



2026/452

2.3.2026

COMMISSION DECISION (EU) 2026/452
of 27 February 2026
setting up the cooperation network on asset recovery and confiscation
(notified under document C(2026) 1239)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Whereas:

- (1) Articles 83(1), 83(2), 87(2) of the Treaty assigned the Union the task of ensuring, inter alia, effective judicial and police cooperation in criminal matters through the establishment of minimum rules for the access to and exchange of information for law enforcement authorities, the definition of criminal offences and sanctions in areas of particularly serious cross-border crime.
- (2) In accordance with Article 29 of Directive (EU) 2024/1260 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾ on asset recovery and confiscation, the Commission should establish a cooperation network on asset recovery and confiscation.
- (3) It is therefore necessary to set up a group of experts in this field, and to define its tasks and its structure.
- (4) The group should provide the Commission with advice and enable the exchange of best practices in relation to the implementation of Directive (EU) 2024/1260.
- (5) The group should also facilitate cooperation among asset recovery offices and asset management offices in the Member States and with Europol.
- (6) The group should be composed of representatives from Member States' asset recovery offices and asset management offices, as established pursuant to Articles 5 and 22 of Directive (EU) 2024/1260, and Europol. Rules on disclosure of information by members of the group should be laid down.

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION

Article 1

Subject Matter

The cooperation network on asset recovery and confiscation ("the group"), is set up.

Article 2

Tasks

The group's tasks shall be:

- (a) to provide advice and enable the exchange of best practices in relation to the implementation of Directive (EU) 2024/1260.
- (b) facilitate cooperation among asset recovery offices and asset management offices in the Member States and with Europol.

⁽¹⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/1260 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 on asset recovery and confiscation (OJ L, 2024/1260, 2.5.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1260/oj>).

*Article 3***Consultation**

The Commission may consult the group on matters relating to the implementation of Directive (EU) 2024/1260.

*Article 4***Membership**

1. Members of the group shall be Member States' authorities fulfilling the tasks of asset recovery offices and asset management offices as set out in articles 5 and 22 of Directive (EU) 2024/1260 and Europol.
2. Members shall nominate their representatives and shall be responsible for ensuring that their representatives provide a high level of expertise.

*Article 5***Chair**

The group shall be chaired by a representative of the Commission and where appropriate, based on the agenda, by a representative of Europol.

*Article 6***Operation**

1. The group shall act at the request of the Commission, in compliance with the Commission Decision C(2016) 3301 ⁽²⁾ establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert groups.
2. Meetings of the group shall, in principle, be held on Commission premises. When necessary, video conference or hybrid video/physical meetings may be organised. Based on the agenda, the meetings of the group may also be held on the premises of Europol.
3. The Commission shall provide secretarial services. Commission officials from other Commission Services with an interest in the proceedings may attend meetings of the group and its sub-groups.
4. In agreement with the Commission, the group may, by simple majority of its members, decide that deliberations shall be public.
5. Minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and on the opinions delivered by the group shall be meaningful and complete. Minutes shall be drafted by the secretariat under the responsibility of the Chair.
6. The group shall endeavour to adopt its opinions, recommendations, and reports by consensus. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by simple majority of the members. Members who have voted against or abstained shall have the right to have a document summarising the reasons for their position annexed to the adopted opinions, recommendations or reports.
7. In its activity, the group shall process personal data in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽³⁾.

⁽²⁾ Commission Decision C(2016) 3301 of 30 May 2016 establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert groups.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1725/oj>).

*Article 7***Sub-groups**

The Commission may set up sub-groups for the purpose of examining specific questions on the basis of terms of reference it will define. Members of the sub-groups shall be Member States' authorities with expertise in the question at stake. Sub-groups shall operate in compliance with the horizontal rules and shall report to the group. They shall be dissolved as soon as their mandate is fulfilled.

*Article 8***Invited experts**

The Commission may invite experts with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the group or sub-groups on an ad hoc basis, including from Eurojust, the European Public Prosecutor's Office (the EPPO) and, where appropriate, the Anti-Money Laundering Authority.

*Article 9***Observers**

1. Individuals, organisations and public entities other than Member States' authorities may be granted an observer status, in compliance with the horizontal rules, by direct invitation.
2. Organisations and public entities appointed as observers shall nominate their representatives.
3. Observers and observers' representatives may be permitted by the Chair to take part in the discussions of the group and provide expertise. However, they shall not have voting rights and shall not participate in the formulation of opinions, recommendations and reports of the group or sub-groups.

*Article 10***Rules of procedure**

On a proposal by and in agreement with the Commission the group shall adopt its rules of procedure by simple majority of its members, on the basis of the standard rules of procedure for expert groups, in compliance with the horizontal rules. Sub-groups shall operate in compliance with the group's rules of procedure.

*Article 11***Professional secrecy and handling of classified information**

The members of the group and their representatives, as well as invited experts and observers, are subject to the obligation of professional secrecy which by virtue of the Treaties and the rules implementing them applies to all members of the institutions and their staff, as well as to the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of Union classified information, laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 ⁽⁴⁾ and (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 ⁽⁵⁾. Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

⁽⁴⁾ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 of 13 March 2015 on Security in the Commission (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2015/443/oj>).

⁽⁵⁾ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2015/444/oj>).

Article 12

Transparency

1. The group and its sub-groups shall be registered in the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities ('the Register of expert groups').
2. As concerns the group and sub-groups composition, the following data shall be published on the Register of expert groups:
 - the name of Members;
 - the names of observers.
3. All relevant documents, including the agendas, the minutes and the participants' submissions, shall be made available either on the Register of expert groups or *via* a link from the Register to a dedicated website, where this information can be found. Access to dedicated websites shall not be submitted to user registration or any other restriction. In particular, the agenda and other relevant background documents shall be published in due time ahead of the meeting, followed by timely publication of minutes. Exceptions to publication shall only be possible where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁶⁾.

Article 13

Meeting expenses

1. Participants in the activities of the group and its sub-groups shall not be remunerated for the services they offer.
2. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants in the activities of the group and its sub-groups shall be reimbursed by the Commission. Reimbursement shall be made in accordance with the provisions in force within the Commission and within the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission departments under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

Article 14

Recipients

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels, 27 February 2026.

For the Commission
Magnus BRUNNER
Member of the Commission

⁽⁶⁾ Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2001/1049/oj>). These exceptions are intended to protect public security, military affairs, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy and integrity of the individual, commercial interests, court proceedings and legal advice, inspections/investigations/audits and the institution's decision-making process.