



Issue 5, July 2014

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## Foreword from the President

Dear all,

*Just before your well-deserved summer break I wanted to make use of this opportunity to share some updates with you of the past few months and to give you an overview of our planned activities after summer. In this issue you will also find a brief analysis of the European Parliament elections results.*

*First of all, I would like to emphasize that it was a pleasure to meet so many of you at our EuroCOP Committee meeting in Vilnius and to hear your valuable experiences and thoughts. At our meeting it became clear that further action is needed on the issue of privatization of police tasks, and the issue of police health and safety. EuroCOP is therefore examining the potential for an EU advocacy strategy on health and safety issues, the privatization of the police as well as trade unions’ rights in order to raise awareness among EU policymakers about the state of play in EU Member States. In order to make our position clear in the EU and to policymakers in Brussels we need more solid data on these issues and have therefore prepared a questionnaire that has been shared with you recently. We are very grateful*

*for the responses we have already received and look forward to receiving more contributions. The consolidated results will be shared with you at the next Committee meeting.*

*Looking ahead, on behalf of the Executive Committee, we look forward to welcoming many of you to the Autumn EuroCOP Committee Meeting in Berlin this October. Until then, have a great summer and enjoy the updates below.*

*Best wishes,*

*Anna Nellberg-Dennis*

*President*

## **EU snapshot**



### **European Parliament elections**

On 22-25 May, European citizens across the 28 Member States had the opportunity to vote during the European Parliament elections. Despite the disappointingly low participation rates in some Member States, this year's voter turnout of 43% remained the same as in 2009. Across the EU, different voting trends could be observed that will lead to new dynamics in the European Parliament in the upcoming five years.

From the MEPs that EuroCOP met last year, we are very pleased to see that Danish MEP Bendt Bendtsen, Dutch MEP Wim van de Camp and Swedish MEP Cecilia Wikström were all re-elected. With important upcoming items on the agenda such as the post-Stockholm programme, health and safety issues and union rights, it is good to know that we already have some allies in the Parliament that understand and support our priorities.

In the upcoming weeks, we will closely monitor which MEPs will become members of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee of the European Parliament and other relevant committees. As soon as the members are installed we will plan outreach meetings for the autumn to inform new MEPs about our work and issues and to broaden our network of allies. With our new communications materials, e.g. the brochure, video and website, and existing as well as upcoming EuroCOP position papers we will be in a position to bring a strong story to the table and are ready to collaborate with new and returning policymakers.

### **Council general approach on Europol's role**

The proposal issued by the Commission in March 2013 set out to create a legislative framework for Europol, to create a mechanism by which the European and national parliaments could scrutinise Europol activity and make the agency "*a hub for information exchange between the law enforcement authorities of the Member States*" in line with the Stockholm Programme goals. The Commission had also proposed to merge Europol and CEPOL, a move rejected by the Council in June 2013 and the Parliament in February 2014.

The Council's Law Enforcement Working Party (LEWP) has been examining the text since June 2013 and national ministers reached a [general approach](#) on the file during their meeting on the [5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> June 2014](#). Amongst notable features in the general approach are: the emphasis on Europol's competency in dealing with organised crime; and, the encouragement of the formation of joint investigation teams in Europe. The procedure is now complete and the new legislation will come into force after its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union.

### **Police Financing programmes adopted by Council**

The Council adopted [financing programmes](#) in the area of home affairs in April. The programmes cover the period 2014-2020, with a total of €6.9 billion allocated to the area. Funds will be allocated to two programmes, namely, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Internal Security Fund (ISF).

The ISF itself comprises two sections. ISF Borders (will receive €2.76 billion) seeks to provide a high level of security for European external borders and will also finance a common Schengen visa policy and integrated border management. ISF-Police (will receive €1.004 billion) focuses on security within the EU and will therefore finance initiatives aimed at crime prevention, tackling organised cross-border crime (including terrorism) and reinforcing cooperation between law enforcement authorities. Funds will also go towards helping Member States prepare for and create solutions for protecting citizens and critical infrastructure in the event of terrorist attacks.

### **CEPOL to move to Budapest in September**

The Council [adopted](#) an initiative amending the European Police College (CEPOL) regulation to allow out it to move its headquarters from Bramshill, United Kingdom to Budapest, Hungary. Seven Member States (Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain) made applications to host CEPOL, and Hungary was chosen as the new base. The European Parliament also voted on this, adopting the decision in April 2014 but stressing that Hungary was only a temporary headquarters. In its adoption, the Parliament asked for a headquarters agreement to be concluded with provisions from the Commission in order to establish a permanent headquarters. CEPOL will move to Budapest in September 2014.

### **Outcome of the European Council JHA meeting**

On 26 and 27 June, the European Council discussed the future of EU Justice and Home Affairs policy, i.e. the post-Stockholm programme (PSP). Member State agreement on this programme finalizes the EU's 5 year framework for building "*an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers, and with full respect for fundamental rights*", and the role of the police in supporting this goal.

The [Council conclusions](#) reinforce the core objectives of the PSP, which effectively seek to build "*on the past programmes, [and...] consistently transpose, effectively implement and consolidate the legal instruments and policy measures in place.*" It adds that "*coherent policy measures need to be taken with respect to asylum, immigration, borders, and **police and judicial cooperation**, in accordance with the Treaties and their relevant Protocols*".

Of particular interest to EuroCOP, is conclusion number 10 where it is stated that "*it is essential to guarantee a genuine area of security for European citizens through operational police cooperation and by preventing and combating serious and organised crime, including human trafficking and smuggling, as well as corruption*". It also states that effective EU counter terrorism policy is needed "*whereby all*

*relevant actors work closely together” and adds that “the Union should back national authorities by mobilizing all instruments of judicial and police cooperation, with a reinforced coordination role for Europol and Eurojust”. Specific action points to achieve these objectives include:*

- the review and update of the internal security strategy by mid-2015;
- the improvement of cross-border information exchanges, including on criminal records;
- the further development of a comprehensive approach to cybersecurity and cybercrime;
- the prevention of radicalisation and extremism and action to address the phenomenon of foreign fighters.

## Meet a colleague

In this issue: Geert de Vries, the Netherlands



**Name:** Geert de Vries

**Function:** deputy Chief of Police, city of Pijnacker-Nootdorp, member Police works council, VMHP-representative.

**Country:** The Hague, the Netherlands

**Has been with the police since:** 1999

**What are your biggest challenges at the moment?** The biggest challenge at this moment is to maintain the high quality of policing and good working conditions at a time when the Dutch police is reorganising and restructuring. Another challenge is to keep the organisations/employers demands and changes in balance with the police officers/employees needs and interests.

**What keeps you motivated?** The wellbeing of police officers: in their working and social environment, in order to let them do what they do best; policing.

**What would your top recommendation be for Europe's politicians?**

- 1) More democratic function of police-unions & works councils in those areas of the EU where such police fundamental rights are being violated
- 2) Obligated minimum standards (accompanied by sufficient funding) on issues of health & safety and gear & facilities in all EU-countries

**Which international colleague would you like to hear from next?** Angels Bosch

## Three questions for...

In this issue: **Bendt Bendtsen, Member of European Parliament from Denmark.**



Mr Bendtsen was re-elected during the 2014 European Parliament elections and is part of the Christian-Democrat group in the European Parliament, the EPP group. He is a member of the Det Konservative Folkeparti in Denmark. Mr Bendtsen began his career as an employee of the Copenhagen police force in 1975 before becoming an inspector and detective inspector in Odense between 1980 and 1988. Bendtsen also served as Vice-Chairman of the Odense Criminal Police Association from 1986 to 1994.

*1. In your opinion, what should be the priorities of the European Parliament regarding the future of EU Home Affairs policies, i.e. the follow-up to the Stockholm Programme, for the next 5 years? And could you describe how you, or members of your group, intend to contribute to these priorities?*

“The freedom of movement of EU-citizens is a fundamental principle that we should uphold and defend, both within the Schengen area and in the rest of the Union. However, to ensure the safety of EU-citizens, a borderless Europe also demands closer and more binding police co-operation between member states. We need to make Europe’s external borders more secure, by strengthening the capacity of FRONTEX to prevent and end human trafficking, people smuggling and organised crime. We also need a strong and capable EUROPOL to help coordinate modern, reliable and sufficiently funded police forces at all levels to combat organised crime, especially organised theft and burglary. In my opinion, this is one of the top priorities for the next five years. Combatting organised crime also requires that joint decisions and EU law in the area of justice and home affairs are implemented and executed in a timely manner. Finally, we need a well-funded European strategy for cyber-security and combating cyber-crime.”

*2. The changing nature of threats facing European countries means that Europe’s police officers are playing increasingly diverse roles. However, because of severe budget cuts, some police officers find themselves ill-equipped and demoralized. Acknowledging that police budgets are often a controversial issue to discuss at the EU level, how do think that the EU and Member States could support Europe’s police officers to carry out their tasks?*

“The last thing Europe needs is incapacitated, demoralized police forces. EU citizens, wherever they live, should be able to have faith in European and national law enforcement agencies. Police budgets are largely a national issue, but I support further EU-funding of Europol and cross-border police work that might help police officers combat both online and offline crime.”

*3. Could you describe how you see the role of police officers in the creation of an open and safe Europe?*

“Police officers are the back bone of law enforcement, and the rule of law is a fundamental principal of the European Union. We can open up our borders, facilitate the freedom of movement of workers, and improve citizens' legal rights, but if misuse is not prevented, and if rights are not upheld, our principles

are just words on a piece of paper. In my view, police officers are law enforcement agencies are absolutely key to the creation of an open and safe Europe.”

## Calendar

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Stakeholder event on EU internal security strategy	29 September	Brussels
2 <sup>ND</sup> INTERPOL-EUROPOL Cybercrime conference	1-3 October	Singapore
JHA Council Meeting	9-10 October	Luxembourg
Autumn EuroCOP Committee Meeting	28/29 October	Berlin

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

The next issue of the newsletter will be published in September.