

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The European Data Protection Supervisor ('EDPS') issues this supervisory opinion on the Internet Facing Operational Environment - Quick Reaction Area ('IFOE-QRA') proposed by the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation ('Europol').

The IFOE-QRA is a [REDACTED] environment designed to facilitate the retrieval and processing of online data, including personal data.

The EDPS has assessed the IFOE-QRA's compliance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 (the 'EUDPR') and Regulation (EU) 2016/794 ('the Europol Regulation', or 'ER'). The EDPS has identified several concerns, including:

**A risk of non-compliance with Article 18(6) ER:** The EDPS notes that the IFOE-QRA risks becoming a full-fledged parallel environment to Europol's regular operational environment, which could lead to non-compliance with Article 18(6) ER, which only allows personal data to be processed for the limited purpose of establishing relevance.

**Retention periods and analytical tools:** The EDPS considers that further measures can be taken to restrict the IFOE-QRA's retention periods and analytical tools to what is required for the identification and filtering of irrelevant data.

**Oversight mechanisms:** The EDPS emphasises the need for comprehensive oversight mechanisms to ensure Europol remains fully accountable and maintains effective control over the data processing within IFOE-QRA.

To address these concerns, the EDPS deems necessary that Europol:

- 1. Further limit the intake of personal data:** Including by adopting an appropriate policy for staff on minimising personal data retrieved in IFOE-QRA under Article 17(2) ER.
- 2. Restrict retention periods and analytical tools:** Limit the retention periods and analytical tools employed within IFOE-QRA to what is required for the identification and filtering of irrelevant data.
- 3. Implement comprehensive oversight mechanisms:** Ensure Europol remains fully accountable and maintains effective control over the data processing within IFOE-QRA.

[REDACTED]

The EDPS also issues several further recommendations aimed at improving compliance with the EUDPR and the Europol Regulation.

