

Proposal to Revise Europol Regulation

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News

On 24 June 2026, the European Commission published a [proposal to revise the Europol Regulation](#) and [Annex](#), with the aim of strengthening Europol's role by enhancing information exchange, operational support, technological capabilities, and cooperation with key partners such as the EPPO, Eurojust, and other EU agencies, while expanding collaboration with Schengen-associated countries and international partners. A factsheet is available [here](#).

The proposal is part of a [larger package published on 24 June 2026](#) to strengthen the EU's response to the evolving criminal landscape. The package includes two regulations to strengthen the mandates of Europol and [Eurojust](#), a revision of the European Investigation Order, and amendments to the Data Protection Regulation for Union institutions and bodies.

In detail, the proposed Europol Regulation consists of sixteen chapters covering: (1) general provisions, objectives, and tasks; (2) operational cooperation; (3) information management; (4) technological capabilities and innovation; (5) organisation; (6–7) relations with Union entities and partners; (8) data protection; (9) remedies and liability; (10) the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group; (11) staff; (12–14) financial, miscellaneous, and transitional provisions; (15) amendments to other existing instruments; and (16) final provisions.

The first chapter sets out Europol's objectives, legal status, mandate, and core functions.

- It extends Europol's competence to gender-based violence, reflecting the increasingly cross-border and technology-facilitated nature of this form of crime and aligning the Regulation with Directive (EU) 2024/1385 on combating violence against women and domestic violence.
- The proposal also simplifies the definition of Europol's tasks by replacing the current detailed list with a functional approach centred on information processing, operational support, analysis, cooperation, and innovation. Detailed provisions have been moved to the relevant substantive chapters, creating a clearer and more flexible legal framework while preserving operational effectiveness.

The second chapter establishes a strengthened operational framework for Europol. It brings together criminal intelligence, strategic analysis, specialised expertise, and operational coordination within a coherent structure, enhancing Europol's analytical and operational role.

- By means of improved access to financial intelligence, closer cooperation with asset recovery offices and financial intelligence units, and the possibility to request urgent asset-freezing measures, the framework strengthens Europol's support for identifying links between investigations, coordinating cross-border action, and advancing “follow the money” approaches. It also reinforces cooperation

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with Eurojust by ensuring that criminal intelligence requiring judicial follow-up is channelled through appropriate coordination mechanisms.

- A central element is the creation of a permanent operational backbone, including the Operational and Analysis Service as a 24/7 coordination hub and a network of Centres of Operational Expertise dedicated to priority crime areas. These centres will combine intelligence, analytical, forensic, and operational capabilities while remaining adaptable to emerging threats, including hybrid dimensions of serious and organised crime and terrorism.
- Key operational cooperation tools are formalised, including operational task forces, Europol deployments, support for the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), participation in joint investigation teams, and specialised expert pools.
- Links between Europol and national authorities are strengthened by expanding the role of Europol national units and establishing Europol Support Offices within Member States. These offices will facilitate the integration of Europol's analytical, technical, and operational capabilities into national investigations, promoting continuous cooperation and knowledge exchange between EU and national law enforcement structures.

The third chapter modernises Europol's information exchange and data-processing framework to enable faster, more structured, and interoperable cooperation with Member States.

- It strengthens Member States' obligations to provide information to Europol and introduces an annual assessment of information contributions to improve the availability and quality of criminal intelligence.
- The provisions clarify Europol's role in relation to EU information systems, including the Schengen Information System (SIS), the Visa Information System (VIS), and the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS), and they define the purposes for which Europol may process information.
- A key change concerns Europol's data-processing capabilities. The new framework aligns the data subject categorisation regime with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, which governs the processing of personal data by EU institutions, bodies, offices, and agencies. It reflects the operational reality of modern law enforcement, where investigations increasingly rely on large and complex datasets. Europol may process data relating to persons outside predefined categories where necessary and proportionate for carrying out its tasks – subject to safeguards including separation of such data, notification obligations, and deletion once no longer required. The chapter maintains the principle of data ownership, ensuring that information providers retain control over the use, transfer, and deletion of their data.
- Clear rules for Europol's data environment and operational tools are established, including the cross-matching service, analytical environment, Police Shared Data Space, the Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA)-secure communication system, and mechanisms for cooperation with private parties.
- Finally, the legal basis for Europol's technological infrastructure is provided, including cloud services, secure access through an EU Police Digital Identity, statistical reporting, the Universal Message Format, and an EU DNA matching application.

The fourth chapter establishes a comprehensive framework for innovation and capability development across the entire lifecycle, from strategic foresight and research to operational deployment and specialised

support. It aims to prevent fragmented innovation efforts by ensuring continuity between capability planning, technological development, testing, deployment, and operational uptake.

- The proposal recognises that advanced law enforcement capabilities – including artificial intelligence, cloud infrastructure, secure data-processing environments, and forensic tools – can no longer be developed efficiently at the national level alone. It therefore strengthens Europol's role in identifying common capability needs, coordinating technological development and providing shared, interoperable solutions to reduce fragmentation, duplication of investments, and capability gaps across Member States.
- The chapter provides Europol with an expanded mandate to support Union-funded research and innovation, develop and operate advanced technological capabilities, and participate in AI-related research, pilot projects, and regulatory sandboxes.
- It further reinforces Europol's role in the operational testing, deployment, and scaling of innovative technologies, complemented by specialised expertise, training, and support for Member States in co-operation with the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL).
- Finally, it establishes a dedicated governance framework through a Capabilities and Innovation Service and an advisory group bringing together Member States, EU bodies, and experts to coordinate innovation at the EU level.

The fifth chapter aligns Europol's governance with the common framework applicable to decentralised EU agencies. It strengthens the strategic role of the Management Board, establishes an Executive Board to improve oversight and decision-making, and reinforces the Executive Director's responsibility for the effective management of the Agency and implementation of its expanded mandate.

The sixth chapter strengthens Europol's cooperation with EU institutions, bodies, and agencies by establishing a more coherent framework for operational cooperation and information exchange.

- It introduces automated hit/no-hit mechanisms for indirect access to Europol data while preserving data ownership, access restrictions, and data protection safeguards.
- The chapter also enhances cooperation with key EU partners, particularly the EPPO, by expanding analytical support and introducing dedicated arrangements to facilitate access to information relevant to investigations into offences affecting the EU's financial interests.

The seventh chapter updates Europol's framework for cooperation with third countries, international organisations, and private parties. It strengthens alignment with the EU's external policies, provides for closer operational integration with Schengen-associated countries, and clarifies the conditions for cooperation with private parties. The proposal also reinforces Europol's role as a trusted intermediary for secure information exchange, while maintaining strict data protection safeguards, ensuring complementarity with the EU anti-money laundering framework, and introducing enhanced transparency and accountability measures.

Finally, Chapters VIII–XVI complete the framework by aligning Europol's data protection regime with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, including safeguards for sensitive data processing, research and innovation activities, data subject rights, and oversight by the European Data Protection Supervisor, the Data Protection Officer, and the Fundamental Rights Officer. They further regulate remedies and liability, parliamentary scrutiny, staff and financial management, and establish miscellaneous, transitional, and final provisions to ensure legal continuity following the repeal of Regulation (EU) 2016/794. The Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group (JPSG) framework is maintained and reinforced through clearer arrangements on political oversight, reporting obligations, and access to information, strengthening democratic accountability alongside Europol's expanded operational role. The proposal also amends related EU legislation, notably to strengthen cooperation with eu-

LISA and to enable Europol to use the Prüm II framework, while providing for the phased implementation of the new Regulation.

The proposal will now be examined by the European Parliament and the Council under the ordinary legislative procedure before possible adoption and subsequent phased implementation.

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