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From: General Secretariat of the Council

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To: Delegations

Subject: Conclusions on jointly operationalising the EU Drugs Strategy

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on jointly operationalising the EU Drug Strategy, as approved by the Council (Justice and Home Affairs) at its 4179th meeting on 4 June 2026.

Council conclusions on jointly operationalising the EU Drugs Strategy

In response to the growing health, security and societal challenges posed by drug use, drug-related harms and drug trafficking, the Council endorsed the EU Drugs Strategy¹, taking into account the elements underlined in the Council conclusions approved in March 2026. Grounded in evidence, the Strategy adopts a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. It seeks to balance supply reduction, demand reduction and harm reduction, while maximising synergies and promoting consistency across and between local, national, EU and international levels, in full respect of EU values, international law and human rights.

I. Effective policy depends on effective implementation

The present Council conclusions constitute the EU Drugs Implementation Framework (hereinafter referred to as the ‘the Implementation’). It translates and complements the Strategy's priorities into concrete commitments and actions, operationalising all five pillars: (1) enhancing preparedness and response; (2) protecting public health; (3) improving security and protecting society; (4) addressing risks and harms; and (5) building strong partnerships.

The Implementation will guide the EU's collective work in the years ahead. By bridging political, strategic, policy and operational levels, and by engaging sectors spanning health, law enforcement, justice, education, social affairs, development cooperation and the environment as well as a variety of actors, including civil society, academia and private actors, it is designed to generate a compounding effect across local, national, EU and international levels, with a sustained focus on evidence-based, measurable and real impact. The Council underlines the importance of effective cooperation and coordination based on the EU Drugs Strategy and the Implementation, both within and between EU institutions and bodies, across all areas relevant to drugs policy.

¹ 7066/26 & 15573/25

To ensure that the priorities are achieved, the Implementation should, where necessary, foster the development of new measures to reflect emerging and future needs and challenges. This should be done in a practical, evidence-based and results-oriented manner, while making optimal use of existing mechanisms, tools and processes.

Three main components will be used in the Implementation: - regarding mainly the security pillar, (1) the EU Action Plan against drug trafficking² and the EMPACT priorities on drug trafficking, ensuring synergies between them, which may be complemented by further targeted work strands; - regarding all the pillars, (2) existing mechanisms, tools and processes to be leveraged to their fullest; - and in the areas of demand reduction and risk and harm reduction, (3) innovative Cooperation Projects to be developed advancing cooperation between Member States, EU agencies and other relevant actors on matters of mutual interest and addressing implementation gaps.

The operationalisation of these components is set out in the ANNEX to these Council conclusions.

II. Policy effectiveness cannot be assumed; it must be measured and reviewed where necessary

The progress of the Implementation should be monitored over time, enabling evidence-based review and course correction where necessary.

The European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA) is invited to map its existing indicators onto the Strategy's objectives, and to assess whether additional indicators would potentially be needed to help monitor the Implementation at EU and national level.

² 16353/25

Monitoring of the implementation should minimise the additional burden for Member States by making better use of data that are already collected, while recognising that effective monitoring requires sufficient data input from Member States.

The Commission, taking into account information, data and analysis provided by the Member States and the EEAS, and that available from the EUDA, Europol, other agencies and EU bodies, as well as from civil society, think tanks and academia, should monitor the implementation of the EU Drugs Strategic Framework. Close cooperation and coordination are essential in this area, given the intertwined competences at EU and national level. To facilitate coordination and to allow for any necessary policy follow-up, including monitoring, the Commission, the Presidency of the Council of the EU and the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs (HDG), as the Council preparatory body in charge of drug policy, should closely cooperate. The HDG will facilitate information sharing on national level implementation of the strategic priorities of the Strategy. Regarding the Cooperation Projects, this will be done taking into account information provided by the Member States, agencies and other stakeholders participating in the projects concerned. Updates and discussions on the implementation of the Strategy will be regularly included on the agenda of the HDG, notwithstanding such exchanges in other Council preparatory bodies as relevant.

The review of the Implementation should be included in the overall report on the EU Drugs Strategy, expected by the end of 2032, and should take into account insights from the monitoring process and lessons learned from the implementation of the Cooperation Projects.

1. The EU Action Plan against drug trafficking

The Council endorses the EU Action Plan against drug trafficking, taking into account the following elements. This endorsement is without prejudice to the actions or processes that are developed in related areas and to the roles, responsibilities and mandates of the various stakeholders. Its implementation shall also respect the mandates of the EU agencies and shall not prejudice future discussions on the revision of their mandates. The Action Plan against drug trafficking is an integral part of the Implementation. The Council recognises its strong emphasis on operational cooperation and the quality and relevance of the actions identified therein.

The Action Plan outlines the key actions necessary at EU and national levels from 2026 to 2030. It should be noted that Member States already identified, during the preliminary examination of the Action Plan, that in addressing drug trafficking, emphasis should be placed, inter alia on: strengthening a follow-the-money approach; enhancing the maritime dimension with the help of the European Ports Alliance as well as through a reinforcement and expansion of the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre (Narcotics) (MAOC-N)'s operations, with due respect for its mandate and functioning, and the roles and responsibilities of its members; deepening public-private partnerships, in particular with postal and parcel service providers; reinforcing cooperation with technology companies to prevent online recruitment, especially of minors, including through improved detection tools; and improving the exchange of information between law enforcement, including customs, and judicial authorities. Further attention should also be given to emerging operational challenges, such as the misuse of high-speed vessels and the use of submersible and semi-submersible craft, as well as to promoting the exchange of best practices, including on dismantling illicit drug production facilities.

The Council recognises that the EU Action Plan against drug trafficking will partly be implemented, inter alia, through operational actions (OAs) developed within the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), and that mutual coherence must be ensured. In this light, the Council invites the Commission to contribute, within its remit, to that coherence by reflecting the priorities, drivers, and action leaders of EMPACT in the implementation of the Action Plan to the fullest extent possible, while recognising the results of the EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (EU-SOCTA) developed by Europol as the primary basis for setting OAs. Furthermore, the Council encourages the Commission to invite relevant EU networks and expert groups funded by the Commission to reflect, within their working programmes, a commitment to participate (including as leader or co-leader of specific actions) in EMPACT actions related to the Action Plan, thereby reinforcing EMPACT and supporting the delivery of its Operational Action Plans.

The Council underlines the non-exhaustive nature of the Action Plan and notably stresses the relevance of other security related initiatives undertaken at Member State or EU level. The Action Plan may be complemented by further targeted work strands as identified by EU institutions, bodies, agencies, and Member States, taking into account further developments and assessments such as the findings of the 11th round of mutual evaluations and Eurojust's input on the judicial dimension. Particular attention should be given to strengthened and internationally coordinated criminal investigations to effectively weaken organised drug crime through the identification of criminal hierarchies, financial flows, logistical routes and associated criminal organisations.

The Commission, taking into account information provided by the Member States and the EEAS, and that available from the EUDA, Europol, the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) and other relevant EU agencies and bodies should monitor the implementation of the Action Plan against drug trafficking, including the complementary actions, with regular reporting to the Council in the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs (HDG). Other relevant preparatory bodies in the Council will support the implementation of the Action Plan where relevant, in particular the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI), especially when it comes to operational cooperation aspects linked to the implementation of the EMPACT priorities on drug trafficking, the Coordinating Committee in the area of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters (CATS), the Law Enforcement Working Party, the Working Party on Cooperation in Criminal Matters (COPEN) and the Customs Union Working Party (CUG). There should be sufficient flexibility in the framework to reflect future needs and to invite actors to contribute where it is deemed necessary.

To ensure coordinated and continuous support for the implementation of the Action Plan against Drug Trafficking, successive Presidencies of the Council, supported by the General Secretariat of the Council, are invited to address priorities drawn from the Action Plan, in cooperation with the Commission and, where relevant, with the EEAS and EU Agencies concerned, taking into consideration the further targeted work strands or complementary actions identified by Member States.

2. Using existing mechanisms, tools and processes

In the areas addressed in all the pillars, synergies should be exploited using existing mechanisms, tools and processes optimally. EU institutions and relevant agencies and bodies are invited to coordinate their activities related to the implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy, ensuring complementarities and in line with their respective mandates. Where possible, they should ensure that existing mechanisms, tools and processes are consistent with the priorities set out in the Strategy.

Where relevant and based on the priorities set by the successive Presidencies of the Council, other EU institutions and relevant agencies and bodies will be encouraged to report regularly to the HDG on their respective contributions to the implementation of the Strategy. Similarly, Member States are encouraged to bring to the attention of the HDG their national developments that relate to the implementation of the Strategy. The Commission, the EEAS, the EU agencies and Member States are encouraged to provide information to the HDG on the activities of other international and regional organisations or initiatives relevant to the implementation of the Strategy.

This will enable the HDG to have an overview of the activities related to the Implementation, including but not limited to the areas of health, judicial cooperation, home affairs, and international cooperation, in order to understand how they interplay and to help address gaps, overlaps or inconsistencies that could hamper the efficiency or the realisation of the EU Drugs Strategy.

3. Cooperation Projects

The Cooperation Projects should be an operational tool for addressing those areas of the EU Drugs Strategy that would benefit from strengthened engagement across all levels (local, national and EU), in addition to existing mechanisms, structures and tools in the area of demand reduction and risk and harm reduction. The project-based approach reflects the need to strengthen implementation in those areas, facilitating synergies between actions taken at the EU or national or local levels. The Cooperation Projects should complement existing mechanisms, structures and tools. The Cooperation Projects are therefore meant to address the pillars and priorities of the Strategy not covered by the EU Action Plan against drug trafficking and the EMPACT priorities on drug trafficking, while being recognised as equally important for the effective and balanced implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy.

The methodology, as well as the topics for the Cooperation Projects will be discussed and agreed upon by Member States meeting in the HDG.

The lead by a Member State and participation in Cooperation Projects will be voluntary, ensuring that the implementation framework remains responsive to national needs and emerging challenges. EU agencies, in particular the EUDA, are also invited to contribute to the Cooperation Projects where relevant. In addition, and where relevant, the participation of other actors, such as academia, laboratories and other specialised entities, international or regional organisations, and civil society should be facilitated.

The implementation of the Cooperation Projects should be monitored by the participants, with the assistance of the EUDA, within the limits of the EUDA's available resources. The Presidency of the Council chairing the HDG, supported by the General Secretariat of the Council, will provide an overview of the projects and their progress. As part of the development of each Cooperation Project, efforts should be made towards a baseline assessment relating to implementation and the development of performance indicators where relevant by the participating Member States, with the support of the EUDA.

To date and ahead of the launch of the pilot phase, a Member State, France, has already proposed an initiative for a Cooperation Project to foster European research on psychostimulant use disorders³.

The implementation of Cooperation Projects may be supported through national funding, by the participating Member States and where possible and appropriate, possibly in combination with EU funding sources such as EU4Health, ESF+ and Horizon Europe, where applicable and in line with broader EU priorities. Without pre-empting negotiations on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), given that the implementation of the Cooperation Projects goes beyond 2028, opportunities for funding could be explored as part of the next MFF. The Council invites the Commission to provide technical assistance to Member States participating in Cooperation Projects in accessing relevant EU funding sources, where possible and relevant.

³ The aim of the initiative is to share existing knowledge and ongoing studies in the field of treatment for psychostimulant use disorders; discuss how to pool resources, the possibility of development of large-scale cohorts, the harmonization of protocols, and the production of comparable and cumulative data; and to explore contacts with the pharmaceutical industry to accelerate the development and evaluation of effective treatments.

The EUDA may provide support to Cooperation Projects, particularly in the areas of scientific analysis, methodological development, monitoring and dissemination of results, where this is compatible with its mandate, programming and available resources. For projects including activities to take place outside the EU or in cooperation with third countries, the relevant EU Delegations will be duly involved.

The pilot phase of the Cooperation Projects shall start in the second semester of 2026 for a period of 18 months. The continuation and further development of the project-based approach shall depend on the assessment of its added value by the Member States meeting in the HDG.

