



'Joint Investigation Teams are now an established efficient and effective cooperation tool amongst national investigative agencies when tackling cross-border crime.'

Europol website

Online Module: Executive Summary

A joint investigation team (JIT) is an international cooperation tool that can be used to investigate demanding cross-border investigations or investigations requiring coordinated or concerted actions in two or more countries.

JITs are set up by competent authorities in two or more countries, potentially including both judicial (judges, prosecutors, investigative judges) and law enforcement authorities. They are established for a limited duration and for a specific purpose. The specific workings of JITs vary, as they are based on an agreement made between the authorities involved.

JITs are uniquely valuable in that they include both the law enforcement cooperation which focuses on information exchange and the judicial cooperation which aims at the exchange of admissible evidence in the criminal procedure. This enables them to speed up the sharing of information, the instigation of coercive measures, the exchange of evidence, and ultimately the prosecution and sentencing of offenders in cross-border investigations. As a result, JITs are finding increasing favour as a crime-fighting tool amongst international investigators and competent authorities.

The Joint Investigation Team module aims to raise awareness and understanding on how a JIT can benefit an investigation, and how it can be set up and run. It is aimed first and foremost at current and potential practitioners in the field of JITs intending to tackle international crime affecting two or more states. Practitioners may come from different backgrounds, both law enforcement and judicial.

The module consists of an introduction, nine topic chapters and a glossary of JIT-related terms and abbreviations. In the My Progress section, users can assess their levels of understanding of each of the topics by considering a selection of true/false statements.

The individual chapters are:

1. **Introduction**
2. **The JIT Concept:** This chapter discusses the JIT concept, explaining what a JIT is and why using it can be advantageous.
3. **Legal Basis:** This chapter provides a general overview of main provisions, instruments and agreements, which can be used as the legal basis for setting up a JIT.
4. **Support Framework:** This chapter describes the sources of support available to a JIT and the benefits these provide. These sources include the JITs National Experts, the JITs Network and its Secretariat, and EU agencies (Eurojust and Europol).
5. **Setting up JITs:** This chapter outlines the actual steps leading to the setting up of a JIT – that is, signing the JIT agreement and identifying a suitable case, a potential partner and a suitable legal basis.
6. **Running JITs:** This chapter covers the main aspects of the active lifetime of the JIT, notably: communication, meetings between the parties, the role of the seconded members and considerations concerning the prosecution of the investigated crimes.
7. **Exchange of Information:** A key advantage of a JIT is that it enables its members to share information with each other speedily and directly. This chapter explores the why, when, who and how of information exchange as it concerns the successful cooperation and execution of a JIT, and the secure and confidential management of this exchange of information in accordance with the JIT agreement.
8. **Handling and Accessibility of Evidence:** This chapter covers questions related to the gathering, handling and sharing of evidence in a JIT.
9. **Funding JITs:** This chapter presents in detail the current funding possibilities offered by Eurojust and Europol, and how they can be employed by JIT practitioners.
10. **Closure and Evaluation of JITs:** This chapter describes the closure and evaluation of a JIT, and highlights several good practices and tips for these processes.