
Welcome Address

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Organisers, and especially Dr Detlef Nogala, for the invitation to participate to the CEPOL 2017 Research and Science Conference “Innovations in Law Enforcement – Implications for practice, education and civil society”. It is a pleasure for me to give a keynote speech at this Conference in Budapest. I will give you an overview, including on the added-value of EU funded security research, WP2018-2020, key features, examples, FP9.

Nowadays, criminals and terrorists exploit technological developments and find more and more sophisticated ways to act and elude investigations. Moreover, we are facing new challenges through cyber-crime attacks on infrastructures, companies, public administrations.

As stated in Tallinn two weeks ago, at the Security Research, Innovation and Education Event, co-organized by DG HOME with the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences and EE Ministry of Interior (Panel “What can research and education do for police?”), we need police officers with the right competences to face these challenges. To this end, research and education are the keys, and not only on a national level. Building an EU capacity is vital.

We can only find solutions to safeguard the security of our citizens through cross-border cooperation. If crime does not know borders, responses shouldn’t either. Also Member States do not have the necessary capacity to face certain challenges. We need to tailor our actions consequently and provide practitioners with the support they need in their daily work.

In a recent Special Eurobarometer on Europeans’ attitudes towards security, the importance of cross-border cooperation for the European citizens has been underlined: 69% think national law enforcement authorities should share info with other EU countries on a systematic basis. Also in Spring 2017 Eurobarometers, for the first time, terrorism comes as number one challenge facing the EU.

There is thus a clear mandate of the citizens for the Member States to work together on security matters and that they benefit from EU support. And EU support includes support through research funding. Research can help identify new security threats, better understand their real causes and their impacts on societies. Security research also plays an important role in the development of innovative security solutions that help to mitigate security risks more effectively. It can be new technologies, or new systems or processes.

We have invested nearly 2 billion euro in over 400 projects since the “EU security research programme” started ten years ago, in the seventh Framework Programme, and continued in Horizon 2020. Under the Programme for 2014-2020 1.7 billion are foreseen for “Secure Societies”. EU Security Research accounts for 50% of all public funding for research in security in the EU. Only 7 MS have their own national security research programmes. The EU and its citizens rightfully expect to see a return for this investment. We do have quite a number of results. Some of these will be presented here. I will also mention some a bit later.

Let me underline: we face a major challenge: market uptake that is to ensure that research results are effectively translated into tools and services that police, customs, etc. can use in their daily work. For that to happen, we need practitioners, trainers, educators, civil society, to be involved in our projects and also industry, if we want the EU security research to have a real added-value for European citizens.

The current framework programme, Horizon 2020, has a central role in ensuring that the EU’s research effort is well targeted, factoring in the needs of law enforcement authorities by involving end-users at all stages of the process. To this end, the participation of practitioners in research projects is now mandatory. Eligibility criteria have been made stricter in this respect. Furthermore, under the current work programme, we fund pan-European practitioners’ networks.

The reasoning behind funding networks of practitioners lies in the following:

1) Practitioners (LE) police, customs have little means to free workforces from daily operations, and to dedicate time and resources to monitor innovation and research that could be useful to them and to be thinking about long-term threats and what tools they would need to tackle those threats.

2) Practitioners have little opportunities to interact with academia or with industry on research and innovation.

The newly created networks include two on law enforcement (I-LEAD, ILEA-net), one on firefighters, one on CBRN testing sites (forensics) and one on the Danube River Basin. They aim at helping practitioners identify their future needs, make those needs known to research and industry and be able to monitor what research has brought and what innovative solutions could be of use for their work on the ground. Role of Agencies: Frontex / European Boarder and Coast Guard Agency, Europol, eu-LISA should play an important role in research leading to the tools their relevant practitioners need.

Using the outcomes of research in police practice is very important and should cover a whole range: technology-related research as well as cultural, social and human sciences. And this is why an event like this one organised by CEPOL is so important and so much welcome, convening practitioners in policing and other areas of law enforcement, trainers, educators and scientific scholars from Europe and beyond around the topic of Innovation. I recognise in particular from the programme a number of projects funded by EU Security Research’s familiar names such as TENSOR, ASGARD, UNITY, AUGMED, TARGET and I am particularly pleased and grateful that they are presented here in this forum.

On 27 October the Commission adopted the WP2018-2020 of H2020. The overall funding for the 2018-2020 Work Programme will exceed 30 billion euro, 700 million of which dedicated solely to security research. It will focus efforts on fewer topics with bigger budgets, directly supporting the Commission’s political priorities:

- preventing and fighting serious crime including terrorism;
- improving border security; and
- protecting infrastructure against threats, including cyberattacks.

In this context, a key feature is the creation of ‘Focus areas’, cut across several parts of the overall Work Programme and expected to create an exceptional impact, addressing ‘big ticket’ challenges. These focus areas have been designed around four political priorities: a low-carbon, climate resilient future; circular economy; digitising and transforming European industry and services; and ‘Boosting the effectiveness of the Security Union’.

The Focus Area 'Boosting the effectiveness of the Security Union' will have an overall budget of one billion euro. It will bring together a wide array of security relevant topics from different parts of Horizon 2020, including ICT, Space, Health and Energy.

I would like to give some examples on how we try to:

- on the one hand, use security research as a tool to implement security policies; and
- on the other hand, use security research to feed into the policy development cycle.

The most recent example is the comprehensive Counterterrorism Package which was adopted on 18 October. It comprises a number of practical and operational EU measures to support Member States in fighting terrorism, such as two Action Plans: one on CBRN preparedness and one on EU support to protect public spaces. The Package also entails Recommendations on

- the better application of the Regulation on explosives precursors; i.e. better control of supply chain
- as well as actions to counter radicalisation;
- to counter terrorist financing; and
- to strengthen the external dimension of counter-terrorism.

Let me bring an example related to technology-oriented research on home-made explosives. Most bombs used by terrorists or criminals actually benefit from commercially available products. Innovative solutions to neutralise and detect these explosives have been a constant theme in both EU security policy and EU security research. Our research projects PREVAIL and EXPEDIA have found a way to alter the composition of commercially available chemicals, to make them unusable for bomb makers. These findings will now be used in the revision of the new regulation on explosives. But short-term relevant recommendation to MS is already proposed. Through this, research is providing scientific advice to the policy development process and contributes to the shaping of legislation.

Another example is the Action Plan to protect public spaces – H2020 2018-2020 funding, ISF Police – 18.5M in 2018, plus 100 M in 2018 Urban Innovation Act.

Our work on violent radicalisation is another, [less technology and more socially oriented example, but by no means less important.] Since 2007, research on violent radicalisation has been a recurrent topic in our Work Programmes. Under FP7, four such projects were funded with 14 million euro in EU contribution. Research projects on violent radicalisation are producing scientific tools, and providing policy suggestions for direct use by law enforcement agencies and security policy-makers, including by the experts of the Radicalisation Awareness Network.

As an illustration of their usefulness, let me just mention one of these projects, called SAFIRE, which developed, for the first time, a model of the radicalisation process in its full complexity. This model is already actioned by services in some Member States to address individual cases of radicalisation. Within Horizon 2020, TENSOR and DANTE, two projects related to the detection of online terrorist content, started last year. Four more projects, worth 12 million euro in EU contribution, were launched for funding this year, through the 2016 call for proposals under the H2020 Secure Societies Challenge. They propose among others to develop policy recommendations and improved communication tools for law enforcement and security agencies. Violent radicalisation and explosives will remain research priorities for the 2018-2020 Work Programmes of the Secure Societies Challenge. These are some examples of how the circle between research and policy is closed.

Some of you are already engaged in our projects. I would encourage all of you to look into our Work Programme, into our projects. Our ultimate goal, from a European security research perspective, is to be useful to policy makers and to law enforcement. Let's join forces to be effective in the fight against crime and terrorism.

I wish you all three very successful days of discussions, mutual learning and networking.

Thank you for your attention.