

Consultation on Europol's draft Multiannual Programming 2019-2021

Input by the Cyprus delegation to the JPSG.

Our general view is that the draft Multiannual Programming is a very coherent and well-structured document that describes clearly the Organisation's objectives in the period under review. We do, however, wish to bring up a few points.

-We consider corruption as a major enabler of a host of other criminal activities, as indicated also in the latest Threat Assessment. In spite of this, we notice it does not feature in the draft Multiannual Programming. How does Europol intend to deal with this issue in the period in question? Would the Management Board share the view that a reference should be included?

-Concerning the goal 1.3 to "Strategically enhance partnerships with cooperation partners", we are very skeptical with regard to the inclusion of Turkey in the Mediterranean countries with which an agreement for the exchange of personal data is considered as urgent and with which negotiations will be opened by the European Commission. The country has a particularly low record of data protection, further exacerbated under the current emergency status. Furthermore, the progress report on the Road Map for the liberalization of visas for Turkish citizens explicitly provides that "Turkey needs to revise its legislation and practices on terrorism in line with European standards, notably by better aligning the definition of terrorism in order to narrow the scope". In this light, the purpose of exchanging personal data regarding organized crime and terrorism before the amendment of the relevant legislation, brings into question the scope on which data exchanges between Europol and Turkey will occur.

Additionally, Turkey does not cooperate with Cyprus, inter alia, on issues of serious organized crime and counter-terrorism, compromising the overall efficiency of Europol's aims.

We also wonder how reliable an exchange of information on the part of the third party could be, particularly in the light of recent developments, which prove that radicalization efforts in EU Member States are actually directed by state structures of this country.

Under these circumstances, the upgrading and widening of Europol's conventional framework vis-à-vis this country, sends the wrong signal with regard to the real importance the EU in general, and Europol in particular, attach to the protection of the personal data of its citizens.

-While the role of the EU IRU to combat online radicalization is welcome, radicalization that occurs in mosques or other establishments should also perhaps form part of the wider counterterrorism strategy, particularly in cooperation with the Radicalisation Awareness Network.

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