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Foreword from the President

Dear all,



Just after your well-deserved summer break I wanted to share some updates with you about EuroCOP’s activities these past few months and give you some insights on what you can look forward to after the summer.

In June, members of EuroCOP’s Executive Committee took the opportunity to further strengthen existing relationships and build new contacts with EU policymakers in Brussels. You will find a detailed summary of the meetings in this issue. The program was fully packed with 15 meetings with different policymakers from different EU institutions over four days. The main topics that we addressed during these meetings were the health and safety of police officers and the EU Agenda on Security. EuroCOP also used these meetings to present its views on data retention regulation by sharing the first copy of the EuroCOP’s data retention position paper with British MEP Timothy Kirkhope. Our existing EuroCOP position papers and other communication materials were well received once again.

The success of EuroCOP's Brussels meetings is evident in subsequent request for contributions to the EU policymaking process. We have been asked to provide input for European Parliament draft reports on issues such as the prevention of radicalization as well as suggestions on improving working conditions in the EU for police officers. EuroCOP has also been asked to draft a proposal for a pilot project on training programs for local police. You will find more details about these exciting developments in this newsletter.

Given the positive feedback we keep receiving from policymakers about EuroCOP's contributions to EU policy discussions (for example: the Open Letter, the Internal Security Strategy consultation response and the position papers on health and safety, trade union rights and data retention), it is vital that we continue to share our positions on and solutions to the challenges European police officers face today. I would like to emphasize again that in preparing these positions and materials, the input from members, for instance by contributing to the questionnaires, was of utmost importance as policymakers are always looking for quantifiable examples and real stories. We therefore look forward to hearing more from you and to receiving input on topics for further position papers!

Looking ahead, on behalf of the Executive Committee, we look forward to welcoming many of you to the next EuroCOP Committee meeting in Prague in September. Until then, have a great summer and enjoy the updates below.

Best wishes,

Anna Nellberg-Dennis

President

EU snapshot

EuroCOP June outreach meetings in Brussels

During the week of 23-26 June, members of EuroCOP's Executive Committee worked on building EuroCOP's existing relationships and developed new contacts with EU policymakers in Brussels. Overall, the meetings with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), the European Commission and representatives from EU Member States proved very successful. The main topics addressed during these meetings were the health and safety of police and the new European Agenda on Security (and other security related topics such as cyber security, data retention, organized crime, terrorism etc.). Over the course of four days, we met with Members of the European Parliament from nine Member States (Spain, Portugal, UK, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany, The Netherlands and Belgium), as well as representatives from the European Commission and agencies such as EU-LISA (European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice) and the office of the EU Counter-Terrorism coordinator.

Police Health & Safety and Trade Union Rights

In all meetings with policymakers, EuroCOP addresses the concerns related to the health and safety of European police and the impact of budget cuts and lack of appropriate resources. We paid particular attention to these topics in the meetings with Members of the European Parliament's Employment and Social Affairs committee. In the meetings with Spanish MEP Javier Lopez and Belgian MEP Claude Rolin, the Executive Committee had in-depth discussions about the working conditions of police officers and the concerns about the implementation of the existing EU legislation in certain EU Member States.

Our productive discussions led to some interesting results, outlined below:

The MEPs were very interested in the issues addressed by EuroCOP and were keen to receive further information, EU-wide statistics and practical examples.

Both MEPs also asked EuroCOP to provide concrete input to reports that are currently being discussed in the European Parliament on the EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014 – 2020 (2015/2107). With the help of FleishmanHillard, EuroCOP provided the MEPs with ready-to-use amendments which we hope will be included in the final report. The Employment and Social Affairs committee is expected to vote on the amendments that have been tabled at its meeting on 23 September. The final plenary vote is currently foreseen during the October Strasbourg session.

Following the meeting with EuroCOP, MEP Rolin wrote an [article](#) about the meeting with EuroCOP and the importance of protecting the police and held a [speech](#) in the European Parliament on the reduced trade union rights of police officers in some EU countries.

MEP Lopez further said that he would welcome suggestions from EuroCOP on parliamentary questions about the situation in different Member States regarding working conditions. Parliamentary questions are a great tool to raise awareness and to get a written response from the European Commission.

Opportunities for EuroCOP contributions to security topics

EuroCOP also met with 9 different Members of the European Parliament's Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), of all different nationalities and from a range of political groups. In these meetings, the Executive Committee discussed the new European Agenda on Security and the new challenges for police officers in the face of the changing security environment in Europe (focussing on cyber security, organized crime, migration and terrorism).

Our productive discussions led to some interesting results, outlined below:

Portuguese MEP Ana Gomes expressed her concerns about the lack of appropriate resources for the police and said that she would be happy to support EuroCOP's Portuguese members. She also offered EuroCOP the opportunity to provide suggestions for amendments to a European Parliament report on the prevention of radicalization.

Similarly, German MEP Monika Hohlmeier expressed her concerns about the lack of appropriate resources for the police and said that she would be happy to support EuroCOP's Portuguese members.

Hungarian MEP Kinga Gal, the MEP leading the negotiations on the CEPOL regulation, noted that there should be additional funding for training but that it has not been agreed for this year's proposal. Following the suggestions by EuroCOP on the need for training of local police officers, Ms Gal responded very positively and said she would be happy to receive a proposal from EuroCOP for a pilot project on such a training program. Like Ms Gomes and Ms Hohlmeier, she offered EuroCOP the opportunity to provide suggestions for amendments to a European Parliament report on the prevention of radicalization.

As agreed with the three MEPs, EuroCOP shared its contributions to the report on the prevention of radicalization and various amendments were submitted that reflect EuroCOP's key messages. Ms Gal tabled for instance an [amendment](#) where the Parliament stresses the importance of fostering and strengthening cross-border cooperation among law enforcement authorities. It also highlights the crucial importance of providing adequate resources and training to police forces working on the ground. The Committee vote on the amendments is currently expected to take place in October and will be followed by a plenary vote in November.

EuroCOP shares first copy of data retention position paper with MEP Timothy Kirkhope

As you may know, EuroCOP has been preparing various position papers to hand out to policymakers. These position papers explain EuroCOP's perspectives in easy language and provide clear

recommendations for policymakers. The latest position paper is devoted to the importance of data retention for security purposes.

EuroCOP had the honour to share the first copy of the data retention position paper with British MEP Timothy Kirkhope. Mr Kirkhope is the rapporteur for the report on Passenger Name Records (part of the European Anti-terrorist legislation) and is a strong proponent of establishing new data retention rules for security purposes.

Our productive discussion led to some interesting results, outlined below:

Mr Kirkhope agrees with EuroCOP that it is critical that authorities, including the police, have access to information in order to combat serious crimes.

He suggested to organize a hearing on data retention in September and invited EuroCOP to speak during this hearing and to share some practical examples that show the importance of having clear rules on data retention in the EU.

Next steps

Following the positive feedback from policymakers on EuroCOP positions (for example: the Open Letter, the Internal Security Agenda consultation response and the position papers on health and safety, trade union rights and data retention), EuroCOP will have to continue to prepare these type of materials and keep policymakers informed about relevant developments.

As always, in order to achieve these goals, EuroCOP depends on the invaluable input from members. We very much appreciate the answers you have provided to recent questionnaires. In addition to the questionnaire, we will also assess if there are other ways to get your input, for instance by organizing a workshop, as we did two years ago in Prague.

We will continue to closely follow and review the different pieces of upcoming legislation in order to assess whether and how EuroCOP can contribute and we will keep you informed about our activities and successes.

European Parliament adopts resolution on European Agenda on Security

On 9 July, the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) on the European Agenda on Security that was presented by the European Commission on 28 April 2015. The Parliament's resolution largely corresponds to EuroCOP's key messages that we have been sharing with policymakers over the past year:

- On the **need for appropriate resources**, the Parliament stresses the need to ensure adequate resources for national police officers and judicial officials whose budgets have been slashed in some Member States.
- On the need to enhance the **cross-border exchange of information**, the Parliament welcomes the Commission's announced assessment of the necessity and potential added value of a European Police Record Index System (EPRIS) to facilitate cross-border access to information held in national police records.
- On the importance of **training for police**, MEPs also emphasize in the resolution the pivotal importance of supporting actions relating to training, research and innovation and the important work of the European Police College (CEPOL) in this field. The Parliament further considers that training and exchange programmes for law enforcement officials are of significant importance for further fostering a European law enforcement culture and good practices in that field. It believes that more investment is necessary in research and innovation relating to security, including in the prevention field.
- On the need for clear rules on **data retention for security purposes**, the Parliament also calls, despite the sensitivities in the Parliament regarding data retention, upon the Commission to fully assess the impact of the Court's judgement on the Data Retention Directive on any instrument involving the retention of data for law enforcement purposes. It also notes that cybercrime requires a new approach to law enforcement and judicial cooperation in the digital age.

Although the resolution does not have a legislative impact, it does show the Parliament's support for our key messages and sends a strong signal to the European Commission and the EU Member States.

Council adopts conclusions on the Renewed European Union Internal Security Strategy for period 2015-2020

The Justice and Home Affairs Council (JHA) met on 15-16 June 2015. At its meeting, Member States adopted [conclusions](#) on the new European Agenda on Security, which the Council refers to as 'the renewed European Union Internal Security Strategy 2015 – 2020'.

Of particular interest to EuroCOP, EU Member States concluded that special attention should be given to actions aimed at:

- **improving information exchange** and accessibility, especially by ensuring the interoperability of different information systems and by encouraging the most appropriate choice of the relevant information exchange channel within the existing legal framework,
- strengthening **operational cooperation**,
- **enhancing prevention and investigation of criminal acts**, with a particular focus on organised financial crime and confiscation of criminal assets, and of terrorist attacks, including the prevention of radicalization and the safeguarding of values through the promotion of tolerance, non-discrimination, fundamental freedoms and solidarity throughout the European Union,
- **enhancing the training, funding, research and innovation possibilities**, especially further developing an autonomous industrial security policy, inter alia in areas such as border control, interoperability of security equipment and law enforcement services,
- developing as well as **promoting availability and use of safe and secure information** and communication technologies in order to enhance cybersecurity within the European Union

Member States also underline the need to provide adequate resources and to make efficient and strategic use of the Internal Security Fund to support the priorities of the renewed European Union Internal Security Strategy 2015-2020.

In terms of next steps, the Council's Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI) will now develop, in close cooperation with the Commission, a well-targeted implementation document with a list of priority actions to implement the renewed European Union Internal Security Strategy 2015-2020 by December 2015 at the latest.

CEPOL: Council and Parliament agree on updated rules

On 29 June 2015, the Permanent Representatives Committee approved, on behalf of the Council, a compromise reached with the European Parliament on a regulation establishing a European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), which will replace the current Council decision that established the European Police College.

The aim of the new regulation is to update CEPOL's legal basis so as to improve EU security through the implementation of a new training approach for EU law enforcement officers.

Of particular interest to EuroCOP, under the new rules, CEPOL will be able to equip law enforcement officials **of all ranks** with the knowledge and skills they need to prevent and combat cross-border crime effectively through efficient cooperation with their colleagues in other member states, EU agencies, third countries and international organizations. In addition, the mandate of the agency will also be extended and the governance improved.

In terms of next steps, the regulation will now be submitted, following legal-linguistic revision, to the European Parliament for a vote, and to the Council for adoption.

2015 Annual Work Programme for the Internal Security Fund for Police

On 8 June 2015, the Commission approved the [2015 Annual Work Program](#) for the Internal Security Fund for Police (see [press release](#)).

All EU States except Denmark and the United Kingdom participate in the implementation of the Internal Security Fund (ISF) for Police. Examples of beneficiaries of the programmes implemented under this Fund can be state and federal authorities, local public bodies, non-governmental organisations and private and public law companies.

Part of the ISF Police fund is managed by the Commission (direct and indirect management) through Union Actions, which include Calls for Proposals, Procurement, Direct Awards and Delegation Agreements.

The Annual Work Programmes defines the priorities and objectives for each year, including the priorities for the [Calls for Proposals](#).

The 2015 Program amounts to €40 million and it includes €1 million for emergency assistance. Of most interest for EuroCOP are the investments in horizontal tools for police cooperation, such as information exchange and training.

Meet a colleague...

In this issue: Vladimir Banel



Name: Vladimir Banel

Function: Head of the National Confederation of Officers Trade Unions (NCOTU). Our organization unites over 4 thousand policemen, firemen, border control officers, penitentiary officers and we are the largest organization of such kind in Lithuania.

Country: Lithuania

Has been with the police since? I started my service a decade ago at the Lithuanian border service. When I became the Head of NCOTU I had to leave the service. However, I still remember those years with joy; I experienced a lot of new things, acquired good friends and colleagues. After I finish my term of office at NCOTU I can return to the border service, I am a so called passive officer.

What are your biggest challenges at the moment? Law enforcement in Lithuania is undergoing the process of transformation at present. After the years of extensive work we finally achieved that Lithuanian Seimas adopted the Internal Service Statute. I believe that this document will become an instrument which will in turn allow the establishment of modern law enforcement system, which will guarantee the safety of Lithuanian people, as well as will be prompt and efficient in reacting to any threats. However, the adoption of this law is only a first step forward, there will be many challenges ahead related to its implementation, e.g.

What keeps you motivated? The ability to contribute to the changes and their implementation. The changes that are important not only to the officers working in the system, but all Lithuanians as well. As only the well prepared, equipped, motivated officer with a sufficient pay and social guarantees will be able to take care of security of other people

What would your top recommendation be for Europe's politicians? Don't forget that many important things in the country start with interior security and stable environment, therefore monitor how the law enforcement officers are doing, how they live, communicate with them, assist them in solving their problems.

Which international colleague would you like to hear from next? I couldn't pick any particular person. We are an open organization; we communicate a lot with colleagues in Germany, Netherlands, and Scandinavian countries. We take these countries as a model to follow while trying to establish modern law enforcement in Lithuania. Therefore it is always interesting to hear how the officers in those countries are doing.

Calendar

Event	Date	Location
EuroCOP committee meeting	2-3 September 2015	Prague
Justice and Home Affairs council meeting	8-9 October 2015	Brussels
EuroCOP congress	16-18 November 2015	Dublin

For a list of upcoming CEPOL trainings click [here](#), for webinars, click [here](#).

The next issue of the newsletter will be published end of September