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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Working Group on Information Exchange and Data Protection (DAPIX)
Subject:	Outcome of the 4thConference on Police and Customs Cooperation Centres (PCCCs) on 21 and 22 October 2013, Brussels, Belgium

(1)   The 4th Conference on Police and Customs Cooperation Centres (PCCCs) took place on 21 and 22 October 2013 in Brussels and was jointly organised by the Commission and the Presidency. The Conference brought together PCCC officials from 17 different countries, representatives of the Commission, Europol, Frontex, CEPOL and other Member States' authorities (in total 105 participants).

The aim of the conference was threefold:

i)   Support of PCCCs regarding mutual information and expertise sharing (including networking);

ii)   Update the roadmap for the further development and strengthening of PCCCs in the EU in line with IMS II/ action No. 7 on the European Dimension of PCCCs[1];

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[1]   see doc 5709/1/12 DAPIX 7 ENFOPOL 18 CRIMORG 8 ENFOCUSTOM 4

iii)   Supplement the existing EU PCCC Guidelines regarding the use of the PCCC Europol Platform of Expert (EPE) and define in the Guidelines the use of requests between PCCCs (chain requests) to facilitate law enforcement information exchange in urgent cases.

(**2**)   The first day of the Conference was attended by the national PCCC coordinators only.

The Commission explained the structure of the new Internal Security Fund (ISF) within the EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) coming into force in 2014 and informed the audience on funding possibilities and conditions for PCCCs under the new regime.

The audience was also informed about the state of play of the ISEC PCCC project. As a follow-up to the workshops organised in the framework of this project, two proposals to amend the PCCC guidelines were presented and discussed by the participants:

(a) Introducing the possibility of requests between PCCCs

The core group delegates suggested to add the following footnote to the text of the PCCC guidelines (doc. 9105/11):

"Requests between PCCCs, if allowed by the respective bi-/multilateral agreements and national legislation, could be used in urgent cases. National central authorities are informed according to national legislation."

(b) Enhance the use of the PCCC platform on the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE)

The second suggestion was to add a new annex to the PCCC guidelines explaining and providing guidance on the use of the existing PCCC platform on the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE).

At the end of the first day of the Conference, the Presidency highlighted the necessity of close and immediate cross border cooperation between different PCCCs. The Presidency also supported the idea to improve the exchange of knowledge, best practises and experience between the PCCCs on strategic and operational levels via the EPE.

(3) On the second day of the Conference, the PCCC coordinators were joined by representatives of national authorities, Europol, CEPOL and FRONTEX. The participants of the Conference agreed that the aim of the PCCC community is to go forward, to enhance the exchange of information, to share good practice, to involve other national/central agencies into PCCC activities. The need to cooperate in the broader European security architecture with EU JHA agencies such as Europol, CEPOL and Frontex was also confirmed.

In the pursuit of these goals, the Conference discussed the draft roadmap (updating IMS action No. 7) 2013. The proposal aims at strengthening and fostering the cooperation and the exchange of information in and between PCCCs, on the one hand and, on the other hand, between PCCCs, central authorities and EU agencies such as Europol and CEPOL. The draft roadmap which comprises seven objectives and a number of concrete operationalisation measures (see Annex) met the general support of delegations.

(4) Concluding the Conference, the Presidency informed the delegates that the draft roadmap as amended in the light of discussions during the Conference, the Annex on the PCCC EPE as well as the proposal for the amendment of the PCCC Guidelines regarding chain requests will be submitted for further discussion and approval to DAPIX on 27 November 2013.

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> **ANNEX 6**
>
> **The PCCC-Platform on the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE)**

1.   General framework

During the first PCCC conference in 2010, under Belgian Presidency, the participants expressed the need for more and better exchange of best practices between PCCC coordinators.

The road map presented by the Polish Presidency during the second PCCC conference proposed to use the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE) to this end and to create a dedicated platform for the PCCCs.

The third IMS action list of the Working Group on Information Exchange and Data Protection (DAPIX) foresees in its action point 7 to provide PCCCs with an e-platform for non operational communication.

2.   The Europol Platform for Experts (EPE)

The EPE is a secure environment for specialists in a variety of law enforcement areas, enabling them to interact and collaborate within their respective communities.

The EPE cannot be used for the exchange of personal data, classified information or to share any data related to specific criminal events.

Access to these specific communities is granted by invitation only. The responsibility of accepting a law enforcement user on the EPE and on a specific platform under the EPE is shared between the ENUs/NCPs (user authorisation) and Europol (Platform membership acceptance), in close cooperation with the community managers.

3. <u>**Purpose**</u>

The aim of the PCCC-platform is to contribute to the improvement of the functioning of PCCCs by "***learning from each other***".

To this end, this platform enables and promotes the exchange of knowledge, good/best practices and experience in the framework of the tasks and working of the PCCCs.

Therefore it is recommended that as much as possible PCCC staff take part on the PCCC EPE platform:

4. <u>**Content**</u>

- Address book and general information about the existing PCCCs

- Best practices

- Legal framework

- Agreements about PCCCs

- Other relevant documents (DAPIX, LEWP, projects, …)

- Events (conferences, seminars, …)

- News

- …

5. **Target community**

- PCCC coordinators, including national coordinators

- Staff of PCCCs

- Other facilities for regional cross-border cooperation with the participation of police and/or customs and/or border guards should also be involved in the platform

- Representatives of central law enforcement bodies/authorities responsible for PCCC cooperation

6. **Access/invitation**

Interested new users of the platform *have* to be invited by an existing user (with appropriate permissions)

After the invited new user has self-registered in the EPE, a user authoriser (Europol/C2) activates his EPE account and the platform manager(s) *endorses* him as a member of the PCCC platform

7. **Community managers**

Community manager can:

- moderate the content within the community

- assign members to a community

- manage pages, portlets on pages and web content

- update community metadata.

The community managers can be designated during the annual PCCC conference or by a written procedure on the platform.

8. **Language**

The main language should be English, but the use of other languages is also possible.

Contributions can be short and don't have to be written in perfect academic English.

(Attached) documents can be posted in another language but should be - if possible - accompanied by a short summary in English.

9. **Evaluation**

A state of play of the PCCC platform will be presented and discussed during the annual PCCC conference.

4th Police and Customs Cooperation Centres (PCCCs) Conference

21 and 22 October 2013, Brussels, Belgium

Proposal Roadmap (IMS II / action nr 7) 2013

- **Enriching trans border crime analyses of PCCCs and Europol through structural communication and cooperation while fully including national/central authorities and their competences.**

  Operationalisation: as a first step, explore the possibility to organise under the umbrella of the ISEC PCCC project a workshop in which crime analysts of PCCCs, central/national authorities and Europol participate to determine cooperation possibilities and modalities with the aim to enrich each other's crime intelligence pictures.

- **Develop a set of requirements for PCCC workflow and information exchange systems.**

  Operationalisation: as a first step, PCCCs and Europol explore PCCC SIENA requirements in view of future SIENA scopes.

- **Strengthen customs and other authorities' (e.g. border guards, judicial and administrative authorities) involvement through their direct participation in PCCCs or through working arrangements with PCCCs.**

  Operationalisation: as a first step, conduct a study on the current situation on multiagency involvement in or with PCCCs in Europe and accompanying arrangements; Include in the study an assessment of a 24/7 presence at PCCCs taking into account value-cost assessments.

- **Setting-up a specific PCCC training & stimulate staff exchanges between PCCCs and/or between PCCCs and the national level to enhance the sharing of expertise.**

  Operationalisation:

  – *Conduct an analysis of practitioners' needs;*

  – *CEPOL develops an e-learning module and potentially a multilingual module at a later stage in cooperation with the ISEC PCCC project, which could be an integral part of national training programmes and the EU Law Enforcement Training Scheme (LETS) to be executed by the EU agency responsible for law enforcement training;*

  – *PCCCs can apply through the PCCC EPE to be supported by the PCCC ISEC project in having a staff exchange with another PCCC and/or central authorities.*

- **Further stimulate the exchange of expertise, work practices and provide networking possibilities.**

  Operationalisation:

  – *Stimulate the use of the PCCC Europol Platform of Experts (EPE) by the EPE managers on the platform itself and presenting the results and use of the PCCC EPE at PCCC related Conferences and meetings.*

  – *Organise meetings, an on-going activity open to all stakeholders. Current examples are the annual PCCC Conference and the MEPA Conference as well as workshops for example organised under the ISEC project.*

- **Inform on funding possibilities for PCCC's including EU funding (ISF Police)**1**.**

> *Operationalisation:* as a first step, the Commission provides at PCCC
> Conferences and on EPE information on EU funding programmes, their
> conditions, to which PCCCs can apply for funding; after which the application
> will be assessed before a decision is taken.

- **Promote the added value of the PCCC instrument in the EU at (working groups/committees) as well as at national level, by increasing the visibility of the PCCC activities** (tools are for example websites and newsletters and pro-active sharing of expertise with other authorities).

> *Operationalisation:* as a first step, present PCCC work (compilation of cases) and
> Conference and ISEC results to various bodies in particular concerned working
> and expert groups;

- **Explore achievable exchange of information and statistics between PCCCs and Frontex while fully taking the role of national Frontex points of contact (NFPOC) into account.**

> *Operationalisation:* As a first step, Frontex will organize a workshop with all
> concerned stakeholders to explore the possibilities.