PREVENT

Building capacity against high-risk criminal networks in the EU: from an improved intelligence picture towards an integrated prevention approach

CONTEXT

High-risk criminal networks (HRCNs) currently pose one of the most serious security threats in Europe. The organized crime (OC) landscape is marked by increasingly networked, fluid, and profit-driven international operations. Recent reports reveal HRCNs successful use the legal 'upper world' to facilitate or conceal criminal activities. In light of HRCNs' evolving tactics, the European Commission (EC) and other law enforcement agencies (LEAs) at the national and EU levels have underscored the urgent need to better identify the most dangerous OC groups or networks.

PREVENT is a multi-country project aimed at addressing these critical challenges. The project seeks to tackle high-risk criminal networks (HRCNs) in Europe) by contributing to an improved intelligence picture, enhancing the understanding of their infiltration into the legal economy, and promoting an integrated prevention approach. This includes applying administrative measures and increasing public and social reuse of confiscated assets to foster alternative local level economic development models – an underutilized tool across Europe.

PREVENT

OBJECTIVES

Enhance Intelligence on HRCNs: Strengthen collaboration between academics and institutions to improve data collection and analysis on criminal networks and their finances.

EXPECTED OUTCOME: Improve capacity of LEAs to identify HRCN, their criminal finances, business models and use of the legitimate economy.

Boost Social Reuse of Confiscated Assets: Promote social reuse of confiscated assets implementation as an innovative tool to fight crime among stakeholders at all levels (local, national, and European).

EXPECTED OUTCOME: Greater awareness and understanding of the benefits of social reuse for crime prevention.

Promote Administrative Approaches: Identify and share effective administrative measures to combat HRCNs at national and EU levels.

EXPECTED OUTCOME: Increased adoption of administrative tools to prevent and disrupt HRCN activities.

Strengthen Strategic Public-Private Cooperation: Foster dialogue among stakeholders at the local, national and EU levels in prevention and fighting HRCN.

EXPECTED OUTCOME: Improved partnerships leading to strategic crime prevention and community development.

OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

- **HRCN Scorecard** combining harm and threat indicators
- **Assessment of the threats and harms** of HRCN at the local level in the EU
- **Assessment of the HRCNs' infiltration into the legal economy** at the local level in the EU
- **Overview** of existing and promising administrative measures against HRCN
- **A feasibility and impact** assessment of the social economy approach against HRCN
- **A model approach** for prevention and fight against HRCN at the local level and remedy for the harmful effects for society through social reuse of assets
- **10 Workshops** and Events engaging experts, policymakers, and civil society actors to discuss measures to prevent and tackle HRCN
- **4 local action plans** in Sofia, Brussels, Utrecht and Madrid, engaging local actors to promote social innovation and reuse initiatives and to counter the influence and impact of HRCN in local communities
- **EU Forum** on Social Reuse of Confiscated Assets in Brussels and a field visit in Naples, Italy
- A Final **EU conference in Gent** to disseminate results and promote the adoption of best practices across Europe

DURATION

1 January 2025 – 31 December 2026

BENEFICARIES

- EUROPOL, European Commission (DG HOME, DG REGIO, DG EMPL)
- National and local law enforcement authorities, AROs, AMOs, municipal authorities
- Civil society organisations, social enterprises, and social economy organisations

PARTNERS

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS

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