Council of the European Union

Brussels, 3 November 2026
(OR. en)

15170/26

POLMAR 76	**COMAR 63**
POLGEN 236	**JAI 1362**
POLMIL 471	**CSDP/PSDC 785**
CYBER 438	**CFSP/PESC 1792**
HYBRID 128	**ENV 1336**
RELEX 1433	**PECHE 454**
MARE 34	**TRANS 668**
MAR 177	**PROCIV 204**

COVER NOTE

From:	Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director
date of receipt:	3 November 2026
To:	Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
No. Cion doc.:	JOIN(2026) 26 final
Subject:	Joint Report on the implementation of the EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS)

Delegations will find attached document JOIN(2026) 26 final.

Encl.: JOIN(2026) 26 final

EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

HIGH REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE UNION FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
SECURITY POLICY

Brussels, 3.11.2026
JOIN(2026) 26 final

Joint Report

on the implementation of the EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS)

Joint Report

on the implementation of the EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS)

Introduction

On 24 October 2023[1], the Council approved the Revised EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) and its Action Plan[2], with the overall aim of strengthening Europe's ability to address an increasingly volatile maritime security environment. At the same time, it invited '*the Commission and the High Representative to submit to the Council a joint progress report with contributions from the Member States three years after the Strategy is approved by the Council*'.

Over the past three years, proliferating hybrid threats, including cyberattacks, drone incursions, disruptions to critical maritime infrastructure (CMI), and increased maritime piracy and drug trafficking activities, have underscored the urgent need for a coordinated, capability-driven approach. Geopolitical tensions in the Arctic Ocean, the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the Gulf, the Red Sea and the Indo-Pacific region, compounded by the rise of the shadow fleet and sanction evasion, have further elevated risks to global trade, energy security and freedom of navigation. Unilateral approaches to the Straits regime or the Area[3] and its resources undermine the international order at sea, based on the rule of law and international law, as reflected in the United Nation Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and threaten the very framework of global maritime security. Against this backdrop, the EUMSS has served as a unifying framework, aligning civilian and military efforts to enhance maritime domain awareness (MDA), operational effectiveness, resilience and international cooperation.

The EUMSS is fully aligned with the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence[4] of March 2022. Since the approval of the Revised EUMSS, other relevant initiatives have been adopted. These initiatives include, in particular: the Preparedness Union Strategy; ProtectEU - the Internal Security Strategy; the Cable Security Action Plan; the European Ocean Pact; the Drone and Counter-Drone Action Plan; the Maritime Industrial Strategy; the EU Drugs Strategic Framework and EU Action Plan against Drug Trafficking; the EU Ports Strategy; the EU's Strategic Approach to the Black Sea region, and the OceanEye. The initiatives include actions aligned with the strategic objectives of the EUMSS.

Since 2023, four Member States (Spain, Denmark, Ireland, France) have developed or updated national maritime security strategies, which are aligned with the EUMSS, with similar objectives and actions. Spain updated its National Maritime Security Strategy in 2024. In 2025, Denmark adopted a Global Strategy for Maritime Security 2025-2028. In 2026, Ireland launched its first-ever National Maritime Security Strategy 2026-2030 and France updated its National Maritime Security Strategy.

This Joint Report summarises the actions which the Member States[5], the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Commission and the relevant EU agencies have

[1] 7311/23.
[2] 14280/23.
[3] The Area is the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.
[4] 7371/22.
[5] Fifteen Member States submitted input on the actions they implemented between 2023 and 2026.

implemented since the Revised EUMSS was approved. It is structured around the six strategic objectives of the EUMSS, as follows.

Strategic Objective 1. Step up activities at sea

Under Strategic Objective 1, the EU and the Member States focused their actions on Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) naval operations at sea and maritime security exercises, including strong intra-EU cooperation, civ-mil cooperation and cooperation with partner countries and organisations.

Since October 2023, the EU has continued to conduct its CSDP naval operations EUNAVFOR ATALANTA in the Western Indian Ocean and EUNAVFOR MED IRINI in the Mediterranean Sea. In addition, in February 2024, the EU launched Operation EUNAVFOR ASPIDES, providing a concrete answer to the growing threat to maritime security and freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and the Gulf region. ATALANTA monitored more than 50 piracy events in the reporting period and arrested six pirates in 2024. ASPIDES demonstrated the EU's ability to conduct a limited, kinetic naval operation in a high-risk area. Since the start of its mandate, ASPIDES has provided close protection to more than 760 merchant vessels and monitored more than 2 000, with a 100% success rate.

During the reporting period, both ATALANTA and ASPIDES had their mandates upgraded with two non-executive tasks: to monitor the shadow fleet and to report on suspicious activities related to critical undersea infrastructure. In addition, ASPIDES received the non-executive tasks of monitoring illicit arms trafficking, training the Djibouti maritime forces and coordinating with the Yemeni coastguard. ATALANTA received enhanced, non-executive responsibilities to monitor arms trafficking and narcotics trafficking off the coast of Somalia

In 2025, IRINI received similar, additional tasks concerning maritime situational awareness about illicit activities and the protection of critical infrastructure. In 2026, IRINI and ATALANTA were tasked with undertaking flag verification inspections of shadow fleet vessels in accordance with UNCLOS (see below under Strategic Objective 4. Manage risks and threats).

Several Member States maintained continuous participation in CSDP naval operations, with some providing uninterrupted naval assets despite resource constraints. However, the total naval and air assets provided to the operations continued to fall short of the combined joint statements of requirement. The EU consolidated the implementation of the Coordinated Maritime Presences (CMP) concept in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) with a continuous naval presence ensured by several Member States but ended it in the north-western Indian Ocean, focusing instead attention and resources on the EU naval Operations ATALANTA and ASPIDES.

Within the scope of the cooperation agreement signed with ATALANTA in 2022 and ASPIDES in 2025, EMSA[6] provided these operations with MDA, including access to the maritime picture and customised tools to more efficiently assess higher-risk traffic passing through the area of operations.

There has been significant progress regarding maritime security exercises, as follows.

[6] European Maritime Safety Agency.

The first annual EU maritime security exercise, EU MARSEC 24, took place in May 2024 near Cartagena, Spain, bringing together EU institutions, specialised agencies (EMSA, EFCA[7], Frontex)[8], and EU Member States' navies and coastguards. Scenarios focused on tackling IUU fishing and the protection of critical maritime infrastructure. The second such exercise took place in July 2025 near La Spezia, Italy, focusing on the same issues. In September 2026, the third MARSEC EU took place near Helsinki, Finland, with a dedicated focus on protecting critical underwater infrastructure. The establishment of a dedicated EU maritime security exercise is an important step towards meeting the EU's objectives of becoming a more effective and comprehensive maritime security actor[9] and contributing to improved readiness, interoperability and resilience. EU MARSEC 26 highlighted the importance of exchanging information – including classified information – to enhance MDA, referring to the Common Information Sharing Environment for the maritime domain (CISE) as an appropriate tool. EMSA has developed customised notification services in cooperation with Finland that were deployed during the MARSEC exercise, utilizing CISE to exchange information.

Frontex has provided Member States with extensive EUROSUR fusion services[10], including Earth observation products from the Copernicus Border Surveillance Service and multipurpose aerial surveillance, to detect and track vessels suspected of being involved in irregular migration or cross-border crime and to monitor coastal areas.

EMSA has provided earth observation and fusion products to 78 authorised organisations via the Copernicus Maritime Surveillance (CMS) service supporting European maritime security operations worldwide, including the three EUNAVFOR operations: ATALANTA, IRINI and ASPIDES, as well as counter-piracy operations by Member States' navies under CMP in the GoG.

EFCA's role in multipurpose maritime operations, geospatial intelligence for countering illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, coastguard training and exchange programme, and close cooperation with EMSA and Frontex are some key contributions from fisheries control to the broader maritime security objectives.

The EU strengthened cooperation on coastguard functions among the relevant Member State authorities, particularly through interagency cooperation (between EFCA, EMSA and Frontex) and the coastguard function forums, enhancing capabilities in providing supporting tools to Member States conducting search-and-rescue, contributing to the protection of CMI, tackling cross-border crime, irregular migration, IUU fishing, etc. Nine multipurpose maritime operations (MMOs) took place, involving EFCA, EMSA and Frontex and Member States in the western Black Sea, the Baltic Sea, the English Channel and southern North Sea, and the Adriatic Sea. The Commission financially supported the work of the two main coastguard function forums (the European Coast Guard Functions Forum (ECGFF) and the Mediterranean Coast Guard Functions Forum (MedCGFF)), which are chaired by participating countries[11] on an

[7] European Fisheries Control Agency.
[8] European Border and Coast Guard Agency.
[9] The lessons learned from MARSEC EU 24, and several recommendations can be found in the input provided by Spain.
[10] Eurosur Fusion Services (EFS) support and add value to operational activities. EFS provides essential components to compile the European Situational Picture (ESP) and the Common Pre-frontier intelligence Picture (CPIP) from a variety of sources, including platforms deployed under the Common Application of Surveillance Tools (https://coastguard.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2026-03/EFS%20Service%20Catalogue.pdf)
[11] ECGFF chair: 2023 – BE; 2024 – PT; 2025 and 2026 – IT; 2027 – ES. MedCGFF chair: 2023 (not organised); 2024 – AL; 2025 – IT; 2026 – ES.

annually rotating basis. The two forums promote cooperation and exchange of best practices on all operational challenges facing coastguard authorities.

In the framework of the Maritime Intelligence Community – Risk Analysis Network (MIC-RAN), EFCA, EMSA and Europol were involved in developing two maritime risk profiles in 2024 for drug smuggling via bulk carriers and an analytical report in 2025 on the role of West Africa as key transit hub for cocaine trafficking from Latin America to the EU. In March 2026, the Commission published guidance on AEO - Customs Cooperation to Detect, Report and React to Suspicious Activities, fostering private-sector participation in the fight against illegal trafficking and organised crime. The Import Control System 2 (ICS2), deployed for maritime and inland waterways trade flows in 2025, improved the detection of security threats in the supply chain.

SatCen provides geospatial intelligence to support CSDP naval operations and helps improve maritime situational awareness across the EU. It also provides a broad range of geospatial products to Frontex and EU Member States, supporting operational activities, participating in MMOs and facilitating the timely sharing of intelligence, including search-and-rescue context at sea. In line with an agreement signed in January 2026, SatCen provides EFCA with geospatial intelligence products to counter IUU fishing. In addition, SatCen has been actively involved in testing aerial surveillance capabilities in cooperation with Frontex.

As one pillar of the European Ports Alliance, the Commission supported anti-drug-trafficking operations by strengthening customs cooperation through the EU Customs Alliance for Borders (EUCAB), which comprises a maritime unit committed to enhancing coordinated management of EU maritime borders. The Commission further developed another key pillar of the European Port Alliance, the public-private partnership to increase the resilience of ports and maritime logistics against drug trafficking.

In the framework of the EU Drugs Strategic Framework and the EU Action Plan against Drug Trafficking, the Commission together with the EEAS, Member States, EU agencies and bodies is also engaging in increasing port security in third countries with the help of the European Ports Alliance and by undertaking voluntary port security assessments. The Commission is working on increasing civil-military partnerships to tackle maritime drug trafficking and is working with stakeholders on a European approach against diversifying criminal methods including at-sea transfers and drop-off methods.

The Commission also continued its support, including funding, to the Maritime Analysis Operations Centre on Narcotics (MAOC-N[12]), which has ensured the interception of hundreds of tons of illicit drugs (cocaine, cannabis) being shipped to Europe, in the past three years. However, due to limited available naval interception capabilities among its members many suspicious vessels could not be intercepted.

In the framework of the EU European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats – EMPACT - the EU's flagship operational framework to combat serious and organised crime, Member States with the support of the Commission, EU agencies and bodies undertook maritime operations to tackle various types of organised crime in particular drug trafficking and migrant smuggling.

[12] MAOC-N is an intelligence and coordination centre for maritime and aerial anti-drug trafficking operations in the Atlantic Ocean including near the coast of West-Africa as well as the Mediterranean. Eight EU Member States and the United Kingdom are members of MAOC-N.

Maritime authorities of Member States have endeavoured to enforce and apply the requirements set out at UN Security Council (UNSC) and EU level regarding sanctions and restrictive measures in reaction to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as measures against North Korea.

Strategic Objective 2. Cooperate with partners

Under Strategic Objective 2, the EU and the Member States focused their actions on cooperation with partner countries including in the GoG, the Red Sea, the Western Indian Ocean, South-East Asia, the Pacific and Latin America. Areas of cooperation included capacity building against piracy, IUU and drug trafficking, support for port safety and security, and enhancing regional maritime cooperation.

The EU has continued to promote respect of international law, as reflected in UNCLOS, and to fight against illicit activities at sea. Since October 2023, the EU has co-chaired with Vietnam, Australia, Canada and New Zealand two Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF) workshops implementing UNCLOS and other international instruments to address emerging maritime issues. Maritime security is also a priority area in many of the security and defence partnerships concluded between the EU and like-minded partners (e.g. Australia, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Ghana, India, UK, Iceland and Norway). Furthermore, maritime security and safeguarding the integrity of UNCLOS continues to be a priority of the EU in multilateral forums such as the UN[13] and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). On 12 October 2026, the High Representative issued on behalf of the EU a Pledge on maintaining the integrity of the International Law of the Sea – "No Fees/No Tolls" - supported by more than 30 partners, with more countries expected to join.

Maritime security became part of the agenda of the G7 with the dedicated Declaration by Foreign Ministers on Maritime Security and Prosperity in March 2025 and the declaration by Environment Ministers on "Mobilising against IUU fishing". Maritime security has featured prominently in security and defence dialogues with partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America, including a dedicated annual maritime security dialogue with India. Areas of cooperation with partners include exchanges on emerging maritime security challenges, operational cooperation at sea with ATALANTA, cooperation in the framework of regional maritime security structures, and joint seminars on topics of common interest, such as the regional workshop on critical undersea infrastructure protection in the Western Indian Ocean, held in Delhi in December 2025.

EU-NATO cooperation on maritime security issues continued via regular staff contacts. EEAS co-chaired and ensured the follow up to the annual staff-to-staff talks, held in 2024, 2025 and 2026, alongside the Commission and European Defence Agency. In parallel, EU services had regular informal staff talks with NATO counterparts on CMI protection. This cooperation was complemented by reciprocal briefings on topics of mutual interest, including the operational dimension and the countering of the shadow fleet phenomenon. The Commission and EEAS held informal scenario-based dialogues hosted by the Hybrid Centre of Excellence in Helsinki in 2025 and 2026, with a particular focus on CMI protection. The Commission participated in and ensured follow-up to the EU-NATO Structured Dialogue on Resilience in January and July 2024, and in January 2025 and January 2026, alongside the EEAS.

[13] A/RES/80/110 – Oceans and the law of the sea.

The Commission has also promoted cooperation with non-EU countries on coastguard functions through the Mediterranean Coast Guard Functions Forum (MCGFF); stepped up support for maritime surveillance with non-EU partners, through EUROSUR, in line with the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation; and continued collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to tackle transnational crime at sea.

From 2024 to 2026, EFCA, EMSA and Frontex participated in the MCGFF, organising workshops on deceptive shipping practices, the protection of CMI and other maritime security topics, and supported training cooperation and capacity building and the development of professional coastguard skills.

In the GoG, the CMP matured into a practical instrument of the EU's integrated approach, combining sustained naval presence with partnership-driven security cooperation. In 2024, EU Member States maintained a permanent maritime presence in the region, conducting 71 port calls across 21 ports in 16 countries. In 2025, vessels of EU Member States carried out 58 port calls in 22 ports across 17 countries. During the first half of 2026, EU Member States continued their commitment through 28 port calls in 17 ports across 14 countries.

This engagement is complemented by substantial EU and Member State investment in maritime security. EU-funded programmes in the GoG currently amount to approximately EUR 117 million and support maritime governance, law enforcement, operational capabilities, information sharing, port security, sustainable ocean management and regional cooperation. Implemented in close coordination with the EEAS and regional partners, these initiatives directly contribute to the objectives and functioning of the Yaoundé Architecture.

EU-funded projects, including Enhanced MARitime Action in the Gulf of Guinea (EnMAR) and Support to West Africa Integrated Maritime Security (SWAIMS), have supported numerous port visits, capacity-building activities and regional exchanges, increasing the visibility of the EU as a maritime security partner. Through EnMAR, a series of events were organised in the region together with the Network of Professional Women in the Maritime and Port Sectors for West and Central Africa, helping to integrate the Women, Peace and Security agenda into EU engagement.

The Safe Seas for Africa programme, implemented across the 19 coastal states of the GoG, strengthens the legal and judicial chain from interdiction at sea to prosecution, reinforces the institutional capacity of the Yaoundé Architecture, and fosters operational dialogue with the maritime sector. The programme also covers the Western Indian Ocean, ensuring a coherent EU approach to maritime security on both sides of the continent.

Coordination with EU Member States continued through the informal CMP GoG coordination mechanism, which supported a more coordinated Team Europe approach in regional engagements, including the annual GoG Chiefs of Navy Symposium and the G7++ Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (FoGG). A new EnMAR+ project started in July 2026, covering both the GoG and the Western Indian Ocean.

Cooperation with key international partners was further strengthened through naval engagements and dialogue, including exercises with Brazil between 2023 and 2026, a first joint exercise with India in 2023 in the GoG, and the first EU-Brazil Workshop on Maritime Security (Lisbon, 2-3 December 2025), which explored practical avenues for enhanced Atlantic maritime security cooperation, including through CMP.

In 2024, 2025 and 2026, the EEAS convened annual roundtables in Brussels, bringing together GoG ambassadors, regional organisations, EU Member States and EU institutions. These events strengthened dialogue on regional maritime security cooperation, helping to promote a coordinated Team Europe approach in support of maritime security in the GoG.

In the Indian Ocean, the EU maintained its two naval operations and reinforced its presence. In April 2024, it became a Friend of the Djibouti Code of Conduct-Jeddah Amendment (DCoC-JA) against piracy, armed robbery and broader maritime security threats in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden. As a follow-up to the 2025 high-level meeting of the DCoC-JA, the EEAS convened a roundtable of ambassadors in Brussels to discuss further cooperation. France became a full member of DCoC-JA in November 2025.

The EU supported capacity building in the Western Indian Ocean, in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden through various programmes on maritime governance, the rule of law – including legal finish procedures – and coastguard functions, including support for the Djibouti and Yemeni coastguards, notably through the Red Sea Programme and the Western Indian Ocean component of Safe Seas for Africa. It also supported port safety and security in the area as well as capacity building of the regional institution (Indian Ocean Commission). Through Safe Seas for Africa, which consolidates the achievements of the MASE programme. It supported the Regional Maritime Security Architecture in the Western Indian Ocean, with the Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre in Madagascar and the Regional Coordination Operation Centre in the Seychelles. In the context of its growing partnership with India, the EU intends to appoint a liaison officer to India's Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region.

Operation ATALANTA conducted further joint activities at sea with partners, including the annual Aldabra exercise carried out with the Seychelles since September 2022; the annual Doraleh regional exercise with Djibouti since November 2024; several exercises with Kenya since May 2024; continued, frequent exercises with Japan and the Republic of Korea; and an exercise with India in May-June 2025. In November 2025, ATALANTA and the Indian navy coordinated in a real-life anti-piracy operation that also involved a Japanese surveillance aircraft (liberation of MV Hellas Aphrodite). In addition, ATALANTA reinforced its cooperation with Somalia on suspected IUU fishing activities in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

In the Indo-Pacific, the EU-funded Critical Maritime Routes Indo-Pacific (EUCRIMARIO) project has continued to expand its network of partners in the region. EUCRIMARIO extended its activities to cover all Latin American countries with a Pacific and Atlantic coast, providing capacity building to partner countries to enhance their MDA and to deal with various challenges and threats in the maritime domain. Personnel in more than 57 countries across some 150 organisations have been trained and are using the IORIS information-sharing platform, including some for communication with merchant shipping. IORIS has been used by over 500 merchant vessels to communicate with ASPIDES while crossing the Red Sea. The EU-funded Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia (ESIWA) project and its successor ESIWA+ organised seminars and workshops that allowed the EU and its Indo-Pacific partners to share experience on important topics such as international maritime law and freedom of navigation, the regulation of uncrewed underwater vessels, maritime cybersecurity and the protection of CMI.

Member States strengthened cooperation with the IMO and other regional sea conventions to counter threats that may affect ships and port facilities worldwide, ensuring the implementation of relevant international conventions and codes, also applying their competence for flag and port State control under the Paris Memorandum of Understanding.

The EU pursued its cooperation with partners on fisheries, launching the West Africa Sustainable Ocean Programme in 2025. In January 2026, EFCA launched the Sustainable Western Indian Ocean Programme. In March 2026, the Commission funded the launch event for the Partnership for Advancing Decent Work in Fisheries and a workshop in support of the ratification of the Work in Fishing Convention[14].

In 2025, the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) launched the Maritime UN Sanctions Enforcement (MUSE) project, implemented by UNODC to fight the evasion of UNSC sanctions in the maritime sector and associated transnational organised crime.

The EU Advisory Mission to Ukraine (EUAM) has started work to establish a Joint Maritime Security Centre (JMSC) for the country. By the end of 2028, an MDA system will be operational for the naval forces and the maritime guard, integrated with the national information exchange system and capable of exchanging data with NATO and civilian institutions.

Strategic Objective 3. Lead in maritime domain awareness (MDA)

Under Strategic Objective 3, the EU and the Member States focused their actions on enhancing MDA, in particular by implementing the Common Information Sharing Environment for the maritime domain (CISE)[15] *and increasing the number of Member States and EU agencies connected to it; strengthening civil-military information exchange through the CISE-MARSUR interconnection; and conducting many exercises, workshops and projects on MDA.*

The Commission launched the operational phase of the CISE on 1 July 2024, with the assistance of EMSA and in cooperation with Member States and other relevant agencies. The launching of the operational phase of CISE was an important milestone. There is support among Member States for using CISE in the context of the EUMSS and for the purposes of the regional 'cable hubs' or 'integrated maritime surveillance hubs' or 'maritime security hubs. Several additional connections to CISE have been established in Member States and agencies since 2023, and more are in preparation. As of June 2026, there are 14 operational CISE nodes (connections) in Member States and agencies (BG, CY, EL-navy, ES-armada, FR-SGMER, HR, IT-CG, IT-Navy, MT, RO, SI, EFCA, EMSA, SatCen) and 8 nodes in preparation (ES-GUCI, IT-ASI, DE, FI, NL, IE, PT, Frontex).

The classified version of the CISE network (EU-RESTRICTED level) is planned to be launched by the end of 2026, providing further impetus to information exchanges between cross-sectoral civilian and military stakeholders within the EU. The secure and routine exchange of classified information is a key enabler for effective MDA, and to enhanced EU resilience, readiness and ability to detect and deter threats and protect CMI, including from hybrid threats and other disruptions. Enhanced information sharing and cooperation can reduce timelines to responses, accelerate recovery, strengthen interoperability between EU Member State coastguards, navies and other stakeholders, and increase operational effectiveness when needed. Cooperation with industry and CMI operators needs to be strengthened through enhanced situational awareness, enabling EU agencies, Member State stakeholders and private-sector actors to tailor their responses more effectively to a range of incidents, while drawing on their respective capabilities, information and expertise.

[14] The ILO, together with the governments of France and the United Kingdom, officially launched the 'Partnership for Advancing Decent Work in Fisheries' Campaign – a multi-year initiative focusing on awareness-raising, advocacy, technical assistance, capacity building and elevating fishers' voices.
[15] CISE is financially supported by the EMFAF and participating Member States.

Since the CISE-MARSUR technical connectivity was established via an adaptor at SatCen in October 2024, the European Defence Agency (EDA), EMSA and SatCen have been actively progressing with implementing the connection. In this context, a coordinated effort is underway to enable information to be exchanged regularly between the two networks by the end of 2026. In parallel, EDA has been tasked with supporting the upgrade of MARSUR to the EU-SECRET level, with the dual objective of enhancing its operational relevance and ensuring continued capability to exchange information with CISE at the EU-RESTRICTED level. SatCen continues to provide critical technical and operational support to MARSUR, including the hosting of the 'bridging node' that connects the MARSUR network with CISE. This connectivity will allow satellite-derived information to flow seamlessly between civil and military domains, creating an enhanced picture of the maritime environment. Civil-military synergies will improve MDA.

The Commission funds ongoing projects aimed at enhancing maritime border control and securing the maritime domain ('CONNECTOR', 'CROSSMARE' and 'MARCONNECT') and future ones (HORIZON border surveillance and maritime security), to develop solutions that address capability needs of security practitioners, including to explore future capabilities compatible with CISE.

The Commission continued to provide satellite support to Member State authorities, EU agencies and international organisations through the CMS service, including for the surveillance and protection of CMI. In addition, operational ocean forecasting and marine environmental intelligence through Copernicus provided maritime surveillance actors an environmental context that enhances operational decision-making. In 2025, SatCen signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to join the interinstitutional framework contract for Frontex surveillance aircraft services.

Overall, the information submitted by EU Member States reconfirms the support for EU MDA networks like CISE and MARSUR. This includes increased participation through more information sharing and upgrading existing nodes or installing new ones to facilitate exchanges, and designating authorities at national level to lead on CISE. Some reservations were also expressed about the unclassified exchanges on CMI. However, Member States signalled confidence that the new classified capability of CISE can incentivise such data sharing. Some Member States are working to establish integrated national databases to achieve comprehensive supervision of the entire area of interest under their respective jurisdictions. Upon completion, these databases could be integrated with CISE, further improving MDA.

EU Member States used CISE in exercises to test and validate its applicability during events like MARSEC EU (see above), MMO ADRIA SAREX 2024 (SI, Koper), and MMO ADRIA 2025 – Adriatic Sea SARex/POLex 2025 (HR, Dubrovnik).

As a complement to operational and legally mandated surveillance systems and to CISE, some EU Member States participated in the SUCBAS (Sea Surveillance Cooperation Baltic Sea) multinational initiative that facilitates unclassified exchanges on maritime surveillance, maritime threats and shipping among coastal states in the Baltic region, involving also partners like Norway and the UK. In the Mediterranean, other systems used by EU Member States, e.g. SMART/FENIX and the Virtual Regional Maritime Traffic Centre (V-RMTC), contribute to enhanced MDA and information exchanges among a broad array of stakeholders.

The MARSUR network has increasingly been used for military communication between EU Member States over the past two years. The majority of MARSUR nodes are now active and

fully operational, and the system is readily available to contributing Member States for regular use. Several participants, including Spain and Italy, already make consistent operational use of MARSUR to exchange information between their maritime assets deployed in the GoG, demonstrating its growing effectiveness and operational value.

By the end of the current year, standard operating procedures are expected to enable the MARSUR network to operate as a federated European maritime surveillance network. In parallel, MARSUR III-contributing Member States have extended the scope of the existing bilateral EDA-EEAS arrangement to authorise EU operation headquarters (OHQ) to install MARSUR nodes for the conduct of CSDP missions, operations and exercises. As a result, an upgraded MARSUR node is being installed at the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC), and additional nodes will be deployed at OHQs.

To accelerate progress, contributing Member States have decided to proceed directly with the implementation of the EU-SECRET layer, the accreditation of which will encompass the existing EU-RESTRICTED layer. This security upgrade, for which a dedicated one-year project will be launched in the first quarter of 2027, will further enhance the relevance of MARSUR as a backbone of the Integrated Maritime and Seabed Defence (IMSD) initiative.

To bolster MDA, some Member States have reinforced their radar and automatic identification system (AIS) capabilities, complemented by electro-optical systems, and leveraged remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS) also through cooperation with EMSA.

Some Member States have made progress with surveys to upgrade the data on shipping routes in their waters, as well as undertaking bathymetric measurements that have greatly increased awareness of wrecks and navigational hazards. In addition, some Member States have expressed support for the full integration and leveraging of EU satellite initiatives like IRIS² (Infrastructure for Resilience, Interconnectivity and Security by Satellite) and have enhanced their efforts to secure Outermost Regions and overseas territories.

The EU provided MDA assistance to partners in various regions of interest through the EU CRIMARIO project (see Strategic Objective 2). Similarly, it supported the Yaoundé Architecture in the GoG through the EU-funded YARIS information-sharing platform. In January 2026, YARIS underwent a transfer from the EU to the EUACC (the EU-Africa Chamber of Commerce), another step towards enhanced regional ownership.

Strategic Objective 4. Manage risks and threats

Under Strategic Objective 4, the EU and the Member States focused their actions on enhancing capabilities to monitor, protect and repair critical maritime infrastructure (CMI); adopting and/or implementing various initiatives, strategies and projects related to CMI protection; and enhancing measures to tackle shadow fleet activities.

To enhance the protection of CMI, the Commission followed up on the implementation of legislation relating to cybersecurity and the resilience of critical entities, namely the NIS 2 Directive and the Directive on Resilience of Critical Entities[16] (CER Directive). The Commission adopted the following relevant initiatives: a recommendation on secure and resilient submarine cable infrastructures in February 2024; the ProtectEU: a European Internal Security Strategy in April 2025; the European Ocean Pact in June 2025, which includes

[16] Directive (EU) 2022/2557 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 on the resilience of critical entities and repealing Council Directive 2008/114/EC.

maritime security and defence among its key priorities, identifies MDA, including a European unmanned fleet, unexploded ordnance removal strategy for specific flagship initiatives and has announced a forthcoming Ocean Act; the action plan on drone and counter-drone security in February 2026; the EU Ports Strategy and the EU Industrial Maritime Strategy in March 2026; and finally the communication on the OceanEye: An EU ocean observation initiative in June 2026. The OceanEye delivers a comprehensive operational European ocean observation system and a European Digital Ocean System that integrates proven operational capabilities of the Copernicus Marine Service and the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODNET) and extends them through the European Digital Twin Ocean. The OceanEye will position the EU as the world's leading provider of ocean information, enhancing our collective capabilities in ocean protection and restoration, climate forecasting, blue economy activities such as fisheries and aquaculture, offshore energy (including wind farms), and shipping, and maritime security and defence, including the effects of climate change and environmental degradation.

Regarding climate-related threats to maritime security, the EU and its Member States are implementing the joint communication of 2023 on the climate-security nexus[17], as reflected also in the joint implementation report[18] of 2025, while initiatives such as the OceanEye offer additional tools and possibilities for prevention and preparedness against such threats.

In February 2025, the Commission and the High Representative adopted an EU action plan on cable security, which aims to complement and support actions at national level through a whole-of-resilience cycle approach: to prevent, detect, respond and repair, and deter cable damage. This action plan highlights the importance of the regional approach in achieving these objectives, including proposing the establishment of regional cable surveillance hubs. To support the implementation of the Cable Recommendation and Action Plan, the Commission set up the Submarine Cable Infrastructures Expert Group comprising representatives from Member States' authorities and the EU Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA), which published two reports. In October 2025, a first report that included mapping, risk assessment and stress testing of the EU's submarine cable infrastructure. In February 2026, a second report proposed a cable security toolbox which recommends a set of mitigation measures to address the risk scenarios identified in the October 2025 report, and a list of cable projects of European interest (CPEI) in the field of telecommunications. In July 2026, the Commission approved funding of a project to reinforce undersea data cable repair capabilities involving authorities and industry. A further call for proposals will be launched to increase European capacity in this area. In August 2026, the project (NEPTUNE) on a Horizon Europe-funded roadmap for next-generation submarine cable technologies started and will run until July 2029.

In March 2025, the Commission and High Representative adopted the EU Preparedness Union Strategy, which includes measures to address maritime security threats; and the 'EU's strategic approach to the Black Sea region' in May 2025, including the proposal to establish a Black Sea maritime security hub. Coastal EU Member States Bulgaria and Romania subsequently assumed the lead on implementation of the 'EU's strategic approach to the Black Sea region', including by defining a concept and priority areas. Information-sharing mechanisms have been strengthened through the Critical Entities Resilience Group (CERG), facilitating cross-border

[17] JOINT COMMUNICATION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL A new outlook on the climate and security nexus: Addressing the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on peace, security and defence.

[18] SWD(2025) 49 final Subject: JOINT STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Progress Report on the implementation of the Joint Communication - 'A New Outlook on the Climate and Security Nexus'.

cooperation among Member States and partner countries (Norway, Iceland) across 11 critical sectors.

In addition to EU-level initiatives, concrete initiatives have also been taken by Member States, such as the joint declaration on cooperation regarding the protection of infrastructure in the North Sea signed in April 2024 by six northern European countries (including four Member States) and the MoU on the protection of critical undersea infrastructure in the Baltic Sea, signed in Vihula in May 2025 by eight EU Member States, the European Union, Norway and Iceland. The CSDP naval operations mandates were updated, to task them with contributing to CMI protection.

Several Member States are conducting risk assessments and mapping of their critical onshore, offshore and underwater infrastructures, including ports, focusing also on boosting resilience against cyberattacks. RPAS and satellite imagery are becoming a common feature in most coastal Member States when it comes to patrolling and protecting shores and infrastructures.

Several Member States took measures for CMI surveillance, including situational centres embedded in the coastguard agencies, dedicated monitoring operations in EEZ (in cooperation with EMSA), and national hybrid attack simulations, including simulated damage to CMI. In transposing the CER Directive, stress tests on critical infrastructure were undertaken, including with methodologies from the EU's Joint Research Centre and the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats. EMSA supports Member States on request following cases of damage to CMI by providing relevant information.

Member States continue developing capabilities for the protection of critical seabed infrastructure (see Strategic Objective 5 below).

Member States have increased communication and information sharing with each other and in dedicated regional frameworks (e.g. Northseal, Joint Declaration Group, NB8) or systems (SIENA). To foster information fusion and MDA, cooperation was also strengthened within the framework of EMSA and Frontex, using data from Copernicus. Member States adopted and implemented new risk management models, often automated with specific algorithms for monitoring and detecting anomalies, such as those of EMSA's integrated maritime surveillance service. Several Member States participate actively in NATO's Baltic Sentry[19], including through the deployment of naval assets to enhance CMI protection.

EU funding instruments, including the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), the Digital Europe Programme (DEP), the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), the Internal Security Fund (ISF) and the multiannual financial framework (MFF), play a key role in supporting concrete measures to strengthen the resilience and security of submarine cable infrastructure. This includes investments in infrastructure protection, repair capabilities and emerging solutions such as cable hubs and integrated surveillance mechanisms.

In the context of implementing the Cable Security Action Plan, in June 2026, the Commission decided after evaluations to provide funding to two such hubs proposed by Member States, one in the Baltic and one in the Mediterranean. Finland took a lead role in the Baltic cable hub (also referred to as 'integrated surveillance mechanism') and used the MARSEC EU 2026 exercise to test this new mechanism.

[19] https://shape.nato.int/operations/operations-and-missions/baltic-sentry.

To reinforce undersea cable repair capabilities, in July 2026 the Commission approved funding for a project involving Member State authorities and industry. In addition, a further call for proposals[20] will be launched in autumn 2026, to increase European capacity for the repair of submarine communication cables.

Numerous actions have been taken at EU and Member State level to tackle the threats associated with shadow fleet activities. In October 2025, the European Council called for further measures to disrupt the operations of the shadow fleet, and to address the significant environmental and security risks that the shadow fleet poses. To that end, the EU has undertaken several actions to enhance the enforcement of environmental and maritime safety standards, including in the IMO, and working with flag states to improve oversight over their registries and compliance with the international regulatory framework. The EU has also further strengthened its restrictive measures, imposing sanctions on some 700 shadow fleet vessels and around 100 enablers, as well as other actors in the broader ecosystem. Member States have also strengthened their enforcement actions and boarded and inspected several flagless or falsely flagged shadow fleet vessels, fully in line with UNCLOS. In spring 2026, Member States updated the rules of engagement of CSDP naval operation IRINI to allow it to undertake flag verification boardings of shadow fleet vessels under the right of visit in accordance with Article 110 of UNCLOS. As of August 2026, IRINI had conducted six such actions. In July 2026, the Member States tasked ATALANTA with doing the same. In addition, the Commission Delegated Directive (EU) 2025/811 on information to be notified to ship reporting systems entered into force, which requires Member States to request insurance certificates from ships in transit; this is particularly relevant to shadow fleet vessels, which are often uninsured.

In October 2025, the High Representative appointed an EEAS shadow fleet coordinator to support coordination between Member States and the exchange of best practices, in a 'whole-of-route' approach. In June 2026, the Council gave a mandate to the High Representative to negotiate pre-authorised boarding agreements with selected non-EU countries to support further action against vessels suspected of violating international legal and regulatory obligations.

proposes this change to limit the exposure of EMSA to potential retaliation] In view of shadow fleet activities, EMSA provides support on request of the Member States and the Commission, based on Member States' needs and the existing operational system's abilities.

Within the EU, maritime cybersecurity is addressed through horizontal legislation such as the NIS2 Directive, the Cyber Resilience Act, and EU maritime security legislation. Regulation (EC) No 725/2004 requires computer systems and networks to be taken into account in security assessments for both ships and port facilities. In addition, the Commission has developed several guidance documents, e.g. on applying cybersecurity requirements, and ENISA is working on revising a guidance document on Cyber Risk Management for Ports.

Beyond the EU, the Union is working actively with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to integrate cybersecurity measures for ships into the IMO's mandatory instruments. This work also addresses the links between ships and port facilities and contributed to the recently adopted revised IMO Guidelines on Maritime Cyber Risk Management. Current joint efforts are focused on developing IMO Cyber Code for the entire maritime ecosystem.

[20] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/news/40037.

In the area of port security and surveillance, most Member States adopted a stricter legal framework on cybersecurity, with some setting up dedicated inter-ministerial agencies, also taking into account the NIS 2 and CER directives. On the operational side, such surveillance is conducted mainly with autonomous systems, as tested by NATO Task Force X, in which many EU Member States participate. EU-funded projects such as VIGIMARE, EMPORIA and CYSCROMS also helped advance maritime security. Member States have been active both at EU level in adopting new legislation and filling gaps, and at IMO level in adopting stricter regulations against crime and malicious activities.

The majority of coastal Member States participate regularly in maritime security exercises and run parallel national exercises on a yearly basis, which helps improve their level of readiness. On cyberthreats, ENISA led the exercise Cyber Europe 2026 focused on enhancing cyber preparedness and ensuring continuity of essential services, including maritime cybersecurity, and tested the EU blueprint for cyber crisis management in line with the June 2025 Council Recommendation.

In May 2024, EDA and three Member States co-organised the Rubikon table-top exercise to evaluate how to improve collaboration and coordination in case of cross-border events related to critical infrastructure at sea. Lessons learned from this exercise are now in the implementation phase. The Commission, EDA and EEAS participated in the REPMUS exercise with the Portuguese navy and NATO in September 2024, 2025, and 2026.

SatCen produces geospatial intelligence from all types of remotely sensed data, including satellite and aerial imagery, and continually adopts new technologies to enhance these capabilities. SatCen is developing, in the frame of the joint communication on the climate-security nexus, the Climate and Environment Security Data and Analysis Hub (CESDA) as a single-entry point for enhanced analysis, early warning and foresight on climate security.

In the framework of tackling unexploded ordnance at sea (UXO), the Commission launched various projects to enhance the detection and mapping of UXO from the sea (MUNIMAP, MMinE-SwEEPER), to scale up technologies for UXO removal/neutralisation ('Save our Seas') and develop better methods for identifying, clearing and disposing of munitions, and developing guidelines for practitioners (CAMMERA). These projects focus on the Baltic Sea, but results will also be applied to other sea basins, e.g. the Black Sea, once the situation permits. The EU Ocean Pact comprises a flagship action to develop a comprehensive strategy for the large-scale removal of UXO from the sea basins around the EU. The Commission is working with Member States towards such an initiative.

The Commission funded research and development projects (e.g. SMAUG, UNDERSEC and COLOSSUS) to develop and test sensors, drones and artificial intelligence to protect ports and ships. It organised a maritime cybersecurity conference and published cybersecurity guidance for ships; and ensured the transposition and/or implementation of legislation relating to cybersecurity, the resilience of critical entities, etc. These investments are expected to deliver additional capabilities that will be usable in all sea basins around the EU, depending on the coastal EU Member States' needs, while contributing to superior levels of monitoring, detection and protection, supporting the EU's overall resilience and readiness.

To combat cross-border crime and hybrid threats, Frontex, in collaboration with Europol, is expanding joint operational activities under the EMPACT framework, targeting firearms smuggling, human trafficking and terrorist movements through cross-border crime action days

and joint operations and multipurpose maritime operations (MMOs). Parallel and coordinated efforts by EMSA, EFCA and Frontex under the ECGFF cybersecurity working group are enhancing coastguard cooperation against hybrid threats, promoting best practice sharing on maritime cyber risks. As the EU and the sea basins around it continue to be major targets for malign hybrid and cyber activities, the ECGFF is set to play an essential role for the coastguard dimension of maritime security at EU level.

The Commission is intensifying maritime security compliance through the MARSEC Committee (involving Member States' authorities) and Stakeholder Advisory Group on Maritime Security (SAGMAS), aligning industry and regulatory efforts with emerging threats, including organised crime and hybrid threats. The SAGMAS format provides for direct exchanges with private industry, thus fostering public-private sector connectivity and information sharing.

Strategic Objective 5. Enhance capabilities

Under Strategic Objective 5, the EU and the Member States focused their actions on strengthening maritime capabilities to address evolving threats, on operational deployments, technological advancements, and adapting relevant legal frameworks. Capability development prioritised the safeguarding of submarine cables, pipelines and ports, with increased patrols, remotely operated vehicle (ROV) deployments and satellite monitoring. The threat posed by the shadow fleet has driven targeted surveillance and interdiction efforts, including imagery intelligence (IMINT) collection and ship-to-ship transfer monitoring.

Member States bolstered responses to hybrid threats (cyberattacks, GPS jamming, deceptive shipping) through surveillance and MDA tools (e.g. the CMS Service, SafeSeaNet); EU-NATO cooperation (e.g. BALTOPS, Open Spirit); and rapid-reaction frameworks for electronic warfare and underwater infrastructure protection.

Member States have significantly enhanced capabilities under the EUMSS, but sustained investment, legal alignment and EU-NATO synergy are critical to addressing emerging maritime threats. Priorities include critical infrastructure resilience, hybrid threat response and regional cooperation mechanisms.

EDA is preparing a project to develop a scalable, modular and AI-enabled mine-countermeasure (MCM) system (SEADEEP) capable of detecting, classifying and neutralising stealth and buried mines, which will be deployable via unmanned or crewed surface platforms; a project (INTELLISEA) to develop an immersive multi-domain simulation environment to support risk assessment, protection, resilience and crisis response for CMI; and a project (GEOFENCING) to create a smart maritime geofencing capability that combines unmanned systems and distributed sensors to monitor, protect and enhance the resilience of critical offshore infrastructure. Since August 2025, EDA has supported the implementation of the PESCO Critical Seabed Infrastructure Protection (CSIP) project, in which 12 Member States are involved. At the end of 2026, a first operational demonstration in a real environment will test technological solutions for seabed infrastructure protection available on the EU defence market, proposed by multinational consortia and chosen by Member States. In February 2026, EDA completed a project (SABUVIS II) on underwater vehicle swarms and is now preparing its third phase (SABUVIS III). EDA is supporting the preparation of a project (UNCODE) on the development, testing and evaluation of an underwater communication and data management system for seabed warfare.

The EDA Action Plan on Autonomous Systems (APAS) aims to help the Member States speed up the development of highly autonomous, effective, efficient and reliable autonomous systems for land, air, maritime and cross-domain operations. This action plan comprises EUMSS-related activities, already ongoing or at an advanced stage of preparation:

- Modular Lightweight Minesweeping – Next Generation (MLM-NG);
- Signature Management Countering Multi-Influence UW Sensor Threats (SIRAMIS III);
- High Sea-State Autonomous Launch and Recovery Systems (HSS-A-LARS);
- European Unmanned Foiling Vessel for Attack and Countermeasure Missions (MAILU).

Under the framework of European Defence Projects of Common Interest (EDPCI), EDA and the Commission are closely cooperating to help Member States implement the Integrated Maritime and Seabed Defence (IMSD) initiative, ensuring coherence between capability development, industrial aspects and operational requirements. This includes fostering synergies between EU-funded instruments and defence initiatives, and helping Member States identify and implement priority maritime capability projects. Work on the IMSD is progressing, with a particular focus on reinforcing MSA, enhancing the protection of CMI, while developing modular, standardised and interoperable naval combat capabilities with open systems-of-systems architectures, including hybrid systems, effectors and manned-unmanned teaming. In this context, MARSUR III is expected to play a key role as a backbone for information exchange within the broader IMSD framework.

Frontex is currently executing a pilot project testing vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) for maritime surveillance, to assess performance, cost-efficiency and reliability.

To strengthen underwater capabilities, the Commission is advancing several high-impact initiatives. The E=MCM and SEACURE projects, selected under the EDF 2023 call, are developing an EU-wide concept of operations for mine countermeasures (MCM), enhancing collective resilience against underwater threats. Additionally, the SHIELD project, now in preparation under EDF 2025, aims to deliver the unmanned underwater super system (UUSS) – a next-generation, AI-driven network integrating distributed unmanned vehicles, sensors and adaptive microservices to safeguard critical seabed infrastructure.

To further accelerate autonomous and unmanned systems, the Commission launched the action plan on drones and counter-drones in Q1 2026, fostering manned-unmanned teaming (MUM-T) capabilities for naval and coastguard operations. Advancing vessel automation, the Commission has also opened a dedicated EDF 2026 Work Programme call for ‘Enhanced medium-size semi-autonomous surface vessels’, targeting resilient automated platforms with reduced crew requirements and AI-driven decision-support systems. These initiatives collectively underscore the EU’s commitment to technological sovereignty, ensuring that Member States’ navies and coastguards are equipped with cutting-edge, interoperable and adaptive capabilities to address evolving maritime security challenges.

The non-mandatory IMO Code on maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS) entered into force in July 2026. While the adoption of MASS will be gradual, it introduces a new era with significant challenges for maritime safety and security. Risks vary by vessel type; those with crew on board function similarly to conventional ships, whereas unmanned vessels – whether

remote-controlled or fully autonomous – face higher vulnerabilities to loss of control, system failures and cyber-incidents.

The EU Defence Readiness Roadmap 2030 sets out objectives and milestones to strengthen Europe's defence technological and industrial base. It aims to expand production capacity, accelerate delivery and reduce critical dependencies across the supply chains. In support of these objectives, the European Commission is conducting a survey to gather insights from the defence and security industry regarding key factors influencing the performance, competitiveness, innovation, capacity and export potential of European companies.

Strategic Objective 6. Educate and train

Under Strategic Objective 6, the EU and the Member States continued to invest in improving skills and capabilities, supporting EU joint endeavours and investing in international cooperation/capacity building to assist partners. Such actions have consolidated the EU maritime culture at navy and coastguard levels, improved interoperability, enhanced readiness and resilience, and facilitated the sharing of best practices and ability to respond to evolving maritime threats, as well as cross-border cooperation.

The European initiative for the exchange of young officers (EMILYO or Military Erasmus) has stimulated exchanges and quality training of future naval personnel across the EU Member States, fostering networking, trust and the sharing of know-how among participants.

National naval colleges and maritime institutions undertook a wide variety of courses and training, ranging from navigation, hydrography, electronic warfare and maritime operations to crisis management and countering marine pollution, among others. Efforts by EU Member States also sought to promote maritime careers, encourage diversity and strengthen lifelong learning opportunities across the sector.

Maritime cybersecurity and MDA received increased attention in the education and training activities of several Member States. Many Member States organised cybersecurity exercises, workshops and awareness programmes to strengthen resilience against cyberthreats affecting ports, vessels, communication systems and other CMI. Research initiatives and training activities focused on risk management, cyber incident response, and information sharing, reflecting the growing importance of cybersecurity within maritime security frameworks. Research initiatives also covered IUU, climate security and other maritime crime.

Member States highlighted the value of maritime exercises, and of capacity-building programmes like the EU Correspondence Group on Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme. Several Member States cooperated with the EU-funded IMO to deliver training in line with its requirements and standards.

Member States actively supported maritime security capacity-building efforts in regions such as the GoG and the Horn of Africa, including via the CMP in the first case, and Operation ATALANTA in the latter. EU Member States have also supported many partners bilaterally, including São Tomé and Príncipe, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, and the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF). Through training, technical assistance, equipment support and operational cooperation, these programmes strengthened local capabilities in areas including maritime surveillance, counter-piracy, law enforcement and counterterrorism. In addition, Operation IRINI provided active support to the training of the Libyan coastguard and to capacity building for the Libyan Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre.

The EU support in Africa aimed at increasing the capacities and capabilities of national maritime law enforcement agencies to prevent, respond and investigate maritime crime (e.g. to train and equip coast guards, national marines and support joint patrols), enhancing legal finish (e.g. training judges in maritime law and peer-to-peer mentoring) and strengthening the capacities of the maritime security architectures in the two regions (Yaoundé Architecture and Djibouti Code of Conduct area); as well as developing coordination at intra-regional level. It also focused on enhancing the capacities and capabilities of maritime affairs and port authorities in terms on port security and safety of navigation.

The EEAS has advanced cooperation with other international partners and organisations, including NATO-accredited centres, by participating in activities held on maritime themes (e.g. the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) annual conferences). The EEAS and European Security and Defence College (ESDC) have addressed CMI protection through events such as the peer-to-peer seminar on CMI protection with Indo-Pacific partners, co-organised with the EU ESIWA+ project and the Italian navy (April 2026). The seminar confirmed mutual interest in exchanged experiences and best practices and identified, and similar challenges related to CMI protection, including underwater infrastructure and the need for further dialogue and exchanges on such topical themes. To further support the Yaoundé Architecture in the GoG, the ESDC, EnMAR and Portuguese National Defence College organised a peer-to-peer seminar in Lisbon in July 2025, which brought together experts from EU Member States and the Yaoundé Architecture structures to exchange best practice and experience.

The EU agencies offered relevant training to Member States and non-EU country authorities on various coastguard functions, such as search-and-rescue and maritime cybersecurity, e.g. through a major cybersecurity conference, the coastguard training catalogues and the coastguard exchange programme operated by EFCA and funded by EMFAF. The agencies also actively promoted the participation of women in maritime professions, including through the ECGFF framework.

To promote women's participation in maritime security, the Commission established three maritime-focused university alliances (SEA-EU, EUNICoast, EU-CONEXUS), embedding gender balance as a core principle. The Commission's Women in Transport – EU Platform for Change served as a key forum for sharing best practices and improving female representation in the sector, culminating in recommendations to attract, recruit and retain women. Through the EnMAR project, the EU engaged with the professional women's association of west and central Africa and organised a series of events in the region, and a study tour to Europe, on women in maritime security.

Sustainability was prioritised through the greening award initiative, launched by Frontex, EMSA and EFCA, with a second edition scheduled for 2026 to recognise eco-conscious advancements in coastguard operations.

Operational capacity building was advanced through multipurpose maritime exercises (MMEs) under multipurpose maritime operations (MMOs), including five major exercises (2024-2025) in the Black Sea, the Baltic Sea and the Adriatic Sea, which enhanced cross-agency coordination and allowed for real-world testing of emerging technologies. The COASTEX exercises, conducted under the ECGFF framework and hosted by Portugal and Italy, demonstrated enhanced joint response capabilities, with EMSA providing earth observation (EO) and underwater services, Frontex contributing aerial surveillance via its FSA DA62, and EFCA deploying an offshore patrol vessel (OPV).

Furthermore, the 2025 online Coast Guard Global Summit – Human Resources Development (CGGS HRD) programme, co-hosted by the three agencies, extended training opportunities to non-EU countries, fostering international collaboration. These efforts align with broader Member State initiatives, such as national training programmes and the EMILYO initiative, collectively reinforcing the EU's maritime security and operational resilience.

Conclusions

Maritime security has become a high priority for overall EU security, including securing the EU's fundamental maritime interests, such as ensuring freedom of navigation; upholding international law, in particular UNCLOS; addressing EU security risks including organised crime and terrorism; protecting natural resources and the marine environment and managing the consequences of climate change and environmental degradation on maritime security; countering the shadow fleet; ensuring the resilience and protection of CMI; protecting the EU's external borders; and safeguarding EU Member States' maritime zones.

As maritime security threats, incidents, hybrid activities and military conflicts have dramatically increased since 2023, in the sea basins around the EU and beyond, the EU and its Member States have stepped up their actions to enhance maritime security through EU-level and international cooperation, playing a key role in global initiatives and forums, and developing the necessary technological capabilities. The report demonstrates that the collective action taken by Member States and EU institutions is effective and impactful.

The EU and its Member States must maintain the momentum, further stepping up coordinated actions, particularly to enhance our shared MDA, our capabilities for joint action in the maritime domain, and in strengthening synergies between civilian and military actors, including maritime industry and CMI operators, and in expanding our joint EU role as a global maritime security actor.

Overall, the EUMSS has demonstrated its unique value in promoting cooperation and concrete actions at national and EU level, contributing to the overall effort of the EU and its Member States on security and defence. It also remains an effective instrument for implementing the relevant priorities of the European Ocean Pact and all EU policy frameworks for which maritime security is an enabler and/or contributes to their objectives. The EUMSS Action Plan is conceived with the flexibility to accommodate actions towards new or escalating threats in the maritime domain in a constantly changing geopolitical context.