

# New EMPACT Cycle Started - Impact by War in Ukraine



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## News

January 2022 saw the start of the new [EMPACT cycle 2022-2025](#) to fight organised and serious international crime. The European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) is a permanent instrument running in four-year cycles to identify, prioritise, and address threats posed by organised and serious international crime. The platform is driven by the EU Member States and supported by all EU institutions, bodies, and agencies involved in the area of justice and home affairs in a broader sense (e.g. Europol, Frontex, Eurojust, CEPOL, OLAF, eu-LISA, and EFCA). Third countries, international organisations, and other public and private partners are also associated with the platform.

Priorities for the new EMPACT cycle for the 2022-2025 period include:

- Fight against high-risk criminal networks;
- Cyberattacks;
- Trafficking in human beings;
- Child sexual exploitation;
- Migrant smuggling;
- Drug trafficking;
- Fraud, economic and financial crimes;
- Organised property crime
- Environmental crime;
- Firearms trafficking.

Document fraud is also being addressed as a common, horizontal, strategic goal, given that it is a key enabler for many crimes.

Update: On 22 March 2022, the [French Council Presidency informed](#) the Member States and EU bodies that the war in Ukraine will also influence the EMPACT policy. The Presidency put forward a proposal "to activate the 'EMPACT community' in order to assess, anticipate, prevent and counter existing or emerging serious and organised crime threats linked to or entailed by the war in Ukraine, with the support of JHA agencies, EU bodies and institutions". This should be done along the following work strands:

- Intelligence assessment and monitoring: National authorities responsible for leading different EMPACT actions (so-called "drivers") should work actively with Europol and relevant JHA agencies. The received information should be systematically cross-checked and analysed both at the national and EU level with the support of JHA agencies, notably Europol and Frontex. Europol and Frontex should prepare "analytical products";

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- Operational response: Drivers should regularly assess operational action plans and think of adjustments if crime threats emerge from the war;
- External dimension: Close cooperation of all relevant actors at the external borders (especially customs and border guards) is key for an efficient fight against cross-border crime. Frontex plays a crucial role in this regard as well. The agency is invited to inform the drivers about the situation, the measures taken and the possible support.

The note by the French Presidency expects that the war in Ukraine will have consequences on the crime scene in the EU and that all priority areas of EMPACT will be affected in the short term (e.g. cyberattacks and trafficking in human beings), mid-term (e.g. firearms trafficking and money laundering), and long term (e.g. evolution of criminal organisations).

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