

Welcome to the latest newsletter of EXERTER, an EU Funded H2020 project. EXERTER commenced in May 2018 and is a five year project which seeks to connect practitioners into a pan-European network of explosives specialists.

Message from the Project Coordinator

EXERTER is now moving into the last part as a project, tying all the knots together. We are working around the fifth EXERTER scenario, concerning influences from different conflict zones to the civil security in Europe, something which is very relevant today. In this newsletter we describe the end-user workshop, held in September 2022 in Belfast, where we all exchanged knowledge on this topic. There was also a webinar held in December 2022 concerning processes and technologies connected to Security of explosives.

For the spring, EXERTER is organising its final event in April in the Netherlands, and we hope to see many of you there. The conference will include not only outcomes connected to the current scenario, but also the general EXERTER outcomes as a project and network.

Wishing you all the best for 2023, and keep an eye out at exerter-h20202.eu for more information about the final conference and other activities.

EXERTER Final Conference - Save the date

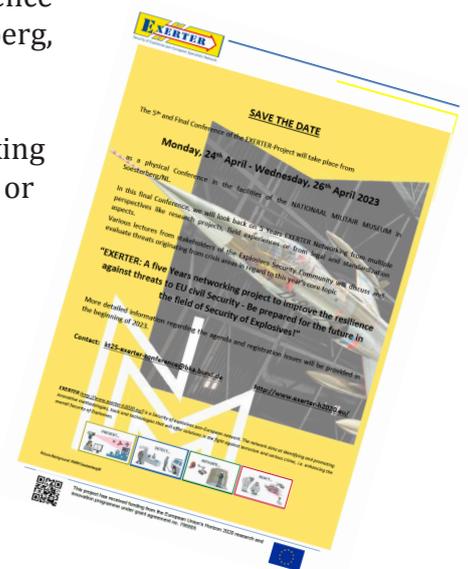
The 5th and Final Conference of the EXERTER Project will take place from Monday, 24th April - Wednesday, 26th April 2023, as a physical Conference in the facilities of the NATIONAAL MILITAIR MUSEUM in Soesterberg, Netherlands.

In this final Conference, we will look back on 5 Years EXERTER Networking from multiple perspectives like research projects, field experiences or from legal and standardization aspects.

Various lectures from stakeholders of the Explosives Security Community will discuss and evaluate threats originating from crisis areas in regard to this year's core topic "EXERTER: A five Years networking project to improve the resilience against threats to EU civil Security - Be prepared for the future in the field of Security of Explosives!"

More detailed information regarding the agenda and registration issues will be provided soon.

For more information contact: kt25-exerter-conference@bka.bund.de



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EXERTER Workshop in Belfast

In October 2022 over 50 participants took part in the EXERTER Workshop in Belfast. It was the first face to face meeting of the project since the COVID pandemic restrictions were lifted, and provided a good opportunity for the project to engage with stakeholders over the two days of conference.

The workshop focussed on the EXERTER Year 5 scenario "Influences to EU civil security emanating from conflict zones". Over the two days the workshop heard from experts focussing on two identified sub topics, "Development forced by need" and "Development created by opportunity".

It provided an opportunity for law enforcement and military practitioners in the field of security of explosives to hear on new and emerging threats, as well as consider and discuss approaches to countering IED and explosive threats which can impact on civil society. Results from the discussions were collated and will inform work being undertaken within EXERTER, with the findings being presented at the EXERTER conference in April 2023. A public version of the findings will be published in the EXERTER annual report during 2023.

The project would like to thank those who attended and for the contributions which will positively impact the outcomes from the work of EXERTER in Year 5.

More details on future EXERTER events, as well as reports and information can be found by visiting the project website at www.exerter-h2020.eu.



EXERTER Participates in EAFS

EXERTER participated in the European Academy of Forensics Science conference, EAFS, in June 2022. EXERTER was invited to give a presentation during the European day of the event, focussing on the outcomes in terms of recommendations and requirements from the first four years of work and discussions within the network.

During the same conference EXERTER had a stand with posters and dissemination material, which was giving room for many interesting and cross-cutting discussions with the conference participants. As the conference cover quite a broad field, the audience all have very varying backgrounds and expertise, leading to many new ideas and thoughts.



EXERTER Considers processes and technology supporting the Security of Explosives

EXERTER hosted a webinar on 9th December 2022, attended by 84 security professionals, with a wide variety of countries and sectors represented. It considered a theme focussed on “Processes and Technology supporting the Security of Explosives”.

The three hour webinar consisted of three presentations with intermediate discussions:

Presentation 1: “Standardisation in information sharing”

Presentation 2: “Is current technology enough to afford new threats?”

Presentation 3: “High Resolution Radar System Embedded on UAVs for detection of buried IEDs”

Mr. Schouten from Dyami gave a presentation on experiences in sharing intelligence within the Dutch aviation sector, with the MH17 case as an example. The most important take away is that trust is important in sharing sensitive information. Building a network, knowing people (‘drink a lot of coffee’) is essential. However the importance of agreements on information sharing between relevant parties should not be underestimated. Clarity of the exchanged information avoids misunderstandings and false assumptions.

Mr. Zamora from Mion Technologies presented on the obstacles that SMEs run into when developing explosives detection systems. Technology is often ahead of regulations. The certification process is slow and expensive. There is a lack of standardisation between sectors and applications. Requirements are complex and associated testing is complex and expensive. Specifically for air cargo screening the main obstacles that have been encountered by Mion Technologies include the lack of testing opportunities to test with real explosive samples, and the lack of a regulatory framework. Mr. Zamora proposed several options to remove these obstacles, such as improved access for SMEs to public funding, for example, Horizon Europe and national and private funding, and should actively engage policy makers to arrange improved access to explosive threats, closer collaboration with research institutes and universities, and faster development of standards and regulation.

Finally Mrs. Garcia Fernandez from Oviedo University gave a presentation on “High Resolution Radar System Embedded on UAVs for detection of buried IEDs”. It described the development of a solution up to Technical Readiness Level 6/7. Currently collaboration with the industry is sought to develop the system further into a commercial product.

Based on the intermediate discussions it was identified that funding is an essential key to start and move on with research and development, leading to innovations that can make a difference and improve the Security of Explosives. Discussions suggest a certain disconnection between the focus of some European funding calls in Security of Explosives and the real needs of the practitioners exists.

Evidently, explosive threats evolve fast and the process to define the topics of the calls is lagging behind. Speed is essential to be ahead of the game in SoE, and the project management deadlines of the European Union’s programmes, encompassing publications, tenders, terms, deadlines and evaluations take too long to address rapidly evolving threats.

In relation to standardisation as a tool for prevention and detection in Security of Explosives, based on sharing information and intelligence, it’s been identified that the effectiveness of collaboration between different actors, including law enforcement, intelligence agencies and authorities in charge of potential targets like airports and other infrastructures could be improved, also on an international level. However, trust between parties remains essential and technical solutions are not the appropriate means to establish trust.

Networking & Events

EXERTER Events

EXERTER Final Conference -

24th-26th April 2023, NATIONAAL MILITAIR MUSEUM in Soesterberg, Netherlands..

For more information email - kt25-exerter-conference@bka.bund.de

Other Related Events

Home Office - Security and Policing Event - 14th-16th March 2023

Farnborough International Exhibition and Conference Centre, UK
<https://www.securityandpolicing.co.uk/>

Fulmination 2023 - 18th -20th April 2023

East Midlands Conference Centre, UK
<https://iexpe.org/event/fulmination-2023/>

Forensics Europe EXPO - 17th-18th May 2023

London, UK
<https://forensicseuropeexpo.com>

52nd International Annual Conference of the Fraunhofer ICT

Karlsruhe, Germany
<https://www.ict.fraunhofer.de/en/conferences/conferences/annual-conference.html>

If your project or organisation wish to promote a future conference, workshop or meeting please contact the EXERTER Project to have it included in future newsletters or the project website.

EXERTER End User and Expert Community

EXERTER End user and Expert Community (EEC) is important to the network, in order to give valuable input to scenarios, requirements, evaluations and upcoming threats.

It consists of practitioners, academia, research institutes, industry and policy makers. If you are interested in becoming a member of the EEC, or are aware of some- one who would benefit in participating in EXERTER, please contact the Project Coordinator. Alternatively if you only wish to receive regular information and updates on the project you can get this through visiting the website and the project news- letter. Please contact the Project Coordinator to be added to the project mailing list.

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Facts & Figures

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01/06/2019 – 31/05/2023

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€ 3 498 868.75

Contact

If you wish to find out more, are interested in our End user and Expert community or wish to receive the EXERTER Newsletter with updates of the project, please contact us:

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Security of Explosives pan-European Specialists Network

Partners

