Subject: Reply to your note EPPO/LCK/2024/188 of 9 April 2024

Dear Chief Prosecutor Kövesi,

Thank you for your note on the continued provisioning of Digital Workplace (DWP) Services from the Commission to the European Public Prosecutors Office (EPPO).

At the request of DG JUST, DG DIGIT started providing DWP Services to the nascent EPPO in 2017. Since that time, our respective technical services have been in close contact, coordinating on technical matters of EPPO’s IT. Since the start, DG DIGIT has informed EPPO that the Commission would only provide DWP services during the startup phase of EPPO, and that the independence of EPPO requires it to set up its own DWP environment. In many meetings EPPO reported on its path and planning towards this goal.

As the independence of EPPO coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, DG DIGIT refrained from pushing the matter of DWP independence at the time, given that EPPO also indicated being on the right path to no longer rely on DG DIGIT for these services.

As you have indicated yourself in your note, EPPO is receiving “NET1”, which is the legacy workplace environment of the Commission. The Commission started its migration to “WELCOME”, a new and more secure environment, in 2021 and is now in the process of completing this migration. Once the migration of the Commission is finalised in 2024, EPPO will be the only remaining user of the legacy NET1 environment. My services informed EPPO in July 2023 that NET1 had an upcoming end-of-life, giving EPPO more than a year to prepare for this event.

I would like to point out that, as NET1 is outdated and DG DIGIT is no longer investing in it. This means that, although we still apply the latest patches from Microsoft, all our engineering efforts are directed to the Commission’s new WELCOME environment. The Commission decided to migrate to WELCOME because the security design of NET1, which EPPO is still using, was no longer considered fit for purpose. We assessed that this could not be fixed and required a new built-from-scratch design. In addition, NET1 is using a number of components that are no longer recommended. For instance, it contains the
Furthermore, the NET1 environment was built for a population of around 40,000 users. As EPPO will be the only remaining operational user of this environment from end of 2024, it requires DG DIGIT to operate NET1 services as bespoke services for EPPO only, significantly increasing the cost per user of this environment since there will be no more synergies with the Commission.

As a token of goodwill, DG DIGIT is willing to continue to operate NET1 services for EPPO for the foreseeable future, under the following conditions:

- EPPO assumes all security and business continuity risks that can potentially arise from the continued use of the NET1 DWP environment. The Commission will under no circumstances be held responsible for any intrusion or security breach of EPPO due to its continued use of an unsecure, outdated environment.
- EPPO accepts that operating NET1 services for EPPO only will increase costs and will reimburse the Commission accordingly. The Commission will not bear the costs that stem from EPPO’s continued use of this environment, which would otherwise be dismantled.
- EPPO provides DG DIGIT with a reasonable but unconditional end-date for the use of its DWP services.

I hope this note will allow us to reach the amicable settlement that you alluded to in your note.

Yours sincerely,

Veronica Gaffey

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