

► EPE

A number of investigators from Slovenia are part of the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE), which provides a secure environment for specialists in different fields of crime prevention, detection and investigation to share knowledge, best practices and data on crime within their expert community.

► SIRIUS

The SIRIUS project is the EU's central reference point for sharing knowledge on cross-border access to electronic evidence, which is needed in more than half of all investigations. EPE members can access the resources via Android and iOS.

WHEN AND HOW TO INVOLVE EUROPOL?

Europol should be brought in as early as possible, at an early stage of the investigation, when the available data or information points to the involvement of organised crime groups and when the other conditions for Europol's involvement are met (when at least two EU countries are affected or when the offence is on Europol's list of competences). Europol and its Liaison Officers' Network may also be approached for studies of a strategic nature, provided that adequate resources are available.

When requesting Europol's assistance in an investigation, it is also essential to ensure the protection and assessment of information and the categorisation of data.

► Information protection

Information must be protected by means of codes that specify the manner and restrictions of its use.

HANDLING CODES

- H0** – This information may not be disclosed to the public and may be used only for the purpose of preventing and combating crime
- H1** – Not to be disclosed in judicial proceedings without the permission of the provider
- H2** – Not to be disseminated without the permission of the provider
- H3** – Other restrictions and comments

► Data categorisation

Personal data must be assigned a category. Only personal data marked in this way can be stored and further processed by Europol.

SUSPECT

POTENTIAL
PERPETRATOR

WITNESS, VICTIM,
INFORMANT

► Information assessment

When providing information or making a request, the information must be evaluated according to the 4 x 4 system.

Source reliability		Information accuracy	
A	where there is no doubt as to the authenticity, trustworthiness and competence of the source, or if the information is provided by a source which has proved to be reliable in all instances	1	information the accuracy of which is not in doubt
B	where the information is provided by a source which has in most instances proved to be reliable	2	information known personally to the source but not known personally to the official passing it on
C	where the information is provided by a source which has in most instances proved to be unreliable	3	information not known personally to the source but corroborated by other information already recorded
D	where the reliability of the source cannot be assessed	4	information not known personally to the source and which cannot be corroborated

LINKS AND CONTACTS

Police: <https://www.policija.si>

Europol: <https://www.europol.europa.eu>

Europol Platform for Experts:
<https://epe.europol.europa.eu>

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20 YEARS OF SLOVENIA'S MEMBERSHIP IN EUROPOL



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SLOVENIA JOINED EUROPOL 20 YEARS AGO

Europol is a European Union's agency for cooperation in the prevention, detection and investigation of organised crime, terrorism and other serious crime affecting two or more Member States. It is an information hub; its coordination and development role is crucial, either in providing operational and strategic information or in ensuring coherent development in the Member States.

Slovenia became a full member of Europol in 2004, and since then its involvement in the Agency has been growing steadily. Slovenian investigators participate in a number of Europol initiatives, joint operations and investigation teams, and as a result the number of information exchanges and contributions is constantly growing.

Today, Slovenia is a member of most of the (20) analysis projects that are central units for data and information analysis, and thus contributes an important part to the overall picture of the global crime situation. The number of contributions is growing year by year.

As an active member of the European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), Slovenia is involved in the development of common policies and other initiatives. Every year, Slovenian police officers participate in a number of Joint Action Days (JAD).

Slovenian criminal police officers are deployed in Europol's Operational Task Forces (OTF), the flagship of joint investigations, to contribute their expertise to the joint fight against organised crime.



EUROPOL NATIONAL UNIT

The Europol National Unit (International Operations Section), which is an integral part of the International Police Cooperation Division within the Criminal Police Directorate of the General Police Directorate, is the national focal point for liaison between Europol and the competent state authorities in Slovenia: the internal organisational units of the Police, the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, the Money Laundering Prevention Office of the Republic of Slovenia and the Asset Recovery Office (ARO).

Part of the Europol National Unit is the Slovenian Liaison Office at Europol headquarters, staffed by liaison officers who are members of the Slovenian police. This is an important network, as it gives Slovenia

direct access to the liaison officers of other Europol members, which is crucial for the successful prevention, detection and investigation of crime.

Europol's National Unit is continuously growing as it takes on more tasks and new challenges, exchanges more information and tackles new threats. When it was set up, it consisted of four criminal police officers, while today there are fifteen. The national unit is a bridge between Slovenia and its foreign partners, Europol members, for the exchange of data and information.

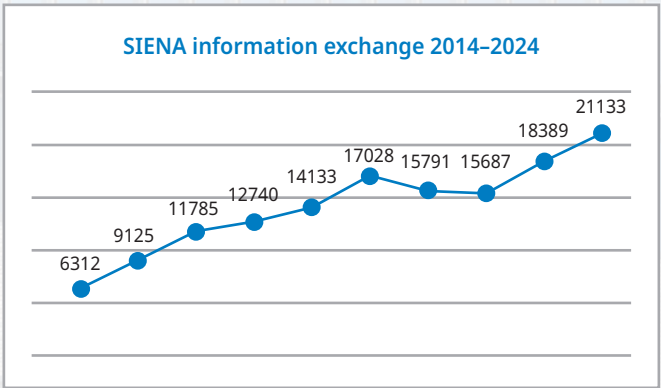


KEY MILESTONES

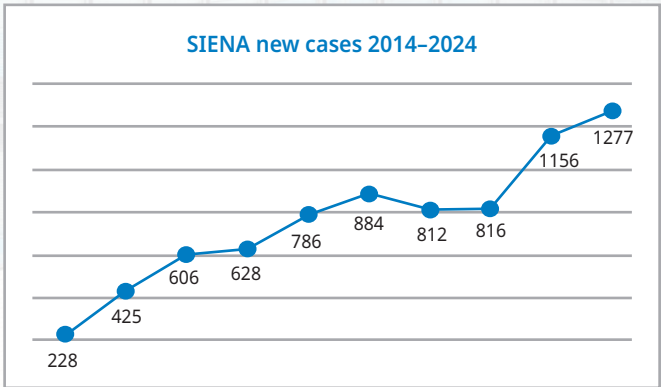
- **1992:** Signature of the Maastricht Treaty and the establishment of the European Police Office – Europol
- **1994:** The Office commences limited operations as the Europol Drugs Unit
- **1999:** Europol becomes fully operational, following the ratification of the Convention on the establishment of a European Police Office (Europol Convention) in 1998
- **2002:** Slovenia's operational agreement with Europol and the establishment of a Europol Unit within the International Police Cooperation Division of the CPD GPD and the secondment of the first liaison officer to Europol headquarters
- **2004:** Following the ratification of the Europol Convention by the Slovenian National Assembly, Slovenia becomes a full member of Europol
- **2008:** Negotiations for a new legal basis for Europol during the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU
- **2009:** Setting up a secure information exchange with Europol through a special application (SIENA)
- **2010:** The Convention is replaced by the Council Decision establishing Europol, and Europol becomes an agency of the European Union
- **2012:** Europol and Interpol sections merge to form the International Operations Section
- **2014:** Setting up a semi-automated upload of Slovenian police data to the Europol Information System (EIS)
- **2015:** SIENA access established for the police cooperation centres in Vrta Megvarje (Thörl Maglern) and Dolga vas

- **2017:** Europol's new legal basis, the Europol Regulation (2016/794), enters into force
- **2017:** Integration of SIENA into the administrative management system of the International Police Cooperation Division
- **2018:** Access to SIENA granted to the Criminal Police Directorate Fugitive Active Search Team (FAST), Passenger Information Unit (PIU) and the Counter-Terrorism Unit (CT)
- **2019:** Access to SIENA granted to the Slovenian representatives in Atlas and to the liaison officer at the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia
- **2020:** Integration of Europol's QUEST interface into the police information and telecommunications system
- **2022:** Europol's mandate is expanded by Regulation 2022/991
- **2023:** Access to SIENA granted to the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia and the ARO contact point

EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BY SLOVENIA



The amount of information exchanged and the number of new cases opened are increasing significantly year by year.



Slovenia is one of the countries with the most information exchanged in relation to its population.

TOOLS FOR COOPERATION WITH EUROPOL

Various forms of investigation support, such as 24/7 analysis and cross-checking of data and information, ensure a rapid response, which is one of Europol's strategic priorities vis-à-vis its Member States. Europol's most up-to-date tool at the moment is operational task

forces (OTF), which, together with the high-value target (HVT) mechanism, provide a platform for cooperation and operational activities of investigators in the most complex and high-risk investigations. The mechanism also provides funding for the activities of seconded national experts (SNE) from Member States and third countries under a dedicated OTF scheme.

Various products, such as operational and strategic analyses, bulletins, situational and other ad hoc reports, Europol's annual Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT), handbooks, the Internet Organised Crime Threat Assessment (IOCTA), and in particular the Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA), serve as a guide for law enforcement policy planning at national level.



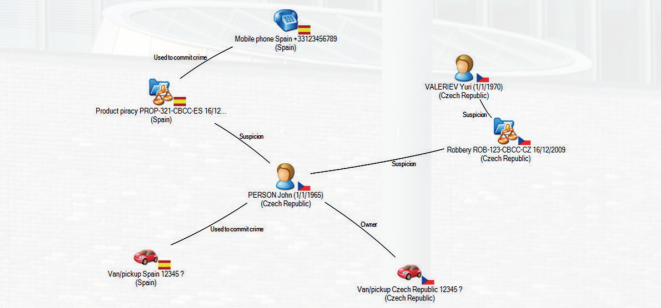
Given the current growth trends in crime and cross-border cooperation, as well as EU requirements (Directive 2023/977), new solutions and organisational adjustments will continue to be needed to ensure an adequate response to criminal threats in the future.

► SIENA

The Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA) has been developed to enable fast, secure and user-friendly communication, the exchange of operational and strategic crime-related information and intelligence between Europol, the Member States and third partners that have cooperation agreements with Europol.

► EIS

The Europol Information System (EIS) offers a large capacity for storing, searching and displaying information related to cross-border crime. The system is able to automatically detect matches between several investigations (see figure).



All information in the EIS is now available to Slovenian investigators through a single operational check in the IT system of the Police. Slovenia is among the top countries in terms of both the number of entries of persons and objects and checks of these entities in the EIS.