

# Council Conclusions on Enhancing Law Enforcement Cooperation

Thomas Wahl

News

Alongside conclusions on internal security ( → separate news item under “Security Union”), the Council adopted conclusions pointing the ways towards enhancing cross-border law enforcement/police cooperation. The conclusions were adopted on 14 December 2020 and included as Annex I after the conclusions on internal security in [Council Document 13083/1/20](#). They underline that new criminal phenomena and new technologies entail the need to adapt the mechanisms of law enforcement cooperation. Cross-border cooperation should also be better aligned with the objectives of the EU policy cycle for organised and serious international crime. At the same time, the Council prefers the improvement of already available instruments, rather than creating new forms of cooperation and places demands on several entities.

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The *Member States* are called on:

- To strengthen operational cross-border law enforcement cooperation by effectively implementing existing instruments. Legislation should be consolidated, simplified, and extended in the following fields:
  - Joint patrols, units, offices, and operations;
  - Cross-border surveillance;
  - Hot pursuit;
  - Police-customs cooperation.
- To further enhance Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) and/or Police and Customs Cooperation Centres (PCCCs);
- To improve the means of regular or *ad hoc* information exchange and direct communication;
- To raise awareness among law enforcement authorities about existing tools and to facilitate the availability of information, e.g., by using web apps or introducing standardised forms;
- To continue developing a common European culture for law enforcement authorities.

The *Commission* is called on:

- To duly take into account the value and success of local, regional, bi- and multilateral cooperations between Member States when assessing the options for a European Police Cooperation Code, which must also be in line with the EU principles of subsidiarity and proportionality;
- To consider consolidating the existing legal cooperation framework, in particular the CISA and the Prüm Decisions;
- To step up support for regional structures/forms of cooperation;
- To contribute to enhancing law enforcement cooperation:
  - By supporting the development of swift and smooth information exchange;

- By promoting joint trainings, exercises, and workshops;
- By reducing technical and language barriers;
- By producing updated manuals;
- By intensifying legal training.

*Europol* is, *inter alia*, called on:

- To further support Member States in order to provide the agency with high-quality data
- To explore technical solutions in order to allow for swift and secure communication between field officers and investigators.

*CEPOL* should continue its assistance in training Member States' law enforcement officers, in particular by enhancing legal knowledge of cross-border cooperation.

Within its mandate, *FRONTEX* is called on to help the law enforcement authorities of EU Member States and Schengen associated countries manage the external borders in order to provide a high level of security for all EU citizens.

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