



## EU Budget 2020 – Europol Position Paper

- In order to respond to the constantly changing EU security landscape and the increasing demand from Member States' law enforcement authorities in analytical, operational and technological support, **Europol needs sustainable and adequate financing.**
- Throughout the years, Europol has been increasingly entrusted with new tasks without receiving sufficient resources.
- Compared to the proposal endorsed by Europol's Management Board for 2020, the **proposal of the European Commission** represents a **reduction of €33.7 M and 52 Temporary Agents** (€141.1 M and 14 TAs against requested €174.8M and an additional 66 TAs). Such a **decrease will seriously affect Europol's development and operational activities in 2020.**
- The **proposed reduction of Contract Agent (CA) Staff** from previously authorised 232 CA posts to 148 CA posts by 2022 leads to an **effective reduction** of Europol's CA staff by more **than 35% by 2022**. This reduction concerns staff in vital support functions such as IT development.
- The **current proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-27 foresees an effective reduction** of the Europol budget even below the level proposed by the Commission for 2020 (€126.1 M for 2021 vs €141.1 M proposed for 2020).
- Europol's ability to provide **agile operational support** and **innovation** as well as to **expand its activities** to new areas and evolving challenges **will be jeopardised** if Europol does not receive the level of funding endorsed by Europol's Management Board.
- Despite the continuing internal security threats, the **EU's robust investments in the protection of its external borders** has **not been matched** with increased **funding in the EU's internal security** mechanisms, such as Europol.

### 1. Background

In January 2019, Europol's Management Board approved a draft budget for 2020 of €174.8 M and an additional 66 Temporary Agents. The Management Board also approved a level of contract agents at effectively the same levels as 2019 (235 CA posts).

Compared to the proposal endorsed by Europol's Management Board for 2020, the Commission's draft budget proposal represents a reduction of €33.7 M and 52 Temporary Agents. In addition, the Commission proposes an additional staff reduction of 47 CA posts for the period 2019-2020 and a further reduction of an additional 48 posts for the years 2021-2022.

Even worse, in the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-27, the current proposal foresees a reduction of Europol budget even below the level proposed by the Commission for 2020 (€126.1 M for 2021 vs €141.1 M proposed for 2020).

Such a decrease will seriously affect Europol's operational activities in 2020 and beyond. Europol's 2020+ Strategy, endorsed by the Member States in December 2018, requires substantial investments in order for Europol to expand its role as the EU law enforcement information hub, to deliver agile operational support to the Member States and to become the EU's driver in the area of innovative law enforcement technology.

Throughout 2019, the European Parliament has repeatedly reiterated the need to strengthen Europol (see annex). The new Strategic Agenda 2019-2024, adopted by the European Council in June 2019, identifies security as a key political priority. Existing security threats, such as terrorism and irregular migration, remain a great concern for the EU.

## 2. New tasks and a growing demand for services

Throughout the last years, Europol has experienced a rapidly increasing demand for its products and services.

### **In 2018,**

- Europol delivered more than **8,300 operational reports, supported more than 1,700 operations and coordinated about 200 Joint Action Days** with significant operational results.
- The number of operational messages **reached more than 1.1 million messages in 2018**. Since 2010, the number of messages has **more than quadrupled**. The use of the **Europol Information System (EIS)** increased exponentially in the last four years – from nearly 634,000 searches in 2015 to more than 4,000,000 searches in 2018. For the same period, the total number of EIS objects more than tripled, surpassing 1,300,000 objects in 2018.
- Europol's **European Counter Terrorism Centre** supported **620 prioritised operations** and produced 1837 operational reports, doubling the number of reports produced in 2017;
- Europol's **EU Internet Referral Unit** assessed more than **39,000 cases** related to terrorism and violent extremism.

Europol has also been entrusted with new tasks without, however, receiving sufficient resources. The European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) was established in 2013. In response to the migration crisis, the Europol Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC) was set up. Europol deployed officers to migration hotspots to perform secondary security checks. The terrorist attacks of 2015 and 2016 triggered the development of the Europol Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC) and the EU Internet Referral Unit (EU IRU).

Member States' law enforcement authorities are also asking Europol to develop state-of-the-art tools and techniques to help with investigations. For example, Europol is developing a decryption platform to enable access to criminals' and terrorists' digital devices. Developing these innovative services at EU level is much more efficient than developing the services within each Member State.

## 3. Consequences of a growing funding gap

If Europol's budget for 2020 remains at the level as proposed at present (€141.1M and an additional 14 TAs), two main areas of Europol's 2020+ Strategy will be seriously affected: Europol's ability to provide agile operational support and its

capacity for technical innovation. It will be necessary to prioritise in almost every area of Europol's activities. In particular, the shortfall of resources will affect:

- **ICT and innovation** investments
- Direct support for MS through **operational** and strategic meetings, **missions**, operational **training**, **technical solutions**, etc.
- Deployment of Guest Officers to migration **hotspots**
- Maintenance costs for Europol's **decryption platform**
- Increasing the **fight against people smuggling**, with particular attention to secondary movements
- Reinforcing the attention to **Trafficking in Human Beings** for sexual and labour exploitation
- Stepping up the European **response against drugs trafficking**
- Reinforcing Europol's operational support targeting individuals that constitute the highest serious and organised crime risk (**High Value Targets**)
- Enhancing the **fight against environmental crime**, in particular illicit waste trafficking and wildlife crime.
- Countering emerging forms of terrorism, such as **right wing extremism**
- Increasing Europol's **forensic support** to MS in particular in cybercrime

In addition, the lack of sustainable funding will prevent Europol expanding its activities to new areas and evolving challenges, for example:

- Fully establishing the **Economic and Financial Crimes Centre** at Europol to combat money laundering and terrorism financing and to provide the utmost support to the **European Public Prosecutor Office (EPPO)** in fighting crimes against the financial interests of the Union
- Providing support to the **ATLAS Network** of MS' Special Intervention Units
- Developing capabilities in the area of **travel intelligence**
- Further investing in intelligent information management and processing, e.g. **machine learning**
- Development of the **EU Platform to Combat Illicit Content Online (PERCI)** to facilitate the coordination of referrals and removal orders of terrorist content online within the EU

The impact on Europol's operational activities is further compounded by the proposal of the European Commission to **impose a reduction of Europol's Contract Agent (CA) staff from 235 CA posts to 148 CA posts by 2022**. The proposed abrupt reduction of Europol's CA staff (by more than 35% by the year 2022) will inevitably lead to a redeployment of operational resources, causing significant disruption to the agency's operations. While Europol remains committed to its established practice of implementing efficiency gains, it is important that the current level of 235 CA posts is retained, since it is necessary to support and deliver the growing work of the agency in 2020 and beyond.

## **Annex 1: Budget development - overview**

<b>Budget (million €)</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Europol Management Board request (1)</b>	<b>Commission proposal (2)</b>	<b>Adopted by Budgetary Authority (3)</b>	<b>Δ (3)-(1)</b>
2018	130.6	118.6	122.2 <sup>1</sup>	8.4
2019	143.0	121.9	138.3	4.7
2020	174.8	141.1		33.7 <sup>2</sup>

Europol's request for 2020 is substantially higher than 2019 as it includes the funding for a number of new tasks that cannot be performed with the current resources of the agency – e.g, the funding of activities of the ATLAS network, development of a European platform for the takedown of illicit contact online and interoperability of EU systems in the area of border management and security.

<b>Establishment Plan (Temporary Agents)</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Europol Management Board request (1)</b>	<b>Commission proposal (2)</b>	<b>Adopted by Budgetary Authority (3)</b>	<b>Resource gap (3)-(1)</b>
2018	611	566	576	35
2019	619	581	591	28
2020	657 (+66)	605 (+14)		52 <sup>3</sup>

<b>Contract Agents</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Europol Management Board (1)</b>	<b>Commission proposal (2)</b>	<b>Resource gap (2)-(1)</b>
2019	232	211	-21
2020	235	188	-47
2021		164	-71
2022		148 <sup>4</sup>	-87

<sup>1</sup> The adopted budget 2018 (€122.2M) was amended by a transfer within DG Home of +€8M totalling to €130.2M (+€3M for secondary security checks at hotspots and +€5M for Decryption).

<sup>2</sup> For 2020, the difference between Europol's request and the COM's proposal is presented

<sup>3</sup> For 2020, the difference between Europol's request and the COM's proposal is presented

<sup>4</sup> Includes 8 new CA posts for interoperability

## **Annex 2: Position of the European Parliament**

### **European Parliament resolution of 14 March 2019 on general guidelines for the preparation of the 2020 budget, Section III – Commission (2019/2001(BUD))**

"10. Considers that the **protection of the EU's external borders and internal security** with the support of a strengthened European Border and Coast Guard and **Europol** [...] are **inextricably linked** and **mutually beneficial**; stresses [...] the **importance of robust EU investments in the area of internal security** with a view to, among other things, **enhancing EU law enforcement and judicial response** to cross-border criminal threats and promoting information exchange [...]; considers it **an obligation to ensure adequate funding, staffing and staff training for all agencies operating in the field of security, justice and border control** as the current level of funding is insufficient [...]

14. **requests adequate financial resources to equip all relevant agencies** with adequate funds to cover their operational and administrative tasks to help secure network and information systems, build strong cyber resilience, and **combat cybercrime**; supports, in this context, the **strategic cooperation between EU Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) and Europol**;"

### **European Parliament resolution of 28 March 2019 on the situation of the rule of law and the fight against corruption in the EU, specifically in Malta and Slovakia (2018/2965(RSP))**

"26. **Observes that the current budgetary and human resources and mandates of Europol and Eurojust are not sufficient for those agencies to provide full and proactive EU added value in carrying out investigations such as in the cases of the murders of Daphne Caruana Galizia and of Ján Kuciak and Martina Kušnírová; calls for further resources to be allocated to Europol and Eurojust for investigations of this kind in the near future;**

28. **Calls on the Commission and the Council to increase Europol's budget in line with the operational and strategic needs identified during the negotiations for the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027, and to strengthen the mandate of Europol so as to enable it to participate more proactively in investigations into leading organised crime groups in Member States where there are serious doubts about the independence and quality of such investigations, [...];"**

### **European parliament report on findings and recommendations of the Special Committee on Terrorism (2018/2044(INI))**

"40. Asks the Member States to take swift legal action to ban and remove to the extent possible within their territories all printed and online propaganda that explicitly incites violent extremism and terrorist acts, [...]; asks for such propaganda to be removed from shops and online platforms as part of the referrals by the **EU IRU**, which could be **reinforced in human resources and capacities** [...];"