

To: HOME NOTIFICATIONS D4
Subject: Mission report - Visit DG Pariat to Europol 19 July

Mission report: Visit of DG Monique Pariat to Europol, 19 July 2022

Participants:

DG HOME: DG Monique Pariat, accompanied by [REDACTED] (HoU D4)

Europol:

- Catherine de Bolle, Executive Director
- [REDACTED], Deputy Executive Director Operations
- [REDACTED] Head of European Cybercrime Centre
- [REDACTED], Head of AP Twins Unit

Summary

Meetings took place in a very positive and constructive atmosphere. It was agreed to continue close cooperation. On the EU Centre on child sexual abuse, participants agreed on the importance and the relevance of the proposal, to keep an eye on resource needs, also on the Europol side, and to work together to communicate on the proposal, including the location of the Centre.

Detailed report

Fight against Child Sexual Abuse

The visit began with a presentation of the work of Europol in combating child sexual abuse, describing a typical investigation and the procedural steps required. The team highlighted the technology savviness of perpetrators in this area and the corresponding need for all MS to have dedicated teams, which not all of them are able to do at the moment. As a result, the team of AP Twins sees different outcomes on the same types of leads, depending on whether MS are able to act on them sufficiently swiftly and competently. [REDACTED]

This was followed by a discussion on Europol's concerns with the EU Centre. [REDACTED] mentioned the need to ensure sufficient resources also for Europol to match its new tasks both operationally and in terms of the planned shared resources (HR, communications etc.) [REDACTED] highlighted three points:

- the need to ensure that all information received by Member States is also available to Europol ("parallel flows");
- to have one shared database with different access rights for both agencies;
- and in case of conflict there would need to be a way to find a solution built into the governance.

[REDACTED] mentioned that there are other crime areas that would benefit from detection and suggested that these could be included; he also mentioned the need to ensure that law enforcement including Europol can use AI tools for investigations (to avoid possible limitations by the AI Act) and can use intercept. These points should be added to the proposal still. He also mentioned that all data is useful and should be passed on to law enforcement; there should be no filtering by the Centre because even an innocent image might contain information that could at some point be useful to law enforcement. He also mentioned that quality data was needed to train algorithms.

DG Pariat explained that a global assessment of resources needed for the Centre and Europol would need to be taken into account along the negotiation process, especially with a view to the new MFF, and that the governance of the EU Centre would include Europol. She signalled understanding for the additional wishes expressed by [REDACTED] but also flagged the need to be realistic in terms of what could be expected, given the many sensitivities around the proposal, and the need to communicate jointly and coherently on this. [REDACTED] confirmed that all information the Centre sent to Member States would be shared with Europol in parallel. She highlighted the fact that the reports received by the EU Centre were not linked to any investigation and that it was therefore not possible to also pass on obvious false positives to law enforcement; on quality data, she also inquired about the sandbox to train algorithms that the JRC had helped Europol set up. Europol stated that this would now be picked up again given a new legal basis.

Participants agreed to coordinate closely on communication around the proposal.