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In accordance with Article 71 TFEU and Article 6(2) of Council Decision 2010/131/EU establishing the Standing Committee on operational cooperation on internal security (COSI), the Council must keep the European Parliament and the national parliaments informed of COSI's proceedings.

Delegations will find in the annex the Report to the European Parliament and national Parliaments on the proceedings of COSI for the period from July 2023 to December 2024.

**Report to the European Parliament and national parliaments on the proceedings
of the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI)
for the period from July 2023 to December 2024**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI), based on Article 71 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU), was established within the Council in 2010¹ to facilitate, promote and strengthen coordination of operational actions of the authorities of the Member States competent in the field of internal security. Under the trio Presidency formed by Spain, Belgium and Hungary, COSI continued to fulfil its mandate as a monitoring, advisory and decision-making body, comprising senior representatives from the EU Member States, the Commission and, where necessary, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and relevant Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) agencies, creating synergies between police, customs, border guards and judicial authorities as well as other relevant internal security actors. COSI plays a significant role at the interface between strategic and operational levels to ensure coherence between strategic recommendations and operational action, thus contributing to the implementation of the Security Union Strategy². COSI prepares internal security matters for consideration by the JHA Council configuration and provides guidance for the work of Council preparatory bodies. COSI itself usually meets twice every semester for formal meetings and once per semester for an informal meeting, while a COSI Support Group (SG) is in place to prepare discussions for COSI and facilitate its work at technical level.

¹ 16515/09.

² 10010/20.

During the reporting period from July 2023 to December 2024, COSI dealt as a matter of priority with the future of internal security, addressing issues such as: the further development of the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), based on the outcome of the independent evaluation of the ongoing EMPACT cycle 2022-2025; the way forward regarding access to data for effective law enforcement, based on the recommendations and the concluding report of the High-Level Group on access to data for effective law enforcement (HLG); other challenges posed by technological developments, such as the emergence of quantum technologies; and the activities of the EU Innovation Hub for Internal Security. COSI considered the implementation of activities under the EU roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime, in particular regarding the identification of high-risk criminal networks (HRCNs) and the involvement of administrative authorities in fighting serious and organised crime. In addition, COSI paid specific attention to the fight against firearms trafficking and migrant smuggling. COSI continued to monitor developments related to terrorism by issuing regular recommendations based on the evolving threat picture, and by drawing attention to the matter of radicalisation. Another major area of work has been the nexus between internal and external security, with a focus on the impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the conflict in the Middle East on internal security. In the area of international cooperation, agreement on a joint ministerial declaration³ and on working procedures⁴ for cooperation between the EU Member States and the Latin American Committee on Internal Security (CLASI) was an important step forward towards consolidating the dialogue on internal security cooperation between the EU and Latin America. Finally, COSI has monitored the activities of JHA agencies and of their network, helping to create synergies and to ensure the consistency of their work.

³ 13575/23.

⁴ 10583/24.

2. HORIZONTAL MATTERS CONCERNING INTERNAL SECURITY

2.1 Future of internal security

COSI exchanged views on the future of the EU's internal security, providing input into the development of the strategic guidelines for legislative and operational planning within the area of freedom, security and justice. The strategic guidelines provided for in Article 68 TFEU and approved by the Council on 12 December 2024⁵ are an important instrument to shape the direction of EU policy in the area of freedom, security and justice and to provide a framework for the implementation of the relevant aspects of the EU's Strategic Agenda 2024-2029. COSI agreed on the importance of following up on the recommendations of the HLG on access to data for effective law enforcement. COSI underlined the significant role of EMPACT in the fight against serious and organised crime and requested its reinforcement, including with additional financial means. The discussion also drew particular attention to the risk of hybrid attacks, disinformation and sabotage and to the challenges posed by migrant smuggling and the trafficking of drugs.

⁵ 16343/24.

2.2 Legislative proposals with an impact on internal security

COSI was regularly informed about the state of play of legislative files with a potential impact on internal security being discussed both inside and outside JHA. The Spanish Presidency introduced a new overview format for digital files, providing detailed information about relevant legislative files managed outside JHA and a table showing relevant legislation within JHA and its implementation status. The overview of digital files presented during the Belgian Presidency focused on the adopted Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act⁶ and the steps towards its implementation. During the Hungarian Presidency, COSI was informed about the state of play of work in the Council preparatory bodies on the proposal for a European cross-border associations directive⁷ and its implications for internal security. COSI also drew attention to a draft delegated act linked to the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2019/125 of 16 January 2019 concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and its possible implications for the use of intermediate force equipment by law enforcement authorities. COSI will continue to monitor relevant horizontal legislative files and alert Member States to their potential internal security implications.

⁶ Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Artificial Intelligence Act), OJ L, 2024/1689, 12.7.2024.

⁷ Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on European cross-border associations, COM/2023/516 final.

2.3 Law enforcement training

COSI exchanged views on the future of law enforcement training and on the need to maintain the dedicated EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) and to continue developing a common law enforcement culture within the EU based on mutual trust to enable cross-border cooperation. The discussion also addressed the need to prepare for technological developments and make best use of common tools.

CEPOL informed the COSI SG of its Research and Science Conference on Tackling HRCN, which will take place in Rome in March 2025. CEPOL also presented the mid-term review of the EU strategic training needs assessment (EU-STNA) 2022-2025 and the new methodology for the next EU-STNA, which will define strategic and EU-level training priorities for the next four-year-cycle, to be issued in 2025.

2.4 Hate speech, hate crime and violence against women

Under the Spanish Presidency, COSI had a discussion on hate speech and hate crime, which are complex phenomena with a huge impact on victims and society as a whole. Hate crime frequently remains unreported and unrecorded, which is also partly due to the challenge of identifying hate crime in the online world. Moreover, there is no common definition of hate crime in the EU. Delegations agreed to continue raising awareness among law enforcement and industry, making best use of the Digital Services Act (DSA)⁸, to pay attention to the connection of hate crimes with radicalisation and terrorism, and to improve the detection and prevention of and the response to these crimes including using AI tools.

COSI considered the underreporting of violence against women to be the main obstacle to countering this type of crime effectively. The exchange of practices, of information, and training were identified as appropriate measures to improve risk assessments and implement an effective preventive approach.

⁸ Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act), OJ L 277, 27.10.2022.

2.5 Public order: new ways of protesting and major sports events

Under the Belgian Presidency, COSI exchanged views about new ways of protesting, which include public demonstrations involving a rapid mobilisation through social media and increased complexity and violence.

Under the Hungarian Presidency, delegations shared their experience in relation to cross-border cooperation to ensure security during major sporting events and made suggestions to improve and expand this type of operational cooperation. In December 2024, the Council approved conclusions concerning a handbook for European states hosting major international football tournaments.⁹

⁹ 16754/24.

3. SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME

3.1 EMPACT

COSI continued to provide strategic guidance and oversight for EMPACT, addressing the EU crime priorities identified by the Council for a four-year cycle from 2022 to 2025.¹⁰ In November 2023, COSI endorsed the EMPACT operational action plans (OAPs) covering the years 2024 and 2025, and the methodology for the preparation of the EU serious and organised crime threat assessment (SOCTA) 2025.

In November 2024, COSI took note of the outcome of the independent evaluation of the EMPACT cycle 2022-2025, which was entrusted to the Commission services (DG HOME), contracted out to an external consultant, and performed throughout the year 2024. COSI exchanged views about the future of EMPACT, considering the strategic recommendations developed in the independent evaluation study. COSI concluded that the effectiveness of EMPACT should be further improved by ensuring its consolidation and sustainable funding while maintaining its operational flexibility, and that the reflections about the arrangements for the possible further embedment of EMPACT into the internal security architecture should be continued.

The COSI SG regularly monitored the implementation of the EMPACT OAPs, including the joint action days (JADs). It considered financial and communication aspects related to EMPACT, contributed to the establishment of an advisory group composed of experts from Member States to support the independent evaluation, and benefited from regular information points from the Commission services on the progress of the evaluation study. In November 2024, the COSI SG developed a roadmap for the implementation of possible measures stemming from the recommendations made in the independent evaluation. The COSI SG also considered the synergies between the Law Enforcement Working Party (LEWP) (Customs) action plan and the EMPACT OAPs.

¹⁰ 8665/21. The ten (10) EU crime priorities for the cycle 2022-2025 are: high-risk criminal networks, cyber-attacks, human trafficking, child sexual exploitation, migrant smuggling, drug trafficking, fraud, economic and financial crime, organised property crime, environmental crime, and firearms trafficking.

3.2 Coordination mechanism for joint customs operations

COSI endorsed the revision of the coordination mechanism for joint customs operations agreed by the LEWP (Customs) on 8 November 2024. That mechanism was established in 2007 to avoid an overlap of customs-relevant operations in terms of aim, geographical area or time.

3.3 EU roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime

In November 2023, the Commission presented to COSI the EU roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime¹¹, complementing the EU strategy to tackle organised crime for 2021-2025 and the EU drugs strategy and action plan for 2021-2025, including four main work strands: strengthening the resilience of logistics hubs such as ports, dismantling criminal networks, prevention, and strengthening cooperation with international partners. The Commission kept COSI informed about the implementation of the EU roadmap, including the establishment of the European Ports Alliance.

¹¹ 14114/23. Commission Communication on the EU Roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime.

One of the actions included in the EU roadmap was mapping the criminal networks that pose the biggest threats to society. This was carried out by the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) with the objective of improving the intelligence picture on the modus operandi of the most threatening criminal networks active in Europe. In April 2024, Europol presented to COSI its report on decoding the EU's most threatening criminal networks¹². COSI welcomed the mapping exercise and considered its findings. In June 2024, the Council adopted conclusions on mapping the most threatening criminal networks¹³. The conclusions determined that the mapping exercise – which is expected to provide valuable input to EMPACT operational activities and to the EU SOCTA – should be carried out every two years. In line with the Council conclusions, Europol delivered a report on the abuse of legal business structures (LBS) by the EU's most threatening criminal networks¹⁴, which was presented to COSI on 27 November 2024. The report confirms the threats related to the high-level infiltration or the criminal ownership of legal business structures. It also restates the importance of continuing to use the administrative approach as an important countermeasure in the fight against serious and organised crime.

Another priority pursued under the Belgian Presidency in relation to the EU roadmap was preventing organised crime activities through administrative measures. Following discussions at the informal JHA ministerial meeting in January 2024, COSI identified the need to boost the implementation of the administrative approach to tackle serious and organised crime, including changes in national laws and enhanced operational cooperation, based on a presentation by the European Union Regional Information Expert Centre (EURIEC). COSI tasked the LEWP (Police) to map the existing tools before potentially asking the Commission to put forward new legislative proposals. The European Network on the Administrative Approach tackling serious and organised crime, affiliated to the LEWP (Police), recommends taking stock of available instruments in its guidance for applying the administrative approach to the criminal infiltration of legal business structures.

¹² <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publication-events/main-reports/decoding-eus-most-threatening-criminal-networks>

¹³ 11153/24.

¹⁴ <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publications-events/publications/leveraging-legitimacy-how-eu%E2%80%99s-most-threatening-criminal-networks-abuse-legal-business-structures>

3.4 Drug trafficking

The trio Presidency made drug trafficking a priority for the work of COSI as this type of crime poses a serious threat to the EU's internal security and the health of its citizens, with cross-border criminal networks established throughout Europe using ever advancing technologies and maritime transport for their trafficking activities.

Under the Spanish Presidency, COSI considered the threats related to fentanyl, which has become a serious threat to public health in the United States of America. Fentanyl is easy to traffic, generates large profits and is relatively easy to produce. Though the marketing of fentanyl in Europe is marginal for the time being, COSI insisted on the need to remain vigilant and get prepared. The international dimension of the production, distribution and trafficking of synthetic opioids by cartels should be monitored in close cooperation with the United States of America. Europol and the EU Drugs Agency (EUDA) should help identify and anticipate trends and thus facilitate prevention.

COSI was informed about the anti-trafficking measures of the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre (Narcotics) (MAOC-N), in particular the interception of vessels from Latin America and West Africa headed to Europe as their final destination. COSI confirmed an increasing level of violence (use of firearms, casualties) and the recruitment of young people linked to the trafficking of cocaine, cannabis and synthetic drugs around logistical centres in various Member States. COSI agreed that a holistic approach, including the external dimension and covering offer, demand, supply and prevention, remained relevant to address the drugs phenomenon.

Finally, COSI considered the environmental impact of synthetic drug production and acknowledged the necessity of paying more attention to that phenomenon. The important role of the new Environmental Crime Directive¹⁵ was highlighted as it will cover the unlawful dumping of chemical waste.

¹⁵ Directive (EU) 2024/1203 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on the protection of the environment through criminal law and replacing Directives 2008/99/EC and 2009/123/EC, OJ L, 2024/1203, 30.4.2024.

3.5 Trafficking in cultural goods

COSI exchanged views on ways to step up the fight against trafficking in cultural goods, including the implementation of measures contained in both the Council conclusions on the fight against trafficking in cultural goods¹⁶ and the EU action plan against trafficking in cultural goods¹⁷. COSI acknowledged intelligence gaps in money laundering and terrorism financing related to trafficking in cultural goods and stressed the importance of the traceability of cultural goods at national level. COSI emphasised the role of the informal network of law enforcement authorities and expertise competent in the field of cultural goods (EU CULTNET) and noted that better information exchange would support efforts to combat cultural goods trafficking and strengthen EU CULTNET's role.

3.6 Migrant smuggling

COSI discussed the main challenges posed by the migrant smuggling phenomenon and the comprehensive set of actions needed to tackle this type of crime, from strengthening international cooperation and partnerships with countries of origin and transit, to the monitoring of fraudulent activities online and more systematically launching financial investigations. Other areas of action mentioned were the timely implementation of the interoperability package and the adoption of pending legislative proposals (anti-migrant smuggling package)^{18, 19}.

¹⁶ 10249/23.

¹⁷ 16107/22.

¹⁸ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on enhancing police cooperation in relation to the prevention, detection and investigation of migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, and on enhancing Europol's support to preventing and combating such crimes and amending Regulation (EU) 2016/794, COM/2023/754 final.

¹⁹ Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down minimum rules to prevent and counter the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and stay in the Union, and replacing Council Directive 2002/90/EC and Council Framework Decision 2002/946 JHA, COM/2023/755 final.

3.7 Trafficking of firearms

COSI held an exchange of views on the prevention of and the fight against illicit trafficking in firearms in the EU and particularly on the need to regulate the 3D printing of weapons. The Commission announced an evaluation of the relevant directive²⁰ in 2025.

COSI took note of the progress made regarding the establishment of National Firearms Focal Points (NFFPs), the development of a harmonised collection of information about firearms seizures at national level and the future contribution of data to Europol. COSI considered that existing databases, such as the Schengen Information System (SIS), should continue to be used to register illegal weapons, and discussed the creation of a new repository of seized firearms, as only registered firearms and lost/stolen firearms are currently stored in EU databases. Cooperation with customs should be strengthened to keep track of postal shipments of firearms or their components. COSI tasked Europol to explore the possibility of further developing its Firearms Intelligence Hub and to consider enhancing cooperation with Interpol.

3.8 Financial and economic crime

Based on Europol's European financial and economic crime threat assessment 2023²¹, COSI discussed the modus operandi of criminal organisations, including corruption, money laundering, underground banking systems and the reinvestment of proceeds into further criminal activities. COSI agreed on the need for specialised law enforcement training, the exchange of best practices and further efforts to cooperate with third countries.

²⁰ Directive (EU) 2021/555 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 March 2021 on control of the acquisition and possession of weapons, OJ L 115, 6.4.2021, p. 1–25.

²¹ <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publications-events/publications/other-side-of-coin-analysis-of-financial-and-economic-crime>

During the Hungarian Presidency, Europol's Financial Intelligence Public Private Partnership (EFIPPP) Practical Guide for Operational Cooperation between Investigative Authorities and Financial Institutions was presented, and COSI exchanged views on facilitating financial investigations in the context of fighting organised crime and drug trafficking. COSI agreed on the importance of continuing cooperation through public-private partnerships and transposing and implementing the anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) package²² and the Directive on asset recovery and confiscation²³.

3.9 Environmental crime

COSI exchanged views on ways to enhance the fight against environmental crime in the EU. The discussion identified various areas for improvement, which included closer cooperation between law enforcement, the judiciary and administrative authorities of the Member States, increasing resources at national level and providing specialised training for investigators and prosecutors. COSI also welcomed the political agreement on the Environmental Crime Directive. In October 2024, the Council approved conclusions on combating cross-border environmental crime²⁴.

3.10 Cybercrime

The COSI SG took note of Europol's presentation on the internet organised crime threat assessment (iOCTA) 2024²⁵, which confirmed that child sexual exploitation and online fraud remained the most threatening manifestations of cybercrime in the EU. The cybercrime landscape remained diverse, comprising both lone actors and criminal networks with a wide range of expertise and capabilities.

²² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/05/30/anti-money-laundering-council-adopts-package-of-rules/>

²³ Directive (EU) 2024/1260 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 on asset recovery and confiscation, OJ L, 2024/1260, 2.5.2024.

²⁴ 14182/24.

²⁵ <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publication-events/main-reports/internet-organised-crime-threat-assessment-iocta-2024>

4. COUNTERTERRORISM

In the field of counterterrorism, COSI has been regularly assessing the challenges posed by terrorist threats and considering actions to counter them effectively. A new EU Counterterrorism Coordinator (CTC) started his five-year term on 1 March 2024 and introduced himself to COSI at the meeting in May 2024²⁶.

COSI took note of Europol's EU Terrorism Situation & Trend Report 2023 (TE-SAT)²⁷ and debated the external counterterrorism priorities that were considered relevant for internal security on the basis of an assessment carried out by the EU CTC.

COSI discussed mental health as a vulnerability factor in the process of violent radicalisation and radicalisation in the prison environment, which led to Council conclusions on dealing with individuals released from prison who may represent a potential terrorist threat, approved in December 2023²⁸. Conclusions on improving support and recognition of victims of terrorism²⁹ were approved by the Council on the same date, bearing in mind that the fight against terrorism should be approached not only from a security perspective, but also with a focus on the people directly affected.

In May 2024, COSI agreed on a shared understanding (non-binding criteria) of when a person should be regarded as a potential terrorist or violent extremist threat, called for by the Council conclusions on internal security and European police partnership of December 2020³⁰.

In September 2024, the Commission presented to COSI the EU Knowledge Hub on Prevention of Radicalisation launched in June 2024, building upon the work of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). The Knowledge Hub is expected to be the main tool in the prevention of radicalisation, creating synergies with the EU Internet Forum and bridging the gaps between key actors under a 'whole of society approach'. Tackling online extremism remains a priority.

²⁶ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/fight-against-terrorism/counter-terrorism-coordinator/>

²⁷ <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publication-events/main-reports/european-union-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-2023-te-sat>

²⁸ 16335/23.

²⁹ 16336/23.

³⁰ 13083/1/20 REV 1.

COSI endorsed the draft Council conclusions on the future priorities for strengthening the joint counterterrorism efforts of the European Union and its Member States, which were subsequently approved by the Council in December 2024³¹. In addition, the Council approved conclusions on reinforcing external-internal connections in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism³². These two sets of conclusions, together with the regular endorsement by COSI of the recommendations based on the six-monthly threat assessment in the field of counterterrorism carried out by Europol and the EU Intelligence and Situation Centre (INTCEN), are expected to provide a solid framework for counterterrorism-related work in the Council and to shape EU counterterrorism policies and measures.

³¹ 16820/24.

³² 16173/24.

5. TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

5.1 Access to data for effective law enforcement

Following the establishment of the High-Level Group on access to data for effective law enforcement (HLG) in June 2023, COSI monitored the Group's work and discussed its findings. During the Belgian Presidency, COSI exchanged views based on the 42 recommendations made by the experts participating in the HLG, expressed its full support for the HLG process and welcomed the work accomplished. In preparation for an exchange of views at the Council³³, COSI considered possible priority areas for action and identified several activities that could be launched without delay, such as cooperation with industry and the mapping of existing legislation.

The concluding report of the HLG³⁴ was presented to COSI during the Hungarian Presidency. COSI discussed the way forward on access to data for effective law enforcement following the finalisation of the HLG's work and ahead of an exchange of views at the Council. COSI welcomed the work done by the experts and agreed to invite the Commission to put forward, by Q2 2025, a roadmap for the implementation of concrete measures to guarantee access to data for effective law enforcement, including a clear timeline, the allocation of tasks and the resources needed. COSI was also in favour of developing a common narrative and communication strategy to raise awareness and gather support among stakeholders.

In December 2024, the Council approved conclusions on access to data for effective law enforcement³⁵, which invite the Commission to present a roadmap by the second quarter of 2025 for the implementation of relevant measures, and task COSI, in cooperation with the Coordinating Committee in the area of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters (CATS), to coordinate, discuss and monitor the implementation of the roadmap prepared by the Commission.

³³ 11281/24.

³⁴ 15941/24.

³⁵ 16448/24.

5.2 EU Innovation Hub for Internal Security

Under COSI's strategic guidance, the EU Innovation Hub for Internal Security (Innovation Hub) has been established as a collaborative network of JHA agencies and bodies with the objective of supporting the work of internal security actors in the EU and its Member States by providing innovation updates and effective solutions.

The Innovation Hub held annual events in Brussels in October 2023 and November 2024, at which experts discussed strategic foresight, key enabling technologies, biometrics, AI and encryption.

COSI took note of the Innovation Hub's reports (2023 annual report, report on the 2023 annual event, and work plan for 2024), welcomed the regular reporting by the Innovation Hub to COSI, encouraged the inclusion of Innovation Hub-related activities in the JHA agencies' financial programmes and endorsed the possible organisation of a high-level strategic reflection on the future of EU security research and innovation.

In April 2024, COSI discussed the impact of quantum technologies on internal security. Delegations considered this discussion timely and invited the Innovation Hub to raise awareness of quantum technologies with the support of the respective agencies, and to establish cooperation with industry and academia. Europol was called upon to continue its activities in quantum technologies with the European Clearing Board.

At the meeting of the COSI SG in September 2024, Europol introduced the work of the Innovation Hub's thematic cluster on encryption, led by the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), and presented the Innovation Hub's report on encryption, published in June 2024³⁶. The aim of the report was to highlight trends from operational, technological, legislative and policy perspectives, and to contribute to the work of the HLG on access to data for effective law enforcement.

In November 2024, COSI was informed about the outcome of discussions in the relevant Council working parties on the work of the Innovation Hub, which the Innovation Hub should consider when preparing its mid-term review of priorities and the 2025 work plan. COSI endorsed the composition of the Steering Group of the Innovation Hub from January 2025 to June 2026.

³⁶ EU Innovation Hub (2024), First Report on Encryption by the EU Innovation Hub for Internal Security, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

6. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

6.1 Cooperation with the Latin American Committee on Internal Security (CLASI)

During the trio Presidency, COSI worked on strengthening the internal security partnership with Latin American countries. COSI contributed to the preparation of the second EU-CLASI ministerial meeting that took place under the Spanish Presidency in the margins of the JHA Council in Brussels on 28 September 2023, and contributed in particular to preparing the Joint Declaration of the Ministers for home affairs of the Member States of the European Union and the Ministers with responsibility for security matters of the Member States of the Latin American Committee on Internal Security (EU-CLASI Joint Declaration).³⁷

In May 2024, the COSI delegates met their Latin American counterparts for the first time in the format of an EU-CLASI senior officials meeting to discuss issues of common concern related to organised crime and to agree on working procedures for cooperation between the EU Member States and CLASI³⁸. COSI and CLASI concluded that there was a strong commitment on both sides to step up operational cooperation, including through prevention, further participation in EMPACT and coordination of EMPACT activities with those of its mirror platform in Latin America, and the sharing of information with Europol. COSI and CLASI exchanged views concerning the HRCNs operating in the EU and Latin America, and undertook to combat those networks together, including through police and judicial cooperation. The conclusion of the treaty for the constitution of the Police Community of the Americas (Ameripol) was considered a further step towards making progress on operational cooperation. The exchange of information should be improved by concluding the ongoing negotiations of international agreements on the exchange of personal data between Europol and the competent authorities of five Latin American countries³⁹ to fight serious crime and terrorism.

The COSI SG prepared a new draft EU-CLASI joint declaration, which was discussed at the EU-CLASI institutional meeting in Brussels on 28 November 2024 in preparation for the third EU-CLASI ministerial meeting foreseen for March 2025.

³⁷ 12838/23.

³⁸ 10583/24.

³⁹ Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru.

6.2 Cooperation with the Western Balkans countries, the United States of America and Interpol

COSI was informed by the Presidency about the preparation and the outcome of the ministerial meetings with the Western Balkans countries and the United States of America, and the regular senior officials meetings with the Western Balkans countries, the United States of America and Interpol. COSI was kept informed by the Commission about the state of play of negotiations for a cooperation agreement between the EU and Interpol.

7. NEXUS BETWEEN EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL SECURITY

7.1 Internal security implications of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

COSI continued to focus on the implications for internal security resulting from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The threat landscape has been mapped and monitored by Member States and JHA agencies⁴⁰. Known threats, such as firearms trafficking, trafficking in human beings, cyber threats, disinformation, and violent extremist foreign fighters, have been joined by new threats, including Russia's hybrid interference in Moldova. While the threat level is currently considered stable, COSI agreed on the necessity of further monitoring threats arising from the war, especially those affecting the Member States bordering Ukraine.

The heads of EU missions in Ukraine and Moldova informed COSI about the situation on the ground and presented the multi-faceted nature of the challenges and threats. COSI acknowledged the key role of both missions to bring Ukraine and Moldova in line with EU standards (e.g. on border control, law enforcement, prevention). Delegations supported the current 'Team Europe' approach and appreciated the value of the information provided by the missions to better prepare for emerging threats.

⁴⁰ 9549/24.

COSI confirmed the importance of implementing the list of actions in support of Ukraine to prevent illegal arms trafficking to the Union, with EMPACT providing the framework for operational cooperation. COSI examined the shift in heroin trafficking routes due to the war, concluding that this has not resulted in major changes in the European drugs market. However, COSI noted the establishment of clandestine laboratories to produce synthetic drugs on Ukrainian territory.

The Presidency and the EU CTC kept COSI informed about the ongoing internal security dialogue with Ukraine.

7.2 Internal security implications of the situation in the Middle East

In November 2023, COSI exchanged views on implications of the situation in the Middle East for the EU's internal security, covering matters ranging from the protection of public spaces to prevention, financial investigations, and the online dimension. There was consensus to remain vigilant and to ensure the full use of EU legal instruments to counter the spread of disinformation and illegal content online.

8. COORDINATION OF THE JHA AGENCIES

In April 2024, the EU Agency for Asylum (EUAA) presented the annual report of the JHA Agencies Network 2023⁴¹ to COSI. The Network's priorities for 2024 were presented by the EU Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA).⁴²

COSI was informed about the outcome of the meetings of the European Police Chiefs Convention in The Hague in September 2023 and 2024.

The Commission kept COSI updated about the cyber-attack suffered by CEPOL and the measures undertaken to restore the full functioning of the agency.

COSI was informed about the contribution of the European Union Satellite Centre (SatCen) to internal security.

⁴¹ <https://www.eulisa.europa.eu/Publications/Information%20Material/JHAAN%20Final%20report%202023.pdf>

⁴² <https://www.eulisa.europa.eu/PartnersStakeholders/Documents/JHAAN/eu-LISA%20JHAAN%202024%20Priorities.pdf>