



EUROPEAN NETWORK OF FORENSIC SCIENCE INSTITUTES
EFSA 2020 TASK FORCE

Vision for European Forensic Science 2020

European Forensic Area 2020



VISION FOR EUROPEAN FORENSIC SCIENCE 2020

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS - 1 DECEMBER 2011

In order to foster cooperation between police and judicial authorities across the European Union with a view to creating a **European Forensic Science Area by 2020**, **Member States** and **the Commission** will work together to make progress in the following areas, **aiming to ensure the even-handed, consistent and efficient administration of justice and the security of citizens**:

1. accreditation of forensic science institutes and laboratories;
2. respect for minimum competence criteria for forensic science personnel;
3. establishment of common best practice manuals and their application in daily work of forensic laboratories and institutes;
4. conduct of proficiency tests/collaborative exercises in forensic science activities at international level;
5. application of minimum quality standards for scene-of-crime investigations and evidence management from crime scene to court room;
6. recognition of equivalence of law enforcement forensic activities with a view to avoiding duplication of effort through cancellation of evidence owing to technical and qualitative differences, and achieving significant reductions in the time taken to process crimes with a cross-border component;
7. identification of optimal and shared ways to create, update and use forensic databases;
8. use of advances in forensic science in the fight against terrorism, organised crime and other criminal activities;
9. forensic awareness, in particular through appropriate education and training of the law enforcement and justice community;
10. research and development projects to promote further development of the forensic science infrastructure.



VISION FOR EUROPEAN FORENSIC SCIENCE 2020

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS - 1 DECEMBER 2011

- The European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) worked on most of the aforementioned actions, but as a mere network of differently organized institutes – official authorities connected with Police or Justice as well as commercial and university organizations, the network lacked of financial and political support for dealing with all 10 actions properly.
- ENFSI requires from and assists its members accreditation according to ISO 17025
- ENFSI's Standing Committees and Expert Working Groups provide
 - Best Practice Manuals
 - Proficiency Tests and / or Collaborative Exercises
 - Forensic Databases
 - Research & DevelopmentIn different areas and in various levels
- In 2016 the Dutch Presidency of the European Council took the initiative to review the progress and renew the Council Conclusions of 2011



EUROPEAN FORENSIC SCIENCE AREA 2020

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS 2016 - ACTION PLAN

1. Improving mutual trust by encouraging continuous quality improvement of forensic procedures and processes through the development and use of **Best Practice Manuals** for forensic analyses.
2. Stimulate the exchange of forensic information from **databases** similar to the methodology used under the Prüm Decisions 2008/615/JHA and 2008/616/JHA, focusing on the areas of weapons and ammunition, explosives and drugs.
3. Improving mutual trust by increased use of **proficiency tests** and **collaborative exercises** by forensic service providers.
4. Improving **forensic awareness** among law enforcement and justice communities.
5. Stimulate **accreditation** of forensic procedures and **competence** of forensic personnel by forensic service providers on a voluntary basis.
6. Stimulating **full implementation of the Prüm Decisions** 2008/615/JHA and 2008/616/JHA to exchange DNA-profiles and fingerprints. In addition, improving the quality of forensic data exchanged between all Member States under the Prüm Decisions.



EUROPEAN FORENSIC SCIENCE AREA 2020

EFSA 2020 TASK FORCE

- The ENFSI Board installed in September 2016 a Task Force to advise the ENFSI Board and support ENFSI's actions with a view to the European Forensic Science Area
- First meeting of the Task Force with Representatives from the European Commission in Brussels in October 2016 in Brussels



EFSA 2020 TASK FORCE

Mr. Thomas Andermann, *BKA Wiesbaden, Germany (chair)*

Mrs. Christina Bertler Edlund, *NFC Linköping, Sweden*

Mrs. Judy Van Overveld, *NFI The Hague, the Netherlands*

Mr. Oscar Ruiz Barba, *GCSP Madrid, Spain*

Mr. Raimonds Apinis, *SFSB Riga, Latvia*

Mrs. Sara Falconi, *DAC-SPS Rome, Italy*

Mr. Üllar Lanno, *EFSI Tallinn, Estonia*

[September 2017: Mr. Jan De Kinder, *NICC Brussels, Belgium*]



EUROPEAN FORENSIC SCIENCE AREA 2020

ACTION PLAN

1. Improving mutual trust by encouraging continuous quality improvement of forensic procedures and processes through the development and use of **Best Practice Manuals** for forensic analyses.
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EUROPEAN FORENSIC SCIENCE AREA 2020

1. BEST PRACTICE MANUALS

Stock taking exercise on the available BPMs in different forensic science areas, the updates needed and the gaps that still exist (COM, ENFSI)

Implement the Council Conclusions by:

- Sharing of existing BPMs for different forensic science areas with non-ENFSI members*
- Developing new BPMs and updating existing BPMs*
- Stimulating the use of BPMs by forensic service providers (MS and ENFSI)*
- Translating BPMs in all EU languages (MS assisted by ENFSI)*



MEASURES REGARDING ACTION 1 OF THE ACTION PLAN

- I. Raising awareness and application of BPMs:
 1. Additionally to BPMs already published on enfsi.eu, all existing ENFSI BPMs should be published here (activity 3a).
 2. Ask the ENFSI members to take into account ENFSI BPMs by setting up their own quality management systems (activity 3c).
 3. Inform EA continuously about the existence of BPMs (activity 4).
 4. Ask the ENFSI members to inform their national accreditation bodies about the existence of BPMs (activity 4).

Activities in brackets refer to the activities mentioned in the Action Plan of the Council Conclusions ST10128/16



MEASURES REGARDING ACTION 1 OF THE ACTION PLAN

II. Development of BPMs (activity 3b)

1. Ask the ENFSI EWGs to develop BPMs in particular in areas with an identified lack of BPMs, but also to revise existing BPMs at regular intervals.
2. Ask the ENFSI EWGs to take actively part in standardization activities worldwide, e.g. in ISO, OSAC etc.

III. Subsidization (activity 2)

1. Seek for additional funding from national and European funding programs for the development of BPMs.
2. Invite the ENFSI members in need of BPMs in their native language to ask for funding from national or EU programs (activity 3d).

Activities in brackets refer to the activities mentioned in the Action Plan of the Council Conclusions ST10128/16



ENFSI ACTION PLAN 2017-2018

ACTION – 1.1

Facilitate the establishment and sharing of BPMs.

Description:

- Explore with the **EWGs** the current need of new BPMs.
- Make available a series of peer reviewed guidelines, which the **Expert Working Groups** have produced. Update if necessary.
- Streamline the BPM approval process to ensure the documents are well-harmonized and uniform.
- Make all BPMs and other guidelines available on the enfsi.eu site.
- Work with the EC to obtain funding for creating new BPMs and updating existing BPMs, including their translation into EU languages. Discuss with the **EWGs** to ensure the BPMs are regularly on the agenda of their Annual Meetings.
- Inform the EA about the availability of BPMs.

Reference:

EFSA 1. activity

Owner: Board

Deliverable: Progress Report

End date: AM2018

Other persons/bodies involved:
EFSA2020 Task Force, QCC



2. DATABASES

- *Evaluate outcomes of projects such as 'Towards the Development of Pan-European Databases in Forensic Science', EFFECT, ODYSSEY and RESPONSE and use as input to develop appropriate strategy to enhance exchange of forensic evidence (ENFSI, MS, Europol, COM)*
- *Develop new research projects using H2020 funding instruments to prepare the future in this area*
- *Are there similar national databases for forensic exchanges and which kind of forensic data is suitable for such online exchange (ENFSI in cooperation with the Member States)*
- *Discuss forensic facial databases as a complementary biometrical identification parameter (Member States, in coordination with ENFSI)*



No case related information

Non personalised information

ENFSI has been seeking vital support from
Europol

Projects funded by the European Commission:

- EDPS (the past)

- Towards the Development of pan-European
Databases in Forensic Science



MEASURES REGARDING ACTION 2 OF THE ACTION PLAN

IV. Support the increased exchange of forensic data between Member States

1. **Execute the project** “Towards the Development of Pan-European Databases in Forensic Science” in time and evaluate the outcomes.
2. The ENFSI Board together with the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission will continually **ask Europol to provide a suitable platform and technical support** for the exchange of forensic data.
3. The **ENFSI members** will use all available measures to **bring forward the demand for administrative and technical support by Europol** through their national representatives in the relevant panels and committees.



ENFSI ACTION PLAN 2017-2018

ACTION – 1.2

Facilitate the establishment and sharing of Forensic Databases.

Description:

Map out the most relevant areas where common European databases would be beneficial to be applied. Ensure the data collected are harmonized and thus comparable. Make a clear separation between knowledge databases and case related databases.

Work with Europol to achieve a solid platform and maintenance system for forensic databases.

Work with the EC to provide funding for the development of new databases and their implementation into a common network.

Reference:

EFSA 2. activity

Owner: Board

Other persons/bodies involved:
EFSA2020 Task Force

Deliverable: Progress Report

End date: AM2018



3. PROFICIENCY TESTS

- *Making a list of forensic proficiency test providers*
- *Identifying the areas of expertise in which good proficiency tests are needed (ENFSI)*
- *Make a list of recommended tests that can be chosen from by forensic service providers (ENFSI)*
- *Which additional proficiency tests need to be developed (MS and ENFSI)*
- *(...)*



MEASURES REGARDING ACTION 3 OF THE ACTION PLAN

V. Raising awareness and application of PTs:

1. Ask the ENFSI members to take part in PTs already provided by ENFSI EWGs or different PT providers (activity 6).

VI. Development and supply of PTs

1. Ask the ENFSI EWGs to develop and to provide PTs at regular intervals (activity 5).
2. Ask the ENFSI EWGs to design PTs and to co-operate with professional PT providers in order to raise quality and quantity of available PTs (activity 5).

VII. Subsidization

1. Ask COM for special funding regarding the development of PTs and ask the ENFSI EWGs to come up with respective proposals.
2. Ask the ENFSI members in need of PTs to ask for funding from national or EU programs.

Activities in brackets refer to the activities mentioned in the Action Plan of the Council Conclusions ST10128/16



ENFSI ACTION PLAN 2017-2018

ACTION – 1.3

Facilitate the establishment of new Proficiency Tests and Collaborative Exercises.

Description:

Carry out an evaluation of existing PTs together with the **EWGs**.

Raise awareness of ENFSI member laboratories about the availability of existing PTs.

Work with the EC to provide funding for new Proficiency Tests and Collaborative Exercises.

Explore the availability of ENFSI Member institutes and private service providers to produce the tests on a regular basis.

Reference:

EFSA 3. activity

Owner: Board

Deliverable: Progress Report

End date: AM2018

Other persons/bodies involved:
EFSA2020 Task Force, QCC, **EWGs**



LESSONS LEARNED - FURTHER CONCLUSIONS

1. Task Force versus Advisory Board

- The Task Force acted more like an advisory board
- It is difficult enough to co-ordinate 7 to 8 people and come to mutual conclusions, more over to discuss suitable measures with approx. 20 stakeholders
- Permanent communication is essential

2. State of play

- Will we ever achieve a European Forensic Science Area ?
- Do we really have problems with mutual recognition of forensic evidence in Europe ?
- Accreditation shall give us consumer confidence in forensic science !
- ENFSI provides a platform for professional information exchange between forensic scientist → Best practices, Research & Development, crucial (background) data

3. The Commission and Europol

- Despite the strong international co-operation in forensic science, standards set by law or governmental regulation may help improving consumer confidence in forensic science !
- Europol as a European Agency may provide more sustainable solutions for secure forensic databases than a variety of national solutions, depending on the resources of smaller organizations and their management decisions !