol data. A batch search mechanism is currently under development that is planned to be available by the end of 2016.

The planned legal revision of the SIS framework should take into account the business needs of Europol with regard to extending the access rights to alerts on missing persons and on persons refused entry or stay in the Schengen territory and it should facilitate the systematic cross-matching of biographic and in the future – once AFIS for SISII is operational – biometric data against Europol systems.

Europol could also support Member States, if it is mandated to insert data received from third countries in the SIS, subject to data owners' consent. Moreover, Europol is willing to contribute to a business assessment for establishing a consistent procedure to ensure the most effective follow-up to SIS alerts, including by systematically sharing relevant data with Europol and facilitating the exchange of all information related to hits via SIENA.

4. VIS and EURODAC (RM 10, 48, and 49)

Europol is preparing business requirements for the connection and use of VIS and EURODAC. Based on practical use cases, the business opportunities of increased use of existing possibilities will be highlighted, as well as suggestions made for further extension of justified access to data in these systems. As currently both databases provide for very strict purpose limitations that impede the usability for Europol, law enforcement needs should be adequately reflected in the expected legislative review of the VIS framework and in the negotiations of the EURODAC Regulation.

5. Prüm framework (RM 13)

Europol will prepare a business case to help explore the possibility to become an information exchange partner in the Prüm framework. Such access would enable Europol to support MS with cross-checking data from prioritized cases received from Third Parties with MS data (DNA/fingerprints of convicted/suspected persons) and possibly identify new links

that can supply relevant information to on-going cases. Europol encourages the sharing of information associated to links identified through Prüm within the EIS, in particular case and biographic data on serious cross-border crime and terrorism.

6. Automation of Data Exchange Process (ADEP) (RM 16)

Europol is supporting the ADEP project, in particular with a view to ensure interoperability and complementarity with Europol systems and tools, including the storage of linked information in the EIS and the exchange of information as follow-up to identified matches.

7. Three-tier information sharing approach (RM 30)

Further to the items addressed above under point 3, Europol will continuously engage in assessing and promoting the opportunities of implementing a consistent three-tier information sharing approach regarding foreign terrorist fighters. Making the best use of SIS II, EIS and AWF would help close information gaps and further enhance the operational support capabilities of Europol in the counter-terrorism area. The systematic monitoring of links between EIS, SIS II and the CT focal points and combining the information for integrated analysis and pro-active measures is essential.

8. Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA) (RM 31)

Europol will conclude the upgrading of SIENA to the confidentiality level of EU CONFIDENTIAL/UE CONFIDENTIEL by October 2016, when the already deployed version is expected to be accredited formally. This will serve in particular the counter-terrorism units in the Member States. Europol is also working on the further extension of the SIENA web services.

9. Eurojust association to FP HYDRA (RM 33)

The agreement to associate Eurojust to Focal Point HYDRA within the AWF Counter-terrorism was concluded in July 2016.

10. Passenger Name Records (PNR) (RM 37, 39 and 40)

Europol will contribute to the work of the operational PNR informal Working Group and is offering support to the EU level discussions regarding the interoperability of the EU Member States' Passenger Information Units (PIUs). Europol will prepare a proposal on how the organisation can support the national PIUs in the most effective way, including in relation to information sharing and development of targeting rules (both national and supranational). Furthermore, Europol will host in partnership with eu-LISA a workshop in the 4th

quarter of 2016 on the mapping and elaboration of workflows, processes and products in regard to PNR data exchange with a view to establishing a coherent and interoperable solution facilitating all parties involved.

11. Support to EU RTF and migrant hotspots (RM 44 and 45)

Europol is committed to continuously support the work against migrant smuggling networks by deploying staff and equipment, and by implementing the guest officer concept for secondary security checks.

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