INTERPOL

PROJECT I-FORCE

Regional cooperation of law enforcement agencies in eastern and southeastern europe

THE SITUATION

Armed conflicts can create conditions that enable serious organized crime and heighten the risk of terrorism. Law enforcement agencies are closely monitoring the potential impact of the conflict in Ukraine on organized crime and other transnational threats, both in the region and worldwide. The situation remains highly dynamic and unpredictable, shaped by rapidly evolving security threats and institutional challenges.

In this context, Project I-FORCE strengthens regional resilience by reinforcing cross-border law enforcement cooperation. The project aims to enhance border security, safeguard public safety, and contribute to long-term regional stability in Eastern and Southeastern Europe.

PROJECT I-FORCE

PROJECT SCOPE

Project I-FORCE focuses on identifying victims of serious crime, apprehending and prosecuting offenders, and disrupting transnational organized criminal networks.

Building on the successes of Phase I, Phase II will continue to facilitate information exchange, enhance operational coordination and strengthen capacity-building among law enforcement agencies, frontline border agencies and international organizations across the region.

The project will also promote best practices from neighbouring countries – Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia – while expanding engagement to additional countries – Austria, Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom – to broaden the scope of regional collaboration.

Crimes covered:

- Organized crime groups and criminal networks;
- Human trafficking, smuggling of migrants and child sexual exploitation;
- Trafficking in drugs, firearms and vehicles;
- Critical threats and terrorism activities;
- Cyber-enabled crime and cybersecurity;
- Financial crimes and financial investigations;
- Illegal border crossing involving falsified identities and documents.

The project has four main objectives:

1: Enhance operational capacities of INTERPOL's National Central Bureaus (NCBs) in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

2: Develop operational capacities of national specialized units through targeted training.

3: Ensure national law enforcement agencies are well-equipped and responsive to investigate and address the threats posed by organized crime groups.

4: Build a strong relationship of trust and recognition between all partners through sustained dialogue, joint operations and a project steering committee.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Provide technical support on INTERPOL databases and tools.
- Deliver capacity-building programmes to enhance investigative skills.
- Improve victim identification and protection mechanisms throughout investigative processes.
- Conduct regular needs assessments to inform quarterly High-Level Activity Plans aligned with partner priorities.
- Assess and raise regional awareness of criminal modus operandi of persons wanted for serious organized crime offences.
- Develop innovative working methodologies for integrated law enforcement approaches.
- Establish and support a Regional Task Force to support transnational investigations., operational support teams, and intelligence-sharing case meetings.
- Carry out joint operations and investigations to arrest offenders and disrupt serious organized criminal networks.
- Enhance travel security through biometric identification.

Timeframe: 1 March 2024 – 30 June 2027

Beneficiary countries: Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and neighbouring countries in the Eastern and Southeastern Europe

Donor: Germany (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Budget: EUR 7.8 million (Phase I and II)

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