

EUROPOL**1 January - 30 June 1999****Six month Progress Report****1. General**

The aim of this report is to give a general overview of the main activities and progress made during the first half of the year 1999. It will form the basis of the annual report for 1999.

2. Europol Management Board

During the German Presidency four meetings of the Europol Management Board took place and one meeting of the Personnel experts finalizing, among other things, the necessary preparatory work for Europol to take fully up its activities.

In addition there were three meetings of the Europol Computer System Project Board and five sets of workshops to consider in detail the Information system required and the plans for a new telecommunication infrastructure.

The Secretariat of the Management Board was formally established on 1 July 1999 with the start of the activities of Europol.

3. Europol Liaison Bureaux

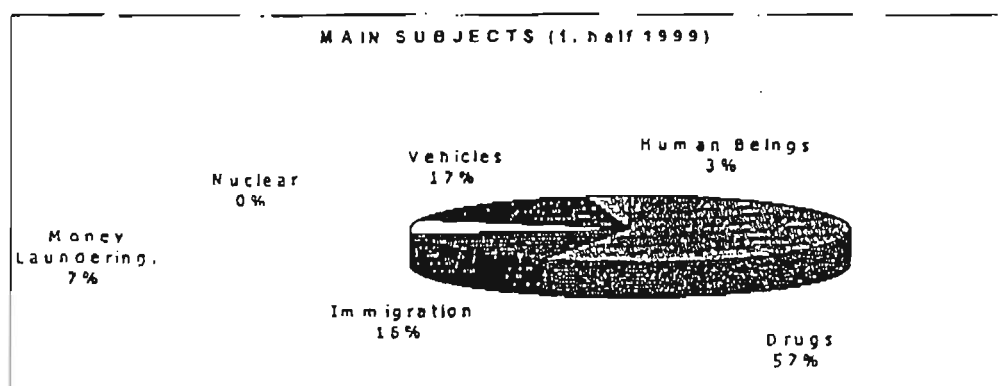
The trend to a more complex and intense exchange of information and intelligence in support of operations in Member States has continued. The emphasis is on the improvement of inherent quality and relevance of cases dealt with by Liaison Officers and Europol personnel. Worthy of particular mention is the assistance Member States' investigations receive from the Intelligence Analysis Department (IA) which improved considerably the quality of the information and intelligence as shown in many criminal investigations.

SEMDOC

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January-June	Enquiries initiated		Responses to enquiries initiated by other MS	
	1998	1999	1998	1999
National Desks	1222	1155	5385	4479
EDU Analysts	0	4	102	64
Total	1222	1159	5487	4543



The number of cases and subject matters slightly decreased by comparison with those of last year. Investigations into drug trafficking still form the majority of operations, followed by cases on illegal immigration, stolen vehicles and related money laundering.

This trend has been discussed by the Heads of Europol National Units (HENUs). They basically agreed that those changes were to a large extent physiological. The decrease, in quantity, was in balance with an increased quality of the information exchanged. This issue is a matter of continuously monitoring by the HENUs and Europol management.

With the release of an updated version of 'Info-Ex' (the computer system used by ELOs for information exchange) the user friendliness and ease of handling have been enhanced significantly.

The Liaison Bureaux have contributed to the development of operational and intelligence projects covering the whole range of criminal activities within the Europol mandate. They have also continued to be an invaluable platform of co-ordination and advice in combating organised crime e.g by supporting transborder surveillances, controlled deliveries and common investigation by two or more Members States.

4. Relations with Third States & International Organisations

As established in the 1999 Working Programme, Europol took steps to prepare the organisation to develop co-operation with third parties.

In line with the Europol Convention and the implementing regulations two documents have been elaborated:

1. a draft European Union Council decision to start negotiations with Third States and non-EU bodies and
2. a draft model Agreement that incorporates all mandatory requirements in order to facilitate the negotiations with future partners.

5. Crime analysis

The development of Analysis Work Files (AWF's) played an important part in the work. A total of nine AWF's were proposed of which four were already sent to the Joint Supervisory Body and Management Board. A final decision on the opening of these files is expected by September 1999. Four more were subject for discussion at the HENU meeting and will be sent to the Management Board and Joint Supervisory Body for consideration. Europol developers and analyst developed the Eurint (the provisional Europol Analysis System) further in order to be able to handle the personal data. Eurint was successfully implemented for test and evaluation.

A considerable number of operational cases of Member States were supported by Europol analyst, some of which were ongoing from the previous year, whilst new requests were also received and dealt with during this period. The analytical work did not only take place in the Europol facilities but analysts visited also the operational teams in the Member States concerned in order to have a better understanding of the enquiries. The analysis work once again highlighted previously unknown links between operations being undertaken within the Member States. Furthermore, responds to everyday requests from the liaison officers in respect of ongoing operations in the Member States have been carried out.

A number of strategic reports and a remarkable work have been carried out in respect of the completion of the 1998 EU Organised Crime Report. In particular Europol has been involved in the work of the Contact and Support Network, as well as in the newly formed Voluntary Reflection Group, which is looking at ways of improving the report in future years both in methodology and content.

Europol analyst's and open sources specialists have been a major driving force in the development of the Open Source policy for Europol and additionally created a new briefing process structure for the Directorate in respect of different assessments of trends and threats.

Two more Strategic Intelligence and Analysis Training courses were held at Europol, in May/June and June/July. This followed previous

courses held since 1996. A total of 43 participants from 14 Member States, the International Crime Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and Europol successfully completed the workshops.

Similarly to previous years as an example of joint venture with one of the Member States the German Federal Criminal Police (BKA) and Europol organised a major analytical conference held in Eltville/Germany in March.

An operational analysis course for the Danish Police in Denmark at their request was held. In addition as part of the UNDCP/Phare programme Europol analysts ran a Senior Managers Seminar on analysis followed by an Operational Analysis Course for law enforcement personnel from Bulgaria, Romania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Two analysts were actively involved in a seminar organised by the *Direzione Centrale per i Servizi Antidroga* in Italy under the OISI/N programme in respect of Criminal Intelligence Analysis, the seminar being attended by North African countries as well as some Member States.

A booklet on Analytical Guidelines was completed and distributed to all Member States in the English language. Translation into all Member States languages is being undertaken, for distribution in the second semester of 1999.

6. Centres of Excellence

To date 267 Centres of Excellence are registered in the Directory. About ninety new Centres of Excellence are waiting to be registered; the work has been held up while awaiting essential work on the database software.

During this initial phase the majority of the Member States have already consulted the Centres of Excellence Directory at least once. Twenty-eight requests were received during the first six months of 1999.

7. Intelligence & Specialised knowledge

7.1. Intelligence Model and working methods

In line with the project planning the work focused mainly on finalising the "study phase" of the Intelligence Model Framework by producing a further study on 'Routing and handling of Information', concentrating on legal, technical and organisational implications at both internal and external levels.

Based on the initial intelligence related planning and activities only one meeting with external experts was foreseen to take place during the first semester 1999. Because of later identified problems, necessary to be solved before Europol's taking up of activities, three additional meetings with external experts have been conducted.

Resulting from the mentioned planning, ad hoc decisions and held expert meetings, the main progress has been the development of 'MAIN LOGI-Charts'. It describes the various functions and steps regarding receiving, assessing, addressing, gathering, monitoring, searching and exchanging information and intelligence between all relevant participants as outlined within six different scenarios of intelligence work.

7.2. OC- regional approach/other projects

The initial phase (gathering of information) of Europol's 5-years-project on Eastern European Organised Crime (EE-OC) has been finalised.

Additionally, most of the short-term objectives could be reached:

- to draw an overview of all existent European initiatives, organisations and units re combating the Eastern European Organised Crime;
- with Austria as leading Member State, to give further support to the structured information collection on Central and Eastern European banks;
- to prepare Analysis Work Files on EE-OC (Top 100 principals and groups) and COMMURBEE (commercial links of murdered business persons) with the participation of eight Member States;

In the overall framework of the EE-OC project Europol provided operational analytical aid to the German Police in Thuringia concerning an Eastern European-Organised Crime investigation.

In the beginning of 1999 Europol started a study on new technologies used by OC and changes of modus operandi resulting from the new technologies. The aim is to develop an EU concept for investigating in High-Tec linked to Organised Crime.

Europol has made steady progress in a project designed to gather, analyse and disseminate intelligence related to maritime criminal activity to appropriate agencies.

During the first half year of 1999 a conceptual framework for the prevention of organised crime was established. The framework is based on a multi disciplinary approach in which sharing of expertise and resources are key issues.

Europol took up the responsibility to develop, in close co-operation with the European Commission, a comprehensive report concerning co-ordination, research and development of the prevention of organised crime at European level. The report shall be finalised before the end of the year 2000.

An informal working party with actual and incoming Presidencies of EU, the European Commission and Europol was established to prepare the projects and to arrange a seminar with workshops to be held in November 1999.

7.3. Drugs

Three operational projects aimed at assisting Member States in the identification of Latin American criminal groups, smuggling routes and modus operandi as well as links between different groups. Where appropriate, expert meetings redefined objectives and methods. This has led to a substantial upgrade of the quality of information and analysis, which may have an important operational impact within the participating Member States.

Strategic and operational projects on Turkish, ethnic Albanian-Yugoslav and ethnic Chinese criminal groups were further developed. This included an initiative by one Member State to start in co-operation with other Member States and supported by Europol a criminal investigation into a major Turkish drug trafficking group.

The 1997 strategic report on ethnic Albanian-Yugoslavs has been updated. Operational activities against such groups continued, involving the ELOs of participating Member States, the Analytical Department and the Drugs Group.

A strategic overview on the impact on the European Union by ethnic-Chinese criminal groups is underway in order to initiate operational initiatives in Member States concerned.

In the framework of the 'Logo database', information on seizures of ecstasy pills was collected. Full use of the system was seriously hindered awaiting the development of essential software modifications. An operational project on one specific logo, initiated by Germany and involving other Member States, was carried out. An update of the 1997 Ecstasy-catalogue was produced in hard copy and on CD-ROM and distributed in the Member States. The development of the ballistic and chemical profiling of synthetic drugs continues in close co-operation with the German BKA and the European Network of Forensic Science Institute (ENFSI).

Europol participated in a feasibility study on the impurity profiling of amphetamine.

In the framework of the Joint Action on the Early Warning System on new synthetic drugs, Europol participated in the collection, analysis and dissemination of information and a risk assessment on two substances: MBDB and 4-MTA. This resulted in legislative measures in all Member States in respect to 4-MTA.

Europol, in co-operation with Member States' experts, organised the 1st 'European Union training course for trainers on the combating of illicit synthetic drugs laboratories'. Forensic scientists and law enforcement staff from 14 Member States attended the course and similar courses will be organised in two Member States in 2000. The drafting of a manual to assist law enforcement agencies in actions against illicit cultivation of cannabis is underway.

The Danish authorities and Europol established the operational project on Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs, with active participation of several Member States, in order to dismantle the criminal groups involved.

7.4. Illegal Immigration

There is a growing support from Member States in the production of the monthly Intelligence Bulletin. As consequence of one expert meeting, the content and structure of the national contributions for the General Situation Report have been harmonised. Most Member States already contributed following this new structure.

Within the Europol framework a first operative meeting dealing with specific cases and ongoing operations took place. A considerable amount of information was received from the Members States.

Two projects have been developed in a first phase, expected to be fully implemented by the end of the year.

Iraqi and neighbouring countries Project

Preparation work has been undertaken in order to forward request for an opening order for the Analytical Work File (AWF) to the Management Board Meeting in September 1999.

An Iraq Case Investigation Group has been arranged under the leadership of Belgium. The six Member States have organised two operational meetings supported by Europol officials and facilities. Operational information has been exchanged and it has been agreed to initiate bilateral investigations.

Kosovo-Albanian Project

The first meeting on this Project took place in February 1999. Organised Crime and Analytical Departments have produced a Situation Report on the Impact of the Kosovo conflict on the European Union. This is going to be permanently up-dated with a Threat Assessment Report produced by Europol.

The progress of the Project has however, been affected by the conflict in Kosovo.

7.5. Trafficking in Human Beings

An Intelligence Bulletin on trafficking in human beings was created and its first issue was published in the beginning of 1999. By now the bulletin has been published every second month. Furthermore a new collection format has been developed for a better and more systematic collection of information for the General Situation Report of Trafficking in Human beings of 1999.

A need of a training course, focusing on best practice in investigation methods and techniques, was identified and action is taken to develop such training courses.

Europol has participated in various external projects especially in the framework of the European Union programmes

7.6. Stolen Vehicles – Nuclear

Europol supported the co-ordination of investigative and control activities in an Operation (code-name "Victor"). Member States and Hungary and Lithuania were helped to schedule and structure their law enforcement activities and supported by exchange of information and intelligence and by analysis. The still ongoing operation resulted in several arrests, seizures of stolen cars and in new ongoing operational investigations.

At strategic level general recommendations were elaborated in order to advise European ministers how to improve the registration procedures of second hand cars.

A concept for information exchange with Member states and for the co-operation and sharing (database) information with the World Customs Organisation, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the European Institute for Transuranium Elements has been initiated.

7.7. Forgery of Money and other means of payment

The mandate of Europol was extended to the forgery of money and (other) means of payment, taking effect from the first of July 1999 on.

Three counterfeit expert meetings took place at Europol. A task list for the foreseen Project Team was agreed upon and sub-groups of MS experts on technical and prevention issues created.

7.8. Money Laundering

Resulting from discussions on the Council document (Crimorg 173), Europol developed a document¹ describing how to organise training, in order to enhance the capability of law enforcement agencies to do financial investigations. This document was discussed and accepted by the MDG-meeting.

Based on one of the recommendations laid down in Council document (Crimorg 173), Europol drafted a document² for the MDG on the need for reliable statistics on money laundering and asset seizure within the EU and on the requirements regarding the development of those statistics. The MDG approved the proposals and Europol and the General Secretariat of the Council have been requested to implement the proposals.

¹ Council document Crimorg 51

² Council document Crimorg 65

7.9. Terrorism

Europol prepared a report to the EU Justice and Home Affairs Council, outlining the tasks to be undertaken by Europol to add value to the joint EU fight against terrorism. The Council approved the report in May 1999.

Resulting from an Italian proposal, a meeting of Experts was held at Europol in June 1999, which elaborated the content of an AWF on criminal activities of Extremist Islamic Terrorism within the EU.

A Glossary of terrorist groups is now almost complete with comments and contributions from six Member States. The original draft is in the process of being amended accordingly.

Six Member States have so far submitted new skills or amendments to the Centre of Excellence Directory on Counter Terrorism. The creation of an electronic Directory is in progress.

In the middle of April 1999 a trial period of three months for the dissemination of terrorism related open source material started.

8. Information & Communications Technology

The year began with a shortfall of 7 members of staff (about 30% of the unit's strength) which had a noticeable impact on software development and user support. With new recruitment's the situation has improved significantly.

The PABX (Europol telephone exchange) was upgraded and all systems checked in respect of Year 2000 compliance.

The focus of the development work has been the enhancement of the Analysis System *Eurlnt* and of the *InfoEx* liaison officer software.

The arrival of new personnel in Europol increased the workloads of help-desk and training. A new software package was introduced to provide a standardised assessment of IT training needs for new staff.

Open tendering procedures were launched for a new Telecommunications Infrastructure, to provide encrypted data and voice communication links between Europol and the ENUs, and for the Information System.

The current and future computing needs of Europol were the subject of a major study involving experts from several companies, delivered in the form of a Europol Enterprise Study at the end of May 1999.

Initial work has been carried out with a view to future participation in EU-funded research projects within the Fifth Framework Programme.

The financial and personnel systems were delivered and tested, enabling Europol to pay salaries on schedule in July 1999.

9. Research

9.1. Aventinus

Europol has participated as a user until the scheduled end of the EU-sponsored Aventinus language engineering research project. The following software components were produced by the industrial and academic partners and some have already been taken into use within Europol.

- Linguistic/translation tools: Coding Tool, Term Substitution, Translation Memory and Machine Translation
- Analysis tools: Multilingual Indexing and Text Retrieval, Information Extraction, Natural Language Query for structured text and Name Search.

Europol as the main test-ground co-ordinated the User Evaluation of the Aventinus software. The Test report was delivered on schedule to the European Commission.

9.2. Sensus

Within the new research project Sensus, Europol represents the User Group of the police and other agencies working in the domain of Illegal immigration and related serious crime.

Europol's main contribution is to collect and evaluate all monolingual, bilingual and multilingual terminology, lexicons, dictionaries, definitions and legal concepts relevant to illegal immigration and related organised crime in Dutch, English, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish, as well as example texts and search queries.

10. Operational Support and Technical Support

The following tasks have been carried out:

- A meeting on the policy for handling informants was organised;
- The manual on controlled deliveries was updated;
- The revision of the manual on "Operational Practices and Techniques relating to drugs matters in the European Union" was initiated. Its scope will be extended to cover other crimes;
- The establishment of a technical and operational support team continued;
- A catalogue of the specialised technical tools used by the Members States law enforcement agencies for investigation activities is in course of preparation.