



JHA AGENCIES NETWORK 2020 REVISED WORK PLAN

I. THEMATIC TOPICS

For 2020, the JHAA Network will focus on **two thematic topics**, namely victims of trafficking and an assessment of the JHAA Network.

In addition to the two agreed thematic topics, the JHAAN agreed in April on a **third topic**: *the COVID-19 pandemic*.

a. Victims of trafficking

Why

According to the Council's Strategic Agenda for 2019-2024, protecting citizens and freedoms is a key priority for the Union. The European Council has confirmed that Europe must be a place where people feel free and safe. On 3 December 2019, the JHA Council adopted Council Conclusions on Victims' Rights calling for a EU Strategy for 2020-2024. Protecting victims of trafficking¹ is a matter high on the political agenda and a priority for all JHA agencies.

Moreover, the Council Conclusions invite Eurojust, FRA, EIGE and ENVI² to look into the question of how to improve the cooperation and exchange of information between the competent authorities concerning victims of violent crime in cross-border cases. The Conclusions also invite CEPOL and the EJTN to contribute in particular with respect to the training of competent authorities.

In 2021, Eurojust will also publish its Report on Casework on THB, which has THB victims as one of the focus areas.

Further, in 2018 the JHA agencies signed a Joint Statement of commitment to working together against THB.

¹ EIGE: Trafficking for sexual exploitation is the most commonly reported form of human trafficking in the European Union. It is a form of gender-based violence that disproportionately affects women. 95% of registered victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the EU are women or girls.

² The European Network on Victims Rights. (ENVR) is cooperation of Member State experts working under the control of competent government authorities responsible for victims' rights, from all Member States of the European Union. Each Member State may appoint two professionals as national contact points to ENVR, so the Network would have altogether 56 permanent experts as representatives. ENVR was established in 2015, by the initiative of the Netherlands, and was being run until 2017 in the frame of an Action Grant under the Justice Programme of European Commission.
<https://envr.eu/>

Therefore, it is considered opportune to also discuss the topic within the JHAA Network and to explore possibilities for increasing EU agencies support to victims of human trafficking, including the identification of victims, their protection, assistance, access to justice, compensation and reparation.

The intention is to have a short paper for dissemination to the Member States to make them aware of the mandate and action undertaken by the JHA agencies to support the identification, assistance and protection of victims of trafficking. The paper will also contribute to the implementation of the Council Conclusions and the preparation of a EU Strategy.

Methodology

- ✓ Liaise and involve the coordination mechanism set up by the EU ATC Coordinator (Q4 2020)
- ✓ Short questionnaire to the JHA Agencies (Q4 2020)
- ✓ Meeting with (THB) experts from the JHA Agencies (Q1/Q2 2021) – *hosted by Eurojust*
- ✓ JHA Agencies (short) paper (Q1/Q2 2021)

b. Assessment of the JHAA Network – 10th anniversary

Why

The JHAA Network was established in 2010 to increase cooperation and explore synergies in areas of common interest. Ten years of existence is an opportunity to assess the value of the network in enhancing inter-agency cooperation by implementing the EU priorities in the areas of freedom, security and justice and in aligning activities in areas of common interest. Moreover, a thorough reflection will open up the discussion surrounding the future of JHAA Network and the way forward.

Methodology

- ✓ Discuss with the Contact Points of the JHAAN the way forward, including concept and methodology (Q3-Q4 2020)

c. COVID-19 pandemic

In April 2020, the JHAAN look into ways to intensify cooperation in times of COVID-19. On 2 June, the Heads of JHA agencies adopted a list of actions regarding COVID-19 pandemic & inter-agency cooperation.

Methodology:

- ✓ Mapp the impact of COVID-19 on the operational work of the JHA agencies and draft a joint paper on the JHA agencies' contributions and support to EU institutions and the Member States in light of the challenges faced by COVID-19 (Q2-3 2020)
- ✓ Develop an infographic (Q2-3 2020)
- ✓ Launch a COVID-19 JHA subpage on the Eurojust website (Q2-3 2020)
- ✓ Organise an informal VC meeting of the Heads of JHA agencies (Q3 2020)
- ✓ Discuss at the meetings of the JHA expert groups the impact of COVID-19 (Q2-4 2020)
- ✓ Discuss at the meeting of the CPs of the JHAAN the follow up of the 9 July meeting (Q3 2020)
- ✓ Organise the annual meeting of the Heads of JHA agencies focussing on digitalisation (Q4 2020)

II. BUSINESS CONTINUITY TOPICS

d. Charter on Fundamental Rights

On 12 November 2019, under the Chairmanship of Europol, the JHAA Agencies signed the JHA Agencies' Statement on the Charter on Fundamental Rights. Following up to the statement, the agencies agreed to exchange within the network, evolving good practices regarding the application of the Charter in the JHA area on an annual basis.

Methodology

- ✓ Annual exchange to be prepared in close cooperation with FRA (Q3 2020)
- ✓ Exchange at the JHAA Network meeting in September (Q3 2020)

e. Diversity & Inclusion

On 22 November 2019, under the Chairmanship of Europol, the JHAA agencies signed the JHA agencies' Statement on Diversity and Inclusion. Following up to the statement, the agencies agreed to a set of measures to mainstream gender equality and diversity into the work of the JHA agencies and to encourage more systematic exchanges on diversity and inclusion matters among the JHA agencies.

Methodology

- ✓ Launch (and populate) the online platform (being developed by eu-LISA) (Q1-2 2020)
- ✓ Liaise with experts of the other agencies and discuss possible joint initiatives (e.g. on International women's day on 8 March) (Q1-4 2020)

III. OTHER TOPICS

- **Public Access to Documents:** PAD training for JHA staff, provided by the Commission. This should be both a training and an exchange of challenges and best practice (Q1 2020)
- **EJCN and EJN, JIT and Genocide Networks Secretariats hosted at Eurojust:** Online- presentations to raise awareness about the activities of the networks and to map existing working relations between the JHA Agencies and Secretariats (Q3-4 2020)
- **JHA expert meetings** on ICT and cybersecurity, data protection, external relations, training (hosted at CEPOL) and communication (Q2-4 2020)
- **EPP0:** integration in the network activities.
- **Interoperability, new large-scale IT systems in JHA domain, Europol Innovation Lab:** keeping track of developments.
- **COM-EEAS meeting 'External Relations'**, co-organised by COM and EEAS in Brussels (postponed to 2021)

IV. JHA MEETINGS

One **regular meeting of the Contact Points and Observers of the JHAAN** of the network on 23-24 Sept and several ad hoc meetings to deal with specific topics.

An **annual meeting of the Heads of JHA Agencies** on 20 November.

All meetings take place via video conferencing, including the **JHA expert meetings** on ICT and cybersecurity, data protection, external relations, training (hosted by CEPOL) and communication.