

# Home Affairs Ministers Assess 2014-2017 European Policy Cycle for Organised Crime



## News

**Thomas Wahl**

At its [meeting of 4-5 June 2018](#), the Home Affairs Ministers of the EU Member States took stock of the EU Policy Cycle for organised and serious international crime for the period 2014-2017. They highlighted the multidisciplinary component of the EU Policy Cycle thus far and gave orientation as regards future developments in combating these forms of crime.

The Ministers [identified several elements that best illustrate the impact of the multidisciplinary approach](#). One key element is the multi-agency component involving numerous public bodies at different levels.

At the national level, it became apparent that awareness has been raised, and the participation of different types of law enforcement authorities – such as border guards and customs, e.g., in the field of organised property crime (including trafficking of cultural goods, firearms trafficking, and counterfeit goods) – has increased. Other public bodies were also successfully integrated in the fight against counterfeiting of goods and particularly pharmaceutical crime, e.g., labour inspectors in operations against human trafficking and labour exploitation as well as pharmaceutical regulatory authorities and food agencies. Close cooperation with judicial authorities continued to be essential, especially in the judicial follow-up phase to operations.

The multidisciplinary component is also evident at the EU level where – alongside Europol, Frontex, and Eurojust – other EU agencies are being involved in the implementation of the EU Policy Cycle, such as CEPOL, EMCDDA, and eu-LISA. Practitioners' networks also play an important role, including CARIN in the field of asset recovery; CULTNET, CARPOL, and TISPOL in organised property crime; and the EUCPN in prevention activities.

Beyond the EU level, cooperation with third countries or international organisations like Interpol have gained in importance. The involvement of the private sector is becoming increasingly significant.

The ministers also assessed the range of activities undertaken during the EU Policy Cycle 2014-2017.

Regarding future orientation, the Ministers agreed that the following should be considered:

- Strengthening coordination at the national level;
- Increasing awareness of the EU Policy Cycle among competent authorities;
- Strengthening the external dimension of the Cycle;
- Promoting inter-agency and multidisciplinary engagement of EU agencies and bodies;

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- Promoting new solutions beyond traditional law enforcement approaches in order to tackle EU crime priorities, increasing trust with and involving the private sector.

In spring 2017, the EU adopted the next four-year plan in the fight against serious and organised crime: “EU policy cycle 2018-2021.” The Council adopted ten priority crime areas for EU action. They are based on the EU’s serious and organised crime threat assessment (EU SOCTA), prepared by Europol (for the SOCTA 2017, see eucrim 1/2017, pp. 14-15).

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