Newsletter Issue 1, October 2024

Message from the Project Coordinator

"When it comes to the safety and security of European citizens, the matter is just not about having the most accurate organisation and solutions available today to deal with current criminal threats. That is a major challenge in itself. However, **to keep pace with criminals** in a rapidly changing world for which **LEAs and other security actors need to prepare, strengthen and develop their capabilities** so as not to be outpaced by citizens' expectations on the one hand and illegal activities on the other. This task is made difficult by the **lack of a forward-looking culture in the civil security sector** combined with a **lack of easy-to-implement foresight methodologies and tools** that LEAs can adopt and apply even with limited resources. There is also a **need to demonstrate that foresight can support decision-makers in their innovation and investment decisions**.

When initiating the AHEAD project, the 10 LEAs had three main objectives in mind: to create a foresight culture in a field where there is no appetite for it; to make foresight activities affordable for civil security actors; and to generate actionable insights that will inform future European investments, doctrine, recruitment and training.

In this respect, **AHEAD is a twofold project**: it involves **experimenting with foresight methodologies**, but also **producing results that demonstrate the actionability of the approach** adopted by the project.

That's the challenge we're now taking up. We have launched the project as a fast-track exercise, completing the first foresight exercise (FE) focusing on 'Online Policing' in less than 6 months. The second FE was about Border Management, and we have just started the third cycle on Cybersecurity. First lessons have been learned and will help us refine future activities. The results of the first FE have been shared with relevant stakeholders, and we continue to work on the collected material to **demonstrate that foresight is possible, useful, and effective in the civil security sector**. These are the main conditions for sustainable adoption by civil protection stakeholders.

As AHEAD is also based on a **strong public-private partnership**, where **LEAs rely on the expertise of scientific and private actors**, this newsletter gives them an opportunity to share their point of view".

Thierry Hartmann, *French Ministry of Interior,*
AHEAD Coordinator

Main achievements so far

AHEAD's ambition is to deliver actionable foresight for law enforcement and civil security actors, allowing them to anticipate their capability needs while enabling an action plan regarding doctrine, investment, recruitment, training, etc. To that aim, and to ensure that the AHEAD foresight framework is well-tailored to the civil security sector, AHEAD research and development activities have been defined to gain a clear understanding of the civil security landscape and identify experts, review foresight processes and frameworks to learn from them (and not reinvent the wheel) for customisation purposes, and develop and test a comprehensive framework accounting for megatrends (i.e. long-term driving forces) and political, operational, industrial and societal context in order to generate capability roadmaps.

Methodology-wise, AHEAD's work is structured around 5 sequential cycles, or Foresight Exercises, respectively dealing with one of the 5 operational destinations defined by the EU Commission under cluster 3, namely: Fight against Crime and Terrorism, Border Management, Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection and Disaster Resilient Society for Europe.

The results and initial conclusions obtained during the first part of the project relate to:
- The Identification and mapping of the required expertise for the project with matching categories of stakeholders
- The setting of a first version of the AHEAD stakeholder and expert database including LEA, STEEPL and foresight experts, with actions undertaken to reach out to sister projects (e.g. EU-CIP, ENACT, EU-HYBNET, DIREKTION) with a view to identifying new experts and knowledge hubs which could contribute to the AHEAD challenges and exercises.
- The identification and thorough screening of existing advanced foresight frameworks, methods, tools, and processes to learn from them
- An accurate benchmarking of identified foresight methods against best practices and the specific needs of EU civil security.
- The development of a robust and tailored methodological foundation for the foresight framework that aligns with the specific requirements of EU civil security.
- The design of a methodology to collaboratively identify and prioritize security-relevant topics then create scenarios for foresight analysis
- The introduction of AI into the creation of certain scenarios in order to assess its relevance and usefulness

- The completion of two Foresight exercises (respectively in the "fight against crime and terrorism" and "border management" domains)
- The design and testing of supporting materials (i.e. board game, cards) to encourage involvement from participants and elicit their thinking
- The delivery of a first version of evidence-based roadmaps through qualitative and quantitative prompters
- The cooperations put in place with sister projects (ENACT, EU-CIP, EU-HYBNET, DIREKTION) and sister initiatives (i.e. JRC, EUROPOL Innovation Lab, OECD, NATO which all include a foresight unit) for synergy purposes and exchange of good practices
- The emphasis on capability roadmaps and action plans, with special attention being paid to the ways in which recommendations resulting from the AHEAD Foresight Exercises can be turned into concrete actions and assessed

Kick-off meeting in Ghent, Belgium, October 2023

Attended events

During the first year of AHEAD, the Consortium participated in several national and EU events:

- **EuCB Plenary Meeting** – November 2023: General project presentation to 27 LEA representatives

- **Comité des Missions Prospectives** (initiative from the French Ministry of Interior) – November 2023: internal visibility provided to the project among high-ranking civil servants from different ministries

- **EU Innovation Hub** – December 2023: Hub's multiannual workplan meeting, specifically addressing foresight

- **CERIS Workshop** – March 2024: Featured project at the CERIS workshop on Foresight and KETs

- **EU-HYBNET Workshop** – April 2024: Exploring collaborations opportunities with sister projects

- **National information day on the Horizon Europe program – Cluster 3 Civil security for society: from idea to project proposal –** June 2024**:** Informative event for universities, ministries, schools, businesses, and NGOs about upcoming Horizon Europe tenders and successful project experiences in Zagreb, Croatia.

- **Project to Policy Seminar** – June 2024: Participation in the European Commission's PPS seminar, connecting with innovative civil security projects

- **ENACT Workshop** – September 2024: Presented AHEAD during a panel discussion on 'The Role of Knowledge Networks for the Future of FCT R&I.

- **CERIS Workshop** – September 2024: Project results presentation, highlighting first cycle recommendations on 'Online presence'

- **Horizon Europe Cluster 3 Expert Group Meeting** – September 2024: Presented project results at a Horizon Europe stakeholder meeting in Finland

- **EuCB Plenary Meeting** – October 2024: Presented the project and specifically Cycle1 recommendations & the collaboration with ENACT to deepen our recommendations

AHEAD as featured project at the CERIS Workshop on Foresight and Key enabling Technologies (5 March 2024)
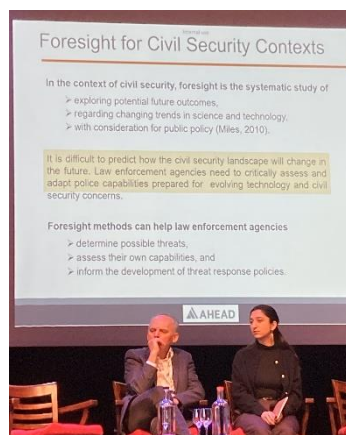
CERIS Workshop, Brussels, 5 March 2024

Responding to DG HOME's invitation to present AHEAD at the CERIS workshop on Foresight and key enabling technologies on 5 March 2024, Thierry Hartmann and the project's academic partner (UGent) had the opportunity to explain the AHEAD methodology and share its initial results in front of a panel of European Commission officials, law enforcement representatives, and researchers.The focus of the event was on the challenges raised by anticipating the future, both in terms of threats and of opportunities, that new technologies offered. Emphasis was placed on the **need to "shift the focus from a purely technological standpoint" to take greater account of the political, operational, industrial and societal context in which the technologies will be used.**

This perspective, perfectly aligned with that adopted by AHEAD, provided a very good basis for discussion. AHEAD's methodological approach, designed to encourage concrete user involvement and presented in a short film by UPPERION, also attracted particular interest from the audience.

Foresight Exercise 1 methodology presentation by UPPERION at the CERIS Workshop

View point from the Netherlands Police: why joining AHEAD?

By Kirsten Hehemann

(Senior Science & Technology Officer in the Strategy & Innovation Directorate (DS&I)[1] with over a decade of experience within the police force. Kirsten has a master's degree in law (LLM) and a master's degree in criminal investigation (MCI). She coordinates the research programme Science, Technology & Innovation (ST&I) for the Netherlands Police, focusing on the cooperation with international and national stakeholders in the field of ST&I in order to make better use of existing knowledge, fill in gaps in knowledge and prepare the police force for emerging technologies).

"The Netherlands police was eager to join the AHEAD project due to the **ambition to design and test a holistic foresight framework**, with a consortium including 10 law enforcement agencies and a **focus on the end user**. As we are now in the third cycle of the project, the different workshops have helped us to think about the way we can use the outcomes of the foresight exercises for the development of our own organization.

The Netherlands police is working on defining capabilities to use them as an interface for **our Futures Platform**. The Futures Platform is an **application with information on trends, developments, opportunities, threats, and probabilities that include impact on society**. The capabilities allow us to objectify, compare and map the outcomes of the foresight exercises to a model, and re-use the results. And to see where measures can overlap or reinforce each other. We can use the work done in AHEAD for this purpose.

In addition, we can learn a lot from our partners in the consortium and the experts involved. For example, from **the Swedish model** that makes it possible to identify what measures are needed on the basis of a holistic view to implement a certain capability. But we also learn a lot from the challenges, network, knowledge and experience of other countries and LEAs that we can build on. It is very inspiring to work together on a holistic framework.

In all, we are looking forward to building this framework together and **our ambition is to make it future-proof and sustainable** in a way that all our colleagues can use it."

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[1] ***The Strategy & Innovation Directorate (DS&I)*** *from the Netherlands Police aims to create strategy development and coordinates innovation within the police, including future scanning and foresight. It ensures that sufficient attention is paid to social developments, addressing long-term needs, while it aims to keep the police force agile.*

Promoting synergies with sister projects and initiatives

Past (July 2024) : Sister Projects Meeting

The AHEAD project collaborated with EU-HYBNET, EU-CIP, and ENACT to identify potential synergies and explore joint research opportunities in critical infrastructure protection, crime & terrorism, and hybrid threats. This collaboration will be particularly beneficial for the AHEAD project in terms of providing experts (from EU-HYBNET & EU-CIP) for our foresight cycles and in-depth research on our crime & terrorism cycle (with ENACT). By sharing the outcomes of the AHEAD project with our partners, we aim to enrich our collective understanding of the challenges and opportunities in this field.

Upcoming (January 2025) : Methodology Meeting

AHEAD will host a methodology meeting on 22 January 2025, in Ghent, Belgium. The primary objectives of this meeting are to learn about foresight methods already employed by other organisations, to exchange best practices and to gather insights for enhancing AHEAD methodology. Invited entities include JRC, NATO, OECD, EUROPOL and SITRA.

To go further: available resources

AHEAD public deliverables can be downloaded from the project's website (here), with methodology focus directly accessible from this newsletter (by clicking on the titles below).

Building the AHEAD foresight network

The AHEAD project aims to establish a sustainable foresight framework to assess how future trends and technologies will impact civil security practices. To achieve this, a network of stakeholders (the « **AHEAD foresight network** ») is being built. This network is essential for identifying relevant experts and organizations to contribute to the five planned foresight exercises. This network will encompass a diverse range of stakeholders, including **Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs), research institutions, universities, industry and STEEPL experts, and policymakers**. A stakeholder map will be created, categorized by the different stakeholder groups mentioned, to facilitate communication and collaboration and procedures will be established to ensure effective interactions with stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle. The stakeholder map and the pool of experts will be continuously updated and refined as the project progresses.

Benchmarking analysis

A capability-based foresight framework is under development by the AHEAD project to suggest it as a tool to European civil security actors. This framework aims to enhance their ability to anticipate future trends and developments that could impact their operations. To inform the framework's design, the **project researchers analyzed 13 existing large-scale foresight programs.** These programs were chosen for their government involvement, clear methodologies, public availability, and history of evaluation. They represent the work of various institutions including nation-states, the European Union, and international organizations.

The analysis highlighted **several key factors for successful foresight** programs in civil security including **focusing on emerging issues**, **incorporating a wide range of stakeholders** through a participatory approach, and **employing a well-defined methodology for analysing and interpreting information**. By emphasizing these elements and tailoring the program to the specific needs of civil security agencies, future foresight initiatives can be designed to be even more effective in the European context.

Foresight Methodology

AHEAD aims to design a new foresight methodology to help law enforcement agencies anticipate future civil security threats. The challenges of anticipating these threats, such as difficulty imagining future scenarios and criminal opportunities, and assessing the impact on law enforcement missions and capabilities, are addressed in the deliverable.

The proposed methodology uses a combination of workshops and a canvas system. Workshops are used to explore a wide range of future scenarios and criminal opportunities. The canvas system is then used to assess the impact of these threats on law enforcement missions and capabilities.

Methods used for AHEAD first Foresight Exercise on "Online presence"

The deliverable investigates how the rapid advancements in **technology** and the increasing interconnectedness of individuals have **fundamentally transformed criminal activities**. Technology facilitated the emergence of new criminal opportunities, such as **cybercrime, online fraud, and the spread of misinformation**. Focus is on the challenges that Law Enforcement Agencies face in adapting to this ever-changing landscape, including the need for specialized skills and resources to investigate and prosecute digital crimes.

Practical Application: The Gaming Session & POSTEDFIT Framework

A **structured gaming session** is proposed to facilitate the exploration of potential new crime opportunities arising from technological advancements. This immersive and interactive session, involving law enforcement practitioners aims to identify and assess

the impact of these new crimes on the missions of LEAs. By simulating real-world scenarios and fostering collaborative problem-solving, the gaming session provides a platform for generating innovative ideas and strategies. The POSTEDFIT framework, a holistic approach considering all aspects of an organization, is then employed to translate these insights into actionable operational capabilities.

Proposed Canvas acting as a game board during the first Foresight Exercise

Methods used for AHEAD second Foresight Exercise on "Border Management"

AHEAD second Foresight Exercise underscores the importance of **anticipatory planning** in addressing future security challenges. **By exploring diverse potential futures and**

identifying emerging issues early on, LEAs can better prepare for challenges and capitalize on opportunities.

Furthermore, the value of **stakeholder engagement** in foresight processes is being emphasized. Involving a diverse range of stakeholders, including citizens and the private sector provides a broader understanding of the evolving security landscape and helps identify emerging threats that may not be immediately apparent.

To maximize the benefits of foresight, tailoring methodologies to the specific needs of LEAs and **integrating foresight** into existing planning processes are recommended by AHEAD. **Adapting techniques** like **scenario planning and horizon scanning** can lead to more effective strategies. Moreover, **proactive application** of foresight insights ensures that LEAs are well-prepared for the future and can build more resilient organizations.

Serious Game Session, Austrian Ministry of Interior, Vienna, May 2024

Serious Game sessions' participants, Austrian Ministry of Interior, Vienna, May 2024
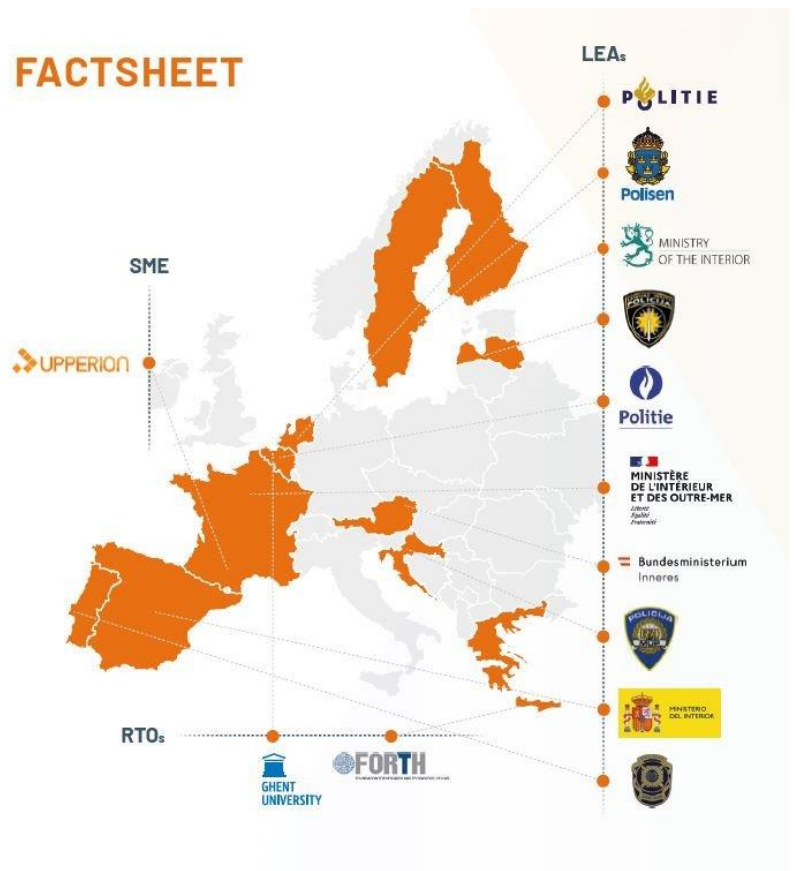
Project Details

- **Start date & duration:** 30 months from 1 September 2023
- **Project Coordinator**: Thierry Hartman (French Ministry of Interior)
- **Consortium**: 8 partners & 5 associated partners:
  - 10 LEAs
  - 2 Research Centres
  - 1 SME

Project Strategic Goals:

- **Develop a foresight methodology usable by civil security stakeholders** which aims to be a systematic approach for anticipating future challenges in their field.
- **Enhance a forward-looking culture**: the project aims to encourage a proactive approach in civil security by integrating foresight practices.
- **Contribute to the European Commission's Foresight Agenda:** AHEAD seeks to contribute to establishing foresight as a regular tool for policy-making in civil security.

Project Key Outputs:

- Delivery of a **foresight methodology**
- Production of a **user's guide** to make the methodology accessible and easy to implement by different organizations.
- **Capability roadmaps** translating foresight insights into actionable plans

Join the AHEAD pool of experts

AHEAD aims to create its **Pool of Experts**: a community where individuals with multidisciplinary backgrounds can contribute their knowledge and help us envision the future in critical areas, including: **Fighting Crime and Terrorism, Border Management, Increased Cybersecurity, Disaster-Resilient Societies and Resilient Infrastructure**.

If you have expertise in any of these above mentioned areas, then don't hesitate to add your name to our expert database! You may be invited to participate in workshops or surveys. Join us here!

Visit our website & follow us on LinkedIn

NPN headquarters, The Hague, June 2024