

Impact of War in Ukraine on Justice and Home Affairs

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News

The Russian invasion of Ukraine that started on 24 February 2022 has also several repercussions on the justice and home affairs policy of the EU. An extraordinary [meeting](#) of the Justice and Home Affairs Council took place on 27 February 2022 at which ministers decided to activate the EU Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR) arrangements. The IPCR is a mechanism by which the Council Presidency coordinates the political response to major cross sectoral and complex crises. The extraordinary meeting addressed aspects of humanitarian support, the reception of refugees, management of the EU's external borders, visa measures, and the anticipation of hybrid threats.

On 3 March 2022, the Council issued a [statement](#) in which EU home affairs ministers unanimously agreed on the establishment of a temporary protection mechanism in response to the influx of displaced persons from Ukraine. This entailed activation of [Directive 2001/55/EC](#) of 20 July 2001 on minimum standards for providing temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof. EU Member States are now able to offer people fleeing the conflict in Ukraine a protected status similar to that of refugees - in any EU country - for a renewable period of one year.

On 4 March 2022, the [ministers for justice agreed](#) that the processing of requests for extradition and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters submitted by Russia and Belarus should be suspended. However, this should be without prejudice to an examination on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, sanctions imposed on Russian oligarchs should be implemented effectively; if necessary anti-money laundering efforts must be increased. Commissioner [Didier Reynders announced](#) the establishment of a task force in this context.

There was also a strong consensus that Member States want to support the investigations of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The measures taken by some Member States to gather evidence on war crimes were welcomed. Eurojust was encouraged to fully exercise its coordinating role and to collaborate with the ICC prosecutor.

On 7 March, the JHA Council published a [joint statement](#) together with the Justice and Home Affairs Agencies, in which the agencies offered, as a matter of urgency, their assistance to EU institutions and Member States within the margins of their respective expertise.

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