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**NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	National Parliaments
Subject:	Report to the European Parliament and national Parliaments on the proceedings of the Standing Committee on operational cooperation on internal security for the period from January 2013 - June 2014

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The Presidency of the Council has submitted to the Council the annexed report on the proceedings of the Standing Committee on operational cooperation on internal security for the period from January 2013 - June 2014.

In accordance with Article 71 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 6(2) of the Council Decision establishing the Standing Committee on operational cooperation on internal security (COSI), the Council hereby transmits the said report to the national Parliaments.

## 1. Summary

This is the third report to the European Parliament and national Parliaments in accordance with Article 71 TFEU and Article 6(2) of Council Decision 2010/131/EU establishing the Standing Committee on operational cooperation on internal security (COSI), which provides that the Council shall keep the European Parliament and the national Parliaments informed of the proceedings of the Standing Committee.

The COSI activities over the reporting period were mainly concentrated on the implementation of the EU Policy Cycle with the end of the first two-year (2012-2013) EU Policy Cycle, and the setting up and implementation of the 2014-2017 EU Policy Cycle. The lessons learned from the implementation of the first cycle proved invaluable and were integrated into the preparations for the fully-fledged four-year Policy Cycle which started at the beginning of 2014. For the first time, a EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA) was issued by Europol which provided the basis for the adoption by the Council of the EU crime priorities for 2014-2017. Following the adoption of these crime priorities, COSI examined and approved Multi-Annual Strategic Plans (MASPs) for each priority, which were then converted into Operational Action Plans (OAPs) for 2014.

The increasing link between internal and external security, and notably the issue of foreign fighters and returnees from a counter-terrorism perspective, in particular with regard to Syria, was an important discussion item in COSI and at its meetings with the Political and Security Committee (PSC). COSI contributed to the preparation of the discussions in the Council on foreign fighters and to the implementation of the proposed measures.

Strengthening the cooperation between the JHA agencies, particularly in relation to the exchange of information, remained a key concern for COSI. The Committee discussed the operational requirements for the exchange of information between agencies and Union bodies, as well as the information supply from Member States to the agencies, with a view to contributing from a practitioner's point of view to the negotiations on the draft Europol Regulation and the draft Eurojust Regulation.

Representatives from the JHA agencies - in particular the Director of Europol, the President of the College of Eurojust, the Director of Frontex and the Director of CEPOL - were systematically involved in the Committee's proceedings for the items relating to their area of competence. In addition, representatives from the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) occasionally attended meetings and the Director of the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre (INTCEN) also attended on one occasion.

The Committee also debated its future role with a view to becoming more operational and increasing its visibility both at EU and national level. Discussions were initiated to better implement the Committee's mandate as set out by Article 71 TFEU and in Council Decision 2010/131/EU. These discussions will be continued under the Italian Presidency, including in the context of the renewed Internal Security Strategy.

A large number of other issues were also reported to and discussed in COSI including the European Network of Law Enforcement Technology Services (ENLETS), the Network of contact points on administrative approach to combat organised crime, the cooperation between Europol and MAOC - N, firearms and the cooperation with Interpol.

Under the Irish-Lithuanian-Greek trio of Presidencies, the Committee met eight times in total, with two meetings under Greek Presidency and three meetings under each of the Irish and Lithuanian Presidencies. Representatives of COSI continued to meet with Interpol representatives, once per Presidency, with a view to strengthening mutual cooperation and avoiding duplication of work. Furthermore, three meetings were held with the Political and Security Committee (PSC), on 28 February and 21 November 2013 and on 13 May 2014.

The COSI Support Group, which prepares the COSI meetings and ensures the necessary follow-up on the different projects and operations, continued to meet on a regular basis. From 1 January 2013 to 30 June 2014, the COSI Support Group was convened 18 times. On 20 November 2013, representatives of the COSI Support Group were also invited to a meeting of the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) to prepare the discussions at the PSC-COSI meeting.

## 2. Activities

### 2.1. Implementation of the EU Policy Cycle

The ongoing implementation of the **EU Policy Cycle**<sup>1</sup> remained a core issue for COSI. 2013 was a significant year for the Policy Cycle, with the 2012-2013 Cycle coming to a close and preparations for the new fully-fledged 2014-2017 EU Policy Cycle commencing.

#### a) *Monitoring and closing of the 2012-2013 EU Policy Cycle*

The 2012-2013 EU Policy Cycle covered eight priorities: West Africa, the Western Balkans, illegal immigration, synthetic drugs, container smuggling, trafficking in human beings and human smuggling, mobile (itinerant) organised crime groups and cybercrime<sup>2</sup>. Of these eight priorities, three were brought to a close at the end of 2013: West Africa, Western Balkans and container smuggling.

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. 15358/10 COSI 69 ENFOPOL 298 CRIMORG 185 ENFOCUSTOM 94

<sup>2</sup> The Council conclusions on setting the EU's priorities for the fight against organised crime between 2011 and 2013 (doc. 11050/11 JAI 396 COSI 46 ENFOPOL 184 CRIMORG 81 ENFOCUSTOM 52 PESC 718 RELEX 603) mention the following priorities for 2011-2013 in no particular order:

- *"Weaken the capacity of organised crime groups active or based in West Africa to traffic cocaine and heroin to and within the EU;*
- *Mitigate the role of the Western Balkans, as a key transit and storage zone for illicit commodities destined for the EU and logistical centre for organised crime groups, including Albanian-speaking organised crime groups;*
- *Weaken the capacity of organised crime groups to facilitate illegal immigration to the EU, particularly via southern, south-eastern and eastern Europe and notably at the Greek-Turkish border and in crisis areas of the Mediterranean close to North Africa;*
- *Reduce the production and distribution in the EU of synthetic drugs, including new psychoactive substances;*
- *Disrupt the trafficking to the EU, particularly in container form, of illicit commodities, including cocaine, heroin, cannabis, counterfeit goods and cigarettes;*
- *Combat against all forms of trafficking in human beings and human smuggling by targeting the organised crime groups conducting such criminal activities in particular at the southern, south-western and south-eastern criminal hubs in the EU;*
- *Reduce the general capabilities of mobile (itinerant) organised crime groups to engage in criminal activities;*
- *Step up the fight against cybercrime and the criminal misuse of the internet by organised crime groups."*

COSI closely monitored the progress in all priorities on the basis of reports from the drivers of the different Operational Action Plans (OAPs), the outcomes of the six-monthly meetings of the National EMPACT<sup>3</sup> Coordinators (NECs)<sup>4</sup> and the reports of the Europol Director<sup>5</sup>. The detailed reports of the OAP drivers were presented to and examined by the National EMPACT Coordinators at their meetings on 14-15 May 2013<sup>6</sup> and 18 - 19 November 2013<sup>7</sup>.

The overall experience of the first two years of the Policy Cycle was positive as it proved to be a valuable learning period. Even in the 2013 OAPs, some actions had already become more focussed and “SMART” (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely), with an increasing number of countries participating in the priorities. In the 2012 OAP there were 126 planned actions and in the 2013 OAP there were 104 planned actions. Of these 230 actions, 92 (40%) were completed during the first 2-year Policy Cycle.

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<sup>3</sup> The abbreviation EMPACT stands for the European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats

<sup>4</sup> The National EMPACT Coordinator is a person with strategic command who has the authority to ensure the implementation of EMPACT in his or her country.

<sup>5</sup> Doc. 9996/1/13 JAI 421 COSI 67 ENFOPOL 159 CRIMORG 81 ENFOCUSTOM 93 CORDROGUE 38 PESC 594 RELEX 443 COAFR 163 COWEB 74 TRANS 261 UD 110 FRONT 60 GENVAL 28 and 16801/13 JAI 1062 COSI 147 ENFOPOL 386 CRIMORG 153 ENFOCUSTOM 179 CORDROGUE 124 PESC 1426 RELEX 1065 COAFR 353 COWEB 172 TRANS 615 UD 305 FRONT 184 GENVAL 79

<sup>6</sup> Doc. 10013/13 COSI 68 ENFOPOL 161

<sup>7</sup> Doc. 17315/13 COSI 160 ENFOPOL 405 ENFOCUSTOM 190

Notwithstanding this overall positive experience, a number of improvements were identified as still being needed, particularly in the following areas:

- Communication: this was considered to be one of the fundamental challenges for EMPACT, and Europol proposed a solution for the 2014-2017 Policy Cycle in the form of a dedicated EMPACT Europol Platform of Experts.
- Some actions within the OAPs should have been more operational and measurable.
- Funding: some Drivers<sup>8</sup> succeeded in obtaining ISEC<sup>9</sup> funding for elements of EMPACT work. Discussions are underway on a more systematic funding mechanism relating to the 2014-2017 Policy Cycle under the new ISF-Police Programme.
- Alignment between national and EU-level priorities was considered a key issue for better cooperation, collaboration and implementation.
- Multidisciplinary approach: cooperation with a variety of actors was considered important in several of the EMPACT areas, including NGOs, tax and customs authorities, judicial authorities, third countries and the private sector.

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<sup>8</sup> A Driver is a representative of a Member State who is leading the EMPACT project group  
<sup>9</sup> The abbreviation ISEC stands for the Specific Programme Prevention of and fight against Crime" established by the Council Decision 2007/125/JHA of 12 February 2007, (OJ L 58, 24.2.2007, p. 7).

b) *Preparation and implementation of the 2014-2017 EU Policy Cycle*

Building on the successive EU-Organised Crime Threat Assessments (OCTAs) between 2006 and 2011, Europol produced in 2013 the first **EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment** (SOCTA) in accordance with the "EU SOCTA Methodology"<sup>10</sup> which COSI had validated at its meeting on 25 June 2012. The SOCTA executive summary<sup>11</sup> which was presented to COSI on 17 April 2013, contained a set of recommended crime priorities based on Member States' contributions. In general the threat picture was characterised by further globalisation, with organised crime groups operating on an international basis with multiple partners and across multiple crime areas.

Following the discussions in COSI of the SOCTA recommended priorities, the JHA Council adopted at its meeting on 6-7 June 2013 **nine EU priorities** for the fight against serious and organised crime between 2014 and 2017<sup>12</sup>: illegal immigration, trafficking in human beings, counterfeit goods, excise fraud and

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<sup>10</sup> Doc. 12159/12 COSI 59 ENFOPOL 219 CRIMORG 88 ENFOCUSTOM 72

<sup>11</sup> Doc. 7368/13 JAI 200 COSI 26 ENFOPOL 75 CRIMORG 41 CORDROGUE 27 ENFOCUSTOM 43 PESC 286 JAIEX 20 RELEX 211

<sup>12</sup> The Council conclusions on setting the EU's priorities for the fight against serious and organised crime between 2014 and 2017 (doc. 12095/13 JAI 611 COSI 91 ENFOPOL 230 CRIMORG 98 ENFOCUSTOM 118 PESC 843 RELEX 630) mention the following priorities for 2014 - 2017 in no particular order:

- *To disrupt OCGs involved in facilitation of illegal immigration operating in the source countries, at the main entry points to the EU on the main routes and, where evidence based, on alternative channels. To reduce Organised Crime Groups' (OCGs) abuse of legal channels for migration including the use of fraudulent documents as a means of facilitating illegal immigration.*
- *To disrupt OCGs involved in intra-EU human trafficking and human trafficking from the most prevalent external source countries for the purposes of labour exploitation and sexual exploitation ; including those groups using Legal Business Structures to facilitate or disguise their criminal activities.*
- *To disrupt OCGs involved in the production and distribution of counterfeit goods violating health, safety and food regulations and those producing sub-standard goods.*
- *To disrupt the capacity of OCGs and specialists involved in excise fraud and Missing Trader Intra Community MTIC fraud.*
- *To reduce the production of synthetic drugs in the EU and to disrupt the OCGs involved in synthetic drugs trafficking.*
- *To reduce cocaine and heroin trafficking to the EU and to disrupt the OCGs facilitating the distribution in the EU.*
- *To combat cybercrimes committed by OCGs and generating large criminal profits such as on-line and payment card fraud, cybercrimes which cause serious harm to their victims such as online Child Sexual Exploitation, and cyber-attacks which affect critical infrastructure and information systems in the EU.*
- *To reduce the risk of firearms to the citizen including combating illicit trafficking in firearms.*
- *To combat organised property crime committed by Mobile Organised Crime Groups."*



Missing Trader Intra Community fraud, synthetic drugs, cocaine and heroin trafficking, cybercrime (on-line and payment card fraud, child sexual exploitation and cyber attacks), firearms and organised property crime.

Workshops were held between 12 June and 16 July 2013 under the auspices of the Commission to elaborate the **Multi-Annual Strategic Plans (MASPs)** for every EU crime priority. These were examined and approved by COSI on 17 September 2013<sup>13</sup>. The workshops were characterised by active and multidisciplinary participation involving experts from the police, customs and the Ministry of Finance, together with the competent EU agencies.

The MASPs were converted into **Operational Action Plans for 2014** (adopted by COSI on 17 December 2013) on the basis of an agreed Operational Action Plan Template<sup>14</sup> which was developed by Europol. As the nine crime priorities encompassed twelve different crime areas, it was decided to address them in twelve separate OAPs.

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<sup>13</sup> Doc 13495/13 JAI 753 COSI 107 ENFOPOL 286 CRIMORG 112 ENFOCUSTOM 134 PESC 1057 RELEX 795 JAIEX 72 COWEB 124 UD 228 FRONT 120 GENVAL 54 FISC 165 CORDROGUE 83 COARM 121 CYBER 18 COMIX 492

<sup>14</sup> Doc. 12587/3/11 REV 3 COSI 54 ENFOPOL 237 CRIMORG 101 ENFOCUSTOM 74

In line with the approach taken during the previous cycle, COSI also confirmed the Member States that would lead the implementation of the crime priorities ("Drivers" and "Co-Drivers")<sup>15</sup> and the participating Member States and agencies. The SOCTA provided an indication of the "most affected EU countries", which was used to invite Member States to participate in the relevant EU crime priorities. On 30 October 2013, a total of 275 participants, 221 from Member States and 54 from agencies, were registered as participants. Representatives from Switzerland, Norway, Interpol and the United States also participated in some OAP workshops at Europol.

The SOCTA also included two "**emerging threats**" (environmental crime and illicit waste and endangered species trafficking) which were closely monitored by Europol and addressed by a specific threat assessment on environmental crime<sup>16</sup> presented to COSI on 17 December 2013. COSI subsequently invited the European Network for Environmental Crime (EnvicrimeNet) to report on its activities before the end of 2014 and agreed to wait for the results of the 2015 interim SOCTA to decide on further measures.

In the area of energy fraud, Europol decided to focus on a number of specific topics of concern for which specific Scanning, Analysis and Notification (SCAN) notices would be produced, in particular oil siphoning, smuggling and theft, and cyber-crime and the energy sector.

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<sup>15</sup> The Co-Driver is a representative of a Member State or an EU Agency who is assisting the Driver and can replace him or her in case of his or her absence.

<sup>16</sup> Doc. 17201/13 JAI 1104 COSI 156 ENFOPOL 401

c) *Monitoring of the 2014-2017 EU Policy Cycle*

Following the start of the new Policy Cycle on 1 January 2014, COSI carried out its first monitoring exercise at its meeting on 18 June 2014. Reports from the 12 [...] Drivers were examined together with the outcome of the six-monthly meeting of the National EMPACT Coordinators on 27 and 28 May 2014 and the report of the Europol Director<sup>17</sup>.

The new Policy Cycle has seen an ambitious start with a substantial expansion on the arrangements previously in place. Apart from the expanded number of priorities and OAPs as referred to above, the number of participants has greatly increased. As mentioned above, on 30 October 2013, a total of 275 participants (221 from Member States and 54 from Agencies) were registered as participants in the OAP workshops; this compares with 97 participants (70 from Member States and 27 from Agencies) in June 2011.

The Policy Cycle 2014 has doubled in size, evidenced by the increased number of actions (224 in 2014, compared to 104 in 2013) and in the number and scale of EMPACT meetings (19 so far in 2014, compared to 13 in 2013).

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<sup>17</sup> Doc. 10355/14 JAI 377 COSI 46 ENFOPOL 149 CRIMORG 45 ENFOCUSTOM 70 PESC 560 RELEX 462 JAIEX 42 GENVAL 36 FRONT 108 UD 156 FISC 89 CORDROGUE 40 CYBER 34 COARM 83 COWEB 60

Some challenges remain. Finding the appropriate funding solutions has proven challenging for the Drivers. However, in addition to individual ISEC grants, JIT funding, CEPOL funding etc. to support investigations, operations and training activities, negotiations on a dedicated and systematic funding mechanism relating to the 2014-2017 Policy Cycle under the new ISF-Police Programme are taking place and are quite advanced. The empowerment of Member States' representatives attending the EMPACT meetings could also be improved. The appointment of full-time Drivers for two OAPs proved to be successful. Good communication is considered vital to the success of EMPACT and should continue to be promoted.

*d) Agency involvement*

The JHA agencies continued to contribute significantly to the COSI proceedings. Europol has again played a key role in the implementation of the Policy Cycle, in particular through the production of the SOCTA and the organisation of the OAP workshops as well as through its constant monitoring and reporting via the EMPACT Support Unit. In September 2013, Europol hosted a CEPOL-funded Driver Training event to help the Drivers and Co-Driver in preparing to lead the OAP drafting workshops and to allow experienced Drivers to pass on their knowledge to those who were new to the role. In addition, CEPOL organised a number of Policy Cycle training courses and provided training to the participants in the MASP workshops and OAP drafting sessions.

CEPOL is leading many actions within the framework of different OAPs. Frontex has contributed to the implementation of the Policy Cycle, notably in the OAP on "Illegal Immigration", for which it acts as Co-Driver, and the OAP on "Trafficking in human beings" in which it is a participant. Eurojust remains highly engaged as it is a participant in all the OAP priorities. EMCDDA participates in the OAPs "Cocaine and heroin trafficking" and "Synthetic Drugs". OLAF participates in the OAP "Excise/MTIC fraud".

e) *Methodology*

The EU SOCTA Methodology<sup>18</sup> which was validated by COSI at its meeting on 25 June 2012 was revised<sup>19</sup> at the end of 2013. In the course of 2014, work will be taken forward to prepare the methodology for the interim EU SOCTA which is expected by March 2015.

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<sup>18</sup> Doc. 12519/12 COSI 59 ENFOPOL 219 CRIMORG 88 ENFOCUSTOM 72

<sup>19</sup> Doc. 13395/1/13 COSI 103 ENFOPOL 283 CRIMORG 111 ENFOCUSTOM 133

f) *Policy Cycle - related activities*

COSI ensured that a number of projects which were closely related to the OAPs were either integrated into these OAPs or else closely coordinated with them:

- In view of the fact that several EU crime priorities have a strong customs/tax dimension (e.g. "MTIC/Excise", "Counterfeit goods"), the Customs Cooperation Working Party conducted an analysis of the customs' engagement with the EU Policy Cycle and presented the main findings to COSI in April 2014 and to the NEC meeting in May 2014 to ensure an efficient multidisciplinary approach. The Customs Cooperation Working Party also developed and aligned its 7th Action Plan to complement the work of the Policy Cycle which was presented to the NEC meeting in September 2013 and the COSI meeting in December 2013.
- COSI also took note of the final report<sup>20</sup> of project group "Measure 4" which was the last project group involved in the implementation of 5 of the 29 measures set out in the **Council conclusions on 29 measures for reinforcing the protection of the external borders and combating illegal immigration**<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Doc. 15906/1/12 REV 1 COSI 99 JAIEX 96 CORDROGUE 79 CRIMORG 127  
COAFR 345 FRONT 152 COMIX 618

<sup>21</sup> Doc. 6975/10 ASIM 33 FRONT 24 COMIX 158

COSI agreed to formally close this project group and to continue the "Seahorse Mediterraneo" project in the framework of the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR). It was agreed that COSI and other competent Council bodies would be kept informed regarding the state of play of the Seahorse Mediterranean Network project.

- COSI ensured that the actions developed in a number of OAPs, notably the OAPs "Illegal Immigration" and "Trafficking in human beings", were taken into account in the implementation of the **EU Action on Migratory Pressures**<sup>22</sup> and in the biannual updating of the list of actions.
- At various meetings, COSI discussed the **multi-disciplinary and administrative approach** to combating organised crime with a view to ensuring a wider knowledge and use of the existing good practices. In September 2013, COSI invited the network of contact points on administrative approach<sup>23</sup> to present its 2015-2017 work programme to COSI in December 2014, taking into account the new EU crime priorities for 2014-2017.

COSI also welcomed the updated EU Handbook on Complementary Approaches and Actions to Prevent and Disrupt Organised Crime – Version 2<sup>24</sup> at its meeting on 17 December 2013.

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<sup>22</sup> Doc. 9650/12 MIGR 45 FRONT 67 COSI 25 COMIX 288

<sup>23</sup> The network was established via the Council conclusions on the fight against crimes committed by mobile (itinerant) criminal groups (doc. 15875/10)

<sup>24</sup> Doc. 17600/13 JAI 1143 COSI 168 ENFOPOL 412 GENVAL 89 COPEN 242

## 2.2 Discussion on other issues

### a) *Terrorism*

An extraordinary COSI meeting was organised on 28 February 2013 to discuss the implications for EU internal security of the situation in Sahel/Maghreb following the crisis in Mali and the attack in Algeria, with the aim of preparing the discussion on this topic at the JHA Council on 7/8 March 2013.

The issue of **foreign fighters and returnees from a counter-terrorism perspective, in particular with regard to Syria**, was discussed several times in the course of 2013 and 2014. This topic was considered of utmost importance from the perspective of EU internal security and the discussions in COSI aimed to contribute to the implementation of the measures proposed by the Counter Terrorism Coordinator (CTC) and endorsed by the JHA Council at its meeting on 6-7 June 2013. In order to develop a comprehensive approach addressing both internal and external aspects of EU security, discussions were held with the PSC on 21 November 2013 and 13 May 2014. These discussions prepared and subsequently followed up on the discussions in the JHA Council in December 2013 and June 2014. At its meeting on 18 June 2014, COSI again discussed the issue of foreign fighters and was briefed by the CTC, Europol and Eurojust on the progress made in implementing some of the measures set out in the CTC's paper regarding foreign fighters and returnees, in particular with regard to Syria<sup>25</sup>, which had been endorsed by the JHA Council on 5-6 June 2014.

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<sup>25</sup> Doc. 9280/1/14 REV 1 JAI 261 PESC 443 COSI 35 COPS 103 ENFOPOL 121 COTER 21



At its meeting on 16 April 2014, COSI discussed the implementation of the draft revised **EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism**<sup>26</sup>, and in particular the draft **Action Plan for the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism**<sup>27</sup> with a view to advising the Working Party on Terrorism (TWP) on how to handle the implementation of the new Strategy.

Europol's **European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report**<sup>28</sup> (TE-SAT) was presented to the Committee on 18 June 2014.

b) *Strengthening cooperation in the field of internal and external security*

COSI continued to discuss together with the PSC the possibilities for **strengthening the EU internal and external cooperation and coordination**. The Road Map on strengthening the ties between CSDP and FSJ is still being implemented. A second progress report on its implementation<sup>29</sup> was discussed by COSI and the PSC on 21 November 2013.

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<sup>26</sup> Doc. 9956/14 JAI 332 ENFOPOL 138 COTER 34

<sup>27</sup> Doc. DS 1163/14

<sup>28</sup> Doc. 10420/14 + ADD 1 CONSOM 80 MI 374 JUSTCIV 205 ENER 194 ENV 405  
DATAPROTECT 64 DENLEG 51 TRANS 178 AVIATION 92 AGRI 350 EF 127  
ECOFIN 439 ETS 16

<sup>29</sup> Doc. 16039/13 CIVCOM 481 COPS 481 COSDP 1074 PESC 1354 JAI 991 RELEX 1011  
COSI 126 ENFOPOL 356

Both Committees exchanged views on the migration issue and the necessity to link the external and internal security aspects of migration. The latest joint COSI - PSC meeting was held on 13 May 2014, when delegations discussed cooperation between the relevant services, possible measures for enhancing the cooperation with source and transit countries, and measures to promote awareness, cooperation and sharing of best practices with third countries to combat smuggling of human beings.

COSI was also briefed by the Commission on the state of play of the **Task Force for the Mediterranean**, set up following the Justice and Home Affairs Council of 7 and 8 October 2013 and welcomed by the European Council of 24-25 October 2013, to identify, in the short term, concrete actions to ensure more efficient use of existing policies and tools, in particular as regards cooperation with countries of origin and transit, FRONTEX activities and the fight against trafficking and smuggling.

c) *Information exchange*

At its meeting on 11 February 2013, COSI took note of the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the European Information Exchange Model (**EIXM**) for strengthening law enforcement cooperation in the EU. The EIXM was also discussed at the EU JHA Senior Officials meetings with OIPC Interpol. The draft **Guidelines for a Single Point of Contact (SPOC)** for international law enforcement information exchange<sup>30</sup> were also presented to COSI.

The collection and analysis of information is a core task of different JHA agencies and in this context COSI discussed the **operational requirements regarding information exchange** between agencies/Union bodies as well as the information supply from Member States to agencies. These operational requirements were then used to inform the negotiations on the draft Europol Regulation and the draft Eurojust Regulation.

d) *Security related research and industrial policy*

The need to strengthen the involvement of the internal security authorities in security-related research and industrial policy was discussed on several occasions in COSI, leading to the adoption of **Council Conclusions**<sup>31</sup>. In December 2013 COSI also took note of the 2014-2020 work programme of the European Network of Law Enforcement Technology Services (ENLETS)<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Doc. 6721/3/14 REV 3 DAPIX 24 ENFOPOL 45

<sup>31</sup> Doc. 12103/13 COSI 92 ENFOPOL 231

<sup>32</sup> Doc. 17365/13 COSI 162 ENFOPOL 408

e) *Cooperation with Interpol*

Over the reporting period, three meetings of the EU JHA Senior Officials with OIPC Interpol were held (21 June 2013, 16 December 2013 and 20 June 2014) with a view to exploring synergies and strengthening cooperation. Special attention was given to enhancing the interoperability of police information systems and strengthening Member States' use of Interpol's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) database. Interpol's procedure for the issuance of information, in particular Red Notices, was also discussed.

f) *Financial crime*

Following the findings of the final report on the 5th round of mutual evaluations - "Financial crime and financial investigations" - which was presented to COSI on 2 October 2012, COSI tasked a project group with the preparation of a **Manual of Best Practices in the fight against financial crime: A collection of good examples of well-developed systems in the Member States to fight financial crime**<sup>33</sup> which was subsequently endorsed by COSI.

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<sup>33</sup> Doc. 9741/13 JAI 393 COSI 59 CRIMORG 75 ENFOPOL 144 + COR 1

g) *JHA Agencies cooperation*

COSI discussed the report of the meeting of the **Heads of JHA agencies** which was held on 3 December 2012 (hosted by Frontex). One meeting of the Heads of JHA agencies was organised during the reporting period, on 20 November 2013 (hosted by Cefpol). In December 2013, the JHA agencies submitted a joint activity report on their cooperation<sup>34</sup> to COSI together with an updated scorecard on the agencies' bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

h) *Internal Security Strategy*

At its meeting on 17 April 2013 COSI took note of the Commission's **Second Report on Implementation of the Internal Security Strategy in Action**. The **Third and final report on the Implementation of the Internal Security Strategy in Action** was adopted by the Commission on 20 June 2014,<sup>35</sup> having been orally presented to the Committee on 18 June 2014.

i) *Firearms*

The Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on **Firearms and the internal security of the EU: protecting citizens and disrupting illegal trafficking**<sup>36</sup> was discussed in COSI in December 2013. In addition, a number of measures were discussed in 2014 to address the threat posed by firearms to the EU's internal security<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Doc. 17498/13, 17495/13 Implementing the Stockholm Programme and as a follow-up to the informal JHA Ministerial Meeting of 1 October 2009, the Swedish Presidency asked CEPOL, Eurojust, Europol and Frontex to produce a report on how to further improve their cooperation, including “inter alia, guidelines for strategic and operative work, common standards, joint training initiatives, development of working methods and routines for practical cooperation”.

<sup>35</sup> Doc. 11260/14 JAI 559

<sup>36</sup> Doc. 15369/13 COSI 121 ENFOPOL 334 ENFOCUSTOM 151 MI 918 RELEX 965

<sup>37</sup> Doc. 5195/7/14 REV 7 JAI 12 COSI 3

j) *Western Balkans and West Africa*

On 28 May 2013, the COSI Support Group approved the new **Western Balkans matrix**<sup>38</sup> which aims to optimise information sharing, coordination and harmonisation of the activities in the field of EU-supported projects in the Western Balkans Region. In this regard, the **Treptower** and **Fontanot** informal Groups have widely used this matrix and the one related to West Africa respectively to achieve their objectives.

### 2.3. **Follow-up**

Following the Informal Meeting of Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs in Vilnius in July 2013, a COSI meeting was held on 21 November 2013 at which Member States expressed their views on how operational cooperation in the field of internal security should be developed in the future and indicated their main **strategic priorities** in this area.

The Committee took also note of the main findings and recommendations of the **Eurojust Strategic Project: "Eurojust's action against trafficking in human beings"**<sup>39</sup> at its meeting on 11 February 2013.

At its meeting in September 2013, the Committee was informed about the Communication from the Commission on Customs Risk Management and **Security of the Supply Chain** and the Council conclusions on Strengthening the Security of the Supply Chain and Customs Risk Management. Various law enforcement authorities and agencies such as customs, police, border guards, Europol, Eurojust, Frontex and OLAF are involved and contribute to the security of the supply chain.

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<sup>38</sup> Doc. 9728/13 COSI 58 JAIEX 36 CORDROGUE 35 CRIMORG 74 ENFOPOL 143 ASIM 40

<sup>39</sup> Doc. 16947/12 GENVAL 89 DROIPEN 175 JAIEX 117 RELEX 1094 JAI 850 COSI 126 EUROJUST 107, doc. 6035/13 COSI 11 GENVAL 6 DROIPEN 9 JAIEX 10 RELEX 103 JAI 74 EUROJUST

COSI took note of the **MAOC-N evaluation report 2013** at its meeting on 12 June 2013.

The **Frontex Annual Risk Assessment (ARA)** was also presented to the Committee on 17 April 2013 and 16 April 2014.

At its meeting on 17 September 2013, the Committee took note of the recommendations expressed by the **European Police Chiefs Convention** held at Europol on 11-12 September 2013<sup>40</sup>.

The Committee was also informed about the new **EU Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR)** arrangements at its meeting on 17 September 2013. COSI was regularly informed about the state of play of the discussions on the **Commission/High Representative's Joint Proposal for a Council Decision on the arrangements for the implementation by the Union of the Solidarity Clause**. The latest state of play was presented at its meeting with the PSC on 14 May 2014.

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<sup>40</sup> Doc. 13647/13 COSI 111

## 2.4 Future of COSI

Throughout 2013 and 2014 COSI has been debating its future and in particular how to become more **operational, more efficient and more visible** and, overall, how to fully implement the mandate set out by Article 71 TFEU and in Council Decision 2010/131/EU. At its meeting on 16 April 2014, COSI reached agreement on seven outlines about its future role (doc. 7843/3/14 REV 3). These outlines, which were endorsed by the JHA Council on 5 June 2014, are as follows:

**Terrorism:** COSI could provide input, in particular from a multi-disciplinary point of view, on the counter-terrorism strategies, without duplicating the role of other working parties and on a case-by-case basis.

**Coordination /cooperation between agencies:** malfunctions in the cooperation between agencies and in information exchange should be reported to COSI.

**Evaluation:** develop COSI's evaluation tasks in line with Article 3(2) of the Council Decision on setting up COSI. These evaluations should focus on the effectiveness of operational cooperation whilst avoiding micro assessments and overlaps with similar evaluation procedures.



**Internal-external security:** the need for further implementation of the FSJ-CSDP Roadmap and COSI's contribution to civilian missions.

**New threats:** COSI's capacity to address new threats or unexpected developments in serious criminal phenomena.

Improving COSI's **working procedures**.

**Visibility:** increasing COSI's visibility in the Council by, for example, submitting annual discussion papers on the Policy Cycle.

Discussion on the implementation of these outlines will continue in the second semester of 2014 on the basis of Member States' contributions<sup>41</sup> and other related discussions, notably following the definition of the Strategic Guidelines for the area of Freedom, Security and Justice by the European Council in June 2014.

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<sup>41</sup> Doc. 10102/14 JAI 514 COSI 43 ENFOPOL 181 COTER 45 IPCR 13 CAB 21 COPS 147 CSDP/PSDC 356 PESC 603

### 3. Conclusion

In line with the previous reporting period, COSI's activities in 2013 and the first semester of 2014 were mainly concentrated on the EU Policy Cycle, with the end of the first two-year Policy Cycle and the launching of the new Policy Cycle 2014-2017. The lessons learned from the first cycle proved to be of great added value for the preparation of the new Policy Cycle and all stakeholders involved have contributed to a better preparation and implementation of the Cycle. Remarkable progress was made in a very short time, as witnessed by a growing number of participants and concrete actions in the new cycle. The scale of the EMPACT projects will bring additional challenges due to the expanded breadth of the priorities and the greater number of activities, but also due to higher expectations. COSI will continue to closely monitor the implementation by Member States and JHA agencies and make interventions and adjustments where necessary.

The Committee acknowledges, however, certain shortcomings that were identified during the implementation process. In particular, issues regarding funding, Member States' involvement and the lack of awareness regarding the Policy Cycle still remain and efforts will continue to resolve these issues.

The Committee will continue to monitor the EU's internal security and will retain a margin of flexibility to address unexpected or emerging threats to EU security. The renewed Internal Security Strategy will undoubtedly have a great influence on COSI's work in the coming years. 2015 will also see the release of the interim EU-SOCTA [...]. The increasing link between internal and external security will also require intensified cooperation between all actors involved, including in the field of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. COSI will seek complementarity, coherence and consistency in the development and implementation of EU internal security-related policies, including by reference to the external dimension and regional cooperation.

The discussions initiated by the Committee on its future role demonstrate its dynamic nature and its ambition to implement as effectively as possible its mandate in the field of EU internal security as set out by Article 71 TFEU and in Council Decision 2010/131/EU.

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