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Delegations will find attached the evaluation report on Operation Archimedes as prepared by Europol.



Management Board meeting  
3 December 2014  
Item 09b  
Management Board to discuss

# Operation Archimedes Evaluation Report



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## Key findings

Overall, Operation Archimedes was well received and prompted positive feedback.

### Actions

More than 300 Actions in more than 260 places

### Participation

28 Member States, 6 third countries, Eurojust, Frontex and Interpol participated  
Permanent representation of Frontex and Interpol in the Europol Coordination Centre  
Very active participation of third countries

### Evaluation

Member States and third partners and stakeholders positively highlighted Operation Archimedes as:

- an important step in multi-disciplinary cooperation,
- a good example of implementing the policy cycle in practice,
- a good test of capabilities and limits of a major international action spread over many days, countries and fields of action,
- a positive awareness tool.

Other positive aspects mentioned by the participants include:

- the excellent on-the-spot support using mobile offices,
- the effective logistical support provided by the Europol Coordination Centre,
- the cooperation with key third partner countries and agencies as a real asset.

Some critical remarks highlighted include:

- difficulties connected with planning complexities,
- problems in information exchange during the operation,
- questions regarding the long-term impact of the operation.

The JHA Council, COSI and EPCC praised the approach and called for similar initiatives in the future.

### Information exchange

- Siena: 1970 Siena messages were exchanged
- Real time operational data flow to Europol remains a challenge for many EU MS

### Media

- Archimedes was reported 3245 times in the media

# 1. Introduction

## Background

- In November 2010, the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council of the EU adopted the framework for the implementation of the EU policy cycle for organised and serious international crime.<sup>1</sup>
- In June 2013, the JHA Council adopted the current 9 priorities concerning the fight against serious and organised crime for 2014–2017.<sup>2</sup>
- In January 2014, all 12 Operational Action Plans (OAPs)<sup>3</sup>, in response to the 9 priorities set by the Council in June 2013, were adopted by the Standing Committee on Internal Security (COSI) of the Council.
- In January 2014, Europol proposed to the Drivers of the OAPs the idea of Joint Action Days to bring together operational activities in a joint exercise. Following involvement of the April 2014 Heads of Europol National Units (HENUs) meeting and the Europol Management Board (MB) in May 2014, all Drivers of the OAPs, except for cyber attacks and MTIC, decided to participate in the Joint Action Days. Archimedes was chosen as the name for the Joint Action days.

## Operation Archimedes?

Operation Archimedes, a large scale international law enforcement operation, targeted serious and organised crime in the EU and involved actions at hundreds of locations between 15 and 23 September 2014. EU Member States (28) and their international partners (6 third countries, Eurojust, Frontex and Interpol) came together to disrupt the activities of criminal groups engaging in the trafficking and production of drugs, the trafficking of human beings, the facilitation of illegal immigration, organised property crime, the trade in firearms and counterfeit goods. As part of Operation Archimedes, law enforcement authorities committed thousands of police officers to actions focusing on key hot spots in the EU with the aim of having a lasting and significant impact on serious and organised crime disrupting criminal groups and their activities for months or even years to come. During the most crucial days of Operation Archimedes, the Europol Coordination Centre was manned 24 hours a day ensuring the continuous flow of operational intelligence from participating states to Europol and other involved parties.

Operation Archimedes was driven by the EU Member States, which deployed thousands of police officers simultaneously for large-scale multi-disciplinary actions targeting multiple crime areas at the same time. Operation Archimedes was planned using an intelligence-led approach that focused actions on the most threatening criminal groups and most significant criminal hot spots in the EU and abroad.

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<sup>1</sup> Council Secretariat file no. 15358/10 COSI 69: (1) illegal immigration, (2) trafficking in human beings, (3) counterfeit goods, (4) excise and Missing Trader Intra Community (MTIC) fraud, (5) synthetic drugs trafficking, (6) cocaine and heroine trafficking, (7) cybercrime, (8) illicit trafficking of firearms, (9) property crime committed by Mobile Organised Crime Groups (MOCGs)

<sup>2</sup> Council Secretariat file no. 12095/13 COSI 91

<sup>3</sup> One OAP per crime priority set by the Council, with the priority cyber crime covered by 3 OAPs (child sexual exploitation, credit card fraud and cyber attacks) and the priority “excise and MTIC fraud” covered by 1 independent OAP per area

## 2. Objectives of Archimedes

### Objectives

The area of activities was primarily in the EU but not exclusively; based on the needs for cooperation between the law enforcement agencies other countries were involved. During the implementation of Archimedes special attention was paid to hot spots (airports, border-crossing-points, harbours and cities) as identified by Europol based on the SOCTA 2013 and MS' reports and information available in Europol databases.

The desired outcomes of the JAD were centred on the following key objectives:

- EU wide action day focusing on key crime hot spots in the EU;
- Significant impact on serious and organised crime;
- Implementation of operational actions of the EMPACT OAPs;
- Improve the multi-disciplinary approach, including cooperation with the private sector;
- Improve the knowledge on the intelligence picture on SOC;
- Target the most threatening organised crime groups and top targets;
- Improve coordination and cooperation at international and national level;
- Raising awareness on the EU policy cycle and EMPACT;
- To give international police cooperation a more visible public profile.

## 3. Operational Results

Overall 1150 arrests and more than 350 seizures were made.

1150 arrests:

- 25% multiple crimes
- 300 suspected of property crimes, of which more than 100 burglars linked to MOCG
- 170 suspected facilitators of illegal immigration
- 96 suspected of drug related crimes
- 94 suspected human traffickers
- overall nearly 200 victims of human trafficking identified
- 30 potential victims of child trafficking rescued

More than 350 seizures:

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- 2.7 tons of illicit drugs (approx 1.8 tons cannabis, 600 kg cocaine, 200 kg heroin)
- 16 stolen high value cars plus 2 trucks
- 1.5 million illicit cigarettes
- 6 lorry loads of alcohol prevented from being diverted
- at least 1000 counterfeit goods (watches, jewellery, clothes, shoes) plus several thousands of other goods suspected to be counterfeits
- more than 100 fraudulent documents
- several small seizures of weapons and ammunition all over the EU
- over 1 million euro cash

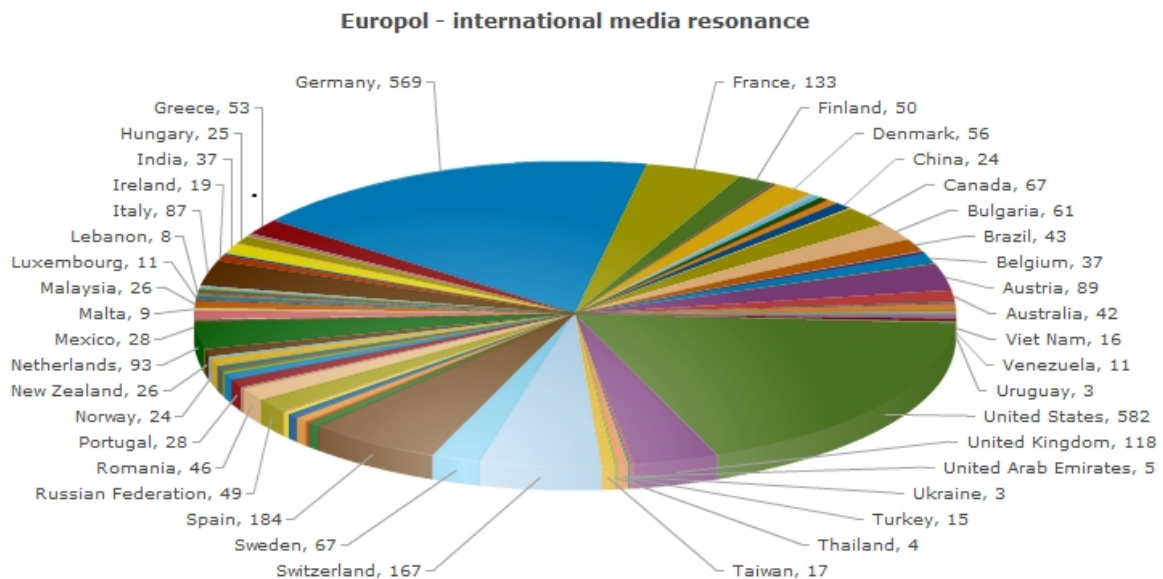
(counterfeit medicine factory dismantled and 130,000 pills seized in Colombia)

Despite the problem of some EU MS in exchanging data within a short time, overall 1970 intelligence reports were exchanged. Twenty thousand entities were checked in the Europol databases.

The intelligence and information collected on Modus Operandi, routes and criminal groups during operation Archimedes confirms the findings of the SOCTA 2013 and provides additional info for the preparation of the interim assessment 2015. Future joint actions will certainly provide a vital input to the SOCTA 2017 that will set the priorities for the next policy cycle from 2017 on.

## 4. Archimedes and Media

In total Operation Archimedes was reported 3245 times in the media. Below an overview of the reporting per country.



## 5. Evaluation and way forward

Operation Archimedes was presented and evaluated during the following meetings:

- HENU meeting, Management Board, EPCC, National EMPACT Coordinators meeting, EMPACT Drivers and Co-drivers meeting at Europol,

Additionally, an awareness session was organised for all Europol staff.

- COSI, JHA Council meeting, College meeting Eurojust.

During these meetings, Operation Archimedes was well received and a call for similar initiatives was made. Depending on the stakeholders, proposals for improvements were presented. Europol took these proposals into consideration in the overall evaluation.

### Evaluation meeting and questionnaire

On 3 October 2014, drivers, National EMPACT Coordinators (NECs) and action leaders came together to discuss the outcomes of Operation Archimedes and provide feedback on the Operation to Europol. Following this meeting, Europol distributed a questionnaire to collect detailed feedback on the Operation (see Annex 1).

Respondents were asked to give overall feedback regarding Operation Archimedes by answering the following four questions:

- 1) How do you assess the overall value of Archimedes?
- 2) What key experience has been gained during Archimedes?
- 3) What are key aspects to be changed in similar operations?
- 4) What should the priority be on the way forward?

All countries except the United States answered the questions, greatly varying in length and detail. Main themes extracted were based on common topics of discussion in the feedback and suggestions by Member States. The below is not indicative of the feedback as a whole, rather, it reflects mostly the criticisms and the changes that Member States would like to see. The positive judgements of the Member States were often short phrases that did not provide much information ("Very Good") and can still be seen in the quantitative data above.

In total, 37 responses were received from 23 countries.

The majority assessed the Operation in its various aspects (national coordination, info-flow, support from Europol) as 'good' or 'very good'. Operation Archimedes was a good way to **develop cooperation** at a European and national level. It allowed for reflection about inter-departmental and inter-agency coordination and identified best practices for communicating at a European level. It highlighted the ability to work on an international basis, across Member State borders. Member States were able to gain new contacts and to promote their own agencies. Respondents stated they had gained more knowledge regarding the coordination of operations involving police forces in other Member States.

Most Member States want to **repeat** joint action days in the future, provided that they are **smaller**, more **regional** and more **intelligence-driven**. Some Member States would also like



to enhance cooperation with the private sector. **Timely preparation** and proper **communication** at all levels is crucial.

In summary, Member States positively highlighted Operation Archimedes as:

- an important step in multi-disciplinary cooperation,
- a good example of implementing the policy cycle in practice
- a positive awareness raising initiative

The main critical observations related to the following areas:

- planning (insufficient time; highly ambitious goals)
- information exchange (problems in transferring information from front-line operational scene to Europol)
- impact on serious and organised crime (impressive results but unclear to what extent Archimedes was uniquely responsible; long-term impact questionable)
- media (good profile but important not to be 'too media driven')

To accommodate certain criticisms, Europol has taken the following initiatives:

- Europol is exploring technical options to improve the flow of operational data from the front-line.
- Europol has made sure that Joint Action Days are foreseen in the OAPs 2015. The timing and duration of these actions days is to be decided, but should not exceed one week.
- Via the delegation agreement, Europol will support countries by financing national and international meetings to prepare and execute Joint Action Days.
- Europol will support EMPACT priorities in planning Joint Action Days, on a smaller scale and with a specific focus (i.e. regional action days on some but not all priorities; target a specific modus operandi such as the use of parcels to distribute illicit goods).
- Europol will prepare a general information package for EMPACT Joint Action Days and provide a timely overview of all planned actions and participants. (This requires a timely transmission of the related information by the Member States to Europol).
- Europol will organise a meeting with the national media contact points to discuss the media strategy for EMPACT Joint Action Days

## 6. Conclusions

The majority of the objectives set for Operation Archimedes were successfully met. All EU Member States participated and the cooperation with third countries and organisations was very good. Archimedes has given international police cooperation a more visible public profile. The Operation highlighted to the public that combating serious and international crime is a key objective for European law enforcement authorities and their partners.

Operation Archimedes demonstrated that coordination and cooperation at the international level can maximise results and lead to successes that isolated actions are not able to achieve. Archimedes demonstrates that international law enforcement cooperation is crucial and not just an abstract concept.

Archimedes was a test for the efficacy of the EMPACT process as a whole. The EU policy cycle established in 2010 is a relatively young initiative. Operation Archimedes successfully

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implemented the aim of the policy cycle to coordinate joint responses by EU MS, EU institutions and third party stakeholders to the threat of crime.

Archimedes has demonstrated the efficiency of operational partnerships. Cooperation with agencies like Frontex has been extremely beneficial. Archimedes was the catalyst for the closest operational interaction between Europol and Frontex so far.

Operation Archimedes helped to confirm that Europol is the natural hub for large-scale operational law enforcement action in Europe and that Europol's unique capabilities as information hub and operational coordination centre are well established.

Archimedes is a good example of multi-national law enforcement teams working together in a shared environment in a very dynamic way, exchanging information in real-time on very different crime areas. This model is, and will be further, replicated in other areas of international cooperation such as the J-CAT (cyber), JOT MARE (facilitated illegal immigration) or FP Travellers (foreign fighters).

It is clear that these task-force type arrangements, temporary or otherwise, and overall success in the common fight against serious and organised crime, can only succeed with the active engagement of all partners. Archimedes showed that although there is a general improvement within our community overall, levels of active engagement vary significantly between MS.

Evaluation meetings showed that Archimedes was not without challenges or difficulties and made clear that some things did not go to plan. But this was an opportunity to test limits and capabilities of international law enforcement community in a real-life scenario. Some MS for example did not succeed in exchanging operational data via SIENA in a short time. In a few cases it took up to 4 days before the operational data arrived at Europol. Other MS solved this by checking the data via the ELOs by phone but some further discussion is required on this.

Review also showed that the operation had an impact on organised crime. This will be temporary in nature and likely lead to many groups and threats reforming. Nevertheless, we need to be realistic about the scale of the problem. A permanent, structural, sustained effort is further required by EU MS, third partners and Europol. In particular, relevant MS authorities are encouraged to think progressively and imaginatively about opportunities to join forces in more dynamic operational coordination arrangements to bring about more sustained operational impact on top crime threats.

Operation Archimedes will have an impact beyond immediate arrest and seizure figures. Intelligence and investigative leads generated by this collective effort will require careful analysis and have already resulted in further actions.

The intelligence collected also serves as an input for the interim assessment SOCTA 2015.

To improve the results, to target the most threatening criminals, a more focused and targeted approach is required for future actions. Additionally, the multi-disciplinary approach, including cooperation with the private sector, needs to be further developed.

MS have requested that actions scheduled for the coming year are integrated into the planning for the policy cycle implementation in 2015. Further actions should, if possible, be more limited in time and complemented by several smaller-scale joint operations with a narrower geographic focus or targeting a more limited number of crime areas.