

PRESS RELEASE

New Justice and Home Affairs policy fills the post-Stockholm gap, but lacks ambition

European police staff organisations and unions emphasise need to address serious issues faced by police officers today.

BRUSSELS, 12 March 2014 – Yesterday afternoon the European Commission published its outline of the EU's future policy in the area of Justice and Home Affairs. Representing more than 500,000 police officers from staff organisations and unions, EuroCOP welcomes the new JHA policy framework until 2020. However, EuroCOP's members are concerned that the Commission Communications' lack of concrete actions fails to address some of the serious issues facing European police officers today.

Anna Nellberg, President of EuroCOP said: "A new programme would need to focus on implementation and enforcement rather than presenting another set of proposals, a point which has now been reflected in the text. That said the documents published yesterday demonstrate a worrying lack of ambition and absence of tangible next steps."

In the area of law enforcement, the Commission rightly emphasises the need for increased mutual trust. Creating a culture of European policing will not happen overnight, and significant efforts are needed to strengthen cooperation, and build trust and solidarity between European police forces. Now more than ever, European law enforcement is under pressure to cope with the side effects of social instability brought on by the economic crisis. Austerity has a serious effect on internal security, and is also reflected among our members. **The issues faced by police forces in Europe today range from a lack of basic policing equipment (uniforms, vehicles), vehicles not being repaired, and a full recruitment stop in Spain – to a 3% increase in wages in Germany.** Solid measures to address these imbalances are essential if Europe's police officers are to build the trust and solidarity needed to help build an open and secure Europe.

The Commission's communications rightly identify that it is time to make real and tangible progress on better information exchange between police forces. Connected to that is the need to increase pan-European training, given that less and less is being invested in national training schemes. **In Belgium, for example, the number of candidates entering the police academy decreased from 1,500 to 1,300 resulting in fewer retiring officers being replaced.**

The new JHA policy framework is essential to ensuring that the progress made to date is not lost, but rather, built upon for the future. However, EuroCOP calls upon the European Commission, Council and European Parliament to use the coming months to outline concrete actions for the EU to tackle the remaining challenges it faces.

The European Confederation of Police (EuroCOP) is the umbrella organisation for 36 police unions and staff organisations in Europe based in Luxembourg. It represents the interests of over half a million police officers in 25 European countries, dealing with issues which range from police cooperation across borders to a safer working environment for police officers on the street.

Annex: EuroCOP position on the follow-up to the Stockholm Programme



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