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Current state and prospects of interaction of joint investigation teams with international police organizations

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Abstract

In contemporary conditions, crime acquires new characteristics, including transnational cooperation of criminal groups and adaptation to new techniques of investigating criminal offences. This specificity emphasises the necessity of finding an optimal organizational and tactical form of interaction between joint investigation teams and international police organizations. The purpose of the study is to analyse the organizational and tactical aspects of the interaction of joint investigation teams with international police organizations. The methodological toolkit includes general methods of scientific cognition, such as analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, abstraction, and scientific forecasting. The study substantiates the need for collaboration between joint investigation teams and international police organizations. It explores the tasks of international organizations in the process of investigating criminal offences. It is recommended to focus on the importance of interaction between international police organizations and joint investigation teams by developing guidelines for organising their collaboration during the investigation of criminal offences. It is argued that ensuring international cooperation in the investigation of transnational criminal offences directly depends on the activities of joint investigation teams. In turn, a special form of international cooperation in the process of investigating criminal offences involves interaction with a wide range of participants in the criminal justice system. International organizations, as external factors capable of influencing the fulfilment of joint tasks by law enforcement and other authorities at the national and international levels, hold a prominent place in this partnership. The application of innovative tactical techniques and their complexes by joint investigation teams during procedural actions is associated with the algorithm of using shared methodologies that impact the effectiveness of investigating criminal offences at all levels of interaction. The results of the study will serve as a guide for the law enforcement system in implementing international cooperation

Keywords:

international cooperation; organization of the investigation; tactical operation; database; criminal proceedings

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Introduction

In the current period of global transformative changes, crime has acquired a worldwide scale. This necessitates international cooperation in the investigation of criminal offences, particularly the creation of joint investigation teams. Concurrently, Eurointegration processes contribute to the improvement of the regulatory framework regulating the activities of this legal institution and its practical application. Within the scope of the study, it is worthwhile to focus on the organizational and tactical principles of the interaction of joint investigative groups with international police organizations during the investigation of criminal offences. This approach requires defining an algorithm of interaction that will ensure quality collaboration among participants in the criminal justice process, facilitating thorough, prompt, and unbiased investigations while addressing the challenges at the global level.

Currently, researchers are paying attention to several aspects of the problem. An important research direction involves the use of innovative approaches during the investigation of criminal offences by joint investigation teams. O. Samoilenko (2020) emphasises the necessity of collaboration between investigators and owners of telecommunication systems, information owners in systems, and other entities in the telecommunications service market, and operational units that are an integral part of the process of investigating criminal offences in cyberspace. The leading role in organizing collaboration belongs to the investigator who coordinates the activities.

In K. Chaplinsky's (2022) study on the forms of collaboration during the investigation of serious crimes, joint activity stands out. This includes participation in the investigation-operational teams, mutual exchange of operational information between the investigator and operational unit personnel, joint planning of the initial stage of the investigation, and the use of operational and forensic tools. The researcher underscores the need for implementing forms of collaboration based on clear planning, high professionalism of investigators, operational unit personnel, and forensic services, establishing correct service relationships, and creating an atmosphere of trust. In this context, internal collaboration among investigators, operational personnel, and specialists is no less crucial.

Within the definition of the conceptual framework of interaction, A. Danylyak (2018) notes in the dissertation research that interaction manifests through the joint activity of subjects, exchange of experience, skills, and abilities. The author examines various forms of implementing international cooperation in the investigation of economic crimes committed by organized groups. Among these forms, joint crime investigations are distinguished, performed by the pre-trial investigation authorities of Ukraine in collaboration with law enforcement agencies of other countries (including through the creation of joint investigation teams),

interaction with Interpol, providing international legal assistance, taking over criminal proceedings, extradition, and temporary transfer of a person to the law enforcement authorities of another country.

M. Tsutskiridze (2020) draws attention to the crucial element of pre-trial investigation organisation – the cognitive activity of the investigator and their interaction with other subjects of the prosecution in investigating the circumstances of criminal proceedings. Individual aspects of interaction are examined by M. Luchtman (2020). The scientist focuses on the need for confidence-building in transnational cooperation aimed at protecting the rights of victims and, in general, in criminal proceedings. P. Eprintsev (2022) proposes his understanding of interaction in the field of investigating international crime as a coordinated, purposeful, timely, and location-regulated joint activity, independent units combining capabilities, forces, methods, and means for the successful implementation of complementary measures and actions to search for and record factual data on the activities of organized groups and criminal organizations, committing criminal offences of both national and international nature.

B. Sari (2020) underscores the positive role of Interpol as an international organization with international legal personality, tasked with facilitating cooperation among criminal police, preventing and combating criminal offences that lack political, military, religious, or racial character even beyond national borders. However, G. Calcara (2020) emphasises that such cooperation over many years has encountered certain legal problems, including significant branching of state sovereignty in matters of police activity.

In the context of the interaction process, V. Sevruk (2021) identifies the following stages: 1) preparatory; 2) main; 3) final. The preparatory stage involves conducting working meetings, developing joint plans, and ensuring their implementation by authorised individuals. The main stage contributes to the execution of joint operational and investigative measures, control over the implementation of procedural actions, and direct management. The final stage involves summarising results, evaluating activities, analysing action execution, preparing and submitting information based on the results of joint actions, and making decisions.

In light of the aforementioned perspectives of researchers regarding the organization of interaction among participants in criminal proceedings, the prosecution side deserves attention at every delineated aspect, starting from interaction within the investigation-operational teams and ending with collaboration with international organizations. Undoubtedly, the joint investigation teams should be highlighted as a form of international cooperation with multi-vector interactions within the teams and externally (particularly with international law enforcement organizations).

Therewith, a problematic and prospective aspect is establishing the interaction of the joint investigation teams with international law enforcement organizations during criminal proceedings. There is a need to establish interrelationships among various subjects of law enforcement orientation during international cooperation. Attention should be focused on the organizational and tactical features of the interaction of the joint investigation teams with international law enforcement organizations. Thus, the purpose of the study is to establish and analyse the features of organizational and tactical aspects of the interaction of joint investigation teams with international law enforcement organizations during the investigation of criminal offences.

Materials and Methods

Modern knowledge and practice convincingly demonstrate that not every method ensures the successful resolution of theoretical and practical problems. Methodological issues cannot be confined solely to philosophical or intra-scientific boundaries but must be considered in a broad socio-cultural context. To investigate the aspects of interaction between joint investigation teams and international law enforcement organizations during the investigation of criminal offences, specific methods of scientific cognition were used, including analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, abstraction, and scientific forecasting. The analysis utilised report information on the implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union (Report, 2022), Europol's report on the analysis of financial and economic crimes in the European Union (European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, 2023), the strategic plan of the Office of the Prosecutor General for 2023-2025 (Strategic plan for the implementation..., 2023), the report information from the National Central Bureau of Interpol in Ukraine (2023), and Interpol's activity report for the year 2022 (Interpol, 2023). In addition, the analysis of report information from international law enforcement organizations was based on empirical methods of cognition. With the methods of induction and deduction, examples of practical investigative situations that arose both in Ukraine and abroad and required the involvement of international law enforcement organizations in the investigation of criminal offences were provided. These aspects of practical situations are highlighted in official sources of Europol's functioning (Joint investigation team... , 2022) and

Eurojust (Eurojust, 2021).

The method of abstraction helped identify the process of interaction of the joint investigation teams with international law enforcement organizations as a specific form of international cooperation during the investigation of criminal offences through formal and informal investigative actions. In turn, the method of scientific forecasting served to create recommendations for improving the interaction of joint investigation teams with international law enforcement organizations by providing legal certainty, applying special methodologies, and innovative forensic support during the investigation of criminal offences with the involvement of international partners.

In the course of the study, the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union of May 11, 2016¹, and the order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, the Office of the Prosecutor General, the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine, the Security Service of Ukraine, the State Bureau of Investigations, the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, and the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine "On Approval of the Instruction on the Procedure for the Use by Law Enforcement Agencies of Ukraine of the Information System of the International Criminal Police Organization – Interpol" dated August 17, 2020, № 613/380/93/228/414/510/2801/5² were processed. The analysis of these documents allowed examining the features of the modern work of international law enforcement organizations and their cooperation with joint investigation teams.

Results and Discussion

Joint investigation teams (hereinafter – JITs) during the investigation of criminal offences interact with international partners. There are several international organizations that play a significant role in countering transnational crime, including the European Judicial Cooperation Office, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union, the European Union Mission for Security and Defense Policy, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, the European Central Bank, the European Commission, the European Management Board for the Prevention of Misuse of Substances and Fraud, the Joint Situation Centre of the European Union, and others. In this context, a prominent place belongs to international law enforcement

¹ Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council No. 2016/794 "On the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) and Replacing and Repealing Council Decisions 2009/371/JHA, 2009/934/JHA, 2009/935/JHA, 2009/936/JHA and 2009/968/JHA". (2016, May). Retrieved from https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/celex_32016r0794_en_txt.pdf.

² Decree of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, Office of the General Prosecutor, National Anti-Corruption Bureau, Security Service of Ukraine, State Bureau of Investigation, Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, Ministry of Justice of Ukraine No. 613/380/93/228/414/510/2801/5 "On the Approval of the Instructions on the Procedure for the Use by Law Enforcement Agencies of Ukraine of the Information System of the International Criminal Police Organization – Interpol". (2020, August). Retrieved from <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0849-20#Text>.

organizations, in particular, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) and the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol). These organizations are similar in terms of crime prevention, reducing crime rates, upholding human rights, and fostering international cooperation. However, they have distinct characteristics in terms of territorial jurisdiction and the nature of their activities. According to the report on the implementation of the association agreement between Ukraine and the European Union (Report on the implementation of the association..., 2022), it is known that during March-June 2022, the Office of the Prosecutor General signed 10 departmental agreements with competent authorities of EU countries (Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, Romania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Austria, France) regarding joint actions during the investigation of international crimes.

In contemporary conditions, Europol operates in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU from 2016¹. As criminal offences assume significant proportions that extend beyond national borders, Europol is tasked with enhancing cooperation between two or more member states during joint procedural actions aimed at achieving specific goals for effective criminal investigation. Therefore, Europol's main goal is to combat organized crime due to its scale, complex structure, and impact, requiring coordinated efforts from all member states of the Council of Europe. The number of Europol employees is growing exponentially. For instance, while the workforce was 323 people in 2001, it increased to 1,323 people in 2020 (quadruple), indicating the organization's branching functions and overall activity. Notably, the highest number of employees is represented by the Netherlands – 104 individuals, Spain – 103 individuals, and Luxembourg – 1 individual (Leghan, 2021a).

Based on the results of Europol's activity regarding the analysis of financial and economic crimes in the European Union (European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, 2023), in July 2023, during the operation conducted by the National Police of Spain with the support of Europol, 17 individuals were detained on suspicion of manipulating the results of football matches using corrupt schemes. In 2022, with Europol's support, a criminal network trading psychotropic drugs was exposed in France. The criminal network operated in several countries: Austria, Germany, and North Africa. An international operation was also conducted with the collaboration of prosecutors and investigators, supported by Europol and Eurojust, to combat the criminal group "Kompania Bello", which directed its activities towards cocaine trafficking in Europe. At the initiative of the Italian National Police

in 2015, under the guidance of the Florence prosecutor's office, a JIT was created with the participation of Italy and the Netherlands, collaborating for five years. International partners developed a joint strategy and organized an intensive exchange of information and evidence necessary for preparing the final stage of the investigation. The international operation was the culmination of months of thorough planning between law enforcement and judicial authorities in preparation for the investigation process. A joint operational command room was established at Europol's headquarters for coordinating actions. Furthermore, a Europol expert was dispatched to Florence to provide operational support to the Italian authorities, ensuring swift analysis of new data. Judicial coordination was performed by Eurojust's coordination centre, involving prosecutors and investigative judges in real-time to execute and adapt requests for mutual legal assistance necessary for conducting transnational actions (Joint investigation team..., 2022). The involvement of Europol and Interpol in joint procedural actions with JITs ensures meticulous planning of investigation stages, rapid exchange of evidentiary information, and data of operational significance.

To achieve these goals, Europol performs several tasks, including quick communication with member states (through national units) regarding links to criminal offences of interest for investigation; collecting, storing, analysing, and exchanging information using operational data on the state of criminality; coordinating, organizing, and participating in investigative actions to support proper cooperation with competent authorities of member states, often initiating the creation of JITs and actively participating in them; providing assistance and support to member states of JITs during transnational information exchange through operational, technical, and financial aid; offering analytical support during international operations investigating criminal offences; preparing reports on the state of affairs, strategically and operationally analysing and assessing the level of threats; using specialised knowledge and forensic methods during criminal investigations; providing recommendations to member states collaborating during investigations; ensuring specialised training and assistance in organising training and skill enhancement, collaborating with the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), and other international organizations (Perepiolkin, 2021).

In 2023, Europol established the OSINT operational working group to support investigations of war crimes in Ukraine, significantly aiding investigators in verifying and documenting cases of war crimes (Europol established OSINT..., 2023). To enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement response to cybercrime and

¹ Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council No. 2016/794 "On the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) and Replacing and Repealing Council Decisions 2009/371/JHA, 2009/934/JHA, 2009/935/JHA, 2009/936/JHA and 2009/968/JHA". (2016, May). Retrieved from https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/celex_32016r0794_en_txt.pdf.

violations of the rights of European citizens and businesses in the European Union, the European Cybercrime Centre was formed as part of Europol (European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, 2023). Thus, Europol provides qualified assistance to JITs, utilising databases of information systems and subsystems capable of analysing the threats and risks of organised crime.

Furthermore, more than 20 countries, including 14 EU member states, have initiated investigations into international crimes possibly committed in Ukraine. Eurojust facilitates the coordination of these national investigative efforts and organizes meetings among all countries involved in the investigation process. It is noteworthy that since the spring of 2022, Eurojust has been providing strong support to JITs. At the initiative of the Attorney General of Lithuania, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice of Poland, and the Attorney General of Ukraine, an agreement was signed on March 25, 2022, for the creation of a JIT in Ukraine, with Eurojust as its developer. Estonia, Slovakia, Romania, and Latvia joined the JIT. The main goal of establishing this group is to ensure proper information exchange and support the investigation of international crimes, primarily war crimes, aggression, and genocide, committed on the territory of Ukraine (Reznikova, 2023). The positive aspect of this collaboration between JITs with the support of Eurojust contributes to international cooperation during the investigation of criminal offences. An algorithm of actions should be developed according to specific situations when international assistance is needed. An example of this could be the introduction of the Instruction on organizing the interaction of joint investigation teams during the investigation of criminal offences. The document should specify the role of international organizations during the investigation of specific transnational criminal offences.

In contemporary conditions, Eurojust promotes cohesion among investigators by organizing meetings between countries conducting joint investigations. Other states that are not members of JITs may open individual cases within Eurojust, and some of them may join this process later on. The European agency houses the Secretariat of the JIT network, which supports and stimulates the activities of this form of international cooperation. Since 2005, the agency has been supporting national authorities in creating and managing JITs, and since 2009, it has provided funding and played a crucial role in the functioning and awareness-building of JITs (Eurojust, 2022).

In the process of international cooperation during the investigation of criminal offences, Eurojust collaborates with JITs to ensure the smooth conduct of joint investigations, providing legal and practical support. In particular, Eurojust can provide support to JITs in the following areas: firstly, assist in coordinating investigation and prosecution strategies among representatives

of competent authorities of states; secondly, help identify and resolve issues (modify JIT agreements, establish rules of admissibility) related to ensuring the collection of evidence and the conditions for the involvement of deployed members; thirdly, provide advice on jurisdiction regulation and the transfer of criminal proceedings, as well as on the funding of JIT activities. Financial support provided by Eurojust is a significant advantage for national authorities, thereby reducing the impact on national budget expenditures related to the investigation of criminal offences at the international level. Eurojust also cooperates with Europol. They provide assistance to government authorities aimed at addressing the need for transnational access to electronic evidence (Spiezia, 2022; Movchan, 2022).

In addition, Eurojust can support the conduct of joint tactical operations by organizing meetings and establishing coordination centres. The latter acts as a central information hub where Eurojust constantly monitors and coordinates joint operations, and the involved parties, in turn, are in direct interaction. The participation of all key parties allows Eurojust to provide legal and practical advice promptly, ensuring that the actions taken lead to successful judicial prosecution (Eurojust, 2021). In accordance with its powers, Europol provides analytical and forensic support to JITs. Moreover, Europol assists in collecting and analysing data obtained by lawful methods from open sources, such as media, television, and radio broadcasts, conducting open-source intelligence (OSINT) (Office of the Prosecutor General, 2023). To support JITs and provide methodological assistance, the Eurojust Secretariat of the JIT Experts Network operates. Involving these experts contributes not only to practical and financial support but also involves record-keeping, legislative analysis, and provides recommendations for further criminal prosecution of individuals (Krasnoborova, 2020).

A notable example of the involvement of the aforementioned European agency in international cooperation is the support (legal, financial, and material-technical) in the establishment of JITs between the Netherlands, Belgium, Ukraine, Australia, and Malaysia investigating the downing of flight MH17 (July 17, 2014) (Eurojust support to joint investigation..., 2022). Given the above, the coordination of international investigations involving Eurojust is a crucial aspect to avoid duplication of investigative actions, excessive documentation, and repeated discomfort for victims and witnesses due to the need to testify in multiple law enforcement agencies.

By collecting, analysing, and preserving evidentiary information during the investigation of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide, considering data protection rules, Eurojust can support the progress of cases in national and international investigations. This includes providing assistance to competent national authorities and international institutions. This approach

is particularly valuable for verifying the credibility of witness testimonies or establishing circumstances relevant to criminal proceedings.

The results of investigations into criminal offences covering thousands of episodes, numerous pieces of evidence recorded in different languages, and testimonies from a large number of victims and witnesses require consolidation and analytical processing without restricting access for participants in the criminal process (courts, ICC, law enforcement, non-governmental organizations, etc.).

The importance of collaboration with international organizations, foreign partners, and civil society during the criminal prosecution for international crimes is highlighted in the Prosecutor General's Office's strategic plan for 2023-2025 (Strategic plan for the implementation..., 2023). According to its provisions, one positive aspect in this context is the interaction with Eurojust and Europol. Through cooperation between the prosecutor's office, pre-trial investigation bodies, national and international partners, the Prosecutor General's Office will ensure the high-quality fixation of evidentiary information collected during investigative and other procedural actions. This will expand the boundaries of access to justice for victims and witnesses at national and international levels, increase the number of completed court proceedings and individuals held accountable for international crimes related to the armed conflict in Ukraine, and enhance the level of trust from the public, national, and international partners in the prosecutor's office and pre-trial investigation.

Interpol serves as a global centre for developing joint police strategies and tactics to combat international criminality. It facilitates international cooperation among law enforcement agencies for public safety, counterterrorism, drug trafficking, economic crimes, human trafficking, and other forms of organized crime. This unique international organization acts as a mechanism and intermediary in practical cooperation among different states during the investigation of criminal offences. One of Interpol's priority goals is to identify criminals and missing persons wanted internationally.

In its activities, Interpol uses the formula "dans la limite des lois", meaning "within the limits of the law" (Calcara, 2020). In the structure of the police service of each Interpol member state, National Central Bureaus (NCBs) were established. They act as centres for international cooperation and "hubs" for countering and preventing crime locally. According to the report of Interpol's National Central Bureau in Ukraine (National Central Bureau of Interpol in Ukraine, 2023), the following activities were conducted in 2022: ensuring Ukraine's commitments in Interpol, forming and implementing state policy to enhance cooperation between the National Police of Ukraine and law enforcement agencies of foreign states, international organizations, and institutions, participation in the development

of Ukraine's international treaties to combat crime, coordination and cooperation of authorities and units of states in the fight against transnational crime using Interpol, etc. During the reporting year, the NCB of Interpol in Ukraine processed 48,991 requests, including 26,186 from Ukrainian law enforcement agencies and 22,805 from foreign law enforcement agencies. The most intensive cooperation, in terms of the number of processed documents, occurred with law enforcement agencies in Poland (2,331), Moldova (1,736), Hungary (1,087), the Czech Republic (1,895), and Germany (1,842).

Interpol is endowed with a broad spectrum of powers in various areas of work, namely: criminal registration (it formulates a special methodology in collaboration with the General Secretariat for identifying criminals, aimed at establishing demographic data, external characteristics of the object, the method of committing criminal offences, and unique features of individuals); international search for criminals suspected of committing international crimes (conducts intelligence-search actions beyond the territory of the state where the criminal offence was committed). Interpol not only coordinates the actions of the police of several countries but also helps in providing information from its files); international search for missing persons (performed in cases where the national search has not yielded results, and the wanted person has left the borders of the state that initiated the search).

According to Interpol's report for 2022 (Interpol, 2023), in Latin America, an intensive cooperation week among investigators from 12 countries resulted in the arrest of individuals who were subjects of international search. In a joint operation named "INFRA ATLAS" between Interpol and the USA, fugitives wanted by countries in Central and North America were also apprehended. Interpol and Afripol collaborated in countering cybercrime. Thus, law enforcement officers from 27 Interpol countries have joined forces in "Africa Cyber Surge" to combat cybercrime across the continent. Police arrested 11 individuals and took action against over 200,000 units of harmful cyber infrastructure. Moreover, due to an international operation, Nigeria's cybercrime unit, supported by Interpol, apprehended a cybercriminal. Therefore, Interpol conducted a number of activities aimed at increasing the level of knowledge and acquiring skills and abilities of representatives of law enforcement agencies. In addition, a conference on the use of drones was held. This measure allowed law enforcement agencies to share their experience and best practices in countering unmanned aerial vehicles.

In April 2022, a four-month operation called "Africa Cyber Surge II" was launched, focusing on identifying cybercriminals and compromised infrastructure. It was coordinated by the Interpol Cybercrime Directorate under the auspices of the Interpol Africa Cybercrime Operations Division and the Interpol African Union Support Program for Afripol. The operation aimed to facilitate

communication, analysis, and intelligence sharing between countries, optimising cooperation between African law enforcement agencies to prevent, deter, investigate, and stop cyber extortion, phishing, business email compromise, and online fraud. Using practical insights from the private sector, it was highlighted that cyber security is most effective when international law enforcement, national authorities, and private sector partners work together to share best practices and proactively combat cybercrime. Ambassador Jalel Chelba noted that public and private entities must work hand in hand to prevent the misuse of digital systems, information and communication technologies, and artificial intelligence by cybercriminals. Coordinated operations, such as “Cyber Surge”, are essential to dismantle criminal networks and establish individual, organisational, and societal levels of protection (European Cybercrime Centre, 2023). Moreover, the counter-terrorism operation “Tripartite Spider”, supported by Interpol and Afripol, was organized to enhance the capabilities of the national investigation teams in Central and East Africa during terrorism investigations (14 terror suspects, 2023).

In modern conditions, during the investigation of criminal offences with international connections, the verification of DNA profiles of individuals suspected of committing criminal offences becomes relevant¹. The creation of Interpol and the regionalisation of police cooperation form a multi-level system of relationships not only between international law enforcement organizations but also between organizations and states that can simultaneously be members of several international police institutions. Coordinated actions of participants in international law within the police sphere contribute to strengthening regional police cooperation, avoiding the execution of identical functions.

Interpol processes a large amount of personal data regarding criminal individuals (such as names, fingerprints, photographs, etc.). The system of the international organization compares visual facial indicators with images stored in Interpol's forensic databases. The Commission for the Control of Interpol's Files is responsible for processing this data. Interpol's databases help track criminals through collection prints and photographs, lists of wanted persons, DNA samples, and documents. Through the encrypted global communication network on the Internet, Interpol agents and member states exchange information and have 24/7 access to databases. To combat international disasters, terrorist attacks, and murders, Interpol typically forms incident response teams. This group is represented by experts with specialised knowledge and the ability to access databases. Thus, it is possible to identify victims

and suspects, and disseminate information to law enforcement agencies of other states. The information received about the committed criminal offence requires analysis. Together with collecting data for the identification of suspects, conducting cross-checks of reports and investigative versions, Interpol manages files analysing criminal offences and intelligence data, consolidating information from databases and various sources to understand the criminal environment (Temitope & Tunde, 2020). In the mentioned aspects, incident response teams of a criminal nature operating under Interpol can also assist JITs in collecting evidence during criminal investigations.

It is worth emphasising that the primary place for identifying individuals in the Interpol system belongs to forensic data, which can be used to establish connections between a series of transnational crimes, and fingerprints can be quickly checked if a suspect crosses borders. Similarly, facial recognition remains a biometric vector that is rapidly advancing. In addition to data management, conducting forensic examinations is extremely important. For example, fingerprints and DNA can confirm a person's identity and establish their presence at the scene of a criminal offence. It is recommended to develop instructions for organizing the interaction of JITs during the investigation of criminal offences, specifying aspects of cooperation between JITs and international law enforcement organizations in the process of investigating transnational criminal offences.

In this part of the study, it is necessary to separately highlight the aspects of Europol's activities, the importance of which is emphasised by other researchers. It is worthwhile to agree with the opinion of I.M. Leghan (2021b) that Europol provides quality support for the law enforcement processes of member states. This is made possible through information exchange between the agency and Europol liaison officers, conducting operational analysis of operations in EU member states, providing technical support for investigations, harmonising methods of investigation in member states, organizing information events for international cooperation of EU law enforcement agencies to increase their awareness and provide qualified assistance during the investigation of transnational crimes (Leghan, 2021a). As indicated by B. Rostami & A. Jooj (2021), Europol helps exchange data, analyse information, compile expert reports, and conduct training. The international organization, together with law enforcement agencies of member states, fights against transnational crime (human trafficking, terrorism, money laundering, illegal immigration, financial crimes, cybercrime). The above overview and analysis

¹ Decree of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, Office of the General Prosecutor, National Anti-Corruption Bureau, Security Service of Ukraine, State Bureau of Investigation, Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, Ministry of Justice of Ukraine No. 613/380/93/228/414/510/2801/5 “On the Approval of the Instructions on the Procedure for the Use by Law Enforcement Agencies of Ukraine of the Information System of the International Criminal Police Organization – Interpol”. (2020, August). Retrieved from <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0849-20#Text>.

of successful organization actions confirm positive evaluations of its activities. Considering this, the development of international law enforcement organizations at the regional level, as noted by M.V. Zhuravel (2022), becomes a global trend, as the deepening of various areas of regional cooperation requires the creation of similar organizations in other territories.

A promising area for the interaction of JITs with Europol, as indicated by A.V. Movchan & T.I. Sozanskyi (2023), is the application of the SOCTA methodology. Since JITs include representatives of the National Police, the development of specialised software – the information subsystem SOCTA by experts of the Department of Information and Analytical Support, is a powerful vector for assessing key threats and risks of organized crime and serious crimes. This approach allows optimising the process of summarising expert responses regarding organized groups and criminal organizations and helps analyse risks and mechanisms to combat international crime. It is worth adding that during the application of the information subsystem, the following steps can be implemented: firstly, identify all current threats of organized crime and serious crimes (e.g., geographical objects or infrastructure); secondly, identify “weak spots”; thirdly, forecast threats that may arise in the future, considering the cause-and-effect relationship. Europol collects internal and external data for SOCTA in the following areas: organized crime and serious crimes, organized criminal groups and criminal organizations, the environment (European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, 2021).

F. Spiezia (2022) notes the prospective aspect of involving Europol and the European agency collaborating with judicial and police authorities of EU member countries (Eurojust) in investigating cybercrime. It should be emphasised that in this sense, the use of JITs is a tool of cooperation par excellence, as it is particularly effective in combating various phases and articulations through which this form of criminality develops. The activity of Eurojust can benefit from the new protocol to the Budapest Convention, especially regarding relations with third countries. The coordination and assistance of Eurojust to member states have led to a dialogue between various parties that play a crucial role in ensuring the rule of law in cyberspace and achieving results in investigations. International extradition, as correctly noted by S.V. Bondar (2020), should be considered as a separate institute of international cooperation between states during the investigation of criminal offences, which is an integral part of it and exists in an inseparable connection with other forms of such cooperation; international search for stolen valuables (Interpol collaborates not only with member states of the organization but also with the International Council of Museums and UNESCO, conducting meetings on combating looting and trafficking of works of art).

In the context of reviewing the activities of Eurojust, it is necessary to mention the opinion of A. Reznikova (2023), who states that this organization provides extensive assistance to JITs at legal, operational, analytical, and financial levels. Eurojust ensures interaction between national investigative and prosecutorial authorities investigating criminal proceedings. Eurojust provides analytical assistance by structuring relevant information that is significant for investigating criminal offences and can serve as evidence; financially supports, primarily reimbursing expenses for travel, accommodation, oral and written translation of documents, transfer of items (e.g., cross-border transportation of evidence and/or confiscated items), specialised expertise (e.g., traceological, ballistic, and other types of forensic expertise); provides logistical and technical support (technical equipment, such as laptops, phones, printers, scanners, etc.) for the effective work of the team.

The opinion of Professor M. Caianiello (2022) from the University of Bologna regarding the positive aspects is reasonable. Firstly, the creation of JITs with the participation of EU countries, including countries not belonging to the EU and international institutions, and secondly, the key role of Eurojust in collecting and exchanging information during the investigation of international crimes (primarily war crimes). On the one hand, Eurojust is a privileged mediator of international cooperation, and on the other hand, the involvement of Eurojust is necessary due to the large amount of evidentiary information that can be collected at the scene. In this context, it should be noted that an integral part of ensuring the investigation of international crimes is databases. An example of one of such databases is the Core International Crimes Evidence Database, specially developed by Eurojust for storing and analysing evidentiary information. This database can store digital evidence and data related to committed criminal offences, such as photos, video and audio recordings, satellite and drone imagery, testimonies of witnesses and victims, results of medical, forensic, and military investigations, information about specific material evidence, and more. Eurojust ensures the secure storage of these materials in accordance with personal data protection standards applicable within the European Union. In addition, it is worth noting that the analysis of this data will contribute to improving the coordination of national and international investigations, addressing issues with parallel investigations, standardising processes for searching and processing specific evidence (information) related to a particular criminal offence or crime scene and identifying shortcomings in the evidence base.

Conclusions

Cooperation of JIT with international law enforcement organizations is one of the most promising areas in the foreign policy activities of states. International

cooperation in law enforcement develops between equal subjects of international law and is based on adherence to certain legal norms and principles. This process is characterised by internal differentiation concerning territorial location, the number of participants, objects of interaction, etc. Further improvement of collaboration and maximisation of results in the interaction of law enforcement agencies with international organizations, such as Interpol and Europol, require the implementation of comprehensive measures to establish a protocol for involving international partners in the investigation of criminal offences. Cooperation of JIT with international law enforcement organizations primarily involves the exchange of intelligence, technical, and strategic information necessary for procedural actions within criminal proceedings, special knowledge, results of strategic analysis, and reporting activities. Databases of international organizations are used for tracking and extraditing individuals, creating conditions for the implementation of a special form of international cooperation among countries within multilateral interaction.

Through the collaboration of JIT with international law enforcement organizations during the investigation of criminal offences, the protection of human rights and freedoms in criminal proceedings is ensured, evidence is collected beyond national borders, and a comprehensive and unbiased investigation of criminal offences is

facilitated. In particular, using forensic knowledge, international police organizations promote tactical combinations and operations, in particular through the use of forensic databases. The special value of JIT's interaction with international law enforcement organizations lies in facilitating the exchange of information, thanks to the practice of parallel investigations into identical or related criminal facts. This interaction is aimed at avoiding the execution of dual tasks by authorised individuals of competent authorities of states, which, in turn, is a positive aspect in optimising and rationalising the execution of tasks in criminal proceedings. Enhancing the results of this interaction requires the improvement of the normative-legal base, the development of methodology, and forensic support during the investigation of criminal offences in accordance with the best global practices.

A promising area for examining the aspect of the interaction of JITs with international law enforcement organizations can be a comprehensive examination of the activities of JITs, combining national and international experiences.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Сучасний стан і перспективи взаємодії спільних слідчих груп з міжнародними поліцейськими організаціями

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Анотація

У сучасних умовах злочинність набуває нових характеристик, з-поміж яких – транснаціональна взаємодія злочинних угруповань та адаптація до нових прийомів розслідування кримінальних правопорушень. Ця специфіка актуалізує необхідність пошуку оптимальної організаційно-тактичної форми взаємодії спільних слідчих груп із міжнародними поліцейськими організаціями. Метою статті є аналіз організаційно-тактичних аспектів взаємодії спільних слідчих груп з міжнародними поліцейськими організаціями. Методологічним інструментарієм слугували загальні методи наукового пізнання, а саме: аналізу й синтезу, індукції та дедукції, абстрагування та наукового прогнозування. У дослідженні обґрунтовано необхідність взаємодії спільних слідчих груп з міжнародними поліцейськими організаціями. Досліджено завдання міжнародних організацій у процесі розслідування кримінальних правопорушень. Рекомендовано зосередити увагу на значущості взаємодії міжнародних поліцейських організацій зі спільними слідчими групами, уклавши Інструкцію з організації взаємодії спільних слідчих груп під час розслідування кримінальних правопорушень. Доведено, що забезпечення міжнародного співробітництва у сфері розслідування кримінальних правопорушень транснаціонального характеру безпосередньо залежить від діяльності спільної слідчої групи. У свою чергу, особлива форма міжнародної співпраці в процесі розслідування кримінальних правопорушень передбачає взаємодію із широким колом учасників кримінального процесу. Чільне місце в колі партнерства належить міжнародним організаціям, які є зовнішнім чинником, здатним вплинути на виконання спільних завдань із правоохоронними й іншими органами на національному та міжнародному рівнях. Застосування спільною слідчою групою інноваційних тактичних прийомів та їх комплексів під час проведення процесуальних дій пов'язано з алгоритмом використання спільних методик, які впливають на результативність розслідування кримінальних правопорушень на всіх рівнях взаємодії. Результати дослідження стануть орієнтиром для правоохоронної системи під час реалізації міжнародного співробітництва

Ключові слова:

міжнародне співробітництво; організація розслідування; тактична операція; база даних; кримінальне провадження