Enhancing police cooperation in relation to the prevention, detection and investigation of migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings; enhancing Europol’s support to preventing and combating such crimes

2023/0438(COD) - 25/11/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 556 votes to 74, with 7 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on enhancing police cooperation in relation to the prevention, detection and investigation of migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, and on enhancing Europol’s support to preventing and combating such crimes and amending Regulation (EU) 2016/794.

Parliament adopted its position at first reading by amending the Commission's proposal as follows:

A priority for the Union

Parliament stressed that trafficking in human beings is a serious crime, often committed within the framework of organised crime, constitutes a gross violation of fundamental rights and is explicitly prohibited by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and supporting the victims of trafficking, regardless of their country of origin, remains a priority for the Union and the Member States.

Europol’s mission

Europol’s mission is to:

- support and strengthen actions by the competent authorities of the Member States as defined in Regulation (EU) 2016/794 and their mutual cooperation in preventing and combating serious crime affecting two or more Member States, terrorism and forms of crime which affect a common interest covered by a Union policy;

- act as the Union’s criminal information hub;

- deliver agile operational support by being at the forefront of law enforcement innovation and research and by providing European policing solutions. In performing its core tasks of analysing and exchanging information and providing operational and technical support, Europol provides genuine added value for the security of the Union.

The amended text specifies that Europol will, *inter alia*:

- pay particular attention, when supporting the competent authorities of the Member States in the context of investigations, to **migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings**, including when those criminal offences involve activities carried out over the internet;

- support Member States, including through the development of specific tools, with the **effective and efficient processing of biometric data (in compliance with** the principles of strict necessity and proportionality to prevent or combat forms of crime which fall within the objectives of Europol.

Europol will provide **strategic analyses and threat assessments** to assist the Council and the Commission in laying down strategic and operational priorities of the Union for fighting crime. Europol will also assist in the operational implementation of those priorities, in particular by supporting the competent authorities of the Member States in further strengthening the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT). To this end, it will provide administrative, logistical, financial and operational support to operational and strategic activities led by Member States, including related exchange of information.

Information communication

Each Member State setting up, participating in, or supporting an operational task force will, without delay, provide all relevant information to Europol and the other Member States setting up, participating in, or supporting that operational task force, using the **Secure Information Exchange Network** (**SIENA**) application.

Each Member State in whose territory a Europol deployment for operational support takes place will, without delay, provide all relevant information to Europol, using SIENA and, where possible and in accordance with its national law, by making information in national databases accessible to Europol staff and seconded national experts deployed in its territory.

Each Member State will connect its **immigration liaison officers**, designated by the competent authorities of the Member States, to SIENA in order to submit relevant information to Europol. Immigration liaison officers not designated by competent authorities of the Member States will submit the relevant information to such a national competent authority, using secure channels.

Missions and composition of the European Centre Against Migrant Smuggling

The amended text provides for the creation of a European centre against migrant smuggling within Europol as a specialised EU centre of expertise. The Centre will support Member States in preventing and combating migrant smuggling and human trafficking. It will comprise Europol staff and representatives from Eurojust and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. Europol may invite other participants to be involved in carrying out the tasks of the European Centre Against Migrant Smuggling.