

Human Rights Organisations Oppose Europol Reform



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European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

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News

On 21 October 2021, the European Parliament voted in favour of opening negotiations with the Council of the EU on the revision of Europol's regulation. (→ news dated [10 July 2021](#)). The vote on the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee's [draft report](#) on the proposal for the revision of Europol's mandate was strongly questioned by human rights organisations. In the run-up to the vote, 25 human rights organisations, coordinated by European Digital Rights (EDRi) and including organisations such as Access Now and Statewatch, had expressed their concerns over the report's attention to the rights to fair trial, to privacy and data protection, and to non-discrimination.

In an [open letter](#) dated 20 October 2021, the organisations called on MEPs to vote against the report. In the letter, they urged the European Parliament to include additional safeguards, e.g., mechanisms to ensure that Europol's powers are used in a proportionate way, guarantees for defence rights, and robust oversight mechanisms.

Furthermore, the organisations argue that Europol's potential new powers in the field of research and innovation contradict the core elements of the European Parliament's own [resolution](#) of 6 October 2021 on artificial intelligence in criminal law and its use by the police and judicial authorities in criminal matters. Lastly, based on the claim that Europol's work largely relies on data transferred by national police authorities that contain racialised stereotypical assumptions, the organisations ask the European Parliament to wait with the expansion of Europol's mandate until the [Commission's Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025](#) - which aims at improving this situation - has been duly implemented.

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ISSN: 1862-6947

<https://euclid.eu>



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



**Co-funded by
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