

EUAA Presidency of the JHA Agencies Network 2023

Work programme



The Justice and Home Affairs Agencies Network (JHAAN) was established in 2010 to increase inter-agency cooperation in the JHA field and explore synergies in areas of common interest. The Network is constituted of the nine JHA Agencies: CEPOL, EIGE, EMCDDA, EUAA, eu-LISA, EUROJUST, EUROPOL, FRA and FRONTEX. The presidency of the Network rotates on a yearly basis. In 2023, the EUAA will hold the presidency of the JHAAN.

As of 2022, based on the 10-year Assessment Report of the JHAAN adopted by the Heads of JHA Agencies in 2021, the Network implements a Trio Presidency coordination concept. With this concept, three consecutive presiding agencies¹ work closely together by introducing overarching topics to be discussed for three consecutive years. The current Trio agreed to continue keeping important topics affecting each JHA agency such as ‘digitalisation’ and its different dimensions, ‘business continuity’ and the ‘EU Green Deal implementation’ on the agenda of the Network. Moreover, the Trio has also agreed to continue working on implementation of the recommendations from the JHAAN Assessment Report. These considerations are reflected in the EUAA priorities and work programme for 2023. Continuing the tradition of inclusiveness and the practice of active involvement and ownership of all Network members, the EUAA Presidency relies on the expertise and active contribution of all Agencies, in particular concerning topics specific to the individual mandates of the Agencies.

Five priority topics


In 2023, during the EUAA Presidency of the JHAAN, the Agency proposes that the Network will focus on the following priorities:

1. **Digitalisation**..... 2
2. **Implementation of the EU Green Deal in JHA Agencies**..... 2
3. **Information provision in mixed migration situations**..... 3
4. **Cybersecurity** 3
5. **JHAAN communication and promotion** 4

Although the aforementioned priorities form the basis of its presidency, the EUAA will remain vigilant of developments in the justice and home affairs area throughout 2023 and thus will keep a flexible approach during its presidency of the Network to respond to current events, if need be.

On top of the priorities and respective activities presented in this note, the JHAAN and its members will continue following the situation resulting from the ongoing war in Ukraine and will continue

¹ Due to the Network’s composition of nine Agencies, the rotating Trio will consist of the same three Agencies in the course of the three-year period. The first Presidency Trio is CEPOL, EUAA and eu-LISA (2022, 2023, 2024). The following trio will consist of FRA, EMCDDA and EIGE (2025, 2026, 2027) and it will be followed by the Trio of EUROPOL, EUROJUST and FRONTEX (2028, 2029, 2030). Priorities of the CEPOL-EUAA-eu-LISA Trio Presidency (2022-2024) can be found in Annex I of this document.



working together and utilise each other's expertise in order to support the EU Member States in dealing with the consequences of the war.

Moreover, as agreed with the Heads of JHA Agencies' statement on the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union signed in 2019, the network will, in line with their respective mandates, continue ongoing efforts to promote and protect the fundamental rights as they are integral part of their work. In this light, an annual exchange on agencies' practices regarding the implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights will continue to be held.

On page 5 of this note, the EUAA reflects on the organisation of regular meetings and activities of the Network. Page 6 contains a provisional planning of all presidency activities in 2023.

1. Digitalisation

Digitalisation has been one of the central topics for the Network for several years now. In 2022, the first JHAAN Trio Presidency agreed to keep the topic of digitalisation and its different dimensions high on the Network agenda for the period of 2022-2024, in line with the Commission's vision for digital transformation by 2030. Keeping digitalisation on the agenda of the Network will promote continued discussions and future initiatives and encourage the agencies to find synergies and join forces, where relevant.

1.1 Digitalisation conference on interconnectivity

In 2021, a large-scale conference was organised with members of the EUAA Asylum Processes Network, the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC) and the General Directors of Immigration Services Conference (GDISC) coming together to discuss various means of digital innovation in asylum procedures focusing on the digital identification of third country nationals. A follow-up conference is to be organised in 2023. The scope and target audience of the 2023 conference will be expanded to include JHA Agencies, in agreement with organising partners. JHAAN members will be invited to actively contribute to the conference by way of presentations and other interventions.

1.2 Targeted discussions on digital learning technologies


The EUAA will furthermore focus on initiating closer contacts among experts specialising in digital learning and related technologies, separately from training matters. The aim is to explore best practices among the agencies regarding e-learning design, production and the tools and services used for them, to exchange advanced knowledge, and to provide opportunities for keeping up to date with the latest developments in the field. The EUAA will do so by establishing a list of experts in the field, and by organising an ad hoc meeting on the topic.

2. Implementation of the EU Green Deal in JHA Agencies

Given the enormous impact of climate change on different aspects in the field of JHA and in line with the JHAAN Statement on implementation of the EU Green Deal signed by the Heads of JHA Agencies in 2021, the EUAA intends to continue exploring possible cooperation among JHA Agencies on environmental efforts. This intention is reflected in the agreed list of Trio priority topics for 2022-2024 as well.

2.1 Questionnaire, report and online presentation on JHA agencies greening efforts

A questionnaire will be conducted in Q1 2023 to assess the updated state of play of efforts in all JHA agencies to move towards more environmentally conscious and responsible organisations, and to identify areas of interest for future JHAAN activities in this regard. The



EUAA will analyse the results of the questionnaire and will propose further activities of the Network during its presidency where relevant.

3. Information provision in mixed migration situations

Experiences from situations of mass and/or sudden influx show that the swift and adequate provision of proper, accurate and tailor-made information is important for migrants and persons in need of international protection. This way, they can make informed choices, avoid falling victim to exploitation or abuse, and avoid being instrumentalised, while appropriate protection to those in need can be ensured.

In mixed migration situations, relevant national authorities are likely to be confronted with victims of trafficking and their traffickers, traumatized persons, (un)accompanied minors in need of specialised child-care, third country nationals and stateless persons in need of international protection, migrants gone missing along the migration routes and people seeking a better economic perspective. In these challenging contexts, many JHA Agencies work together based on their respective mandates in supporting an affected Member State² perform tasks needed to address such situations.

In order to emphasize the importance of adequate information provision in mixed migration settings, to exchange information and experiences, and to strengthen cooperation between JHA Agencies in this area, information provision in mixed migration settings is one of the thematic priorities of the 2023 JHAAN Presidency.

3.1 Two seminars on the topic of information provision in mixed migration settings

EUAA will organise two seminars to discuss challenges and opportunities for further cooperation among JHA Agencies on the topic of information provisions in mixed migration settings. One seminar will focus on *how* to provide information efficiently. Assessing information needs and developing information provision strategies will also be discussed. A second seminar will cover *what* information agencies provide in these situations and how they could cooperate with each other, ensuring inclusivity and strengthening inter-stakeholder referral mechanisms. The aim of both seminars is to explore and discuss various practices by the JHA Agencies and to nurture further synergies and cooperation.

4. Cybersecurity

The Russian aggression against Ukraine has led to an increased risk of cyberattacks on Member States and other strategic targets, including EU institutions, bodies and agencies. Several JHA Agencies have taken a prominent role in supporting EU+ Member States and third countries in dealing with the ensuing refugee crisis. Their exposure brings greater risks to the JHA Agencies' (digital) activities and daily business.

Apart from increased risks and threats as a result of the current crisis, there are increased digitalisation and interoperability efforts which will extend the cooperation among the JHA agencies which warrant following up on. Therefore, the EUAA proposes that in 2023, the network focuses on cooperation in the area of cybersecurity with the aim to increase cybersecurity and resilience of the JHA Agencies against potential cyber threats.

² In certain of these contexts, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are defined between host MS, EU agencies, COM and other intervening organisations to clarify division of roles and ensure all steps are covered.

4.1 Joint JHA technical cyber exercise

The EUAA will organise a joint technical cyber exercise among JHA Agencies. This exercise on a technical level will focus on sharing and comparing good practices, identifying shortcomings in common IT infrastructure exploits, and mitigation efforts at technical level.

4.2 Joint cyber-crisis situational exercise

The EUAA will organise a joint cyber-crisis situational exercise among JHA Agencies to showcase how an organisation reacts to an attack/crisis, including at senior management level, and to discuss and exchange best practices in this regard.

4.3 Discussion on cybersecurity at executive level

Given the importance of cybersecurity, the EUAA intends to address this topic at the executive level by engaging the Heads of JHA Agencies in the discussion. The EUAA will organise a presentation of a threat landscape by the CERT-EU, specifically designed for the JHA field and the high-level audience.

5. JHAAN communication and promotion

The JHAAN assessment report 2021 highlighted, *inter alia*, the importance of both internal and external communication on the Network's activities and functioning in order to provide better understanding and increase trust. The EUAA will continue the Network's efforts on this recommendation. In this regard, several initiatives are suggested, aiming to increase knowledge about individual agencies and the Network among agencies' staff, to increase awareness about the Network in the main EU institutions, and to increase outreach to European citizens.

5.1 Series of events and activities under communication and promotion priority, which will be considered in 2023:

- Networking event for the Heads of JHA Agencies in Brussels with relevant political and executive level stakeholders within EU institutions
- Meeting on reporting methodologies for JHA Agency experts
- Workshop on communication with Member States
- Staff exchange programme within thematic priority areas and core corporate functions
- Awareness raising event for JHA Agencies' staff on mandates and activities of the JHA Agencies and the JHAAN
- New promotional video of the network
- Update of the JHAAN brochure
- Issuing of a JHAAN newsletter



Organisation of regular meetings and activities of the Network

In 2023, the EUAA will continue organising and conducting regular meetings and activities of the JHAAN as follows:

- Organisation of the Heads of Agencies meeting
- Organisation of the JHAAN Contact Points meetings (three regular meetings and *ad hoc* meetings if needed)
- Organisation of the Trio Executive Directors meetings with incoming Council Presidencies
- Organisation of Trio coordination meetings
- Organisation of the working group (WG) meetings with rotating chair:
 - o WG on Data Protection
 - o WG on Communications
 - o WG on ICT and cybersecurity
 - o WG on External Relations
- Coordinating the annual update of the JHAAN reporting tools and products:
 - o JHAAN Final report
 - o Scorecard
 - o Relex Matrix Tool and Infographics (Relex WG)
 - o Infographic inter-agency activities (WG on Communication)
- Providing input for the tools and products under coordination of other JHA Agencies:
 - o Toolbox on migration (Frontex)
 - o Index of analytical products (EMCDDA/eu-LISA)
 - o Infographic EMPACT (Europol)
 - o Counter-terrorism toolbox (Eurojust)
- Participation in the meetings of the WGs with permanent chairs:
 - o WG on Training (CEPOL)
 - o WG on European Situation Monitoring (Frontex)

Provisional calendar of events for 2023

Date	Event	Location
12 December 2022 OR 16 January 2023	Trio coordination meeting – CPs level	Online
February 2023	Meeting on reporting methodologies	TBC
17 March 2023	Regular JHAAN CPs meeting	Malta
4 April 2023	WG on Data Protection (chair rotating)	Malta
Q1 2023	JHA Security Officers Network (chair TBC following the discussion at the HoA meeting)	Online (TBC)
April 2023	WG on Communication (chair rotating)	Malta
April 2023 (back-to-back with the WG on COM)	Workshop on communication with Member States	Malta
April/May 2023	Technical JHA Agencies' cybersecurity exercise	Malta
02 June 2023	Seminar on information provision ('how')	Malta
12 June 2023	Regular JHAAN CPs meeting	Online
13-14 June 2023	Digitalisation conference	Malta
22 June 2023 (TBC in agreement with the Trio partners and the ES Presidency)	Trio Heads of Agencies meeting with the incoming Council Presidency (Spain)	Brussels
July 2023	WG on ICT and cybersecurity (chair rotating)	Malta
5 September 2023	Regular JHAAN CPs meeting	Malta
14 September 2023 TBC by CEPOL	WG on Training (permanent chair)	TBC by CEPOL
September 2023	Cybersecurity exercise for managers	Malta/online
Q3 Sep/Oct 2023 TBC by Frontex	WG on European Situation Monitoring (permanent chair)	TBC by Frontex

12 October 2023	WG on Relex (chair rotating)	Malta
October 2023	Meeting on digital learning	Malta
October 2023	WG on Data Protection (2 nd meeting)	TBC
8 November 2023 (TBC in agreement with the Trio partners and the BE Presidency)	Trio Heads of Agencies meeting with the incoming Council Presidency (Belgium)	Brussels
15 November 2023	Seminar on information provision ('what')	(TBC)
21 November 2023	Heads of Agencies meeting	Malta
December 2023/Q1 2024	Presentation of the JHAAN Annual Report 2023 to COSI by EUAA	Brussels/Online (TBC at the later stage by COSI)
Q1 2024	Presentation of the JHAAN Annual Report 2023 and the priorities of the next JHAAN Presidency at the LIBE Committee by EUAA and eu-LISA	Brussels/Online (TBC at the later stage by LIBE)

Annex I - Priorities of the CEPOL-EUAA-eu-LISA Trio Presidency (2022-2024)

Based on the 10 years Assessment Report of the JHA Agencies Network, endorsed by the Heads of the JHA Agencies at their meeting in Warsaw (22 November 2021), the Network agreed to establish a 'Trio Presidency Coordination'. It was recommended to explore the modalities and functionality of a Trio Presidency format. This would allow the introduction of additional overarching topics pertinent to the Network and discussing them in a more thorough way. This should also facilitate long-term planning, reflect EU policy developments, ensure a smooth transition from one Presidency to another and help guide the priority areas of cooperation of the Network each year.

Against this background, the subsequent Presidencies of CEPOL (2022), EUAA (2023) and eu-LISA (2024) form the first Presidency Trio. The members of the Trio are eager to explore the opportunities this new framework is providing, while being aware of the chairing Agency's tasks. From the practical point of view, the members of the Trio have already started considerations and will pilot some working methods in 2022 that could then become a regular pattern for upcoming Presidencies and Trios. The guiding principles of this work will be flexibility and avoiding the creation of additional administrative burdens, with the aim of identifying synergies that would enable the three Agencies to genuinely and mutually support each other throughout their annual tenures. Such working methods will be discussed among all members of the Network.

Beyond the onset of the Trio Presidency itself, members of the Trio are committed to gradually work on implementation of all recommendations of the 10 years Assessment Report to capitalise on the well-functioning, established features of the Network having evolved through the past decade, but also to explore some new elements that could bring further added value into the cooperation within the Network.

As regards thematic priorities, the members of the Trio will continue to deal with topics of importance to the network that relate to the core business of most agencies but also further explore cooperation on important topics that mark the current decade, most notably digitalization (subtopics such as, the use of artificial intelligence, biometrics, interoperability, cybersecurity and cybersecurity training), business continuity and the implementation of the principles of the EU Green Deal. Moreover, the Trio will act in a forward-looking manner and will look at challenges ahead of us, while reflecting on a long-term vision of the role of the JHA Agencies, inter-agency cooperation and the Network itself. Inter-agency synergies and close communication among the Trio partners and with the entire Network will be instrumental when it comes to these considerations.