

# Home Affairs Meetings under Portuguese Presidency



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European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

**Thomas Wahl**

**News**

At their [informal videoconference on 28 January 2021](#), ministers of home affairs discussed the [New Pact on Migration and Asylum](#), which was proposed by the Commission in September 2020. During its Council Presidency (which started on 1 January 2021), Portugal wants to focus on the external dimension of migration, external border control of the EU, and the balance between the principles of responsibility and solidarity. Furthermore, the importance of concerted safeguarding and management of the Schengen area and the Europol reform (initiated by the Commission in December 2020) were on the agenda of the ministerial meeting. (TW)

At the first [formal meeting on 12 March 2021](#), ministers of home affairs discussed the proposal for a directive to enhance the resilience of critical entities providing essential services, such as health, transport or drinking water. They, *inter alia*, stressed the need to make such legislation consistent with the measures for a high common level of cybersecurity. In this field, a reform of the [Directive on security of network and information systems](#) (the NIS Directive) is currently under negotiation. Discussions also involved the external dimension of migration and the state of play of negotiations on the asylum and migration pact.

Ministers supported the Council Presidency's initiative to enhance cooperation between the EU and North African countries. The initiative included a proposal for a political dialogue on justice and home affairs, by means of which also operational cooperation should be fostered. Ministers voiced different views of whether more intensive cooperation with North African countries should concentrate on migration or additionally involve other security issues, such as counter-terrorism and organised crime.

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