

JHA AGENCIES NETWORK 2020

COVID 19 pandemic & inter-agency cooperation

I. Introduction

The COVID 19 pandemic is bringing many challenges for the Member States. The pandemic has an impact on the work of the JHA agencies. Whilst ensuring business continuity, it forces the agencies to reconsider activities, to shift resources and to review priorities. Agencies are responding to the crisis within their respective mandates. They are supporting the EU institutions, the Member States and practitioners in coping with the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic in their respective areas of work in both the long term and the short term. Agencies conduct activities and deliver ad hoc products to help the EU and the national authorities to deal with the challenges caused by the COVID 19 pandemic.

This paper presents a list of actions the JHAAN will take forward.

II. Objectives

The impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on agencies can be considered from two angles: an operational angle, i.e. how the agencies are implementing their mandate, and a governance (administrative) angle, i.e. measures to ensure business continuity.

Considering that other initiatives are currently taking place regarding the governance angle in the European Union Agencies Network (EUAN), the **focus of the JHAAN will be on the operational angle based on the specific mandate of each of the agencies.**

The first objective would be **to map out how each agency is responding to the crisis**, each being an essential player in the area of justice, freedom and security. How are the JHA agencies ensuring that they are implementing their mandate? What was the immediate impact? What are the new activities developed in connection with the COVID-19 measures in place? How are the agencies anticipating measures and/or solving problems?

The second objective, through exchanging information and raising awareness amongst the agencies, will be **to identify synergies to enhance inter-agency cooperation** and to contribute more effectively to assisting the EU institutions and the Member States and protecting the general population (EU solidarity).

The third objective is **to raise awareness** on the above with external stakeholders/key partners that the agencies, separately and jointly, are effectively delivering in the current circumstances.

III. List of actions

To implement the objectives above, the JHAAN will take following actions forward:

1. To **draft a short paper** on the JHA agencies' contributions and support – within their respective mandate - to EU Institutions and the Member States in light of the challenges faced by COVID-19 to be published on the Eurojust website on the page devoted to the JHAAN.
 - Eurojust to coordinate the input by the beginning of June, i.e. a complete mapping in a table of all activities per agency (internal document)
 - Eurojust to prepare a template to be completed by each agency (based on the information provided in the table – Part A) for the drafting of a joint paper (for public dissemination, e.g. containing only those elements that can be put in the public domain)

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- A one pager per agency with
 - A short description of the mandate
 - The impact on the operational work
 - New (joint) activities/products in relation to the COVID19 pandemic
 - For adoption by the JHA agencies through written procedure
2. To **develop an Infographic** based on the short paper and to be published on the Eurojust website on the page devoted to the JHAAN¹.
 3. To **organise an ad hoc VC meeting with the contact points of the JHAA Network** first half of June. During this meeting, we will discuss the draft short paper, including its dissemination, and explore the possibility to organise a video conference meeting of the Heads of JHA Agencies in July.
 4. To draft a **news item** (or joint press release) to be published in July highlighting the commitment of the agencies in this area and possible joint actions. This will be linked to the 10th Anniversary of the network, which is in July.
 5. To suggest that **expert groups of the JHA agencies** (i.e. the DPOs, the training experts and the experts on ICT and cybersecurity), where relevant, discuss the impact of COVID-19 in their area of expertise.
 6. To discuss at the **regular network meeting of JHA Network contact points** (plus observers from COM, EEAS, LIBE Secretariat), which is planned for 23-24 September, if additional actions are to be considered in view of the annual meeting of the Heads of JHA Agencies in November.

At the JHA expert meeting on communication, which took place on 1 April, the agencies already agreed to inform each other of any reports, outputs each agency is planning to publish in the coming weeks so we can stand ready to support each other with amplifying the spread via social media.

In relation to communication,

7. To **launch a COVID JHA subpage on the Eurojust website** and publish information, joint products and joint actions of the JHA agencies regarding this topic, as well as providing links to the respective websites of the agencies with their products.

¹ <http://www.eurojust.europa.eu/about/Partners/Pages/jha-cooperation.aspx>