

Europol Launches European Centre Against Migrant Smuggling

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Cornelia Riehle

News

On 24 March 2026, Europol launched the [European Centre Against Migrant Smuggling](#) (ECAMS) as part of the implementation of the new Pact on Migration and Asylum. The centre is intended to consolidate and strengthen existing Europol capabilities, leading to a more integrated, operationally focused structure against migrant smuggling. It is designed to reinforce Europol's support to EU Member States through four main principles: (1) data-driven analysis, (2) close operational proximity to ongoing investigations, (3) strengthened international cooperation, and (4) the disruption of criminal networks.

ECAMS provides operational, technical, and forensic support to Member States, with a focus on dismantling high-risk migrant smuggling networks. It offers capabilities in data-driven investigative support, open-source intelligence (OSINT), operational analysis, and strategic coordination, including stakeholder management and deployment capacity.

The centre is structured into two main units: the Migrant Smuggling Unit and the Expertise and Stakeholder Management Unit. The Migrant Smuggling Unit focuses on different trafficking routes, including land, sea, intra-EU secondary movements, and outbound flows. The Expertise and Stakeholder Management Unit brings together teams responsible for large-scale data analysis and online monitoring, operational deployment support at EU hotspots, and coordination with national and international stakeholders.

ECAMS builds on Europol's long-standing work in the field of migrant smuggling. Since the creation of the European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC) in 2016, Europol has gradually expanded its operational and analytical capacity, including the establishment of specialised teams for maritime operations, joint liaison structures, and operational task forces targeting smuggling and trafficking networks across multiple regions.

ECAMS represents the latest stage in this development, consolidating existing capabilities into a more structured and operationally integrated centre, with strengthened emphasis on integrated operational support, digital investigative capacity, and deployment-based assistance to Member States in combating migrant smuggling across physical and digital environments.

AUTHOR

Cornelia Riehle

Deputy Head of Section
Academy of European Law

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