

Europol Tackles Violence-as-a-Service



euclid

European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

Cornelia Riehle

News

In response to the growing trend of Violence-as-a-Service (VaaS) and the recruitment of young people into serious organised crime, Europol launched a new **Operational Taskforce** named **GRIMM** at the end of April 2025. VaaS often involves young perpetrators who carry out threats, assaults, or killings for a fee, thereby reducing the risk to criminal networks and shielding them from law enforcement. These acts are often orchestrated remotely, with young people recruited and instructed online.

Led by Sweden, the new taskforce brings together law enforcement authorities from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway, with Europol providing operational support, threat analysis, and coordination. The taskforce aims to coordinate intelligence sharing and joint investigations across borders, map the roles, recruitment methods, and monetisation strategies used by VaaS networks, and identify and dismantle the criminal service providers that enable such violence. Cooperation with tech companies is also a priority to detect and prevent recruitment on social media.

In addition, Europol has published a **notification** that breaks down the recruitment ecosystem, detailing the use of encrypted messaging apps, social media, lifestyle messaging, manipulation tactics, and gamification. The notification explains how criminal networks exploit minors, particularly through recruitment and task assignments via social media. It highlights the use of targeted language, coded messaging, and gamification strategies in this process.

Lastly, Europol has created an **awareness guide** for parents, which contains a list of warning signs.

AUTHOR

Cornelia Riehle

Deputy Head of Section
Academy of European Law

Published in
2025, Vol. 20(1) euclid

ISSN: 1862-6947

<https://euclid.eu>



About euclid

euclid is the leading journal which regularly informs about current developments in European criminal and “criminative” law.

All news items are freely accessible at: <https://euclid.eu/news/>

Stay informed by emailing to euclid-subscribe@csl.mpg.de to receive alerts for new releases of issues.

The project is co-financed by the **Union Anti-Fraud Programme (UAFPP)**, managed by the **European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)**.



**Co-funded by
the European Union**