

# EU JHA Heads Strengthen Fundamental Rights Compliance



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## News

From 4 to 5 December 2025, the Heads of [EU Justice and Home Affairs \(JHA\) Agencies](#) met in Vienna to review joint achievements and align future cooperation with broader EU priorities.

The meeting brought together the Heads of the EU JHA Agencies (e.g., CEPOL, Europol, Eurojust, Frontex, eu-LISA, FRA, etc.) and representatives from the European Parliament; the Danish and Cypriot Council Presidencies; the Danish coordinator of the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT); the European Commission; the European External Action Service; and the EU Agencies Network.

Key topics discussed included the EU Internal Security Strategy ProtectEU (→[eucrim 1/2025, 3-4](#)), the EU Innovation Hub for Internal Security, and the AI Act (→[eucrim 2/2024, 92-93](#)).

To mark the 25th anniversary of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (→[related link](#)), the Heads of the JHA Agencies also adopted a [joint statement](#) expressing their commitment to strengthening the protection and promotion of fundamental rights and compliance with the Charter across all agency activities. Furthermore, they published a [consolidated overview](#) on the measures taken since 2019 to embed Charter compliance in the activities of each JHA Agency.

A central theme is the institutionalisation of fundamental rights oversight. Agencies with significant operational mandates, such as Europol, Frontex, and the EU Agency for Asylum (EUAA), have strengthened the role of independent Fundamental Rights Officers (FROs), supported by monitoring mechanisms, complaints procedures, and binding codes of conduct. For Frontex, this includes the deployment of Fundamental Rights Monitors in the field and expanded safeguards in return operations. The EUAA has adopted a Fundamental Rights Strategy (2024–2028) and enhanced its complaints mechanism for individuals affected by asylum support operations.

Training and capacity-building are key compliance tools. CEPOL has fully mainstreamed fundamental rights and data protection across law enforcement training curricula, treating them as cross-cutting requirements rather than standalone topics. FRA, Europol, and Frontex contribute substantively to joint training initiatives, particularly on policing standards, vulnerable groups, hate crime, data protection, and asylum procedures. Notably, the FRA continues to target judges and legal practitioners through Charter-specific tools.

From a data protection and digital governance perspective, eu-LISA and the EU Drugs Agency (EUDA) play a prominent role. eu-LISA, responsible for large-scale IT systems such as SIS, VIS, EURODAC and the newly launched Entry-Exit System (EES), frames data protection and freedom of movement as core Charter obligations embedded throughout system design and operation. Interoperability, data protection by design, and

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cooperation with the European Data Protection Supervisor feature prominently. EUDA highlights robust compliance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices, and agencies, including breach response policies, transparency registers, and internal audit structures.

For criminal justice practitioners, Eurojust highlights its role in safeguarding defence rights, *ne bis in idem*, victims' rights, and data protection in cross-border cooperation, notably in European Arrest Warrant proceedings and jurisdictional conflicts. Eurojust's strategic publications on CJEU case law are positioned as practical reference tools. Europol has strengthened its commitment to fundamental rights, data protection, and diversity & inclusion across its operations. Europol's FRO now oversees compliance, including involvement in research, innovation, and external relations, while advising management and monitoring potential rights violations. The 2022 Recast of the Europol Regulation further enhanced rights safeguards, parliamentary scrutiny, and the agency's ability to process complex operational data.

Overall, the report illustrates a shift from declaratory Charter commitments toward operationalisation, with measurable structures, accountability mechanisms, and inter-agency coordination.

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