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| From: | Presidency |
| To: | Delegations |
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| Subject: | Firearms and Pyrotechnics |

Follow-up to the Council Conclusions on combating trafficking of weapons and fighting threats stemming from firearms and pyrotechnic articles adopted in June 2025

Firearms and pyrotechnic articles pose a significant threat to the internal security of the Union and to public safety. They are key enablers of organised crime. The Council, Member States and the Commission are working to fight these threats.

This fight has been boosted by EU cooperation through the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) and through collaboration with Europol and other EU agencies.

Council's actions

The Council, on the basis of the excellent work carried out during the Polish Presidency, adopted Conclusions on combating trafficking of weapons and fighting threats stemming from firearms and pyrotechnic articles¹ on 12 June 2025.

¹ 9907/25.

The Conclusions cover a broad variety of topics, including privately made firearms (including 3D-printed firearms), converted alarm and signal weapons and reactivated firearms, separately loaded black powder weapons, firearms data and the trafficking of weapons and ammunition from non-EU countries and partners, as well as pyrotechnic articles.

The Conclusions contain recommendations aimed at actions falling under the responsibility of the Member States, the Commission, Europol, Frontex and Interpol. They also contain several recommendations concerning EMPACT, including increasing cooperation with the EMPACT Operational Action Plan on Firearms and with the network of European Firearms Experts (EFE) and developing specific actions to counter emerging threats. The Conclusions also recommends continuing to participate in joint cross-border operations, identifying and tracking weapons through relevant systems and databases, which enables law enforcement agencies to quickly verify the legal status of weapons, and continuing cooperation with Ukraine in the early detection of potential illicit transfers. Moreover, the EMPACT Operational Action Plan (OAP) on Firearms and Explosives core actors used the Conclusions as one of their main sources when designing the OAP.

The Presidency finds that it is essential to maintain focus on this issue and ensure that the Conclusions lead to change. Given that the conclusions are quite comprehensive, the Presidency proposes that particular focus be placed on points 7, 8, 18 and 19.

As regards converted alarm and signal weapons and reactivated firearms, the Conclusions state that effective action against converted alarm and signal weapons requires coordinated EU-level cooperation, the harmonisation of legislation and the development of common analytical and law enforcement capabilities and administrative measures, as differences in the implementation of EU legislation are exploited by criminals to get hold of alarm and signal weapons that can be converted (point 7 of the Conclusions). The Conclusions also identify multiple distribution channels for convertible weapons in the EU (point 8 of the Conclusions).

As regards pyrotechnic articles, the Conclusions state that there is an urgent need to consider strengthening the enforcement of rules on (online) access to pyrotechnic articles, notably professional ones, the control of e-commerce, the traceability of products, a form of harmonised administrative control and the application of uniform definitions of categories of pyrotechnic articles (point 18 of the Conclusions).

The Conclusions also state that coordinated action, including considering and taking, in proportion to the risk, effective and decisive measures on specific pyrotechnic articles, is needed at EU level to enhance safety and security, as well as to reduce the risks associated with the illicit use of pyrotechnic articles such as those in category F4 (point 19 of the Conclusions).

Commission's actions

The Commission aims to tighten the net around serious and organised crime by dismantling criminal networks and their enablers, including firearms and illicit pyrotechnics².

As regards firearms, the Commission is working to present a new EU Action Plan against firearms trafficking, which will focus on safeguarding the licit market, curtailing criminal activities, based on better intelligence and closer international cooperation, with a particular focus on Ukraine and the Western Balkans.

The Commission also aims to present a legislative proposal for common criminal law standards on illicit firearms trafficking, which aim at harmonising firearms-related crimes, including the 3D aspects.

As regards pyrotechnics, the Commission has recently carried out a comprehensive evaluation of Directive 2013/29/EU on pyrotechnic articles³. The Directive aims to achieve the free movement of these goods on the internal market, while ensuring a high level of safety and security. The evaluation aimed to determine whether the current rules are fit for purpose.

The evaluation concluded that the Directive is broadly effective, efficient and relevant, but it identified shortcomings, especially as regards safety, security and environmental concerns. Key problems include widespread access to high-risk professional fireworks, including to unauthorised users, limited traceability of products, issues with mail order sales, and insufficient environmental protection. The Commission is currently considering appropriate action to follow up on the evaluation findings.

² 7750/25.

³ Register of Commission Documents - SWD(2025)268:
[https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=SWD\(2025\)268&lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=SWD(2025)268&lang=en)

The Commission has also concluded a feasibility study on the criminal misuse of pyrotechnics, aiming to provide a broader and more in-depth analysis of security issues involving pyrotechnic articles.

The Presidency has invited the Commission and the EMPACT driver on the OAP on Firearms and Explosives to provide information on the above mentioned topics.

Questions to delegations

The Presidency invites delegations to exchange views concerning current threats and the status of actions taken to follow up on the Council Conclusions. Delegations are also kindly invited to give their views on the following questions:

1. In your assessment, what actions do you consider most imperative for the Commission to take, including in relation to a possible revision of the related directives?
2. Have you taken any actions related to the Council Conclusions that you wish to share with other delegations?
