

Council defines the EU's crime-fighting priorities for the next years

Today, the Council agreed on the EU's priorities for fighting serious and organised crime in the next 4 years (2026-2029). These will be implemented by means of the EU's crime-fighting framework, the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), which brings together member states, EU and international actors.

Keeping citizens safe is one of the cardinal role of any democratic state. At EU level, we are committed to fighting organised crime so our citizens can live in an area of freedom and security. EMPACT is a key tool to make this objective a reality.

Tomasz Siemoniak, Polish Minister of the Interior and Administration

EMPACT tackles the biggest threats posed by serious and organised crime in the EU in a coordinated manner. It brings together stakeholders from different fields, such as law enforcement, customs, judicial authorities, third countries and the private sector, to fight crime together including through prevention and capacity building.

EU crime priorities 2026-2029

The Council identified the following seven EU crime priorities for the EMPACT cycle 2026-2029:

- Identifying and disrupting the most threatening criminal networks and individuals
- Tackling the fastest growing crimes in the online sphere: cyber-attacks, online child sexual exploitation and online fraud schemes
- Fighting drug trafficking
- Tackling migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings
- Targeting firearms and explosives crime
- Disrupting networks involved in environmental crimes
- Fighting economic and financial crimes such as VAT fraud and intellectual property crime

The priorities take into account that serious and organised crime is progressively destabilising our societies (e.g. by spreading violence and corruption), it is increasingly happening online and is strongly accelerated by artificial intelligence and other new technologies.

Enhancement of EMPACT

The EMPACT mechanism fosters multiagency, multi-actor, cross-border, innovative and structured cooperation and offers a unique platform that facilitates connections and provides financial support for member states. Therefore it is critical to overcome persistent issues (e.g. related to funding, commitment of EMPACT actors) and to allow EMPACT to achieve and exploit its full potential. The Council urges all involved stakeholders to take action to ensure EMPACT moves to the next level.

Funding

The success of EMPACT depends on sufficient and sustainable funding. With that in mind, the Council calls on the Commission to propose increased allocation for EMPACT in the EU budget, including through a higher EU contribution to Europol.

Next steps

The specific implementation of these crime-fighting priorities will happen on the basis of operational action plans (OAPs). All concerned services and stakeholders, at national and EU level, are called upon to allocate resources to carry out the operational actions under the OAPs.

Background

EMPACT was established in 2010 to tackle the most important threats posed by serious and organised international crime affecting the EU. EMPACT provides a framework that brings together the law enforcement authorities of the member states, Europol, other EU agencies and bodies, as well as a wide range of multi-disciplinary partners to fight serious and organised crime more effectively. EMPACT translates strategic objectives at European level into concrete operational actions.

EMPACT strengthens cooperation between police, border and coast guards, customs, judicial, administrative and tax authorities as well as EU institutions, bodies, agencies and relevant EU networks. It also involves non-EU countries, international organisations, as well as the private sector, where relevant.

EMPACT works in four-year cycles. Each cycle starts with the EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (EU SOCTA), prepared by Europol, which highlights the most pressing threats, and serves as an input for the Council conclusions that define the EU's crime priorities for the new cycle.

In 2024, EMPACT actions led to over 12 000 arrests and seizures of property and goods worth EUR 1 billion.

- [Council conclusions on the enhancement of EMPACT and on EU crime priorities for the next EMPACT cycle 2026-2029, 13 June 2025](#)
- [EMPACT 2024 results \(main results\)](#)
- [EMPACT 2024 results \(factsheets\)](#)
- [EU serious and organized crime threat assessment \(Europol\)](#)

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