

The Hague, 14 April 2021

Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group Secretariat

To the attention of the JPSG Co-Chairs

By email only:

jpsg.libesecretariat@europarl.europa.eu

Europol answer to written questions from the Member of the European Parliament (MEP), Mr Patrick Breyer, to the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group (JPSG)

Dear Co-Chairs,

In accordance with Article 4.2 of the JPSG Rules of Procedure and Article 51 of the Europol Regulation, Europol would like to respond to the questions raised by Mr Patrick Breyer, Member of the European Parliament, received by Europol on 3 February 2021, as follows:

Written questions by Mr Patrick Breyer:

- 1. Have Europol staff been suspended in connection with allegations of racism?*
- 2. What is Europol doing to prevent the recruitment of officials with racist or anti-democratic attitudes?*
- 3. How many Europol officials are currently suspended, and for what reasons (please specify by listing the alleged misconduct)?*

Europol's answers:

1. There is no case since Europol became an EU agency, as a result of which Europol staff was suspended on the basis of an allegation of racism.
2. Europol's recruitment (no officials, but temporary and contract staff as well as Seconded National Experts - SNEs) is performed in compliance with the applicable regulatory framework, taking into account also the Europol Values and the Code of Conduct.

Further to Europol's Values of Integrity (with the essence statement: "We do the right thing. We do it consistently and reliably, with respect for others. We adhere to our Code of Conduct" and Diversity (with the essence statement: "We foster diversity in the workplace. We uphold an inclusive corporate culture. We create and maintain conditions where we have equal opportunities to develop and contribute"), the Europol Code of Conduct of Europol (available on the website of Europol) defines that "... Human dignity shall be respected at all times and everyone shall protect and respect fundamental rights, ... any sort of physical and verbal violence shall not be accepted. ...".

Europol Public Information

In addition, as part of the recruitment and selection process, beyond the specific requirements of the advertised position, 'living diversity' is part of the general competencies at Europol, systematically assessed for all temporary and contract staff as well as SNEs. The competence is usually covered through a series of interview questions and was specifically added to the external assessment for middle management positions at the end of 2019. Particular attention is paid to this competence in the selection of SNEs for secondary security checks.

Europol would like to underline that the majority of Europol staff and all SNEs come from the competent authorities of Member States (law enforcement) at national level, whose very duty it is to uphold highest standards of ethical behaviour with respect to their staff and to fight racist and anti-democratic behaviour under their respective national criminal systems. Depending on the profile of the position to be recruited, successful candidates are required to produce a Certificate of Good Conduct (CoGC) or a National Security Clearance (NSC) certificate (which includes vetting in particular for Europol staff and SNEs given their access to, and processing of sensitive operational personal data in Europol's core business area). These arrangements represent a complementary preventive control for the employment of staff in compliance with Europol's regulatory framework.

On a more general note, in 2019, Europol established a Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group within the agency to help foster an inclusive corporate culture and positive work environment. Accordingly, in November 2019, under the then chair of Europol, the Heads of the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) agencies concluded a corresponding joint statement on diversity and inclusion¹.

3. No Europol staff is currently suspended.

I hope that this answer will prove satisfactory. Europol remains available for further clarifications.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Ebner', with a stylized, flowing script.

Jürgen Ebner
Deputy Executive Director of Governance

¹ <https://eucrim.eu/news/meeting-eu-justice-and-home-affairs-agencies/>