
ANNUAL REPORT 2025

European Network of Forensic Science Institutes

ENFSI



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ENFSI Board



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Message from the Chairperson



Dear ENFSI members and friends,

Welcome to this year's ENFSI Annual Report.

2025 marks the 30 anniversary of our network, representing another significant milestone in ENFSI's history. As you will see from the following pages, we have grown and expanded significantly to encapsulate the key needs of contemporary forensic science.

With origins in various Council of Europe countries, we are confronted with the diversity of cultural and organisational backgrounds of our member forensic organisations, a diversity that can only be perceived in positive terms. The unique and powerful voice of ENFSI, its global impact and well-deserved recognition are all due to the invaluable and utilitarian experience of our member laboratories.

We have ambitious plans and, hopefully, achievable goals. While the world is accelerating at a pace that my generation cannot comprehend, ENFSI is successfully adjusting to the rapidly changing technological landscape. Our aim is to raise the effectiveness of criminal investigations and the evidential process to an even higher level. To this end, we are working together to develop more sensitive and non-destructive analytical methods, explore the potential of machine learning for analysing evidence, improve evidence collection, and ensure efficient turnaround times without compromising quality. The European Network of Forensic Science Institutes factors all these aspects into its strategic approach.

2025 brought us closer to implementing the European Forensic Science Area 2.0 by enabling us to start planning tailored forensic project proposals to be submitted under the Direct Award scheme. The ENFSI community is preparing a strategy for implementing new forensic science standards and adapting them to quality assurance systems in our countries. We have held numerous meetings, including the European Academy of Forensic Sciences in Dublin and Joint Meeting in Yerevan, and welcomed a new member to the Board and a new Member Institute. We

have proceeded with Position Papers, which summarise the key forensic strategies in each discipline covered by the EWGs. Finally, we continue to publish and disseminate R&D bulletins and newsletters, which guide the ENFSI community through research and funding opportunities.

Additionally, the Board has started to explore potential collaboration with the ETIAS Central Unit within Frontex and the European Union Drugs Agency to ensure we provide support for operational activities designed to reach common goals in combatting and preventing crime.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the ENFSI Board, EWGs, Standing Committees and Task Forces for their commitment and support despite their daily workplace obligations. The idea of volunteering in our network continues to be realised. I wish all the members of our ENFSI community passion and enthusiasm, and hope that we can continue to work together with pride and satisfaction. Despite our diversity, it is important to speak with one voice, as the saying goes: 'Concordia res parvae crescunt, discordia vel maximae dilabuntur'. ENFSI matters.

Yours,
Agnieszka Łukomska

Message from the Treasurer



Dear colleagues, dear ENFSI Directors,

The ENFSI forensic science community continues to progress. The ongoing implementation of the ENFSI Action Plan with a link to EFSA 2.0, participation in the EU funding programme with ENFSI's own projects and the regular conduct of specialised training courses and interlaboratory studies to maintain expertise and improve quality in the field of forensics are important examples. The foundation of our success is intensive scientific exchange within the various working groups, standing committees and task forces. In short, ENFSI is continuing to enhance the forensic landscape throughout Europe very successfully.

Of course, this success costs money. Money that ENFSI generates primarily from the annual membership fees paid by its members. On the other hand, the expenditures focus on administrative costs for the highly effective ENFSI Secretariat – an indispensable facilitator in terms of organising the diverse range of tasks and processes that make up ENFSI – as well as supporting the ENFSI working groups, standing committees and task forces – the scientific backbone of ENFSI.

A look ahead at the budget planning stage shows that the years of expected surpluses are largely over. Despite all the financial uncertainties, it is likely that maintaining the essential support services for all ENFSI bodies at state-of-the-art level will become more difficult in the future. Against this backdrop, the ENFSI directors have decided to pursue a new approach to cost sharing for ENFSI's associate members. Starting in 2026, a

membership fee of €250 for associate members will be charged for participating in a certain ENFSI working group. This will replace the previous system of a 20 % surcharge for participation in working group meetings and proficiency tests, respectively. The ENFSI Board hopes that this will be perceived as a "fair" cost-sharing arrangement for all ENFSI members – both regular and associate ones – and will thus generate at least some additional revenues to stabilise the financial situation. The effectiveness of the new approach will then be validated in the upcoming years. This new approach is certainly not at odds with the fact that we are well aware of the very valuable role played by ENFSI associate member institutions. ENFSI depends on broad participation from all members of the forensic science network!

I am confident that together we will succeed in sustainably driving ENFSI forward in the future. We can all contribute and should actively embrace this responsibility.

Best regards,
Attila Kuczmann
ENFSI Treasurer

Andrea Ledić

Member of the 29th ENFSI Board



Dear colleagues and members of ENFSI,

It is a great honour for me to address you for the first time as a newly elected member of the ENFSI Board. I would like to sincerely thank you for the trust and confidence you have placed in me at the Annual Meeting in Dublin.

I have been working in forensic science for more than twenty-five years, all of them within the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia. Since 2018, I have had the privilege of leading the Forensic Science Centre Ivan Vucetic, where I am responsible for coordinating a wide range of forensic disciplines and for representing our work at both national and international levels. My background is in chemistry and cognitive neuroscience, and early in my career I specialised in forensic document and handwriting examination, later becoming the chief expert in this field.

I have been involved in ENFSI since 2006, initially through the Expert Working Groups for Documents (EDEWG) and Handwriting (ENFHEX), and I have had the honour of serving as the official ENFSI representative for Croatia since 2018. These years of cooperation have allowed me to witness first-hand the strength of our network and the value of sharing expertise across countries and disciplines.

Alongside my work in Croatia and in ENFSI, I have been engaged in international forensic cooperation through the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, where I have been a full member since 2022, and through my academic contributions as a lecturer at the Universities of Split and Zagreb. I have also been fortunate to receive several international accolades for my professional work, which I see as acknowledgements not only of my efforts but also of the colleagues and institutions with whom I have had the opportunity to collaborate.

As a member of the ENFSI Board, I am committed to working with dedication, openness and responsibility to further strengthen our network. I believe that cooperation, innovation and mutual trust are essential to ensuring that forensic science continues to contribute effectively to justice and

security across Europe. I look forward to supporting initiatives that enhance our joint work, encourage knowledge exchange, and inspire the next generation of forensic scientists.

Thank you once again for this opportunity and for welcoming me so warmly onto the Board. I look forward to our common path ahead.

“Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity and is the torch which illuminates the world”
– Louis Pasteur.

Andrea Ledić

ENFSI Secretariat



Dear ENFSI members,

The ENFSI Secretariat is pleased to present the ENFSI Annual Report 2025 to you.

Over the past year, the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) has continued to take important steps to promote cooperation and knowledge sharing among European forensic laboratories. Workshops, conferences and training events enabled experts from different countries to share their experiences, insights and work together to advance the field of forensic science.

A highlight of the past year was the successful organisation of our Annual Meeting, which was held in conjunction with the European Academy of Forensic Science (EAFS) conference. The joint event was a huge success, with around 1000 participants attending the EAFS conference, making it one of the largest gatherings of forensic experts in Europe. The ENFSI Annual Meeting provided a valuable opportunity for our members to come together, discuss current issues, and shape the future of forensic science in Europe.

At the ENFSI Secretariat, we have strived to improve communication and information sharing, and have also

developed an overall data protection manual for our network. We look forward to making further progress in the coming year and to continuing to strengthen forensic science in Europe. Our Secretariat has also been boosted by the return of Mrs. Kreidel from maternity leave, who has brought new energy and ideas to our team.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the ENFSI Board for their leadership and guidance, as well as to all our members, who have contributed to the success of our organisation through their active participation and engagement. We also thank our Working Groups, Task Forces and Standing Committees for their hard work and dedication to advancing the field of forensic science. Their efforts have been instrumental in shaping the future of ENFSI, and we are grateful for their commitment to our organisation.

We hope that this report will give you a comprehensive overview of our activities and achievements, and look forward to continuing to work together to achieve our goals and to promote excellence in forensic science.

Yours,
Nina, Jessica, Valeri and Aliena

NEW PLACES, NEW FACES

NEW PLACES, NEW FACES

Instituti i Policisë Shkencore (IPSH): Scientific Police Institute, Albania

The IPSH sits within the General Directorate of the Albanian State Police, and is located in the capital city, Tirana. There are currently approx. 80 employees, but the institute will be expanding in 2026, with a further 18 posts agreed. The institute will also be providing increasing oversight of crime scene examination specialists located in the 12 regions of Albania from 2026, with a new Deputy Director post established for that purpose.

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The range of forensic services provided includes crime scene examination, fingerprint enhancement and comparison, DNA recovery and profiling, handwriting comparison and document examination, digital forensics, audio comparison and facial recognition, ballistics comparison, gunshot residue analysis and shooting scene reconstruction, explosives and narcotics analysis. Access to forensic databases (CODIS, AFIS, EVOFINDER) is also provided, including requests for searches from INTERPOL.

The IPSH is currently organised into 11 sectors, of which 9 are directly delivering casework plus two (support services and quality management) provide services to support high quality service delivery. Almost 12,000 cases have been delivered in the past year. The operational sectors are:

1. Biology

- The sector performs presumptive tests for body fluids and DNA analysis of crime scene and reference samples.

2. Evaluation of Fingerprints and Crime Scene Sector

- Carries out physical and chemical enhancement of latent fingerprints, recording the images. If prints are judged to be of sufficient quality, they are passed to the Dactyloscopy sector for comparison.

3. Dactyloscopy carries out the comparison of fingerprints and maintains the AFIS system including networks with the Border and Immigration Police.

4. Chemical Examinations Sector

- Analysis of narcotics, precursors and explosives.

5. Handwriting and Document Examination Sector

- Carries out document examinations, handwriting comparison and examination of travel documents in civil and criminal cases.

6. Digital Examinations Sector

- Forensic analysis of phones, computers and digital media.

7. Ballistics Examinations Sector

- Maintains the IPSH EVOFINDER Database, maintains a collection of cartridge cases and test material originating from legally owned and Police firearms.

8. Audio-Visual Sector

- Facial recognition and audio-visual comparison

9. Evidence Receiving Sector

- All the cases received at the Institute pass through the Evidence Receiving Sector, which logs their arrival, ensures continuity and integrity are maintained and archives copies of expert reports delivered.

NEW PLACES, NEW FACES

International Support

The IPSH has been the beneficiary of international support from:

1. European Commission pre-accession Projects

2. UNDP – SEESAC Western Balkan Programme supporting the control of small arms and light weapons, ballistics and CSI

3. Bilateral

- a. Sweden (CSI and Sexual Violence Investigation),
- b. Germany (LKA Berlin supporting Audio Visual Unit)
- c. INL/DEA, supporting the narcotics team – validation and sampling in large seizures
- d. UK – Forensics for Albania, supporting quality management and work towards ISO/IEC17025 accreditation, review of CSI at a national level with a view to ISO/ IEC17020 accreditation, national forensic strategy and organisational structure development.

4. ENFSI: attending working group meetings has given substantial support to sectors in developing their processes in line with international standards. Full membership, conferred by the ENFSI Board in December 2025 is a major step forward for the institute, recognising its strides towards achieving accreditation.

Quality & Accreditation

Albania is proceeding with its application to join the European Union. Accreditation of its forensic laboratory is a key objective to enable the exchange of biometric data in its objective to tackle transnational serious and organised crime.

The IPSH has submitted an application for ISO/IEC 12025 accreditation for the first three activities: DNA Reference samples from arrested and detained people, dactyloscopy and analysis of cocaine. Across the institute, a network of the most experienced sector experts acting as Quality Contacts is working in each sector to prepare for accreditation.

The institute's Director, Mr. Perlat Çullaj, emphasised that participation in ENFSI is a strategic step toward for the institute in terms of professional development, improvement of scientific quality, and European integration of forensic services. This will provide us with access to best practice, training, scientific cooperation, and internal recognition, while ISO IEC 17025 accreditation will ensure the quality, reliability and legal acceptance of forensic results.



ENFSI VISION

ENFSI VISION

Implementation of the EFSA 2.0 Action Plan

As is already known throughout the ENFSI community, the concept of the European Forensic Science Area 2.0, largely based on the contribution of this Network's vision, was endorsed and published as Council Conclusions in the form of an Action Plan on 9 March 2023.

However, this concept is not new, but rather a continuation of the path begun in the previous stage, which concluded in 2020, with this new stage having a time frame of 2030.

In our previous annual reports, we have outlined the steps taken by both ENFSI and the trio of Presidencies (France – Czech Republic – Sweden), who took the initiative to promote EFSA continuity in order to improve both the effectiveness of scientific and technical research and collaboration between Member States, adapting to new forms of crime, especially at this time when new technologies are breaking with the established paradigm. The Spanish Presidency also highlighted the importance of moving forward with the implementation of this Action Plan.

This is a team effort: Member States, together with other European partners that play a special role (EUROPOL, CEPOL, ECTEG, EJTN, eu-LISA), although we must not forget that the ENFSI community is responsible for 18 of the 24 actions identified in EFSA 2.0.

To achieve maximum performance, ENFSI incorporated the implementation of EFSA 2.0 as a priority task in its Strategic Plan 2023–2026, consequently introducing it into its annual action plans through specific actions and micro-actions that facilitate its accomplishment.

Indeed, the development of projects funded by ISF-P Direct Grants and the regular activities of the ENFSI Board, its Committees, Tasks Forces and Expert Working Groups are aligned with this task.

We have almost reached the halfway point without realising it, and, as every year, it is time to take a look at the goals we have achieved and the tasks that still require further effort. To begin, we must start by highlighting the workshop held at the triennial EAFS meeting in May in Dublin, with the aim of summarising the status quo in the implementation of EFSA 2.0, identifying priority areas and taking the next steps in the development of an action plan, in order to meet current and

future needs with a view to strengthening the impact and reliability of forensic results across Europe.

This year, the new DG policy has also come into effect, an internal call for proposals for the next announcement has been issued, and the established evaluation process has been carried out, making the entire decision-making cycle more transparent and efficient. We hope that this new budget line will be operational as soon as possible, and will give us the opportunity to continue promoting research and training. Another noteworthy task is conducting a prospective analysis of forensic sciences, led primarily by the RDSC, which presented its new roadmap during the last Annual Meeting held in Dublin.

In the same way, this Committee continues to produce and distribute regular publications in the form of bulletins and newsletters highlighting innovation opportunities and projects. But particularly important this year has been the activation of the RDLG to promote this necessary ecosystem in the field of innovation and development, as well as participation in EuCB working groups, where research into new and traditional biometrics is being analysed in depth.

With regard to training-related tasks, ENFSI has actively collaborated with CEPOL in the development of its EU Strategic Training Needs Analysis 2026–2029, consolidating the relationship between the two organisations. Also noteworthy is the holding of an OOS on e-learning in Tallinn, organised by the E&T Task Force.

But if there is one thing that is taking up many hours of work in all areas of forensic science, it is the emergence of AI. The work entrusted to the AI Task Force will soon see the light of day, including a SWOT analysis designed to help all members of the network understand the opportunities and risks associated with implementing this technology in their laboratories' work processes. Also in February, ENFSI participated in the first seminar organised by the EJTN on key issues relating to the use of AI in the criminal justice system, contributing the perspective of forensic science.

Another noteworthy milestone is the publication of ISO21043:2025 series of standards for forensic sciences, which was presented during the QCC-QCLG meeting in Oxford. This Committee is working to raise awareness and

ENFSI VISION

educate the entire community on the need to focus on quality as the ultimate goal, beyond accreditation processes. This new standard serves as a guide covering the entire work process, from the scene to the defence of reports in court, with the interpretation of results playing a prominent role. Many other activities have been carried out in line with this European Forensic Science Area, which, despite not being mentioned here, are no less relevant.

The Board would like to thank everyone for their efforts in achieving this common goal, and we encourage all of you to continue with the same enthusiasm in those areas where more work is still needed, such as the impact of bias and the human factor.

María Bueno. Board Member

ENFSI VISION

ENFSI Action Plan 2025 – 2026

The ENFSI Action Plan for 2025–2026 was presented to, and approved by, the ENFSI membership at the Annual Meeting in Dublin in May 2025. The annual action plan is monitored by the ENFSI Board in cooperation with other internal bodies, such as standing committees and task forces, as well as regular members.

What do we want to accomplish in the near future? The focus is, of course, on the European Forensic Science Area 2.0, as well as on raising the overall effectiveness of ENFSI's operational capacity by strengthening cooperation and fostering scientific growth. Our intention is to achieve major goals by working through smaller, more manageable steps.

Last but not least, the ENFSI Board would like to thank everyone involved in achieving the ENFSI core objectives outlined below.

I. Contribute to the establishment of the European Forensic Science Area 2.0 through the implementation of its Action Plan

ACTION 1.1

Implementation of EFSA 2.0 Action Plan

- This year, our aim is to continue implementing EFSA 2.0 through projects funded by the ISF-P Direct Award scheme and our regular activities. The ENFSI proposals for the next Direct Award scheme have been submitted and reviewed internally, with a view to contributing further to the aims of EFSA 2.0, i. e. the future challenges, strengthening the impact of forensic results, and demonstrating the reliability of forensic results. The progress of EFSA will be communicated further to the Law Enforcement Working Party, whereas the analysis of SOCTA 2025 will serve to direct the activity of the forensic scientific community to help fight organised crime.

ACTION 1.2

Continue Forensic Science horizon scanning

- The Research and Development Standing Committee is responsible for developing and maintaining the process that captures emerging medium and long-term trends in forensic science. Regular scientific updates, including a pipeline of developments and funding opportunities, are disseminated through newsletters and bulletins, which are also available on the ENFSI website. Horizon scanning in forensic science is one of the ongoing tasks performed effectively and to the satisfaction of the ENFSI community.

ACTION 1.3

To reinforce Education and Training activities

- This important item on the ENFSI agenda aims to improve the skills of the ENFSI community by promoting ENFSI e-learning tools, identifying E&T needs, and cooperating with other relevant stakeholders, such as CEPOL and EJTN. ENFSI will continue to deliver various educational activities, such as OOS or thematic activities on the implementation of e-learning modules, and the encouragement of the E&T Task Force to identify educational and training needs.

ACTION 1.4

To assess the threats and opportunities presented by Artificial Intelligence

- In order to develop appropriate policy, the potential and challenges of integrating AI into forensic science and criminal investigation must be evaluated. With this in mind, the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) – supported by the AI Task Force – will further explore the challenges in this area, identify relevant stakeholders and initiate cooperation between them, including the judiciary, as well as organise activities focusing on the usability of AI in forensic science.

II- Strengthening the network through professionalisation

ACTION 2.1

To reinforce ENFSI's professional identity and visibility

- The visibility of ENFSI's various deliverables must be coherent and consistent. Our flagship product, the website, needs to be modified and redesigned to improve its functionality. The Secretariat has already started this process. The consistent use of the ENFSI brand has been ensured by updating the Framework for Communication.

ACTION 2.2

Raising the profile of ENFSI

- An enhanced activity profile is particularly important for promoting and representing the interests of ENFSI to a wider community. The ENFSI Board seizes every opportunity to showcase the achievements of the Network to other entities and institutes, ensuring that it is recognised as a unique global voice in forensic science.

ACTION 2.3

Empowering ENFSI with its own IT infrastructure

- The extensive administration of ENFSI is challenging. Therefore, we need to carefully analyse which tools need to be implemented at a general or working group level. This will be achieved by identifying user requirements and cases for restricted access to ENFSI reports and data.

III – Consolidate and improve cooperation within ENFSI

ACTION 3.1

To decide on ENFSI operating model

- A management survey was prepared and circulated to identify areas for improvement, with the aim of further professionalising the activities of the Board and its key functions. This year, we must implement the survey's conclusions, promote the engagement of ENFSI members, and prepare and implement an initiation programme for new members due to noticeable turnover amongst Permanent Representatives.

ACTION 3.2

Identify tools for internal ENFSI cooperation

- The ENFSI Board evaluated possible ways to improve internal communication and cooperation. Online meetings are encouraged across all organisational levels and the strategies of individual expert working groups have been encapsulated in a 'new template'. The Board monitors Position Papers and various tasks and commitments through the creation of task lists and special 'umbrella' oversight of the EWGs' activities.

ACTION 3.3

Identify and review collaboration with Forensic Science providers globally and stakeholders to strengthen the network

- IFSA is a partnership between Regional Networks of Operational Forensic Laboratories aiming to create opportunities for strategic collaboration across the global forensic community. ENFSI has been one of the seven IFSA's Member Organisations since 2008. ENFSI has taken on the leadership role in IFSA until the end of 2025 and the regular reports are submitted to the Board.
- ENFSI will further improve cooperation with its main stakeholders and enhance its commitment and cooperation with forensic science networks and organisations globally. With this in mind, the existing agreements and MoUs should be reviewed and other channels of collaboration established, depending on mutual needs.

ENFSI IN CLOSE-UP

ENFSI IN CLOSE-UP

Expert Working Groups (EWGs)



Animal, Plant & Soil Traces

Field of Activity

The Animal, Plant and Soil Traces expert working group (APST) supports the aims and objectives of the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) in the area of casework analysis of all kinds of biological traces of non-human origin and soil traces. The activities of APST offer a scientific platform to share experiences, to discuss analytical issues concerning morphological, chemical and molecular aspects, to plan collaboration in the field of general biology, and to generate a network of forensic biological and soil experts. It will provide a forum for the validation, introduction and improvement of morphological, chemical, physical and molecular biological analysis in casework.

Chair

Irene Kuiper, Netherlands Forensic Institute

Size of EWG

54 Members (24 Full Members, 30 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed

no information

Meetings

Hungary, Pecs SC Meeting in May 2025
Annual Meeting during EAFS Dublin, in May 2025

Activities/Achievements

In 2025, a small project sponsored by APST on the topic of genetic typing of dog-wolf hybrids was presented during the annual meeting. Another project on nano-CT was proposed and accepted. The ENFSI APST Working Group unites diverse forensic disciplines dealing with biological trace evidence, examined through morphology, chemistry, geology, and DNA, to determine sample origin or crime-scene association, requiring broad biological expertise, and illustrated through case examples (soil, botanical, wildlife, microbiome) that show how modern technologies and expert knowledge can yield high evidential value

Outlook for the following year

- Meeting in Madrid, Spain in April
- Two workshops will be organised.
- At the Annual Meeting 2026, PT/CE outcomes will be presented. A PT on soil and non-human DNA is planned.
- In 2026, the first results of the small nano-CT project will be presented.



DNA

Field of Activity
The ENFSI DNA Working Group provides a forum for implementation and improvement of DNA analysis in casework as well as validation of methods and software. It considers all aspects of DNA case analysis and case reporting.

Chair
Sander Kneppers, Netherlands Forensic Institute

Size of EWG
90 Members (60 Full Members, 30 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
1 (Collaboration with the ISFG-EDNAP group: mtDNA heteroplasmy, “Biographic ancestry” Quo Vadis, BGA?)

Meetings
SC Meeting in Luxembourg in May

Activities/Achievements
ReAct II project as part of Monopoly 2022 ENFSI project FOR-FUTURE (WP5) to continue the work of ReAct with 25 DNA laboratories collaborating. A new cycle of one-hour online “Expert Answers” meetings (starting with a session on mixture analysis and probabilistic genotyping), the production of EPE-hosted training videos on activity-level evaluation, and theme sessions at the annual meeting on mixture interpretation, DVI, familial searches, expert reporting, and customer perspectives.

- Outlook for the following year
- Continue initiative ‘The expert answers’ on different topics
 - A new survey on E&T needs
 - Use an e-learning platform for E&T activities. First topic to be addressed ‘Mixture analysis and statistical interpretation’ based on previous survey, and still the most requested topic
 - Second meeting, ‘Kinship analysis using Familias’, with Expert Thore Egeland
 - Finish CE project as part of Monopoly 2022 ENFSI project FOR-FUTURE (WP2)
 - Project proposal to continue the organisation of multidisciplinary exercises E97
 - CE Plans in collaboration with the ISFG-EDNAP group

Digital Imaging

Field of Activity
Image and video processing and enhancement; image and video authentication; image and video generation/creation; image and video recovery; facial image comparison (one-to-one, one-to-many, automated facial recognition systems); photogrammetry and 3D techniques; Augmented and Virtual Reality.

Chair
Zeno Geradts, NFI, The Netherlands

Size of EWG
153 Members (143 Full Members, 10 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
no information

Meetings
no information

Activities/Achievements
no information

Outlook for the following year
no information



Drugs

Field of Activity
Drugs Working Group (DWG) acts as a platform for information exchange on new developments and trends in the field of forensic drugs analysis. For that purpose, a number of documents are published and relevant libraries are maintained. A significant contribution to quality assurance and development. The Group is dedicated to research and development activities as well. Collaboration with esteemed partner organisations like SWGDRUG, UNODC, EMCDDA, EC-JRC, AFSN is maintained on a continuous basis.

Chair
Dr. Natasa Radosavljevic-Stevanovic, National Forensic Center of the Republic of Serbia

Size of EWG
77 Members (60 Full Members, 17 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
1 (DWG PT)

Meetings
SC Meeting in Berlin, Germany in May

Activities/Achievements
A continuation workshop on the validation of quantitative methods was held alongside the DWG Annual Meeting 2025, the UNODC Forensic Science Symposium was jointly organised by UNODC, ENFSI-DWG, DEA and AFSN in early September 2025, and DWG members conducted a workshop on sampling of seized drugs for German Customs. Laboratories Panel Discussion on Flexible Scope of Accreditation: joint discussion on accreditation flexibility in forensic drugs analysis followed the presentations about the accreditation flexibility experiences of two member laboratories.

Outlook for the following year
• Meeting in Madeira/Lisbon, Portugal in April
• Workshop on the application of NMR in forensic drugs analysis will be held in conjunction with the DWG Annual Meeting 2026.
• UNODC Forensic Science Symposium 2026 will be organised jointly by UNODC, ENFSI DWG, DEA and AFSN in October 2026.



Documents

Field of Activity
Entire field of document examination: exchange of information and expertise, support on technical issues, promoting quality, proficiency testing and collaborative exercises, harmonisation of examination procedures and techniques, co-operation in research and development. EDEWG has a number of mainly technical based subgroups, each taking forward areas such as research and development, method validation, drafting of Methods & Procedures, QA trials, sharing of information, collection of samples and information for database purposes, etc. in specified areas of questioned documents.

Chair
Simon Wyss, Forensic Science Institute Zurich, Switzerland

Size of EWG
79 Members (68 Full Members, 11 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
no information

Meetings
Business Meeting in Krakow, Poland in October

Activities/Achievements
• EDEWG Teamsite on EPE for general EDEWG topics
• Update of Framework

Outlook for the following year
Joint Conference with ENFHEX & BM in Lisbon Portugal in October



Fingerprint

Field of Activity
The European Fingerprint Working Group (EFP-WG) promotes development and improvement in the areas of fingerprint recognition, representation and comparison.

Chair
Aldo Mattei, Forensic Science laboratories of Carabinieri Force (RaCIS)

Size of EWG
203 Members (161 Full Members, 42 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
3 (MdCE025, ACE2025, VIS2025)

Meetings
Barcelona, Spain in November

Activities/Achievements
Three ENFSI documents were created, which collectively outline standardised procedures for fingerprint examination, including best-practice workflows, guidance for conducting proficiency tests and collaborative exercises, and protocols for effective fingerprint work at crime scenes.

Outlook for the following year
no information

Handwriting

Field of Activity
ENFHEX is an Expert Working Group of the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) and supports the aims and objectives of ENFSI in the area of Forensic Handwriting Examination.

Chair
Tomasz Dziedic, Institute of Forensic Research, Poland

Size of EWG
80 Members (61 Full Members, 19 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
1 (CE25)

Meetings
16th ENFHEX Conference in Lyon, France in September

Activities/Achievements
Training and competency materials have been prepared for online publication, with access planned through the purchase of iSpring software licenses. Jonathan Morris and Maria Branco, together with colleagues from the Documents, DNA, and Fingerprints Working Groups, co-authored a paper on developing multi-disciplinary collaborative exercises, which was submitted to Forensic Science International

Outlook for the following year

- Joined Meeting with the EDEWG in Lisbon, Portugal
- CE26 – planned
- Review of upper index ENFHEX PT



Paint, Glass & Taggants

<u>Field of Activity</u> The European Paint, Glass & Taggants Expert Working Group (EPGT EWG) is an Expert Working Group of the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI), and it supports the aims and objectives of ENFSI in the area of forensic investigation of paint, glass, adhesive tapes and security links.
<u>Chair</u> Christos Batis, Forensic Science Division/Hellenic Police Headquarters, Greece
<u>Size of EWG</u> 6 Members (6 Full Members)
<u>Number of PT/CE performed</u> no information
<u>Meetings</u> no information
<u>Activities/Achievements</u> no information
<u>Outlook for the following year</u> no information

Textile & Hair

<u>Field of Activity</u> Fibre identification and comparison, textile identification and comparison, textile and fibre damage/physical fits, textile video imaging, hair identification and comparison
<u>Chair</u> Genevieve Massonnet University of Lausanne, Switzerland
<u>Size of EWG</u> 57 Members (53 Full Members, 4 Associate Members)
<u>Number of PT/CE performed</u> 46 (textile PT/CE) 31 (hair PT/CE)
<u>Meetings</u> Annual Meeting in Athens, Greece in June
<u>Activities/Achievements</u> • Submission of an EU direct grant in 2025 • Pan-European harmonization of forensic fibre data for evaluative reporting: standardize data collection, develop shared reference samples, build a database infrastructure

- Outlook for the following year
- Meeting in Marseille, France in June
 - Work on the pan-European fibre data for evaluative reporting – depending on the acceptance of the EU direct grant
 - Other research projects on evaluative reporting at the activity level and automatisisation/AI for fibre analysis (search and indentification)
 - Implementation of research networks (RNs)

ENFSI IN CLOSE-UP



ENFSI IN CLOSE-UP



Firearms and GSR

Field of Activity
The ENFSI EWG Firearms / GSR is the European organisation of experts in one of the most interesting disciplines of forensic science. It combines scientific experience in the fields of firearms identification (FAID), firearms technique, gunshot residues (GSR) and scene of crime reconstruction in firearms offences. According to the Terms of Reference (ToR), associate members from around the world are able to join in the annual meetings and the projects of the EWG Firearms /GSR in compliance with ENFSI goals.

Chair
Kal Chana, Cellmark Forensic Services, UK

Size of EWG
98 Members (73 Full Members, 25 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
4 (GSR PT, Shooting Distance Determination, Real GSR PT, Firearms Identification)

Meetings
31st ENFSI Firearms & GSR EWG Annual Meeting, The Hague, Netherlands in October

- Activities/Achievements
- Ballistic soap project
 - Exchange of 3D Forensic Ballistic Data, MP2022 FOR-FUTURE
 - Transfer and persistence of GSR

Outlook for the following year

- Meeting in The Hague, Netherlands

Fire and Explosion

Field of Activity
The aim of the Fire and Explosion Investigation Working Group is to share knowledge and experiences, collect information, develop methods and give advice to working group members. The sphere of activities of the working group is fi eld investigation, technical investigation and chemical analyses of a fire scene. The Working Group strives to ensure the quality of development of fire and explosion investigation.

Chair
Eric Leung, University of the West of England Bristol, UK

Size of EWG
53 Members (40 Full Members, 13 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
1 (CE23: SPA Forensic Services Scottish Crime Campus)

Meetings
26th ENFSI FEIWG Annual Meeting in Brussels, Belgium in September

- Activities/Achievements
- Integrating Quality Control (QC) into the R&D Proposal for 3D Technology in Crime Scene Examination
 - Establishing a Dedicated Group for Knowledge Revision and Procedure Review
 - Developing Multi-Disciplinary Examination (MDE) Working Guidelines
 - Fire Investigation Course (DBI Denmark) – November 2025
 - Webinar: “Introduction to Special Lights” – 29 August 2025

Outlook for the following year

- Meeting in Malta in September
- Need for Updated Guidance and Development of a BPM for Accelerants Analysis
- Ongoing Revision of the FEI BPM

Forensic Information Technology

Field of Activity
The Forensic Information Technology (FIT) Working Group's focus: "all the sciences and technical disciplines combined to allow the examination of material that contain information (computers, networks, electronic devices etc.) to assist an investigation and, eventually, present evidence for a trial."

Chair
Chris Lavoine, Gendarmerie France

Size of EWG
76 Members (56 Full Members, 20 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
1

Meetings
Business meeting in Istanbul, in September

Activities/Achievements
ENFSI institutes are involved in 8 EU projects on digital

Outlook for the following year
no information

Explosives

Field of Activity
The activities of the Expert Working Group on Explosives, also known as the Forensic International Network for Explosives Investigation (FINEX), focus on a number of forensic areas related to the investigation of explosives.

Chair
Matthew Beardah, Forensic Explosives Laboratory, UK

Size of EWG
78 Members (41 Full Members, 37 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
2 (LGC Forensic Analysis of Explosives 013 and 014)

Meetings
TBC in May

Activities/Achievements
• The group worked on developing a guide for explosives identification, conducting collaborative research on trace explosives recovery, and supporting a PhD study at the University of Dundee.

Outlook for the following year
• LGC Forensic Analysis of Explosives (FAE) 015 and LGC Forensic Analysis of Explosives (FAE) 016
• Two PTs in 2026 planned.
• 3 FINEX Webinars planned





Forensic Speech and Audio Analysis

Field of Activity

The ENFSI-FSAAWG has members representing a wide range of forensic and university labs from almost 30 countries. Aims and Objectives of FSAAWG:

- To improve / develop / evaluate methodologies used in forensic speaker recognition
- To improve / develop / evaluate methodologies used in audio enhancement
- To improve / develop / evaluate methodologies used in audio authentication

Chair

Luca Cuccovillo, Fraunhofer Institute for Digital Media Technology, Germany

Size of EWG

38 Members (31 Full Members, 7 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed

- 3
- CE on cross-lingual automatic speaker recognition (completed)
 - CE on speech enhancement (started)
 - Multi-disciplinary CE by FOR-FUTURE (started)

Meetings

Annual Meeting in Zagreb, Croatia in October

Activities/Achievements

- CERTAIN FORS WP7 continued. Development of a multilingual voice samples database for further research
- Gearing up to take part in upcoming EU projects focused on synthetic content detection

Outlook for the following year

- Meeting Online in October/November
- Update BPM on audio authenticity analysis
- Update BPM on automatic speaker recognition
- Plans to participate in new EU grants on synthetic content detection, as soon as suitable calls for projects are available

Marks

Field of Activity

- Forensic examination of footwear and bare footprints
- tire marks, tool marks, glove marks, manufacturing
- marks, locks and other related fields.

Chair

Julien Pasquier,
Forensic Service, Police Neuchâteloise, Switzerland

Size of EWG

86 Members (64 Full Members, 22 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed

1 (Collaborative Exercise Footwear n°11, will be distributed end of 2025)

Meetings

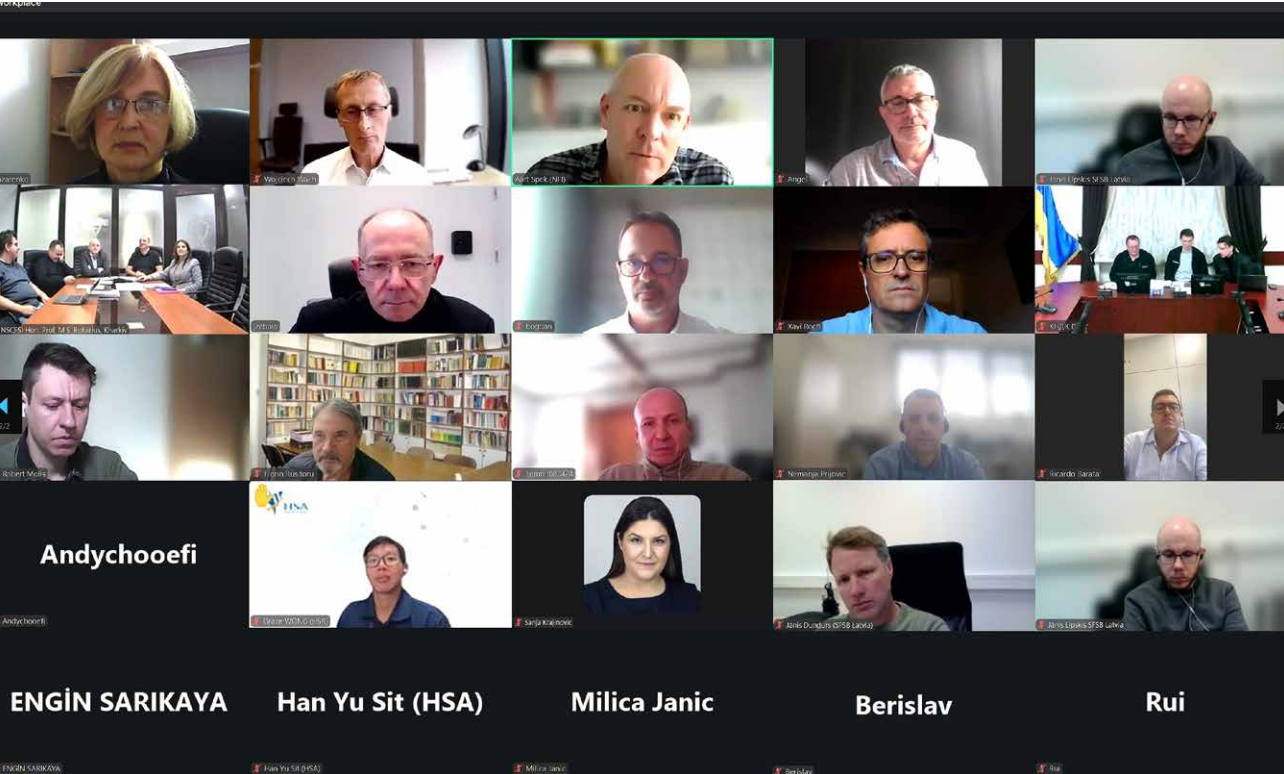
no information

Activities/Achievements

Transferred the BPM Toolmark to the secretariat for public review, submitted the BPM Footwear to the EWG for review, and conducted a survey within the EWG to assess current practices and training needs for evaluative reporting.

Outlook for the following year

Develop an e-learning module on evaluative reporting for Marks WG CE11, analyse and publish BPM Toolmark results, finalise and publish the BPM Footwear documents after public review, and continue improving evaluative reporting and BPM dissemination activities.



Road Accident Analysis

Field of Activity
Sharing information and recommended practices; exercises and tests to increase capability.

Chair
Mrs. Lina Lazarenko,
Forensic Science Centre of Lithuania

Size of EWG
17 Members (14 Full Members, 3 Associate Members)

Number of PT/CE performed
1 (CE “Evaluation of iPhone data in the investigation of traffic accidents”)

Meetings
Online Meeting in December

Activities/Achievements
Collected member-submitted cases with known vehicle impact speeds for the Car Impact Speed Database and examined the use of video data in road-accident investigations.

Outlook for the following year

- Meeting in Cluj-Napoca, Romania in September
- Vehicle collision, assessment of the possibility of avoiding a traffic accident.
- Handling and analysing large datasets from smart devices.

Scene of Crime

Field of Activity
The scope of the Scene of Crime Working Group is:

- to consider the “crime scene” as part of the overall contribution of forensic science to crime investigation and the administration of justice
- to recognise that a broad definition of the “crime scene” needs to be employed that covers the location, collection and interpretation of forensic evidence from suspects and victims as well as places / locations
- to recognise the broad spectrum of interests of police, forensic and law enforcement agencies in effective “crime scene” examination, the involvement and representation on the Working Group will reflect this broad view

Chair
Ruth Buckley, Metropolitan Police

Size of EWG
161 Members

Number of PT/CE performed
1 (PT/CE of CSI & BPA (planned))

Meetings
SoC Group Meeting in The Hague, Netherlands in September

Activities/Achievements
Continued consultation on the BPM Archaeology, progressed work on the BPM BPA, reviewed the BPM SOC, planned publications on the Sydney Declaration, and maintained ongoing cooperation with CEPOL.

Outlook for the following year
no information

Research and Development Standing Committee (RDSC)

Membership

The year 2025 was a year of consolidation for the dedicated RDSC team. Responsibilities for the actions listed in the RDSC action plan 2024–2026 were shared among all members and were followed up on with a high degree of commitment. The RDSC was recently boosted by a 7th member, Nick Tsiatis from the Hellenic Police, and is now superbly equipped to tackle its many tasks and expectations. A face-to-face meeting at the EAFS in Dublin in May 2025 served to further reinforce the cooperative spirit and shared R&D mission across the ENFSI community.

European Academy of Forensic Science (EAFS)

A highlight of 2025 was undoubtedly the EAFS conference, which was held in Dublin, Ireland, from 26th to 30th May. In his role as member of the FSI, Edward Connolly played a leading part in the management of the conference, but still found time to bridge the gap to the RDSC.

All other members of the RDSC were actively involved as members of the Scientific Committee, reviewing abstracts and chairing track sessions or workshops.

A face-to-face RDSC meeting was held on this occasion, which, of course, centred mostly around EAFS activities.



RDSC Members 2025

Christa Dern
(BKA, Germany – Chair)

Laura Aalberg
(NBI, Finland – Member)

Lisa Burke
(Metropolitan Police, UK – Member)

Edward Connolly
(FSI, Ireland – Member)

Didier Meuwly
(NFI, Netherlands – Member)

Elisa Pizarro
(Policia Nacional, Spain – Member)

Nick Tsiatis
(Hellenic Police, Greece) – Member

Attila Kuczmann
(FSI Schleswig-Holstein, Germany – Board Liaison)

Maria Bueno
(Policia Nacional, Spain – Board Liaison)

RDSC Newsletter and RDSC Bulletins

With the aim of keeping the ENFSI community informed on trends in forensic science, funding opportunities, major scientific conferences, core scientific themes of EFSA 2.0., new tools and emerging technologies, and – last but not least – RDSC and RDLG activities, the RDSC published 3 Bulletins as well as the annual RDSC Newsletter.

R&D Survey across the EWGs and ENFSI Member Institutes

In accordance with the ENFSI and RDSC strategic plans, the annual survey on R&D projects and identified trends was conducted in autumn 2025, in order to provide the ENFSI community with an up-to-date list of R&D activities, emerging developments and opportunities in forensic science. While in 2024 the survey was targeted at the EWGs only, in 2025 it was extended to include all ENFSI member institutes, in order to map R&D activities across the ENFSI community as comprehensively as possible.

The results were disseminated to all ENFSI members and Expert Working Groups. As many ENFSI members welcome the idea of having an overview of R&D activities within the network, but annual surveys are difficult to handle – especially by members with a high R&D work-load – a suggestion was made to implement an R&D database within ENFSI. The idea will be followed up by the RDSC in 2026.

News from the Lab – Making Forensic Science Visible

The RDSC online format *News from the Lab – Making Forensic Science Visible* took off well in 2025 with a total of 3 webinars. The format is designed to increase visibility of ongoing research in ENFSI member institutes and EWGs and to **encourage co-operation and the sharing of experience** across disciplines and organisations. The focus of the format lies on the practical side of R&D as opposed to the more abstract, purely descriptive side provided by reports.

Topics covered were:

- ENFSI Direct Grant, CERTAIN-FORS (Direct Grant Manager)
- UNLOCK – FUNdamental fOrensic Knowledge (UNLOCK-Team)



- Multidisciplinary Proficiency Test and Collaborative Exercises in Forensics (ENFSI CERTAIN FORS WP9) (Carabinieri Scientific Investigation Service – Italy)
- Development of a New PT on the Interpretation of GSR Findings according to ISO 17043 and ISO13528 Demands (ENFSI CERTAIN FORS WP8) (BKA, Germany)
- Benchmarking of Proficiency Tests for the Fingerprint Domain (ENFSI CERTAIN FORS WP10) (University of Lausanne)
- TENSOR – Reliable biometric Technologies to asSIST Police authorities in cOmbating terrorism and oRganised crime (ZITIS, Germany)
- Limits and Potential of Forensic Genetic Genealogy in Germany (BKA, Germany)

All sessions were well received with a large number of participants from all ENFSI member institutes. **The RDSC welcomes all proposals for presentations** in this format and wishes to encourage **young scientists** in particular to come forward and present their work.



R&D Liaison Group (RDLG)

The format of an R&D Liaison Group (RDLG) designed to facilitate communication between the RDSC, the EWGs, and the R&D coordinators of ENFSI member institutes was revived in a first online meeting on 09th/10th April 2025. All in all, the RDLG now counts 23 members, mostly R&D officers of the EWGs and the R&D coordinators of ENFSI institutes.

In accordance with the RDSC framework, it will support and facilitate communication between all those involved in forensic research and its end users to promote the transfer of knowledge.

The following key messages were agreed and are being looked into by the RDSC:

- The RDLG, as proposed, is considered a missing link between scientists and the ENFSI institutions such as the Board and the RDSC. It is also needed to close the gap between scientists and R&D management staff, who have different skills and can learn from each other in an active exchange in an open and informal context.
- There is great interest in the presentation of different models of structuring R&D in different Forensic Science Institutes. These presentations should be continued. The different R&D structures across ENFSI should be mapped as well to provide a comprehensive overview.
- The discussion of R&D-related issues in the RDLG will serve as inspiration for all participating institutes and should challenge members to make visible contributions to Forensic Science R&D.
- RDLG meetings should not be limited to annual events, but should be organised more frequently, in order to keep an active exchange going. Additional formats, such as a signal group, could be considered.

- As many different scientific fields are represented within the RDLG, multidisciplinary projects and activities could be initiated.
- An overview of R&D projects that are executed within the ENFSI community would be useful. The annual survey of projects & trends currently only targeting the EWGs should be extended to include all ENFSI institutes.
- The RDSC and RDLG together should find a way to influence the choice of theme for EU funding calls. More lobbying efforts should be made here.
- Existing documents, such as R&D strategies or R&D handbooks that have been developed in different ENFSI institutes, should be shared.
- External guests, such as scientists from universities, could be invited to contribute to the Lunch Talks organised by the RDSC in order to bridge the gap to academia.
- A mentoring programme could be set up (analogous to the “Flying Mentors” used to establish Quality Management with ENFSI), in which ENFSI institutes form teams/tandems to give and receive advice in setting up an active R&D function or developing existing structures further. This could be implemented at low costs online and/ or financed via an ENFSI Direct Grant project.

The RDSC will look into these suggestions in the course of 2026 and will try to extend its action plan accordingly.

Webinar – Introduction to Forensic Data Science

On 20th May 2025, a webinar on the topic of **Data Science** was conducted in a **joint effort between the RDSC and the ENFSI Artificial Intelligence Task Force (AI-Task Force)**. The aim of this webinar was to introduce the topic of forensic data science to practitioners and scientists working in ENFSI forensic institutes. The webinar was structured in 2 parts. The first part, digitalisation, focused on the migration of data from the physical to the digital world. The second part provided an introduction to data science, followed by its application to forensic investigation, generative AI applications and forensic evaluation. Again, this webinar was very well received with over 200 participants from all ENFSI member institutes.

Direct Award

In accordance with the ENFSI Policy on submission of Direct Award, which outlines a structured process of preparation and selection of proposals, the RDSC as part of the selection committee assessed 9 proposals against a set of fixed review criteria. In two RDSC meetings dedicated to this task, the RDSC approved a ranking of proposals that fed into the overall reviewing process. Overall, the quality of proposals was high, which reflects superbly on the R&D activities within the ENFSI working groups and community.

Liaising with the European Clearing Board (EuCB)/Europol Innovation Lab (EIL) core groups and strategic groups

The RDSC continues to actively liaise with the EuCB and EIL with a special focus on the *Strategic Group on Novel Biometric Characteristics*, in order to contribute to ENFSI’s efforts in complying to the EFSA 2.0 priority area of Biometrics. In this context, reports presenting the outcomes of the conducted surveys are currently being finalised. They will be submitted to the relevant parties as soon as possible.

In the same context, other groups are currently emerging that could operate in synergy with this group. Their activities may be of particular interest to ENFSI, as potential collaboration or coordination opportunities could arise.

By appointment of the ENFSI Board, the RDSC chair and Elisa Pizarro have taken over the role of ENFSI Liaisons to the EuCB.

EPE

Finally, thanks to the patience of Lisa Burke and the vigorous support of the ENFSI Secretariat, the RDSC has won access to the EPE and is currently reviewing the RDSC webpages.

Here, in time, you will find all RDSC products – newsletters, bulletins and presentations – to view at your leisure, should you have missed any of the RDSC events.

Joint Meeting

The RDSC was represented by the chair at the Joint Meeting 2025, which was hosted by the *National Bureau of Expertise of the National Academy of Sciences* in Yerevan, Armenia. The meeting was a welcome opportunity to present RDSC activities to the chairs of the EWGs and QCC, to gather feedback and to exchange ideas on ongoing and future activities.

In Summary...

... 2025 was again a busy and successful year for the RDSC. All in all, the RDSC had 7 meetings – 6 online and one face-to-face – in which activities were discussed and R&D-related concerns of ENFSI were addressed.

We hope to be able to continue this level of commitment and activity in 2026 and are happy to consider any feedback or suggestions stakeholders across Europe may have.

QUALITY AND COMPETENCE STANDING COMMITTEE (QCC)

The QCC is a well-established Standing Committee of ENFSI which carries out several critical activities, including developing policies and providing advice to ENFSI Expert Working Groups as well as all ENFSI members. This is done with the intention of ensuring compliance with International Standards and maintaining best practice, with a view to continuously improve.

Opening words from the Chair – Sanya Sreekumar

It is an honour and privilege to step into the role of Chair of the Quality and Competence Committee (QCC) from December 2025. I am grateful for the trust placed in me by our community and I want to begin by thanking those whose leadership and service have brought us to this point. In particular, I would like to acknowledge Jos Toth for his stewardship of the QCC until his retirement in November 2025 and Agnieszka Łukomska for her commitment as Board Representative and wish her well in her new role as Chair of the ENFSI Board. I also extend warm thanks and a sincere welcome to our incoming Board Representatives, Andrea Ledic and Mark Pearse. Finally, I am always grateful for the knowledge, hard work, commitment, camaraderie and support from within the QCC ‘Family’.

2025 has been a year of progress and transition for the QCC, as detailed below. Despite challenges, the committee delivered on key objectives, maintained high standards, and provided valuable support to the ENFSI community. With renewed leadership and a clear strategic vision, the QCC is well-positioned to build on this foundation in 2026 and beyond.

QCC activities undertaken in 2025

1. QCC Meetings

The QCC held monthly MS Teams Committee meetings. Regular agenda items included:

- Progress of QCC projects e. g. Guidelines writing group
- ENFSI documents
- ENFSI survey
- Actions following external meetings e. g. EA Meetings
- Management of proficiency tests
- Planning and preparing for the Quality & Competency Liaison Group (QCLG)
- Planning and preparing for the One day One topic Seminar (OOS)
- Reviewing requests for support from ENFSI members

Two in-person meetings were held in Lyon and Oxford. The purpose of these meetings was to ensure planning and readiness for the OOS/QCLG respectively.



Photo from the QCLG in Oxford, 2025

2. Annual One day One topic Seminar (OOS) and Quality and Competence Liaison Group (QCLG)

The annual meeting of 2025 was held in Oxford, United Kingdom with 70 attendees.

The OOS focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI), which was both timely and impactful, with 94 % of attendees expressing overall satisfaction and a clear appetite to explore AI further. The agenda had speakers from within the QCC as well as from the ENFSI AI taskforce and ENFSI Board. From the wider ENFSI Community, speakers from Portugal and the Netherlands gave presentations on their area of expertise.

The QCLG commenced by picking up from the last OOS in Malta, with the theme of ISO 21043. It was clear from the OOS held in 2024 that this was a subject that the ENFSI community wanted more information about. Hence the QCLG looked at the progress made, if any, across the ENFSI Institutes since the last meeting. Presentations were delivered by experts in the Standard. The QCLG continued with other topics, including a few words from the Forensic Science Regulator for England and Wales. Pertinent subjects such as business continuity, management of non-conformances and corporate memory were discussed, alongside regular updates on the guideline writing projects, Board activities and QCC activities. The results of the recent ENFSI survey were also shared with attendees, ahead of the formal report that will be issued in early 2026. The QCLG was a success, with a 97 % satisfaction rate, evidencing that the QCC are addressing the needs of the ENFSI community.

3. Management of ENFSI documents

The QCC continues to strengthen the ENFSI body of knowledge. In 2025 the QCC assured the quality of and supported publication of key documents.

The following documents have been published this year:

Issue Date	Document
7th Mar 2025	Framework for the Drugs working group
20th Mar 2025	Framework for the ENFHEX working group
29th May 2025	ENFSI Survey: DNA Database Europe 2025
17th Dec 2025	Policy on Accreditation and maintaining of competence
17th Dec 2025	BPM: Forensic Archaeology

4. QCC Members

This year has seen notable change in the QCC membership, with a few long-standing QCC members reaching the end of their tenure, which opened the door for new members. The QCC acknowledges and thanks the outgoing members for their contribution, as the new members look to build further on this solid foundation.

Leavers:

- Jos Toth (Netherlands) – Chair of the QCC – November 2025
- Thierry De Baere (Belgium) – January 2025
- Krisztina Toth (Hungary) – (From April to) August 2025

New Starters:

- Claire Fenwick (United Kingdom) – From April 2025

Existing:

- Sanya Sreekumar (United Kingdom) – Chair of the QCC from December 2025
- Claudia Pastore De Cristofaro (France)
- Daniela Vaz (Portugal)
- Alexandros Lazos (Greece)

The QCC Board Representative has changed from Agnieszka Łukomska (Poland) to Andrea Ledic (Croatia) and Mark Pearse (United Kingdom).

A recruitment campaign was held in November 2025 to fill the vacant QCC positions. The campaign concluded in December 2025 and the three successful candidates, who will start in the New Year, have been notified. It was pleasing to note that the QCC received a significant number of applications this year.

5. European Accreditation (EA) and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC).

QCC member Alexandros Lazos has been ENFSI's representative to the EA and ILAC for several years. His liaison work includes providing feedback to the ENFSI Board and the QCC on topics discussed at EA and ILAC meetings. More importantly, this provides the ENFSI with the opportunity to influence the decision-making process at this high level.



QCC Members, taken in Oxford, 2025.
Left to Right: Claire, Daniela, Alexandros, Jos, Claudia, Sanya

6. Achievement of 2025 targets – as set by the QCC plan

Target	Status	Evidence
Conducting an ENFSI survey	Achieved	Presented a summary of the outcome at the 2025 QCLG and will produce a report in early 2026
Assistance and training on the technical Forensic Standard	Achieved	Support provided during the QCLG. This work will be ongoing in 2026.
Maintaining ENFSI guideline working groups	Achieved	This has been achieved in the sense that the groups have been maintained and it is a piece of work that will be ongoing into 2026. Good progress is being made in three of the groups: • Multidisciplinary examination of casework • Risk Assessment / Risk management • Opinions and interpretations In the last group: • Validation of qualitative forensic methods There have been difficulties this year with the scope having to be redefined and lack of engagement. The situation is being reviewed in early 2026.
Additional communication and cooperation with QCLG members outside the annual QCLG meeting	Not achieved	Our goal to expand communication and cooperation with QCLG members outside the annual meeting was not achieved, primarily due to capacity constraints. We will make this a priority in 2026.
Exploring possibilities for cooperation with ENFSI involved EFSA Projects	Ongoing	The QCC is committed to supporting the EFSA projects and will act as required.
Exploring the possibilities of increasing the knowledge of business continuity management within ENFSI	Achieved	This was addressed in the 2025 QCLG
Hold a One Day One Topic Seminar (OOS) on the role of Quality Assurance in the development of new forensic investigation methods using artificial intelligence (AI)	Achieved	The 2025 OOS was on AI and this subject will be looked at further going forward.

7. Looking ahead to QCC activities in 2026

How we work is as important as what we deliver. Looking ahead, 2026 begins with a refreshed team and a February in-person meeting to reset the QCC operating model and agree a three-year plan. That plan will do three things:

1. Consolidate what works: sustain the annual OOS and QCLG, maintain high standards in document assurance, and preserve our effective links with EA/ILAC and the ENFSI Board.
2. Accelerate what's needed: drive the guideline working groups forward, while re scoping and reinvigorating the "Validation of Qualitative Forensic Methods" Group.

3. Respond to community priorities: translate insights from the 2025 OOS/QCLG and the ENFSI survey into targeted aims and objectives. We will continue to support EFSA projects as needs emerge.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the QCC's work in 2025, this includes speakers, working group leads, survey participants, and those who quietly keep the systems running. The QCC is committed to serving the ENFSI community with openness, collaboration, and a relentless focus on quality and competence. We welcome your ideas and feedback as we embark on the next phase together.

Education and Training (E&T) Task Force

The E&T Taskforce has had a very productive year. The primary aim of the E&T Taskforce is to act as the strategic advisor and coordinator to relevant ENSFI entities on matters of forensic education and training, including its development, funding and innovation in a broad sense. During this time, it has complied with the E&T action plan, as well as the terms of reference for the taskforce. An initial survey of all the education and training activities has been circulated to the ENSFI working groups and the responses from these are currently being analysed. The primary focus of this is to understand the needs of the ENSFI community and the requirements, particularly for online activities.

Actions 2024/25

- Survey and analysis of training needs completed and presented at the 2025 ENFSI Annual Meeting.
- Highlighted overlapping as well as discipline-specific needs.
- OOS on “How to build up e-learning content” on 6th March 2025 in Tallinn, Estonia. This OOS focused on how to design and develop e-learning content, as well as provided information on EU direct grant funding for e-learning activities. Very positive feedback from attendees.
- EAFS poster presentation.

Upcoming Activities

- OOS on mitigation of cognitive bias. Initial plans are to host this in April 2026. Financial considerations to support full travel and subsistence expenses for external presenters would be needed. It is hoped this will put researchers in touch with practitioners to support potential and meaningful research in this area.
- Online meeting with all E&T representatives from the Expert Working Groups was originally planned at the start of December 2025, but not yet held. This was planned to gain insights from E&T representatives, and also a mechanism to prioritise actions from the survey results.
- Looking at developing a potential direct grant application.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Task Force

The AI Task Force (AI-TF) was created in October 2023. The aim of the Task Force is to address the topic of AI applied to forensic science. More specifically, the Task Force has the mission to highlight both opportunities and threats from AI for the forensic science community.

The AI Task Force currently consists of a team of 7 members, with expertise in various areas. It has two co-chairpersons. In its first year, the TF focused on writing two documents. The first one is an explanatory document aimed at forensic scientists and managers who know very little about AI, laying out the groundwork with regard to forensic science. The second one is a SWOT analysis, that highlights both opportunities and risks from the use of AI in the forensic sciences. These documents are in the final stages of review and should be disseminated shortly.

In 2026, the AI-TF hopes to organise a conference on the use of AI in forensic science, to bring together experts working in the field and inform the wider forensic community.

Lastly, the Task Force organised and contributed to several training sessions, such as a workshop at the EAFS Dublin, the online introduction to forensic data science seminar (with the RDSC) and an AI workshop at the QCLG meeting.

ENFSI MEETS

ENFSI MEETS

Board meetings:

2025

28th Board

15th – 17th January
(Ljubljana)

14th February
(hybrid meeting)

21st February
Joint Meeting (hybrid meeting)

26th – 28th March
(Lyon)

11th April
(hybrid meeting)

14th May
(hybrid meeting)

27th – 28th May
Annual Meeting (Dublin)
during EAFS 2025

29th Board

9th July
(hybrid meeting)

3rd September
(hybrid meeting)

10th – 12th September
(Kiel)

16th September
Joint Meeting
(hybrid meeting)

17th October
(hybrid meeting)

12th – 14th November
Joint Meeting (Yerevan)

12th December
(hybrid meeting)



Board Meeting Ljubljana



Annual Meeting Dublin



Board Meeting Kiel

Board report

Meeting activities:

- In addition to preparing for and contributing to the regular Board meetings listed above, the Board:
- has contributed to, presented or represented ENFSI externally at numerous events: FOR-FUTURE online progress meeting (June), - 20th International Forensic Medicine Congress in Turkey (September), the QCC / QCLG meeting in Oxford (October), OOS on e-learning (March), 10th Annual Regional Forensic Conference (OSCE – Montenegro – October), as well as other events as agreed to be of value for the ENFSI community
 - through its assigned representatives, took part in meetings of other ENFSI bodies (RDSC, QCC, EWGs, E&T and AI Task Forces...).

Monitoring the EFSA 2.0 Action Plan and the ongoing triennial ENFSI Strategic Plan through:

- implementation of ENFSI Action Plan 2024–2025 and presentation of the achievements to the membership during AM
- preparation of the ENFSI Action Plan 2025–2026 and its presentation to PRs during the Annual Meeting 2025: the membership gave their final approval to the document by electronic vote. Since then, implementation of the actions/microactions has been initiated.
- Preparation of the official DG2024 project call from the European Commission: initiation of an ENFSI internal call and evaluation of the subsequent project proposals.

Continuous reviewing and preparation of ENFSI documents:

In 2025, the Board prepared, and/or reviewed and/or approved various ENFSI documents such as: ENFSI Annual Reports 2024 and 2025, the Terms of Reference for EWGs, the Terms of Reference for RDSC, the Framework for Awarding, QCC FWK for ENFSI Document Review, QCC ENFSI Inquiry 2025, QCC Annual QA Plan 2025, Quality Assurance Guideline for DNA Laboratories, Policy on Accreditation, documents from the AI Task Force (Action Plan, Framework, Introduction to AI and SWOT analysis) the Framework for Finances, the Framework for Communication, the Framework of several Expert Working Groups (ENFHEX, Drugs, EDEWG, FSAAWG, DIWG), ENFSI PowerPoint template, the Position Paper template...

Evaluation of ENFSI membership applications:

In 2025, the ENFSI Board reviewed 3 ENFSI membership applications: 2 applications were refused, because they did not meet ENFSI membership criteria, and another one was under evaluation at the end of 2025.

Cooperation with external stakeholders:

One of the Board’s responsibilities is to represent ENFSI vis-à-vis other organisations and to establish the relevant relationship with them. In 2025, this resulted not only in the Board’s participation in various external meetings (as described in the Meeting activity § above) but also in:

- the evaluation of various requests from external stakeholders (e.g. FRONTEX, CEPOL, EUROPOL...),
- the review of the request for translation of BPM on Audio Authenticity Analysis into Chinese),
- ENFSI’s interaction with:
 - o the International Forensic Science Alliance (IFSA): IFSA chairpersonship taken over by ENFSI chair for a 2-year term, participation in IFSA meetings, review of IFSA MRDs, visibility of BPMs and other ENFSI documents on IFSA website,
 - o the European Accreditation (EA): renewal of the EA-ENFSI Recognised Stakeholder agreement for a further 5-year period,
 - o the International Committee of the Red Cross to consider collaboration,
 - o CEPOL: to contribute to the EU Strategic Training Needs Assessment 2026–2029 cycle,
 - o the European Commission regarding Direct Grant projects management,
 - o the International Association for Identification (IAI) to consider a possible Memorandum of Understanding between ENFSI and IAI,
 - o the European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA): proposition to sign a working agreement between ENFSI and EUDA, given the potentially similar topics addressed by both organisations.

Other noteworthy activities:

- In 2025, the Board:
- managed ad hoc changes following the election of one new Board member by the membership,
 - prepared implementation of the associate membership fee with EWGs
 - approved the appointment of one new regular member within the RDSC,
 - approved the appointment of 2 new regular members and of the new chair within the QCC,
 - approved the appointment of the new DIWG chair
 - presented the results of the ENFSI Management Review Survey during AM 2025,
 - continued the preparation of EAFS 2025 and participated actively during the event (speech during opening ceremony, EFSA 2.0 Workshop, ENFSI Awards distribution),
 - approved ENFSI Joint Meeting 2026 to be held in Ljubljana (Slovenia)
 - started implementing the strategy related to ENFSI Position Papers
 - appointed one Board liaison person to each EWG to further enhance communication

None of the above achievements would have been possible without the vigorous support of the ENFSI Secretariat and collaboration with other ENFSI bodies.

ENFSI Annual Meeting 2025 – Dublin, Ireland

This year's ENFSI Annual Meeting was held on 27–28 May in The Convention Centre Dublin, organised by Forensic Science Ireland. The event brought together representatives of European forensic institutes, Board members and numerous experts from the field of forensic science in both the working and social parts of the programme.

The official part of the meeting was opened by Board Chair Dorijan Kerzan. Following the adoption of the agenda and a test vote, certificates were presented to the new Permanent Representatives. In total, nineteen new representatives joined ENFSI this year, fourteen of whom were present in Dublin.

Frédérique Coutat presented the Board Report for 2024–2025, highlighting that 76 percent of planned activities had been fully implemented, with the remainder ongoing or nearing completion.

Treasurer Attila Kuczmann presented the financial report and the 2026 budget plan. Members largely approved the exemption of Ukrainian members from the annual fee and the introduction of an annual fee for Associate Members, ensuring a more stable income stream for the network.

Maria Bueno Fernández presented the amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Expert Working Groups and the Research & Development Standing Committee, both of which were unanimously accepted.

Elections followed: Agnieszka Lukomska took over as Chairperson, Frédérique Coutat was elected as the new Chairperson Designate, and Andrea Ledić was confirmed as a Board member. The membership also confirmed that the Board will continue to operate with seven members.



Charlot Casha informed participants about the EWG activities from 2024–2025 and presented the most important achievements of the Expert Working Groups. More detailed information can be reviewed in the relevant presentation, which has been uploaded on the EPE platform.

The meeting included presentations from the Animal, Plant and Soil Traces, Drugs, Road Accident Analysis and Textile and Hair Working Groups, while the QCC and RDSC Standing Committees and the Education & Training and Artificial Intelligence Task Forces also reported on their activities.

Preparations for the Annual Meeting 2026, which will be hosted in Zurich, were presented. Of particular importance was the decision on the 2027 host: following an electronic vote between the candidatures of the Department of Criminalistic Investigations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Azerbaijan, and Forensic Science Centre Ivan Vučetić, Ministry of Interior of Croatia, the majority vote awarded the hosting to Croatia.

The thematic part of the meeting was dedicated to the European Forensic Science Area 2.0 (EFSA 2.0) workshop. Discussions focused on priorities until 2030 and the role of forensic science in Europe, aiming to strengthen the reliability of results and to build a common European forensic area.

Alongside the working sessions, a carefully prepared social programme allowed participants to boost their personal and professional contacts in an informal setting. On Tuesday evening, participants attended a gala dinner at Farmleigh Park, the historic residence of the Guinness family. The evening was marked by a warm atmosphere combining protocol and tradition, with carefully selected Irish specialities and international cuisine served in an elegant setting. Guests were welcomed by Jim O'Callaghan, Irish Minister for Justice, Law Reform and Immigration, who underlined the importance of European cooperation in the field of forensic science. The formal speeches were followed by an informal reception that encouraged dialogue between members and provided an opportunity for new representatives to get acquainted with colleagues from across Europe.



On Wednesday evening, the social programme culminated in a joint celebration for Annual Meeting and EAFS participants at the Guinness Storehouse. Upon arrival, guests were greeted with a festive welcome that included a lively performance by Irish drummers and traditional dancers, creating an authentic atmosphere of Irish cultural heritage. The dinner itself was designed as a fusion of local culinary traditions and modern gastronomy, with dishes paired with the world-famous Guinness beer. The panoramic view from the Gravity Bar offered participants a unique perspective on Dublin by night, adding a memorable dimension to the evening. The event combined cultural experience with networking, allowing participants to share their experiences in a relaxed and festive environment.

The Annual Meeting 2025 in Dublin thus confirmed the importance of the ENFSI network as a central platform for European forensic cooperation. The adopted decisions, new strategic objectives and the rich accompanying programme have further strengthened the position of the network, while the well-thought-out social events provided a valuable space for building trust and collegiality among members.



European Academy of Forensic Science (EAFS) 2025 – Dublin, Ireland

The 10th triennial European Academy of Forensic Science Conference (EAFS 2025) was held in Dublin from 26 to 30 May 2025. It was organised by Forensic Science Ireland (FSI) and the venue was the Convention Centre Dublin, overlooking the river Liffey close to the city centre.

Over 1300 European and International Forensic Science practitioners and researchers, stakeholders of the forensic science community, alongside EU agencies, academia, and industry partners attended. While the greater number of attendees were from Europe, we had participants from 63 worldwide countries, from Australia to Zambia!

The theme of the conference was 'Reflections on Forensic Science: looking back to look forward'. This marked the 10th EAFS conference as well as the 30th anniversary of the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI), and FSI was privileged to host EAFS 2025 in the same year that it celebrated the 50th anniversary of its foundation.

The EAFS 2025 Scientific Committee comprised of thirty-five prominent European and international scientists, forensic practitioners, and experts invited to review oral and abstract submissions across a broad and diverse field of topics.

The conference programme was organised into tracks including Chemistry, DNA and Body Fluids, Digital Evidence including Artificial Intelligence, Drugs, Emerging technologies, Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, Education and Training, Forensic Management and Quality Systems, Marks, Impressions and Biometric Traces, Legal and Ethical Aspects, Scenes of Crime, and Case Studies. Under each track there were a number of topics covered. There was a dedicated European day, which included EU funded workshops, oral and poster presentations. Over the five days, there were a total of 465 oral presentations including 29 keynotes, 43 workshops and 241 poster presentations across multiple parallel sessions.

For the opening ceremony, the Garda (Irish Police) band played a selection of brass instrument compositions, and following an address by the then Chair of the ENFSI Board Dr Dorijan Keržan (of the National Forensic Laboratory, Ljubljana, Slovenia), delegates were officially welcomed to EAFS 2025 with a speech from Dr. Geraldine O'Donnell, Acting Director General of FSI. This was followed by the

first Plenary talk '*The Digital Leap in CSI: Are We Ready to Go Beyond the Tape?*' presented by Olivier Delémont, Ecole des Sciences Criminelles (School of Criminal Justice), Lausanne, Switzerland.

As well as the opening plenary, there were seven further plenary presentations throughout the week:

- The increasing role of forensic sciences in the humanitarian scenario of migration
Cristina Cattaneo, Università degli Studi di Milano, Milano, Italy
- Insights From the Other Side – A Court of Appeal judge specialising in the criminal arena shares insights into the use of Forensic Evidence in Criminal Trials
The Honourable Ms. Justice Tara Burns, Judge, Court of Appeal, Dublin, Ireland
- Maximizing the Human in the Loop: Designing Forensic Systems for the Future
Melissa Taylor, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Gaithersburg, United States
- Challenges Facing Forensic Scientists in the Fight Against Drugs
Natasa Radosavljevic-Stevanovic, National Forensic Centre Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia
- Forensic Genetic Genealogy – An International Perspective
Debbie Kennett, University College London, London, United Kingdom
- Lessons from "The Trial of the Century" and Early Forensic Science Efforts
John Butler, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, Maryland, United States
- Mission Impossible? Communicating Forensic Results in a Clear and Transparent Manner
Glenn Langenburg, Elite Forensic Services, Saint Paul, MN, United States



The conference website <https://eafs2025.org/> was well visited and there was a dedicated EAFS 2025 conference App available to all delegates that was updated daily. The conference venue was an excellent venue for the size and scope of EAFS, with a large lecture theatre, a diverse range of rooms for parallel sessions and workshops, and break-out areas for meetings, as well as a ground floor trade exhibition hall and poster presentation area.

Among the social events was the Welcome Reception at the Convention Centre, and the wonderful EAFS 2025 Celebration evening in the Guinness Storehouse.

The conference had media coverage in Ireland, as to coincide with the EAFS conference, FSI organised a public event to discuss the impact of forensic science in the Irish Criminal Justice system over the last 50 years. This event took the form of a panel discussion on stage, where some past and present FSI staff spoke on scientific advances over the years and how it helped solve crime. It was chaired by well-known journalist, author and podcaster Nicola Tallant. The event was free to the public and over 700 people attended on the night.

On the final morning of the conference the following awards were presented by Agnieszka Łukomska, the incoming Chair of the ENFSI Board.

- Dr Jan-Eric Grunwald received the Distinguished ENFSI Contributor Award.
- Dr Ricky Ansell received the Distinguished Forensic Scientist Award.
- Mr Yu Chen Lim-Hitchings was awarded with the Emerging Forensic Scientist Award.

- The best poster award was presented to Johnny Bengtsson, Fredric Jonsson, Olivier Delémont, and Thomas Souvignet for their poster Digital Forensics as a Complement to Fire Scene Investigations and Reconstructions.

The conference was closed by the Chair of the EAFS 2025 Scientific Committee, Dr. Edward Connolly (FSI), who acknowledged the stimulating range of presentations and discussions, and the active participation by all delegates.

It is anticipated that a special issue of Forensic Science International will be published in 2026 with a selection of contributions from the conference. Dr. Didier Meuwly (NFI) is the guest editor of the issue and chairs the international editorial committee and the organisers are grateful for his time and commitment to this project.

The European programme of the EAFS 2025 Conference was co-funded by the European Union Internal Security Fund (ISF) and coordinated by European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI). Forensic Fundamentals, Technology, Multidisciplinary, Research, Evaluation (FOR-FUTURE) Grant Agreement 101160526.

Many thanks go to all those who helped and contributed to make EAFS 2025 an enormous success. FSI is grateful for the support from ENFSI, the Department of Justice, Ireland and all the trade sponsors. The hosting of EAFS 2025 in Dublin was a great honour for Forensic Science Ireland, with strong positive feedback received on the conference organisation and the content of the scientific programme. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet so many like-minded individuals and to open up network connections!

Joint Meeting 2025 – Yerevan, Armenia

The Joint Meeting of the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) took place in Yerevan, Armenia, on 12–14 November 2025. The event was organised by the National Bureau of Expertises of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia (ENFSI member since 2011) and was hosted at the Ani Grand Hotel. Marking the 30th anniversary of ENFSI, the meeting brought together representatives of Europe's leading forensic institutes, including members of the ENFSI Board & Secretariat, chairs of permanent committees, heads of Expert Working Groups, and specialists from France, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Armenia, Austria, Croatia, Greece, and Poland.

The meeting followed the structure that has become custom and practice in recent years, with the first day consisting of separate working sessions for the ENFSI Board and also the Working Groups & chairs of the permanent committees. This is a useful way of preparing items for discussion on the remaining days, where everyone comes together for the full Joint Meeting.

On the second day, the meeting started with a general ENFSI business update via a series of presentations; ENFSI Chairperson Designate Frédérique Coutat presented the Board report for 2025 and also a summary of the Annual Meeting held in Dublin in May. Board member Maria Bueno Fernandez described the progress made in the implementation of the European Forensic Science Area 2.0 action plan. This programme will be subject to a review of progress in 2026 and a situation report will be submitted to the European Union Law Enforcement Working Party that sponsors the programme. Finally, the Board have worked on the latest iteration of the 2025–2026 ENFSI action plan and our Chair, Agnieszka Łukomska, presented this to the Joint Meeting delegates. This was also new ENFSI Board member Andrea Ledić's first Joint Meeting and she introduced herself and her institute (Forensic Science Centre Ivan Vucetic in Zagreb).

In addition to the Board updates and introductions, the chairs of our permanent committees (the Research & Development Standing Committee (RDSC) and the Quality and Competence Standing Committee (QCC)) both provided updates on their work during 2025. Christa Dern joined online on the second day of the Joint Meeting to

update on the RDSC and Jos Toth provided his update on the QCC in person on the third day.

Both of our permanent committees are led very effectively by Christa and Jos, and they provide an essential contribution to the Network. This was Jos's last Joint Meeting before retiring back in December 2025, and he reported that he was handing the chairperson reigns of the QCC to Sanya Sreekumar of the Metropolitan Police Service in London from December 2025.

A new part of the agenda for the Joint Meeting this year was the presentation of the strategy cum position paper for each of the Working Groups by their respective Chairperson. The section was added as a result of feedback from the 2024 Joint Meeting and after discussion at recent Board meetings. The aim was to provide an opportunity for each Chair to outline what the Working Groups are trying to achieve and the strategic context for their objectives. This, together with subsequent discussion at the Joint Meeting, served to focus more on the activities of the Working Groups rather than just provide (important) updates on ENFSI governance. The majority of the Working Groups had prepared their papers and those present in the meeting presented their plans. This will become a key part of Joint Meetings in future.

The Direct Grant (DG) situation was reviewed for delegates by our Direct Grant Manager Raimonds Apinis on the second day of the meeting, highlighting the progress with previous DG programmes and the progress with project proposal evaluation for the DG 2024 programme. This formed part of a session covering various elements of the management and control of ENFSI finances.

Finally on the third day of the Joint Meeting, in addition to the QCC report, the ENFSI Task Forces updated on their activities; Luca Cuccovillo representing the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Task Force and ENFSI Chairperson Designate Frédérique Coutat reporting on behalf of the Education & Learning Task Force.

The AI Task Force has made significant progress towards taking stock of the impact, opportunities and threats posed by AI in forensic science. As a result of their work, Luca outlined the group's intention to hold a conference in July 2026 at the Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic



Science, part of the University of Dundee in the UK, pulling together the Task Force's technical findings and thoughts on the general application opportunities of AI for leaders across the ENFSI community.

As always, any face-to-face meeting provides a great opportunity to network with colleagues in addition to the presentations and formal parts of the meeting. This Joint Meeting was no different, and our hosts, the National Bureau of Expertises of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia provided an excellent social programme to facilitate this. Delegates were taken to the Matenadaran (the Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts of Armenia), where they toured the museum complex and viewed examples of medieval Armenian manuscript heritage. Later

in the day, the Joint Meeting participants visited the "Ararat" Brandy Company, where they learned about the history of Armenian brandy and the main stages of its production, as well as the company's current manufacturing capacities.

The 2025 Joint Meeting in Armenia was one to remember for all those who attended.

KEY PROJECTS

KEY PROJECTS



Raimonds Apinis

ENFSI DIRECT GRANT MANAGER

In 2025, the Direct Grant programme “Forensic Fundamentals, Technology, Multidisciplinarity, Research, Evaluation” (FOR-FUTURE) continued its implementation. During the reporting period, the FOR-FUTURE project was extended by nine months until September 2026.

Two grant amendments were submitted and approved by the EC:

- First Grant Amendment: inclusion of three new project partners – SSNS (Hungary), INEC (Romania), and the University of Cologne (Germany).
- Second Grant Amendment: extension of the project duration. The extension was justified by the need to enhance the quality and added value of the project deliverables, ensure best value for money, and allow for necessary budget adjustments.

A Project Progress Meeting was held online on 18 June 2025, providing an opportunity for partners to review progress, discuss challenges, and align on upcoming activities.

The FOR-FUTURE programme consists of seven projects (Working Packages, WPs) addressing key priority areas identified in the European Forensic Science Area (EFSA) 2.0 Action Plan. These include:

- Collaborative exercises (WP2 and WP3);
- Strengthening the reliability of forensic methodologies by combining human-based methods with emerging computer-assisted statistical tools (WP4);
- Expanding the use of statistics and probabilistic reasoning in forensic science, including evaluative reporting tools (WP5);
- Developing innovative, scientifically based examination methods using modern 3D technologies in the forensic firearms domain (WP6);

- Enhancing skills and knowledge in chemometrics and likelihood ratio calculations (WP7);
- Dissemination activities, including the organisation of an ENFSI event at the European Academy of Forensic Science (EAFS) 2025, held in Dublin (WP8).

Overall, the FOR-FUTURE consortium comprises 26 participating organisations that are parties to the Grant Agreement, representing 19 countries: Austria, Switzerland, Cyprus, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Finland, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, and Slovakia.

New Direct Grant – Selection Procedure

In 2025, preparations for a new Direct Grant were initiated in line with the ENFSI Policy on the Submission of Direct Awards (30 May 2025). In accordance with the policy principle that “*the selection of the project/Working Packages should be transparent, and sufficient time should be granted to ensure a fair evaluation of proposals*”, project preparation was launched well in advance of the anticipated publication of the EC call.

The selection procedure included the following key steps:

- 19 February 2025: An invitation to submit proposals was circulated to the ENFSI Membership and Working Groups.
- 11 March 2025: A webinar entitled “Call for Proposals – Direct Grant 2024” was held to provide guidance to potential applicants; the presentation materials were subsequently distributed.
- Nine (9) project proposals were received following the call.

KEY PROJECTS

Following submission, the proposals were evaluated for eligibility and relevance by the Direct Grant Manager, the Research and Development Standing Committee (RDSC), the Quality and Competence Committee (QCC), and the ENFSI Board. As a result of this internal evaluation process, eight (8) proposals were assessed as eligible and were put forward to the next stage of the project competition process. For each eligible project, evaluation charts were created, outlining recommended changes and improvements to the proposals. Project teams were invited to provide technical reviews addressing these recommendations as part of the refinement process.

Finally, sincere thanks are extended to all team leaders and participants who contributed to the successful implementation of the FOR-FUTURE Direct Grant programme in 2025. I also express gratitude to all ENFSI and non-ENFSI organisations that provided expert staff to the project teams. The Direct Grant projects would not have been possible without their valuable commitment and contribution. In addition, I wish to thank all Working Groups and organisations that devoted their time and expertise to the preparation and submission of project proposals for the next Direct Grant programme.

KEY PROJECTS

ENFSI Direct Grant 2022 (DG2022)

Direct Grant projects (2022): 2 years programme, 1,000,000 EUR grant awarded / ISF funding
Programme Theme: Forensic Fundamentals, Technology, Multidisciplinarity, Research, Evaluation (FOR FUTURE)
Current Status: Work commenced on 1st January 2024, project extended until 30 September 2026
EU Reference: ISF-2023-TF2-AG-ENFSI-IBA-2

	Project Title	Project Leader
1	Work Package 1. Management & Administration.	Raimonds Apinis, ENFSI
2	Work Package 2. Multi-discipline collaborative exercises	Pietro Maida, RaCIS (Italy)
3	Work Package 3. Collaborative Exercises in the friction ridge domain	Aldo Mattei, RaCIS (Italy)
4	Work Package 4. Strengthening the reliability of the forensic methodology	Henna Kuskelin, NBI-Vantaa (Finland)
5	Work Package 5. REACT II	Stavroulla Xenophontos, CING-Cyprus (Cyprus)
6	Work Package 6. Exchange of 3D Forensic Ballistic Data	Fabiano Riva, UNIL (Switzerland)
7	Work Package 7. The route towards likelihood ratio	Sami Huhtala, NBI-Vantaa (Finland)
8	Work Package 8. Dissemination Event for ENFSI at the EAFS 2025 – implemented	Edward Connolly, FSI-Dublin (Ireland)

ENFSI PRODUCTS

ENFSI PRODUCTS

Contribution of ENFSI Community to Innovation, Quality and Knowledge Exchange in 2025

Throughout 2025, the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) has continued to strengthen and consolidate its position as a leading European forum for scientific excellence, professional cooperation, and strategic development in forensic science. This progress has been achieved through the sustained and coordinated efforts of ENFSI's board, secretariat, taskforces, standing committees, expert working groups, members and scientific forums, all of which contribute to a dynamic and collaborative professional environment.

While the nature of forensic science and standard-setting means that not all activities undertaken within a single reporting year immediately culminate in formal peer-reviewed publications or publicly issued guidelines, the breadth and depth of work carried out during 2025 reflect tangible and meaningful advancement. Collectively, these efforts have supported robust governance, scientific innovation, methodological harmonisation, quality assurance, and the continuous exchange of professional knowledge across European jurisdictions.

This report provides an overview of key contributions delivered during 2025 by the ENFSI AI Taskforce, the Research & Development Standing Committee (RDSC), and the Quality & Competence Liaison Group (QCLG), alongside significant outputs from ENFSI Expert Working Groups, the European Academy of Forensic Science (EAFS) 2025, and other ENFSI-aligned initiatives. Together, these activities underpin operational excellence, inform strategic foresight, and reinforce ENFSI's role in shaping a scientifically rigorous, resilient, and future-focused forensic landscape across Europe.

ENFSI AI Taskforce – Responsible Innovation and Critical Evaluation

During 2025, the ENFSI AI Taskforce continued to provide structured, expert-led analysis on the opportunities and challenges associated with artificial intelligence in forensic science. The Taskforce maintained a balanced and responsible position, recognising the potential value of AI, while emphasising the necessity of scientific validation, transparency, explainability, and ethical governance.

A key milestone was the Taskforce's contribution to the **European Academy of Forensic Science (EAFS) 2025**, where it delivered a dedicated workshop entitled *"Using AI in Forensic Science – Could We? Should We? – An Update from the ENFSI AI Task Force."* This session presented consolidated insights from the Taskforce's ongoing work, including structured reflections on evidential reliability, courtroom implications, and alignment with quality and accreditation frameworks.

Rather than advocating rapid implementation, the Taskforce reinforced ENFSI's commitment to evidence-based adoption of emerging technologies. The discussions held in 2025 represent an important foundation for future ENFSI guidance and best-practice documents on the responsible use of AI within forensic contexts.

Research & Development Standing Committee (RDSC) – Strengthening Research Coordination

The RDSC continued to play a central role in enhancing coordination and communication across forensic research activities within ENFSI. In 2025, the Committee sustained its focus on strengthening links between member institutes, Expert Working Groups, and research leads through structured exchanges and liaison mechanisms.

The R&D Liaison Group (RDLG) remained a key platform for sharing ongoing research initiatives, identifying synergies, and promoting collaborative approaches to innovation. These activities contribute to reducing fragmentation, maximising the impact of research investment, and supporting the translation of scientific advances into operational practice.

In addition, RDSC newsletters and research bulletins, first introduced in 2024, continued to serve as practical knowledge-sharing tools throughout 2025. Although primarily internal in nature, these outputs support strategic planning, awareness of emerging trends, and informed decision-making across the ENFSI network.

ENFSI PRODUCTS

Quality & Competence Liaison Group (QCLG) – Sustaining Trust through Quality

Quality assurance and professional competence remained core priorities for ENFSI in 2025, with the Quality & Competence Committee (QCC) continuing its work to support harmonised standards and robust quality management across forensic disciplines.

Building on structured engagements initiated in previous years, the QCC maintained oversight of accreditation-related challenges, competency assurance, and quality implementation issues faced by member institutes. Particular emphasis was placed on aligning quality principles with emerging technologies, innovative methodologies, and evolving regulatory expectations.

Although much of the QCLG’s work is delivered through meetings, guidance discussions, seminars, and preparatory activities rather than formal publications, its contribution is fundamental to sustaining judicial confidence and ensuring the reliability and credibility of forensic evidence across Europe.

ENFSI Expert Working Groups and Guidelines – Discipline-Specific Progress

In parallel with the work of ENFSI’s standing committees and taskforces, the Expert Working Groups (EWGs) continued to play a central role in advancing discipline-specific expertise and operational harmonisation throughout 2025. Drawing on the collective knowledge and practical experience of subject-matter experts from across member institutes, these groups remain a cornerstone of ENFSI’s technical authority and scientific credibility.

A notable area of progress during the reporting period was the continued development of the ENFSI DNA-Database Europe 2025 document, currently listed as a draft ENFSI guideline. This work reflects sustained efforts to address the complex scientific, operational, and legal considerations associated with the use of DNA databases across European jurisdictions. The guideline aims to support greater consistency and interoperability in database practices, while respecting national legal frameworks and ensuring compliance with data protection, ethical standards, and evidential robustness.

The development of such guidance is inherently consultative and iterative, requiring careful alignment between scientific best practice, quality assurance principles, and judicial expectations. Through expert discussion and consensus-building, the DNA Working Group has contributed to the establishment of a shared reference framework that supports both operational effectiveness and legal defensibility.

More broadly, this activity exemplifies the critical role of ENFSI Expert Working Groups in translating

scientific knowledge into practical guidance. The continued production of draft guidelines and technical recommendations represents an essential step toward future formal adoption and implementation, reinforcing ENFSI’s mission to promote harmonised, high-quality forensic practice across Europe.

Drugs Working Group – Knowledge Exchange and Emerging Trends

The ENFSI Drugs Working Group (DWG) continued to play a critical role in supporting European forensic laboratories and law enforcement agencies through structured knowledge exchange and expert collaboration during 2025. The ENFSI Drugs Working Group Annual Meeting 2025 served as a key forum for addressing the increasingly complex and rapidly evolving landscape of drug analysis, illicit substance production, and distribution trends.

The meeting brought together subject-matter experts from across ENFSI member institutes to exchange operational experiences, analytical challenges, and scientific developments. Through case studies and practitioner-led discussions, participants examined emerging psychoactive substances, evolving synthesis routes, changes in drug markets, and the forensic implications of new adulterants and manufacturing techniques. Particular emphasis was placed on the practical impact of these trends on laboratory workflows, method validation, and evidential interpretation.

Collaboration with relevant European bodies, including the European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA), further strengthened the intelligence-led dimension of the meeting. This cooperation supported the integration of forensic findings with broader European drug monitoring and early warning mechanisms, enhancing situational awareness and the timely identification of emerging risks. Such cross-institutional engagement reinforces the strategic value of forensic science as both an investigative and intelligence-generating discipline.

In addition to scientific and technical discussions, the Working Group addressed operational and quality-related considerations, including method harmonisation, analytical resilience, and the challenges posed by rapidly changing substance profiles to accreditation and validation processes. These exchanges contribute to consistent practice across jurisdictions and support the continued credibility of forensic drug analysis within judicial systems.

While the outcomes of the Drugs Working Group’s activities do not always result in standalone publications, their impact is reflected in strengthened professional networks, improved analytical preparedness, and enhanced responsiveness to emerging threats. These exchanges are essential to maintaining operational readiness, scientific relevance, and strategic foresight in a dynamic and evolving threat environment, and they remain a cornerstone of ENFSI’s contribution to combating illicit drug activity across Europe.

ENFSI PRODUCTS

European Academy of Forensic Science (EAFS) 2025 – Scientific Dissemination

The European Academy of Forensic Science (EAFS) 2025, held in Dublin, Ireland under the auspices of ENFSI, served as a flagship event for scientific dissemination, professional dialogue, and peer engagement within the European forensic science community. As ENFSI’s principal scientific conference, EAFS 2025 exemplified the Network’s commitment to fostering excellence, innovation, and collaboration across forensic disciplines.

ENFSI played a central role in shaping the scientific programme, ensuring that the conference reflected both the depth of established forensic expertise and the evolving challenges facing the profession. The programme featured a comprehensive range of scientific presentations, workshops, and expert-led sessions, addressing traditional forensic domains alongside emerging areas such as digital forensics, artificial intelligence, complex evidence interpretation, and quality assurance in innovative methodologies. Contributions from ENFSI taskforces, standing committees, and Expert Working Groups were prominently represented, reinforcing the strong link between ENFSI’s strategic priorities and the scientific content delivered at the conference.

EAFS 2025 provided a unique platform for the exchange of research findings, operational experiences, and methodological advancements, facilitating meaningful dialogue between scientists, practitioners, academics, and policy stakeholders. This interaction supported the translation of research into practice and strengthened the interface between forensic science, operational policing, and judicial and policy frameworks.

The outputs of EAFS 2025, including conference proceedings and peer-reviewed publications planned in affiliated scientific journals, constitute a substantial body of work contributing to the advancement of forensic science knowledge and professional practice at European level. These outputs further reinforce ENFSI’s role as a driving force for scientific leadership, standardisation, and future-focused thinking within the forensic science community.

Strategic Impact and Outlook

The collective outputs and activities undertaken in 2025 by ENFSI taskforces, standing committees, working groups, and scientific forums reflect a mature and forward-looking organisation. ENFSI continues to balance innovation with responsibility, research with coordination, and technological advancement with quality and competence assurance.

While many contributions take the form of workshops, draft guidelines, internal publications, conference outputs, and professional exchanges, they constitute essential building blocks for future formal guidance, standards, and peer-reviewed work. Importantly, these efforts position ENFSI

to proactively address emerging scientific, ethical, and operational challenges rather than reacting to them.

Closing Remarks

The progress achieved throughout 2025 is a direct reflection of the dedication, expertise, and collaborative spirit demonstrated by ENFSI members and contributors at all levels. Across Expert Working Groups, Standing Committees, Taskforces, and governance bodies, a significant volume of work has been undertaken through meetings, workshops, scientific exchanges, and strategic discussions that continue to shape the direction of European forensic science.

Much of this work is conducted with professionalism and commitment beyond the spotlight of public visibility, yet it remains fundamental to ENFSI’s credibility, relevance, and leadership. The sustained efforts invested in harmonising practices, advancing scientific knowledge, safeguarding quality and competence, and critically evaluating emerging technologies underpin the confidence placed in forensic science by judicial systems, law enforcement agencies, and the wider public.

The collective engagement of ENFSI Working Groups and Committees during 2025 has not only strengthened technical capability, but has also reinforced a shared culture of cooperation, integrity, and continuous improvement. The willingness of experts to contribute their time, experience, and insight, often alongside demanding operational roles, continues to be one of ENFSI’s greatest strengths.

As ENFSI continues to evolve in response to increasing scientific complexity, technological advancement, and societal expectations, sustained investment in these collaborative structures will remain essential. Continued support for the work of ENFSI’s groups and committees will ensure that the organisation remains resilient, forward-looking, and well positioned to address future challenges, while maintaining the high levels of public and judicial trust that are central to the mission of forensic science in Europe.

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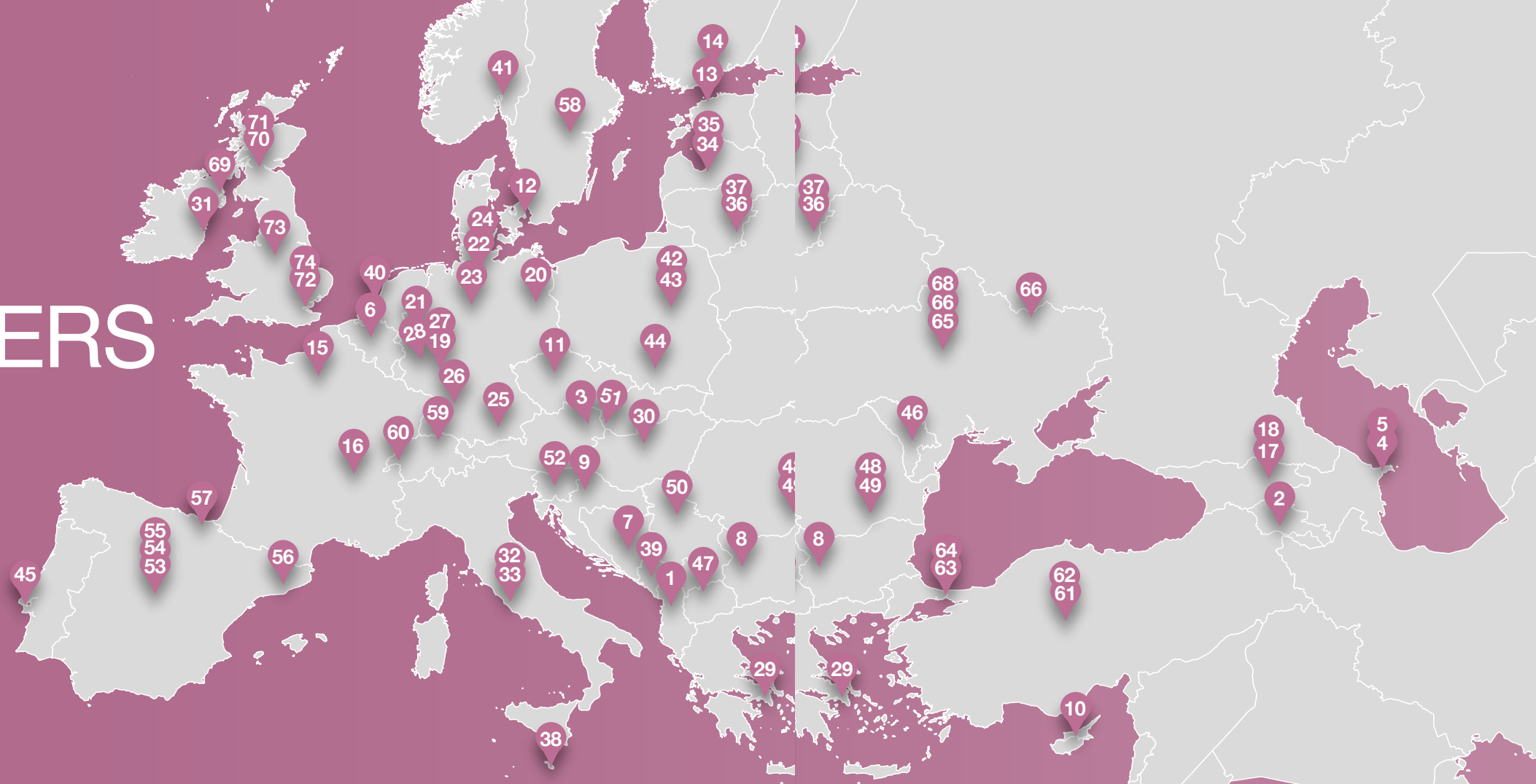
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