

Europol and Frontex Sign New Working Arrangement

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European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

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News

On 16 July 2026, [Europol](#) and [Frontex](#) signed a new [Working Arrangement](#), reinforcing cooperation between the two agencies in tackling migrant smuggling, human trafficking, terrorism, and other cross-border crime. The cooperation between the two bodies was already forged by a joint statement, which was signed on 31 January 2024 (→[eucrim 1/2024, 22](#)).

The new arrangement replaces the cooperation agreement signed in 2015 and reflects the significantly expanded mandates that both agencies have received in recent years, as well as current EU data protection law. It also sets out how the two EU agencies ensure strong safeguards for fundamental rights and the protection of personal data.

The Working Arrangement supports the implementation of the EU's rules on migration and border management under the Pact on Migration and Asylum (→[eucrim 2/2024, 96-97](#)), which took effect on 12 June 2026. Under the Working Arrangement, Frontex and Europol will strengthen cooperation in four main ways:

[Share information to stop criminal networks](#)

The agencies' exchange of information may involve the exchange of operational personal data of individuals suspected of being involved in cross-border crime. Before any transfer of data, Frontex will assess each request received from Europol against the established criteria and share data only where the transfer is strictly necessary and proportionate to carry out Europol's tasks. Once shared, the data may only be used for the purpose for which it was provided; any further use must be authorised by the agency that shared it and be compatible with that original purpose. The agencies will report back to each other on how the data is used, and the detailed rules governing these exchanges will be reviewed at least once a year.

[Build a shared picture of what is happening at the borders](#)

The agencies will cooperate through the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR). Under detailed rules to be agreed between the agencies and set out in a dedicated cooperation plan, Frontex will establish and provide Europol with specific situational pictures, helping both agencies and national authorities identify developments, assess risks, and plan their responses. These situational pictures may contain only very limited personal data, namely ship and aircraft identification numbers.

[Work together in operations](#)

Frontex and Europol will coordinate their activities and EU-wide actions targeting cross-border crime, including within the EU's joint framework for fighting serious and organised crime (EMPACT). The agencies

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will also exchange experts and liaison officers, provide joint training for staff, and cooperate on research and innovation to address emerging security challenges.

Steer and review cooperation

The agencies will organise regular high-level meetings and develop a joint cooperation plan, while keeping the arrangement under continuous review.

The Working Arrangement applies as of 17 July 2026.

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