

European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol)

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The Council reached **a general approach** on the proposal for a regulation on the European Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation and Training (Europol). This general approach will constitute the basis for negotiations with the European Parliament **in order to agree** the final text of the regulation.

CEPOL: one of the aims of the Commission's proposal was for Europol to take over and build on the tasks currently carried out by CEPOL, creating a single European law enforcement agency and repealing the existing decisions on Europol and CEPOL.

However, a very large majority of delegations opposed the merger essentially because it would not be beneficial for either agency and they were not convinced that savings could be made through a merger.

On 3 March 2014 the Council decided that all the provisions linked to this idea would be removed from the draft Europol regulation and the Commission was invited to submit a new proposal on the "lisbonisation" of CEPOL.

Lisbonisation: apart from the merger, the new draft regulation is mainly aimed at "lisbonising" the current Council decision on Europol, by setting up the legislative framework of Europol in the Regulation and by introducing a mechanism for the scrutiny of Europol's activities by the European Parliament, together with national Parliaments. It also aims to meet the goals of the Stockholm Programme by making Europol "a hub for information exchange between the law enforcement authorities of the Member States", ensure a robust data protection regime for Europol and improve the governance of Europol.

Key elements of the general approach: the Greek Presidency's new compromise text deals with data protection. The new Presidency compromise text on this issue was discussed by the JHA Counsellors at their meeting on 21 May 2014 and the revised proposal was submitted to COREPER on 28 May 2014 where both the text of the Regulation and the aim to reach the general approach at the Council meeting of 5-6 June 2014 was supported by a vast majority of delegations.

In conclusion, it was also agreed that further technical work should be carried out in order to seek **coherence, where relevant, between the data protection provisions in the draft legislative acts relating to various JHA agencies, in particular Eurojust and EPPO**, while taking into account the special features of these agencies.