



Priorities of the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) agencies' network in 2018

Role of the EU agencies in the JHA area

Close cooperation of the nine JHA agencies (CEPOL, EASO, EIGE, EMCDDA, eu-LISA, Eurojust, Europol, FRA and Frontex) continues to play an important role in implementing EU priorities and objectives in the areas of freedom, security and justice.

The ongoing challenges posed by increased migration flows as well as security threats in Europe underline the need to effectively implement the EU *acquis* in these areas. The JHA agencies are at the core of the EU response to these challenges.

Since the inception of the network in 2006, the JHA agencies have cooperated on selected and mutually relevant topics, in addition to bringing new evidence on emerging issues to policy makers in the EU, such as security and migration. In 2018, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) will chair the network continuing the extensive work of the EMCDDA last year. Activities relevant to the current context and joint actions will be added throughout the year to the already well-established agenda. EIGE will present the network's progress to the EU Council's Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI) at the end of 2018.

Following the pattern of previous years, three network meetings will be organised in Vilnius/Lithuania, followed by a meeting of the heads of the nine agencies (attended by the Directors-General for Home Affairs and Justice of the European Commission, representatives from DG NEAR, representatives from the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Council Secretariat, the LIBE Committee Secretariat and FEMM Committee secretariat of the European Parliament, and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)).

All network members have been consulted on the 2018 priorities, which are proposed in this paper under two headings: Thematic cooperation and Horizontal cooperation. They will be agreed in advance and finalised during the first network meeting in 2018.

Outlook for 2018 — Priorities of JHA agencies' network for the coming year

Thematic areas

- Migration and Internal Security:
 - Improve the capacity of the JHA agencies to respond in a timely and proactive way to a dynamic and changing situation in the areas of migration and internal security by strengthening technical and operational activities and the exchange of information among the JHA agencies, within the limits of their mandates, by using various cooperation platforms, including among others the EU Regional Task Force (EURTF), where those are operational;
- Gender related aspects in the area of work of the JHA agencies:
 - Support current and upcoming EU Presidencies and EU policies by identifying gender related challenges of digitalisation in the area of work of the JHA agencies;
 - Highlight gender equality aspects in the work of the JHA agencies through encouraging them to collect and use sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics for relevant operational areas.

Horizontal areas

- Synergies:
 - Continue creating synergies in all relevant areas linked to the operational work of the agencies, such as the provision of tailored training, sharing knowledge on ICT solutions and cybersecurity and the exchange of relevant data and analytical tools;

- Exchange views and experiences on the work with Third countries:
 - In close cooperation with the European Commission and the European External Action Service further exchange information and enhance the coordination work among the Agencies and in the area of cooperation with Third countries, within the existing mandates of the JHA agencies;
- Communication:
 - Communication of the activities of the JHA agencies' network to EU and national stakeholders, as well as other partners in order to raise awareness of the network's value increase the Agencies' visibility, and improve their reputation vis-à-vis stakeholders and the general public.

Please note: This paper does not aim to provide an exhaustive list of all multilateral activities, as these will be outlined in detail in the scorecard maintained by the network.

1. Thematic priorities for 2018

1.1. Migration, asylum and border management

Strengthen collaboration among the JHA agencies and increase effectiveness of joint activities in the area of migration, asylum and border management

Support the Member States and EU institutions in implementing the European Agenda on Migration ⁽¹⁾

- Continue reinforcing both operational and technical measures as well as exchanging relevant information among the JHA agencies, within the limits set by the relevant legal framework and their mandates with the aim to respond in a timely and proactive manner, especially in the ever changing areas of internal security and migration;
- Support and promote a network of Operational/Situation Centres – Monitoring Hubs, which operate on 24/7 basis or provide a constant situational picture and information exchange in their areas of expertise. The aim of this network is to exchange best practices as a learning platform, to reinforce inter-Agency Cooperation, partnerships and synergies among different actors and to enhance the performance and efficiency of the participating agencies, decreasing possible duplication and overlapping, with the scope to improve situational awareness and reaction capabilities of both the agencies and MS. The main topics of discussion and exchange of views could be operational information exchange, situation monitoring and crisis management;
- Streamline the agencies' activities (in particular, eu-LISA, Frontex, Europol) with regards to the increase of their responsibilities, stemming from the development and implementation of new IT systems, namely the Entry/Exit system and the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS);
- Create synergies and coordinate the JHA agencies' efforts regarding interoperability while avoiding overlaps. Joint approach for interoperability is expected to derive from the work of the group of 6 JHA agencies (EASO, eu-LISA, Eurojust, Europol, Frontex, FRA) under eu-LISA's coordination;
- Raise awareness and support the increase of capabilities to identify, refer and protect vulnerable groups in the migration flow as well as the need to ensure their better protection;
- Strengthen the ongoing work and synergies in the implementation of the actions of the Commission Communication of 12 April 2017 'The protection of children in migration', and others relating to the situation of unaccompanied/missing children in the migration flow;
- Optimise border control operations to protect children and women and to promote their fundamental rights;
- Map current initiatives relating to the provision of healthcare in the hotspots for migrants and experts deployed by the agencies;
- Further streamline the operational support and coordinated activities the agencies provide in the 'hotspots'²;
- Strengthen the focus and impact on the links between security, border and asylum management, in particular the fight against serious international crime and terrorism, and the respect for fundamental rights, in particular the rights of vulnerable groups, such as women and children, especially unaccompanied minors;
- Continue enhancing cooperation with customs authorities in relation to integrated border management, coast guard functions and in relation to tackling cross-border crime.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication_on_migration_en.pdf

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32016R1624>

- Improve operational effectiveness by developing different tools used in the migration and asylum areas (VIS/BMS, Eurodac, Dublinet and the future Dublin allocation system) also in light of the most recent institutional developments regarding the interoperability concept;
- Contribute as relevant to the EU policy priorities to address THB, in close cooperation with the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, including in the framework of the network of EU agencies' THB contact points;
- Take into account a minimum gender balance in the agencies' deployments on the ground, particularly for what concerns direct contact with migrants;
- Make efficient use of the cooperation platform of the EU Regional Task Force (EURTF).
- Make efficient use of existing tools, in particular Information Clearing House, for pooling information and avoiding overlaps;

1.2. Internal security

Strengthen and foster inter-agency cooperation while ensuring increased synergy and coherence and respecting fundamental rights — in priority areas such as counter-terrorism, serious and organised crime and cybercrime — in order to support implementation of the relevant policies in the areas covered by the Renewed EU Internal Security Strategy 2015–2020 ⁽³⁾ and the European Agenda on Security ⁽⁴⁾

- Further identify areas for improved information exchange and access to data across various IT platforms of the JHA agencies' in accordance with applicable Union law on data protection including the respective Agencies' legal basis data protection provisions. This will support and inform policy and operational work and provide input/facilitate analyses and studies and highlight gaps for additional research;
- Continue making important contributions to Europe's efforts to meet all challenges related to terrorism threat and organised and serious cross-border crime by ensuring the operational management of high quality tools for information exchange in the JHA area through its activities and stakeholder engagement;
- Strengthen collaboration among the JHA agencies, operational police, and judicial cooperation priorities, i.e. cybercrime, THB, hate crime, violence against women in the context of serious and organised crime, migrant smuggling, , violent extremism, excise fraud, document fraud, environmental crime, weapon and drug trafficking as well as in the areas covered by the European Agenda on Security, particularly terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters;
- Strengthen inter-agency capacity and know-how on anti-radicalisation measures in the context of the High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCEG-R);
- Facilitate awareness of new possibilities and functionalities deriving from changes in existing systems and creation of new large-scale IT systems;
- Contribute to the implementation of the operational Action Plans set under the new development of the EU Serious Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA) 2017 and the COSI priorities for the EU policy cycle on serious and organised international crime 2018–2021 approved by the JHA Council, with a view to mobilising the expertise and contribution of the JHA agencies;
- Enhance cooperation with the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator;
- Foster inter-agency cooperation and more joint contributions to the EU actions on drugs;
- Continue developing initiatives that would allow the JHA agencies to exchange best practices and tools that address the use of cyberspace for criminal purposes.

³ <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9798-2015-INIT/en/pdf>

⁴ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/HIS/?uri=celex:52015DC0185>

1.3. Gender related aspects in the area of work of the JHA agencies

Support current and upcoming EU Presidencies and EU policies by identifying gender related challenges of digitalisation in the area of work of the JHA agencies

Highlight gender equality aspects in the work of the JHA agencies through encouraging them to collect and use sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics for relevant operational areas

- To support the work of the current and upcoming EU Presidencies and implementation of relevant EU policies, by identifying gender related challenges of digitalisation in the area of work of the JHA agencies. In order to identify and discuss current and potential risks and opportunities that new digital technologies bring to women and men in the areas of freedom, security and justice, EIGE will initiate a discussion and coordinate the collection of input from all the JHA agencies and external experts (if needed) in a dedicated workshop. Discussion among the JHA agencies on this topic could result in a set of recommendations for Director's meeting in November 2018. Certain aspects of this topic could remain on the network's agenda in the future;
- To discuss how the JHA agencies could contribute to improved gender equality through encouraging the collection and usage of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics for selected operational areas of their work. EIGE will organise a dedicated workshop to discuss the importance of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data for effective monitoring of policy implementation. Conclusions from the workshop could feed into a second set of recommendations to be adopted at the November meeting.

2. Regular (horizontal) network activities

2.1. Coordination and information exchange about developments in various areas of expertise and responsibility of the JHA agencies

Increase efforts to exchange information about current developments in various areas of expertise and responsibility of the JHA agencies', including in the areas of ICT & cybersecurity
Share key strategic documents, data and analytical tools in view of strengthening and coordinating joint actions in the JHA area, while fully respecting data protection and fundamental rights

- Further develop and update existing reporting tools:
 - Scorecard;
 - Relex Matrix;
 - Foreign Fighter's Toolbox;
 - Analytical Products Index;
 - Training Matrix;
 - Toolbox on Migration.
- Increase efforts to exchange information about current developments on the following areas and aspects:
 - The importance of cybersecurity (including cybersecurity training);
 - An analysis of ICT policies (best practices);
 - Mobile tools and technologies used for corporate services;
 - Corporate application development, synergies explored;
 - Document management exchange within the JHA agencies;
 - IT Architecture enabling digital workplace;
 - The secure exchange of sensitive classified information;
 - Exchange of best practices in baseline security controls and processes;
 - Adoption of the EU Common Cyber-security Maturity Model (C2M2);
 - Exchange of best practices in business continuity management.
- For enhanced coordination and information exchange on ICT and cybersecurity, to organise (under the leadership of eu-LISA) a meeting for the ICT experts of JHA agencies, and a workshop of security/business continuity experts.

2.2. Training

Further enhance cooperation in the area of training and capacity building to promote synergies and joint planning, and avoid duplication of efforts

Exchange best practices through sharing of methodologies and tools

The agencies will concentrate on the following areas and aspects:

- Support the Strategic Training Needs Assessment process, the outcome of which would help, as a training coordination tool, to identify and prioritise strategic training needs and the division of labour among the agencies. To this end, inter-agency cooperation on STNA should be carried on;
- To consider making CEPOL's cyber training available to other agencies. Training aspects of the Conference on cybercrime organised by the EMCDDA chair of the Network in 2017 should be further elaborated;
- Continue discussions to renew the JHA Training Matrix taking into account STNA priorities and to respectively incorporate planning, implementation and reporting. Evaluate the exercise coordinated by CEPOL on the related glossary;
- Discuss the possibility to set up an interagency training certification and evaluation group aiming at harmonising evaluation and achieve comparability/compatibility of results;
- Create synergies in the all relevant areas linked to the operational work of the agencies, such as the provision of tailored training and the sharing of best practices in this area, important ICT issues and the related aspect of cybersecurity and, in addition, the exchange of relevant data, analytical tools and other measures;
- Build on the joint training initiatives to further improve sharing of knowledge and practices on emerging and on-going topics of common interest with fundamental rights and gender equality as an important cross-cutting aspect;
- Continue making training more widely accessible, efficient and appropriate by exchanging experiences and best practises for online learning tools and activities, using training-of-trainer methodology, exploring use of 'scenario-based' training and fostering implementation of joint training initiatives;
- Further develop training initiatives in the context of the new EU policy cycle and its potential impact for the Law Enforcement Training Scheme (LETS). CEPOL will continue taking a prominent role in this, supported by the agencies who also provide input by training related actions;
- Continue maintaining cooperation with other training providers outside the JHA agencies' network, such as the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) and other relevant organisations in the field, by inviting a representative to attend the annual coordination meeting;
- Promote the use of CEPOL's e-Net and Lecturers, Trainers and Researchers database.

2.3. External relations

Develop synergies among the JHA agencies in their technical and operational cooperation with non-EU countries and adopt a coherent approach towards partner countries, in close cooperation with the European Commission and the European External Action Service

The agencies will concentrate on the following areas and aspects:

- Further reinforce cooperation and capacity building with Third Countries in line with the revised European Neighbourhood Policy, the European Agenda on Migration, the Partnership Framework Approach ⁽⁵⁾, the European Agenda on Security, the renewed EU Internal Security Strategy, and the Communication on Trafficking in Human Beings⁶ (including cooperation on migration management, return, combatting irregular migration, smuggling and THB, tackling terrorism and preventing radicalisation, disrupting serious and organised cross-border crime and

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160607/communication_external_aspects_eam_towards_new_migration_ompact_en.pdf

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/documents/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/trafficking-in-human-beings/docs/20171204_communication_reporting_on_follow-up_to_the_eu_strategy_towards_the_eradication_of_trafficking_in_human_beings.pdf

corruption, improving judicial cooperation in criminal matters and fighting cybercrime, in full compliance with the rule of law and international law as well as fundamental rights);

- Further promote cooperation and develop synergies with activities carried out by the Liaison Officers deployed by the EU institutions and agencies in strategic Third countries.
- Exchange best practices in the set up and management of the Liaison Officers back office;
- Support coordination and exchange experiences in relation to capacity building activities in the area of protection-sensitive migration management;
- Exchange information on planned and ongoing capacity building and technical assistance projects and the modalities of their implementation in Third countries via the network of JHA agencies' experts responsible for cooperation with Third countries;
- Continue exchanging information, best practices, approaches, methods, and tools on collaboration with Third countries, including on access to funding for the agencies and in the implementation of EC funded projects;
- Support coordination and exchange of experiences in relation to training of officials cooperating with Third Countries and/or taking part in Common Security and Defence Policy missions, including training on fundamental rights and gender awareness;
- Contribute to the EU external relations policy to combat local and international criminal groups that control smuggling routes and organised crime networks involved in THB, as set out in the European Agenda on Migration.

2.4. Communication

Promote and enhance visibility of the joint work and of the added-value of the agencies

The agencies will concentrate on the following areas and aspects:

- Communicate the activities of the JHA agencies' network to its main stakeholders (EU institutions and national authorities) with the aim to raise awareness of the network;
- Enhance public awareness of the work of the JHA agencies by promoting the network's video and brochure and online banner through different platforms and communications channels;
- Maintain the JHA agencies' network website and continue showcasing 'added value' examples of working together;
- Further improve communication with the EU institutions and bodies (particularly with DG JUST and DG HOME, the Council and the European Parliament), report on the activities of the network to COSI and other relevant EU Council Bodies and to the European Parliament (LIBE Committee and FEMM Committee), both at the end of 2018/beginning of 2019;
- Close cooperation on media activities including press releases, interviews with the chairing agency and social media, in order to highlight the work of the network (e.g. the workshop on digitalisation and the meeting of JHA agencies' Directors in November 2018);
- Proactively share information about the JHA agencies' network and related topics with the public;
- Produce specialised communication material highlighting key areas of cooperation (e.g. infographics);
- Ensure synergy in the communication work of the JHA agencies' network and that of the Heads of Communication and Information Network (HCIN), particularly in the context of the HCIN 'Message House' working group on issues related to freedom, security and justice (as well as relevant international and European days).

2.5. Data protection

Develop common strategies/capabilities and identify good practices in implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Directive EU) 2016/680

The agencies will concentrate on the following:

- Further analyse the impact of the recent General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Directive on the functioning of the JHA agencies and to develop common strategies/capabilities and good practices in GDPR's implementation.

3. Tentative dates for the JHA meetings in 2018

Please note that the regular network meetings run over two half days, beginning at lunchtime on day one and ending at lunchtime on day two in order to accommodate travel arrangements.

The second network meeting will be combined with a workshop on digitalisation and therefore will need additional time.

Regular JHA meetings	
1 st JHA network meeting	1–2 March 2018
2 nd JHA network meeting + workshop on digitalisation	19–21 June 2018
3 rd JHA network meeting	27–28 September 2018
Heads of JHA agencies' meeting	November 2018
Other JHA meetings	
Workshop on gender statistics and sex disaggregated data	12 April 2018
Data protection meeting	18 May 2018
Training meeting (CEPOL)	17-18 July 2018
Meeting on external dimension (Frontex)	tbc (Brussels)
Working meetings: exchange of good practices on prevention of sexual harassment	tbc
ICT experts' meeting	tbc

Dates for the JHA meetings in 2018 in chronological order:

1 st JHA network meeting	1–2 March 2018
Workshop on gender statistics and sex disaggregated data	12 April 2018
Data protection meeting	18 May 2018
Training meeting (CEPOL)	17-18 July 2018
Meeting on external dimension (FRONTEX)	tbc
2 nd JHA network meeting + workshop on digitalisation	19-21 June 2018
3 rd JHA network meeting	27–28 September 2018
Working meeting: exchange of good practices on prevention of sexual harassment (tbc)	tbc
ICT experts' meeting	tbc
Heads of JHA agencies' meeting	November 2018