

WELCOME TO THE 2<sup>ND</sup>  
CEASEFIRE PROJECT  
NEWSLETTER!



# CEASEFIRE

## Introduction

The EC-funded R&I project **Ceasefire**, a 3-year Horizon Europe Innovation Action launched in October 2022, has been designed to improve the crime-fighting ability of European nations using modern technology. It brings together 21 expert partners from across Europe, including industrial partners, Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) and research universities or institutions, while focusing on *combatting firearms trafficking*. Ceasefire is coordinated by the *Centre for Research and Technology – Hellas (CERTH, Greece)*.

## Collecting data

On April 4-5, 2023, Ceasefire had its 2<sup>nd</sup> physical plenary meeting in Poland, at the premises of the *Provincial Police Headquarters in Gdansk*, which is a partner of the project consortium. Members of Ceasefire exchanged ideas and shared progress on this exciting project about combating firearms trafficking, discussing next actions and planning future work.

*From the premises  
of the Provincial  
Police Headquarters  
in Gdansk, Poland.*



*From the project workshop  
at police warehouses  
in Gdansk, Poland.*

The day before the plenary meeting was dedicated to a project workshop at the local police warehouses. The event gathered representatives from the *Polish Customs* authorities and from 3 technical project partners (*Harokopio University of Athens, Institut National Polytechnique de Toulouse, ITTI Sp. z o.o.*). Protocols were agreed upon for the collection of relevant real-world datasets, facilitating the development of AI tools for automatically detecting firearms trafficking instances in fast parcel services, using X-ray technologies.

## Coordinating at a European level

On 14 March 2023 the European Commission held a workshop in Brussels on **Europol's new role in Horizon Europe**, organized by the Community for European Research and Innovation for Security (**CERIS**). Ceasefire participated, along with several other active Horizon 2020/Horizon Europe projects, in a joint effort to determine the terms of future cooperation between Europol and the European research ecosystem.

Independently of the above event, Ceasefire has also been coordinating its efforts with **EMPACT**: the “European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats”. Firearms trafficking has been identified as one of the EMPACT priorities since the first EU fully-fledged policy cycle of 2014 – 2017. In this regard, *EMPACT Firearms*, composed of representatives of Member States, EU agencies and other stakeholders, aims at targeting criminal networks and individual criminals involved in the illicit trafficking, distribution and use of firearms.

Ceasefire can contribute to strengthening and enhancing LEAs operational capabilities and activities by providing LEAs with useful tools, knowledge, recommendations, best practices, etc. EMPACT Firearms can contribute to the success of Ceasefire by sharing information, inputs, feedback and expertise. This link allows the project to start from the actual operational needs and to develop *ad hoc* solutions that LEAs can benefit from.



From the workshop  
on 14 March 2023  
in Brussels, Belgium.



## Coordinating at a European level

Many activities have been performed in the last months to coordinate Ceasefire activities with EMPACT Firearms, under the lead of the *French Ministry of the Interior*. A first online meeting was organized to discuss the relevant synergies, highlighting many analogies between the objectives of the two efforts: the development of a better intelligence picture, the establishment of fully functional National Firearms Focal Points (NFFPs), the use of 3D printing, online and financial investigations, and the use of fast parcel and postal services to illegally traffic firearms, parts and components.

In March 2023, Ceasefire was invited by the European Commission in its capacity as the Driver of an EMPACT Operational Action to attend a meeting in Brussels on the state of play and way forward on the establishment of NFFPs and the standardization of data collection on firearms at EU level. This was the occasion to present the project to the EMPACT Firearms community and to gather useful feedback on the activities as well as contacts of LEAs interested in the project.

The exchange of needs, ideas, inputs and concrete solutions has proven to be an effective way to work together. The collaboration will also ensure the avoidance of duplications in the activities by creating common strategies to tackle common issues and by promoting more advanced and targeted solutions able to address the real operational needs.



# Developing the Ceasefire ethical approach

Under the lead of the project partner *Trilateral Research*, ethical and legal considerations related to Ceasefire activities are being thoroughly investigated. The goal is to fully align the project with the standards of research ethics required by the European Commission and to pre-emptively understand any possible issues raised by Ceasefire technologies, in terms of ethics, societal values, fundamental rights, data protection and other applicable laws, if used by LEAs.

Thus, during the past months, Trilateral has created **a manual on law and ethics** that can be utilised by Ceasefire partners throughout the project's duration to monitor relevant issues. The purpose of this is to identify potential issues that may arise from the project and intelligence-led policing (ILP), and to provide recommendations for mitigating them. The law and ethics manual is intended to guide partners in a "law- and ethics-by-design approach" that involves considering these important issues throughout the project and technical developments, to minimise any potential issues during the design and development phase, rather than post-deployment. Future work on the law and ethics manual will incorporate more granular ethical and legal recommendations for the project partners.

Trilateral has also completed the first phase in conducting a comprehensive societal impact assessment of Ceasefire's project activities, as well as the phenomena of ILP in general. This desk-based analysis focused on possible effects to human rights and related principles such as non-discrimination, due process, dignity, fairness, power, trust, integrity, and justice. The purpose of conducting this analysis is to help citizens and civil society understand the impacts of ILP, assist LEAs in identifying risks and benefits of using ILP technologies, and help technology developers integrate more social protections in the design and development of ILP technologies. Future steps will include surveying civil society organizations and experts in the field, as well as broader civil society engagement.

# Building a European community of stakeholders

Ceasefire is committed to building a community of stakeholders that are relevant to the project goals and can benefit from each results. To this end, an expanded **CEASEFIRE Community** is being built, to facilitate interactions between the project and relevant stakeholders, such as various LEAs, relevant LEA user communities, initiatives or established bodies and other EC-funded projects.

Sister projects are an integral part of the CEASEFIRE Community. Currently, the following projects participate:

**CTC Website**

<https://ctc-project.eu/>

**CTC Twitter**

[https://twitter.com/ctc\\_eu\\_project](https://twitter.com/ctc_eu_project)

**CTC LinkedIn**

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/ctc-project/?viewAsMember=true>

**CTC LinkedIn Group**

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12645195/>

The **Cut The Cord-CTC** (GA 101036276) project is an EU-ISF-Police funded project with 30 months duration that kicked off in November 2021. Its consortium consists of 10 partners from across Europe. It aims at preventing and disrupting terrorism financing through a public-private cooperation enhancement, capacity building and preparedness of the end-users regarding Countering Terrorism Financing. CTC will provide technical solutions based on Artificial Intelligence tools for data acquisition and analysis of financial transactions (e.g., cryptocurrency transactions). To achieve the above objectives and in order to maximize the applicability and usability of CTC, the project aspires to form a strong Stakeholder Community, with members from key group audiences such as Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs), Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs), Financial Authorities and payment Services, Cryptocurrency Anti Money Laundering Organizations and Policy Makers and more.

**TRACE** is a three-year Horizon 2020 research project, assembling 17 international partners to develop solutions that will:

- Identify, track and document illicit money flows
- Disruptillicitmoneyflows
- Pave the way for recovering the proceeds of crime

TRACE solutions enable law enforcement agencies to detect and combat money-laundering operations and the financing of organised crime and terrorism by increasing the efficiency of information sharing. Every year, cross-border investigations into illicit money flows are hindered by fragmented e-evidence. TRACE addresses this issue by delivering a modular open-source framework for money-laundering investigations which can be tailored to meet law enforcement agencies' needs. It will enable investigators to scrape data in any given language, analyse it and visualise the results.

**TRACE Website**

<https://trace-illicit-money-flows.eu>

**TRACE Twitter**

@TRACEH2020

**TRACE LinkedIn**

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/trace-project-764142219/>

## The future

Technical Ceasefire work is also progressing, in areas such as:

- Elicitation of LEA requirements.
- Criminological analysis.
- Harmonization of international LEA procedures.
- Development of efficient inter-LEA information sharing tools.
- Development of AI tools for on-line data collection and analysis.
- Development of AI tools for off-line visual analysis.
- Ceasefire system specifications.

## Ceasefire links

The project's dissemination channels will host regular updates on these critical aspects.

**CEASEFIRE Web site:**

<https://ceasefire-project.eu/>

**CEASEFIRE LinkedIn:**

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/ceasefireproject/>

**CEASEFIRE Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Ceasefire-Project/100089862614779/>



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