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ON CULTURAL ISSUES, HUMAN RIGHTS AND SECURITY

## MONTHLY WRAP JUNE 2025

### SECURITY COUNCIL

#### [Security Council Resolution 2782 \(2025\): The situation in the Middle East \(UNDOF\)](#)

The Security Council on 30 June renewed the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Golan Heights for six months until 31 December 2025 and requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the Force has the required capacity and resources to fulfil its mandate “in a safe and secure way”. UNDOF was established immediately following the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement between Israel and Syria, with a mandate to maintain the ceasefire and supervise the area of separation — a demilitarized buffer zone — as well as the area of limitation — where Israeli and Syrian troops and equipment are restricted — in the Golan Heights. Unanimously adopting resolution 2782 (2025) — submitted by the United States and the Russian Federation — the 15-member organ called on the concerned parties to immediately implement its resolution 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and stressed both parties’ obligation to scrupulously and fully respect the terms of the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement. Further, the Council called on the parties to exercise maximum restraint and prevent any breaches of the ceasefire and the area of separation. It underlined that UNDOF remains an impartial entity, stressing the importance of halting all activities that endanger United Nations peacekeepers on the ground.

#### [Security Council Resolution 2783 \(2025\): The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)

The Security Council on 30 June renewed the sanctions regime concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo until 1 July 2026 and extended the mandate of the corresponding Group of Experts until 1 August 2026. Unanimously adopting resolution 2783 (2025) under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Council decided to renew measures relating to arms, finances and travel relating to the Democratic Republic of the Congo until 1 July 2026. The resolution reiterated that the armed and security forces of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are exempt from the embargo on the supply of military equipment and assistance, as agreed on 2 May 2024, and from any notification procedure, as set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the resolution. By other terms of the text, the Council decided to extend until 1 August 2026 the mandate of the Group of Experts, as set forth in paragraph 6 of resolution 2360 (2017), and expressed its intention to review the mandate and take appropriate action regarding further extension no later than 1 July 2026. It also requests the Group of Experts to provide the Council, after discussion with the Committee, a mid-term report no later than 30 December 2025 and a final report not later than 15 June 2026, as well as monthly



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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updates. The resolution also recalled the Secretary-General's commitment that the United Nations will do everything possible to ensure that the perpetrators of the killing of the two members of the Group of Experts and the four Congolese nationals accompanying them are brought to justice and stressed the importance of a follow-up in assisting the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the national investigation, within existing resources.

## UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL INVESTIGATIVE BODIES

### [Israeli attacks on Gaza schools could be crimes against humanity: UN probe](#)

The Israeli military's destruction of Gaza's education and cultural infrastructure amount to war crimes and the crime against humanity of extermination, a UN investigative body said on 10 June, as humanitarian agencies warned of continued mass suffering across the Strip. The UN Human Rights Council-mandated Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI) report found that Israeli forces have used airstrikes, shelling, burning, and controlled demolitions to damage or destroy more than 90 per cent of schools and university buildings across Gaza. This destruction in the wake of the 7 October 2023 Hamas-led terror attacks on Israel has made education impossible for over 658,000 children, many of whom have been out of school for nearly two years. The COI documented cases where Israeli forces seized and used educational institutions as military bases, including the conversion of part of Al-Azhar University's Al-Mughraqa campus into a synagogue for troops. The report also noted one instance where Hamas militants used a school for military purposes. Such conduct is a breach of international humanitarian law, which mandates the distinction between civilian objects and military targets. More than half of Gaza's religious and cultural sites have been damaged or destroyed, including places serving as refuges for civilians – killing hundreds, including women and children. The Commission stated that Israeli forces knew or should have known the cultural significance of these sites and failed to prevent harm.

### [Israeli actions in Palestinian territories constitute war crimes, Human Rights Council hears](#)

The ongoing crises in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Sudan are in the spotlight at the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva. "The goal of the Israeli government is abundantly clear: the destruction of life in Gaza." That's how Navi Pillay, Chair of the Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, opened her statement to the 59th session of the Council on 17 June. It found that 90 per cent of Gaza's schools and universities have been damaged or destroyed by Israeli attacks – including airstrikes, shelling, burning and controlled demolitions. The Commission found no military necessity to justify the destruction of schools, concluding that the intent was to restrict long-term Palestinian access to education. In Gaza, Israeli forces have damaged 53 per cent of religious and cultural sites. Many were being used for refuge or worship, causing further civilian casualties, constituting war crimes and, in some cases, the crime against humanity of extermination.



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IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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These actions violate international law, including the right to cultural life, freedom of religion, and protection of cultural heritage.

## **UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE HIGHT COMMISSIONER**

### [UN rights office ‘horrified’ by deadly violence at Gaza food distribution sites](#)

As the pall of starvation hangs over Gaza, UN agencies have sounded the alarm over deadly violence at food distribution points, where over 400 Palestinians have reportedly been killed in recent weeks while trying to access desperately needed humanitarian aid. The UN human rights office (OHCHR) in the Occupied Palestinian Territory called on the Israeli military to cease the use of lethal force near aid convoys and food distribution sites. It cited “repeated incidents” of Palestinians being shot or shelled while seeking food, warning that such attacks could constitute war crimes under international law. In one of the deadliest recent incidents, Israeli military reportedly shelled a crowd waiting for UN food trucks in southern Gaza on 17 June, killing at least 51 people and injuring some 200 others, according to Gazan health authorities.

## **UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND**

### [A systematic and collaborative approach to address global and transnational challenges](#)

The UNDP Bureau for Policy Director, Mr. Neto, emphasized the need for a systematic and collaborative approach to support countries in achieving Sustainable Development Goals during the 2025-2035 decade of action. With advancements such as generative AI, UNDP has adapted to meet partners' evolving needs. By the end of 2024, half of UNDP projects included digital components due to increasing demand for digital transformation support. Internally, UNDP has continued to make efficiency gains to allocate more funds for development results, investing 92 cents of every dollar in development programming and services in 2024. As part of its operational role within the United Nations development system, UNDP administers payroll for personnel in 70 United Nations entities and manages common United Nations premises in at least 121 countries worldwide. The evaluation's recommendation to incorporate systems thinking highlighted the growing disconnect between the scale and scope of development issues and the predominantly fragmented and short-term approaches that inform much of public and development sector work. While recognizing that addressing silos is an ongoing process, the organization has already invested in capabilities, systems, and methods such as portfolio-based programming and more rigorous impact measurement approaches for sustained development impact. These efforts have facilitated progress on integrated initiatives across multiple sectors. Regarding the agenda of leaving no one behind, UNDP has prioritized this concept in its current Strategic Plan and as a core programmatic principle for both UNDP and the United Nations Sustainable Development Group. UNDP's approach aims to design programs that enhance vulnerable



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(School of Law)  
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Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
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populations' access to economic opportunities, basic services, social protection, employment and livelihoods, and participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

### Public-private cooperation for ocean-positive development

UNDP aims to mobilize public and private finance for ocean-positive development. Enhancing awareness and transitioning capital flows to sustainable ocean approaches that benefit economies, the environment, and communities is essential. We will support initiatives to boost coordinated investments in the sustainable ocean economy. This includes developing national finance and governance frameworks for effective ecosystem management, generating necessary data, valuing ecosystem services accurately, providing incentives and risk mitigation, and creating projects aligned with local and national priorities. Collaborating with UN agencies, civil society, and the private sector, UNDP is partnering with organizations like UNCDF, UNEP, UNESCO IOC, UN Global Compact, UNCTAD, UN Tourism, IUCN, and WRI to launch One Ocean Finance. This initiative seeks to secure new funding from ocean-dependent industries and blue economy sectors.

### Climate action can boost economic growth and development

A new report released today by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and UNDP indicates that aligning climate policies with economic and social priorities can increase global GDP. This report will be presented at the Global NDC conference, scheduled from 11-13 June in Berlin, Germany. The report emphasizes the significant progress in climate action over the past decade, noting that investments in clean energy have surpassed those in fossil fuels, and net-zero targets now encompass almost 90% of the global economy. However, these efforts are still insufficient. Global emissions reached a new high in 2024 when average temperatures exceeded 1.5°C for the first full year. The Paris Agreement mandates countries to submit more ambitious climate plans every five years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate impacts and risks through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The data presented illustrate that climate action can lead to positive economic outcomes, even beyond GDP growth. To assist countries in achieving these benefits, the report outlines a set of strategic priorities, including high-level political commitment.

## **UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

### New guidelines to reduce environmental impact of data centres

The environmental impact of data centres and servers had an exponential growth, also due to the increasing use of AI models in business and personal life. The UNEP has released new procurement guidelines to help national and international authorities to reduce impact, such as energy efficiency and reducing water consumption. Few countries have comprehensive frameworks for sustainable data centre operations. This lack of regulation allows rapid industry growth, contributing to higher



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greenhouse gas emissions, climate change, and water scarcity. The International Energy Agency estimates that data centres will drive more than 20 per cent of the growth in electricity demand between now and 2030. The global demand from data centres is set to more than double over the next five years, consuming as much electricity by 2030 as Japan does today, according to estimates. Data centres and data transmission networks were responsible for 1 cent of energy-related greenhouse gas emissions in 2020, experts say. Many data centres also use significant volumes of water. According to the World Economic Forum, a one-megawatt data centre can consume up to 25.5 million litres of water each year only for cooling, comparable to the daily water use of around 300,000 people. This dependency can pose serious challenges, especially in regions facing water scarcity. The environmental impact of data centres and servers has experienced exponential growth, partly due to the increasing use of AI models in both business and personal contexts.

### [Blackout in the Iberic peninsula underscores the need for climate-friendly, local energy systems](#)

A major blackout on April 28 affected vast areas of Spain and Portugal, highlighting the vulnerabilities of centralized energy systems and the need for local energy solutions. Two-thirds of the electricity supply vanished across the Iberian Peninsula, disrupting transportation, communication networks, and essential services. This incident revealed current grid infrastructure limitations in handling increased electricity demand and integrating more wind and solar power to meet climate goals. Local energy systems generate power close to where the energy is consumed, reducing the need for extensive infrastructure and limiting the impact of external faults. These systems can also be integrated with other local resources and services such as water, waste, heating, cooling and transport, improving overall efficiency, reliability, ultimately reducing the cost of energy, experts say. UNEP collaborates with cities globally to expand integrated energy solutions. It attracts investment by showcasing feasible business models, assists in developing local energy projects, and links experienced cities with those that are emerging.

### [Global Framework on Chemicals Fund approves new project to protect health and environment](#)

The Global Framework on Chemicals Fund has approved its first projects to help countries address challenges in chemicals and waste management. According to the World Health Organization, this initiative is part of global efforts to reduce chemical-related harms, which cause over 2 million premature deaths each year. The fund provides support for national and regional implementation, especially in developing countries, with an initial pledge of US \$28 million. In October 2024, it offered grants ranging from US \$300,000 to US \$800,000 for projects with implementation periods of up to three years. Out of 105 applications from 77 countries, four regional projects have been approved after a thorough evaluation process. These projects will benefit 11 countries across Latin America and Africa, focusing on enhancing national chemicals legislation, implementing the



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(School of Law)  
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Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, and mitigating risks from hazardous pesticides.

## **AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS**

### [Application 045/2019 - Moses Amos Mwakasindile v. United Republic of Tanzania](#)

Moses Amos Mwakasindile (hereinafter "the applicant") is a Citizen of Tanzania. This request is made in relation to the alleged violation of his right to a fair trial. The applicant states that he has been charged, tried and convicted for drug trafficking in violation of the Drug and Prevention of Illicit Traffic Drugs Act of the respondent state. He was subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment by the High Court of Tanzania in Mbeya in criminal case no. 54 of 2015 on 16 December 2016. Dissatisfied with the sentence and ruling of the High Court, he appealed to the Mbeya Court of Appeal in Criminal Appeal No. 15 of 2017 which dismissed the appeal in its entirety on 30 August 2019. The Court orders unanimously that the pleadings in Application No. 045/2019 – Moses Amos Mwakasindile v. United Republic of Tanzania be reopened; also that the Respondent State's Response filed on 6 February 2025 be deemed to have been duly filed. Finally, it orders that the response of the respondent State be notified to the applicant, who must submit a reply, where appropriate, within thirty days from the date of notification of the order.

## **EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

### [Judgment Manolache v. Romania - failure of the appeal court to hear the two main witnesses directly when it sentenced the applicant \(application no. 7908/17\)](#)

In the judgment of the Chamber in Manolache v. Romania, the Court unanimously held that there had been a violation of article 6 § 1 (right to a fair trial) of the European Convention on Human Rights. The case concerned the fairness of criminal proceedings against the complainant, a police officer. During the influence trafficking trial, he was initially acquitted but then convicted in a final judgment by the Court of Appeal of Pitești. However, one of the two jury judges did not collect evidence directly from all witnesses. This violated the requirements of a fair trial. The Court noted the specific features of the case, which concerned, first of all, an appeal procedure following the acquittal of the applicant at first instance - that the Court of Appeal was obliged to take measures on its own initiative to hear directly the relevant witnesses and, secondly, a panel of two judges whose decision could only be adopted by unanimity.



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[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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*Judgment Spivak v. Ukraine - Compulsory psychiatric hospitalisation led to multiple violations of rights (Application no. 21180/15)*

In the judgment of the Chamber in the case of Spivak v. Ukraine, the Court unanimously held that there was a violation of Article 5 §1 and 4 (right to liberty and security) of the European Convention on Human Rights, a violation of Article 3 (Prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment) because of both Spivak's treatment and the conditions in which he was held in a psychiatric hospital, as well as the violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy). The case concerned the compulsory psychiatric treatment of Mr Spivak at the high-security psychiatric hospital in Dnipro as ordered by a criminal court in October 2012. He found that he had attempted the murder, but was exempt from criminal liability based on his state of mind at the time of the crime. The Court held, in particular, that it was unlawful for Mr Spivak to continue his psychiatric detention in the hospital after a judge had interrupted medical coercive measures. He also found that the hearings on the continuation of his compulsory medical treatment in hospital had not met the basic requirements of justice. The Court also held that Mr Spivak had been detained under inadequate and overcrowded conditions in hospital and could not adequately contest the need for the compulsory treatment prescribed by the doctors.

*Judgment Cioffi v. Italy - Ill-treatment of a trainee lawyer at a police station following an anti-globalisation demonstration (application no. 17710/15)*

In the Chamber's judgment in Cioffi v. Italy, the European Court of Justice unanimously held that there had been a breach of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment) of the Convention concerning ill-treatment by the police of Mr Cioffi, the subsequent investigation. The case concerned the employment of Mr Cioffi, then a trainee lawyer at a police station in Naples, where he had been allegedly ill-treated by the police, including beaten while on his knees, and verbally and physically abused when he tried to ask for information. The Court held in particular that the facts relating to his ill-treatment by the police had been clearly established by the Italian courts, which had described him, inter alia, as "particularly odious". It also considered that the subsequent investigation - in which 31 officials were charged with multiple offences in relation to these events, but most of the legal proceedings had been discontinued due to the expiry of the limitation period - was inadequate.

*Judgment K.V. Mediterranean Tours Limited v. Türkiye - Türkiye should further expedite property proceedings brought by Greek Cypriots in the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" (Application No. 41120/17)*

In the Chamber's judgment in K.V. Mediterranean Tours Limited v. Türkiye, the Court unanimously held that there had been a violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 (protection of property) to the European Convention on Human Rights. The case concerned the effectiveness of the Real Estate



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Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
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[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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Commission (IPC) as a legal avenue for claims by Greek Cypriots in the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus". It was also the participation of a religious foundation in the IPC proceedings and the alleged lack of impartiality of the High Administrative Court (appeal board) as a superior judicial authority for IPC cases. In general, the Court acknowledged the progress made by IPC in dealing with claims. It also noted the range of remedies available, including compensation, exchange and restitution, and welcomed ongoing efforts. In this case, however, the Court found that IPC did not act consistently, diligently and quickly enough in examining the application. In accordance with Article 46 (binding force and enforcement of judgments), the Court held that constant and long-term efforts should be continued, particularly as regards the acceleration of IPC proceedings

*Judgment Sagir and Others v. Greece - European court considers it necessary that Greek courts re-examine refusal to register Turkish women's association (application no. 34724/18)*

In the Chamber's judgment in Sagir and others v. Greece the Court unanimously held that there had been a violation of Article 11 (freedom of assembly and association) of the Convention. The case concerned the authorities' refusal to register the cultural association of Turkish women in the prefecture of Xanthi. The Court noted in particular that the refusal to register the association was based on the need to distinguish between a recognised Muslim minority and an unrecognised Turkish minority. It was not justified by a threat to public order, and did not pursue an "urgent social need". The Court also ruled under Article 46 (binding force and enforcement of judgments) that it would be appropriate for the Greek courts to allow the case to be reopened if so requested by the applicants.

*Judgment H.Q. and Others v. Hungary - Hungary must take measures to prevent further collective expulsions and ensure effective access to the international-protection procedure (Applications Nos. 46084/21, 40185/22 and 53952/22)*

In the judgment of the Chamber in H.Q. and others v. Hungary the Court unanimously held that there had been a violation of Article 4 of Protocol No. 4 (prohibition of collective expulsion of aliens) the European Convention on Human Rights in respect of the three complainants; a violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) of the European Convention in conjunction with Article 4 of Protocol No. 4 of the Convention in respect of the three complainants; and a violation of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment - procedural aspect) of the Convention in respect of two of the complainants. The case concerned the removal - pursuant to section 5 (1b) of the law on state borders - of applicants from Hungary to Serbia without examination of their individual circumstances, and their alleged lack of access to protection procedure, which - under the Transitional Law of 2020 - could only be initiated after a successful preliminary procedure at the Hungarian Embassy in Belgrade (the "Embassy Procedure"). Under Article 46 (binding force and enforcement of decisions) The Court stressed the urgent need for the Hungarian authorities to take immediate and appropriate measures to



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Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
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[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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prevent further collective expulsions and ensure real and effective access to the international protection procedure for those seeking such protection.

*Judgment Aksüngür and Others v. Serbia - Confiscation of cash not declared at Serbian border was disproportionate (cases no. 69080/13 and four others)*

In the judgment of the Chamber in the case of Aksüngür and others v. Serbia the European Court of Human Rights held unanimously that there had been a violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 (protection of property) to the Convention. The case concerned the confiscation of sums of money which the complainants had not declared when they separately crossed the borders of Serbia. Overall, the Court found that the broad and imprecise legislative framework, together with the narrow control carried out by the Serbian courts, had not been able to ensure the necessary balance between the requirements of the general interest and the protection of the applicants' right to the peaceful enjoyment of their property. The Serbian courts failed to carry out a meaningful analysis of the sanctions needed in each case.

*Judgment S.O. v. Spain - Spanish authorities failed to protect Venezuelan woman who had undergone a medical procedure without her informed consent (application no. 5742/22)*

In the judgment of the Chamber in case S.O. v. Spain, the European Court unanimously found a violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) of the European Convention on Human Rights. The case concerned the removal of Mrs S.O.'s nipple and areola, allegedly without her consent, during an operation to save her breast from cancer, and subsequent legal proceedings. The Court noted that the Spanish authorities had not examined whether doctors had informed it of the possibility of removing the nipple and areola. The Spanish authorities did not adequately respond to SO's request regarding the lack of valid informed consent. They had not properly and sufficiently applied the existing legal framework to protect their autonomy, in violation of Article 8. Ms S.O. complained that she had not given a valid consent to the removal of her areola-nipple complex. The Court observed, first, that the procedure performed by the hospital had potentially significant effects on a woman's physical and mental well-being, her image and self-esteem and her sexual life. This particular case and the question of consent therefore fell within the scope of Article 8. The Court was convinced that the existing legal framework in Spain on medical consent was adequate. Overall, the Spanish authorities had not responded adequately to S.O.'s claim concerning the absence of valid informed consent. They had failed to implement the existing legal framework correctly and sufficiently to protect her autonomy, in violation of Article 8.

*Judgment Benyukh v. Ukraine - Refusal to provide prisoner with free dentures breached his human rights - (Application No. 39150/20)*



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Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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In the Committee's judgment in the case of *Benyukh v. Ukraine* the Court unanimously held that there had been a violation of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment) and a violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) of the European Convention on Human Rights. The case concerned the dental treatment of Mr Benyukh in detention, in particular a delay of 19 months in providing him with prostheses despite the legal provisions on the duty of care that made them available free of charge to prisoners with an established need for them but without means to pay. The Court found that those legal provisions on the duty of care had been rendered ineffective by a combination of legislative, administrative and financial obstacles in Mr Benyukh's case. He had no reason to doubt that his lack of dentures caused him pain in eating, changed his language and the appearance of his face, and caused him discomfort, further aggravated by other medical conditions. The Court observed that the authorities had been aware that Mr Benyukh was in need of dentures since at least 22 October 2019. Despite the duty-of-care legislative provisions making dentures available free of charge to prisoners with an established need for them but no means to pay, Mr Benyukh had not been provided with any. Therefore, the Court found that legislative provisions had been rendered ineffective by a combination of legislative, administrative and financial obstacles. Although Mr Benyukh was eventually protected at the initiative and expense of the NGO (Youth with a Mission), there is no indication that the authorities played any role in this process other than allowing Mr Benyukh to accept the assistance offered.

## EUROPEAN PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE (EPPO)

### "Calypso" investigation: EPPO hits criminal networks flooding EU with fraudulent Chinese imports

A coordinated raid by the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) in Athens (Greece), Madrid (Spain), Paris (France) and Sofia (Bulgaria) dealt a serious blow to criminal networks flooding the EU market with goods fraudulently imported from China, evading customs duties and VAT. The criminal operation, which involved the massive importation of textiles, shoes, electric scooters, electric bicycles and other goods, is believed to have caused an estimated damage of around 700 million euros. The survey conducted by the EPPO, code-named "Calypso", covers 14 countries: Bulgaria, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. A total of 101 searches were carried out at the offices of customs agents, companies controlled by organized criminal groups under investigation, the premises of suspects and at the offices of tax advisers and representatives, lawyers, accountants and transport companies, in Bulgaria, Greece, France and Spain. Ten suspects were arrested, including two customs officials. In addition, firearms and sidearms were found and seized in the homes of three of the suspects. At stake are several criminal networks, mainly controlled by Chinese citizens, which manage the entire cycle of goods imported from China into the EU market, including distribution in



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IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
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[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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different Member States and sales to end customers, as well as money laundering and the repatriation of profits to China, defrauding the payment of customs duties and committing large-scale VAT fraud.

## **EUROPEAN ANTI-FRAUD OFFICE (OLAF)**

### **OLAF reveals fraud worth over 870 million EURO**

According to the annual report published on 16 June 2025, in 2024, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) called, through its recommendations, for the recovery of over 870 million€ of improperly used EU funds. OLAF investigators also prevented more than 40 million€ from being spent improperly, confirming OLAF's role as guardian of the EU budget. During the year, OLAF concluded 246 investigations and made 301 recommendations addressed to Member State and EU authorities, while launching 230 new investigations. The report highlights that 2024 was not only a year of intense activity, but also the 25th anniversary of OLAF, an achievement that seals a quarter of a century of rigorous commitment dedicated to protecting the EU's financial interests and which confirms the leading role of OLAF in the fight against fraud. From complex financial fraud to illegal cross-border trade and from customs violations to environmental fraud and the prevention of sanctions avoidance, OLAF has systematically demonstrated the relevance of its action and its adaptability to evolving challenges. Over the last three years, OLAF's investigations have made it possible to recover 4.5 billion€ and prevent over 800 million€ from being unduly spent, data which clearly demonstrates its essential role as protector of the financial interests of the EU.

## **EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE COOPERATION (EUROJUST)**

### **Rapid handover of a high-profile murder suspect from Greece to Italy coordinated by Eurojust**

The suspect in a high-profile murder case can be handed over from Greece to Italy, thanks to a rapid judicial support action coordinated by Eurojust. Close cooperation through the Agency ensured the timely issuance of a European Arrest Warrant (EAW), in order to keep the suspect detained in Greece. The detained person is suspected of the murder of a little girl which occurred in the park of Villa Doria Pamphili in Rome. Investigations have singled out an American citizen as an alleged suspect in the murder, sparking public outrage in Italy. The body of the child's alleged mother was also found in the park, but the cause of her death has not yet been officially established. The Italian State Police, coordinated by the Rome Public Prosecutor's Office, managed to track down the suspect traveling to the Greek island of Skiathos. In stretta collaborazione con le controparti italiane, la polizia greca è riuscita ad arrestarlo. The rapid issuance and prompt execution of an EAW was essential to the detention of the American citizen. This was possible thanks to the close and immediate collaboration between the Italian and Greek National Offices of the Agency, after the national authorities had requested their assistance. The suspect is currently still detained in Greece, as he did not consent to



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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the surrender to Italy. The Council of the Court of Appeal of Larissa will decide in the next few days on the procedure relating to its delivery to Italy.

## OSCE

### [OSCE annual meeting reinforces cybersecurity co-operation through cross-functional dialogue](#)

On 23 June, the fifth annual meeting of the OSCE National Points of Contact (PoC) for cybersecurity was held in Vienna, bringing together 69 experts from 41 participating States. The meeting aimed to strengthen cooperation between political and technical communities by enhancing national coordination and collective responses to cyber threats. The event, part of the project supported by Germany and the Netherlands to reinforce the crisis communication network under Confidence-Building Measure (CBM) No. 8, promoted exchanges on national best practices, thematic discussions, and initiatives to build trust through joint activities and regular communication.

### [OSCE holds Summit on emerging challenges and practical solutions in virtual assets regulation](#)

From June 24 to 25, the OSCE Summit on Virtual Assets was held in Warsaw, focusing on emerging challenges and practical solutions for regulating virtual activities such as cryptocurrencies. The event brought together representatives from regulatory bodies, law enforcement, financial crime experts, and technology providers from participating States and international organizations. The summit addressed the risks and opportunities associated with virtual assets, emphasizing the need to improve regulatory frameworks and strengthen international cooperation to combat the illicit use of these technologies. Speakers, including Jarosław Żółtowski from the Polish Ministry of Finance and Ralf Ernst from the OSCE, highlighted the urgency of turning knowledge into concrete action. The event marked a step forward toward coordinated and innovative solutions. The summit was part of the OSCE extra-budgetary project “Innovative Policy Solutions to Mitigate Money Laundering Risks Stemming from Virtual Activity,” supported by Germany, Italy, Poland, Romania, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

### [Kazakhstan’s Participation in OCTOPUS 2025 Strengthens OSCE-Supported International Efforts to Combat Cybercrime](#)

From June 4 to 6, 2025, a delegation from Kazakhstan took part in the international OCTOPUS 2025 conference in Strasbourg, organized by the Council of Europe and supported by the OSCE Programme Office in Astana, as part of a project to strengthen national cybercrime policies. The event brought together experts and law enforcement from over 100 countries, providing a key platform to discuss emerging cyber threats such as cryptocurrency-related crime, artificial intelligence, and financial fraud. The Kazakh delegation, composed of representatives from state institutions and the OSCE, actively participated in plenary sessions, thematic workshops, and bilateral meetings. The conference also addressed the role of the Second Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime in supporting cross-border investigations. Kazakhstan’s participation underscores the



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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country's growing commitment to international cooperation and its efforts to enhance national capacities to combat cybercrime.

### [OSCE-supported conference in Montenegro tackles challenges of transnational drug crime](#)

Transnational organized crime, especially drug trafficking, remains a critical shared threat that transcends national borders and can only be effectively countered through coordinated joint action based on international cooperation, strategic commitment, and mutual trust. This was emphasized at the opening of the three-day international conference "Connecting the Drugs: Challenges and Threats from Expanding Trans-Atlantic Collusion and Traffic in Drug Crime," held from June 4 to 6 in Budva, Montenegro, organized by the OSCE Mission in Montenegro and the Montenegrin Police Directorate, with support from the U.S. Embassy. The conference gathered 70 senior law enforcement officials, investigators, and prosecutors from the Western Balkans, Italy, Romania, Spain, and the United States, focusing on cooperation against high-risk criminal groups involved in cocaine trafficking. Montenegro has made significant progress in fighting transnational organized crime by strengthening police cooperation, adopting European standards, and enhancing international coordination. Speakers highlighted the importance of continued collaboration, innovation, and trust in dismantling criminal networks, with contributions from UNODC, INTERPOL, EUROPOL, DEA, FBI, and others, addressing emerging collusion between Southeast Europe and Latin American drug cartels.

### [OSCE and Thailand mark 25 years of partnership with focus on combatting online scams](#)

The OSCE and the Kingdom of Thailand celebrated the 25th anniversary of their partnership with a workshop and a meeting of the OSCE Asian Partners for Cooperation Group held in Vienna between May and June 2025. The event brought together government officials, experts on cybercrime and human trafficking, and private sector representatives to address the growing threat of online scams. Best practices were shared for detecting, investigating, and preventing digital fraud, as well as identifying trafficking victims involved in such scams. Thailand presented its national strategy based on artificial intelligence, multi-agency coordination, and a centralized Anti-Online Scam Operations Center. Participants also discussed digital and financial literacy, public-private partnerships, and the need for harmonized regulatory frameworks to manage risks related to virtual assets. With online scams causing losses exceeding \$1 trillion in 2023, a strong commitment was reiterated to collaborative responses, prevention, victim protection, and international cooperation.

### [OSCE Seminar in Ashgabat Enhances Capacity to Tackle Technology-Facilitated Human Trafficking](#)

From May 29 to 30, 2025, the OSCE held a two-day seminar in Ashgabat on the growing threat of technology-facilitated human trafficking. Organized by the OSCE Special Representative's Office and the Ashgabat Centre, the event brought together government and civil society representatives from Turkmenistan to discuss the increasing use of digital platforms, artificial intelligence, the dark web, and encrypted apps by traffickers. Participants shared prevention and response best practices, highlighting challenges posed by online anonymity and fragmented jurisdictions. Experts from



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**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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INTERPOL and Kazakhstan presented methods to detect scams and map high-risk platforms. The seminar's outcomes will support Turkmenistan's policy recommendations aligned with its recent National Action Plan, focusing on leveraging technology to enhance the fight against human trafficking.

## COUNCIL OF EUROPE

### [Ukraine and the Council of Europe sign Agreement on establishing a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine](#)

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Alain Berset, signed an agreement to establish a Special Tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine, including its Statute. The agreement was authorized by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and aims to fill a legal gap, as the International Criminal Court currently cannot prosecute the crime of aggression in this case. The Tribunal will try those most responsible for the aggression, avoiding duplication with national proceedings. Zelenskyy emphasized the importance of justice for war criminals, while the Council of Europe highlighted the value of international cooperation and respect for international law. The establishment of the Tribunal was requested by Ukraine in May 2025 and approved by the Council of Europe, which continues to prioritize support for Ukraine, including through the European Court of Human Rights.

### [Money laundering and terrorist financing: MONEYVAL progress reports on North Macedonia and Romania](#)

The Council of Europe's MONEYVAL Committee published follow-up reports on North Macedonia and Romania assessing their compliance with the 40 FATF recommendations on anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing. North Macedonia has strengthened its legal and institutional framework, with 31 recommendations rated compliant or largely compliant, though some gaps remain. Romania has made limited progress, with 25 recommendations compliant or largely compliant and 15 partially compliant, requiring further improvements. Both countries remain under MONEYVAL's enhanced follow-up procedure.

### [Türkiye: High-level GRECO delegation calls for swift action on preventing corruption and promoting integrity in the parliament and judiciary](#)

In June 2025, a high-level GRECO delegation visited Ankara to urge Turkey to fully implement anti-corruption recommendations concerning the parliament, judiciary, and prosecution. Despite some progress in the judiciary, only 3 of 22 recommendations from GRECO's fourth evaluation cycle have been fully implemented in over nine years, while none of the 7 recommendations for parliamentarians have been completed. GRECO emphasized the need to strengthen parliamentary integrity, enhance judicial independence, and limit the Ministry of Justice's powers. The delegation welcomed Turkey's



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IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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expressed commitment but called for swift action. A follow-up review of implementation is scheduled for March 2026.

[Money laundering and terrorist financing: MONEYVAL publishes progress reports on Bulgaria, Cyprus and Republic of Moldova](#)

The MONEYVAL Committee published follow-up reports on Bulgaria, Cyprus, and the Republic of Moldova, assessing their progress in implementing the 40 FATF recommendations against money laundering and terrorist financing. Bulgaria improved compliance in several areas, being fully or largely compliant with 32 recommendations but partially compliant with eight. Cyprus made progress particularly on correspondent banking services and non-profit organizations, with 16 recommendations fully compliant and 20 largely compliant. The Republic of Moldova strengthened due diligence measures in specific sectors and transparency, being fully or largely compliant with 37 recommendations and partially compliant with three.

[GRECO annual report calls on states to strengthen judicial independence and ensure political integrity and transparency](#)

The GRECO 2024 annual report expresses serious concern over ongoing threats to judicial independence in some member states and calls for strengthening the separation of powers. It highlights the need for legislative reforms to enhance transparency in political financing, including stricter controls and deterrent sanctions. GRECO President David Meyer notes that despite anticorruption progress, challenges remain in law enforcement and transparency, worsened by geopolitical and technological changes. The report, which includes an analysis of the fifth evaluation round, shows good progress in information access but delays in integrity controls, post-employment restrictions, asset declarations, and lobbying regulations, especially in high executive functions and law enforcement agencies.

[Council of Europe modernises provisions for mutual assistance in criminal matters](#)

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a third Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, modernizing judicial cooperation. The Protocol updates the 1959 Convention and previous protocols to address current challenges by simplifying and speeding up mutual assistance procedures, expanding the scope of assistance, allowing more electronic communications and video conferencing, permitting technical surveillance tools like GPS tracking and telecom interceptions, and introducing time limits. This initiative, driven by the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC), responds to lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic and increased digital cooperation. The Protocol will open for signature at the informal Justice Ministers' Conference in Malta in September 2025, aiming for more effective, flexible assistance while protecting human rights.

[Global cybercrime experts meet at Council of Europe 2025 conference](#)



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**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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From 4–6 June 2025, over 500 global cybercrime experts gathered in Strasbourg for the Council of Europe’s annual conference, co-organized with Malta’s Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. The event focused on current cybercrime threats, legal frameworks, and strengthening international cooperation. Secretary General Alain Berset emphasized the need for a new “democratic security” architecture to defend against hybrid, cross-border threats, urging states to ratify the Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention. Maltese Justice Minister Jonathan Attard condemned cyberattacks as weapons of war, highlighting Ukraine’s case, and formally deposited Malta’s ratification of the protocol criminalizing racist and xenophobic online acts. Key topics included AI, cybercrime as a war crime, online fraud (“pig butchering”), e-evidence sharing, interference with democracy, and digital violence. Regional workshops focused on Africa, the Americas, and Asia-Pacific. The conference is part of the Octopus project and one of the largest global cybercrime forums, gathering experts from 100+ countries, along with institutions like the EU, Interpol, OSCE, UNODC, and private and civil sectors. Support is provided by the Cybercrime Programme Office (C-PROC), which has led 2,400+ activities in over 140 countries since 2014.

[Human trafficking: Council of Europe experts call for stronger political commitment in the face of growing threats](#)

The Council of Europe’s Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) has released its 2025 annual report, marking 15 years of monitoring and calling for stronger political commitment to address the evolving threat of human trafficking. GRETA expresses concern over the continued misidentification of trafficked children, who are still often treated as criminals rather than victims. The report highlights a growing trend in trafficking for labour exploitation, especially affecting migrant workers, and urges states to enhance labour inspections and social protections. It also warns about the increasing use of digital technologies to facilitate trafficking, calling for greater investment in training and digital tools for law enforcement. In 2024, GRETA carried out evaluation visits in 13 countries and published 12 national reports, including on Italy, Germany, Finland, and Turkey. Follow-up discussions were also held in 10 additional countries to assess progress and remaining gaps in anti-trafficking measures.

[Croatia: Progress made in anti-human trafficking efforts, but action needed to improve victim identification and assistance](#)

In its latest report on Croatia, GRETA acknowledges the legislative and policy progress made in the fight against human trafficking, such as the adoption of the National Plan 2024-2030, but highlights persistent shortcomings in identifying and assisting victims. The number of officially identified victims dropped from 200 to 105, mostly Croatian women victims of sexual exploitation. The conditions of migrant workers and asylum seekers, increasingly vulnerable groups, are also of concern. GRETA calls for adequate resources for the Labour Inspectorate, better monitoring of employment agencies, systematic screening at border crossings, more training for border and asylum



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IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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personnel, and the expansion of specialised reception centres. No victims have received compensation: it is recommended to ensure effective access to justice, including with state sponsorship and review of compensation criteria.

### [FATF and MONEYVAL adopt report on Latvia: first worldwide assessment under new evaluation round](#)

A joint FATF-MONEYVAL plenary meeting, hosted by the Council of Europe, took place in Strasbourg on 12 and 13 June, bringing together representatives from over 200 jurisdictions and observers to strengthen global efforts against criminal activities. The meeting included technical discussions on money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation. An important milestone was reached with the adoption of the MONEYVAL mutual evaluation report on Latvia, the first in a new global cycle to assess the effectiveness of countries in countering these crimes based on risk. The plenary approved updates to FATF standards to improve the security of cross-border payments, supporting the G20 initiative for faster, cheaper and more transparent transactions. It also updated the list of jurisdictions subject to enhanced monitoring, removing Croatia from that status due to progress on FATF recommendations. The meeting was chaired by FATF President Elisa de Anda Madrazo and MONEYVAL President Nicola Muccioli.

### [Ukraine: progress needed ensure human trafficking victims' access to justice and effective compensation mechanisms](#)

A new report by the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) praises the legislative and policy measures taken by Ukraine to ensure victims' access to justice and effective remedies, despite war-related difficulties. The report points out that Ukraine is primarily a country of origin of victims, who are often exploited for labour, sex, criminal activities or armed conflict, risks increased by Russian aggression. GRETA appreciates the adoption of an enhanced state programme, free legal aid, improvements in access to psychological support and enhanced international cooperation. Among the main recommendations, GRETA calls for the establishment of a state compensation system accessible to all victims and a law protecting victims from punishment for their involvement in unlawful activities, with appropriate guidelines for professionals.

### [High-level Conference in Malta puts AI at the centre of anti-trafficking strategies](#)

On 11 June, the conference "Empowering Change: Technology and Artificial Intelligence in the Fight against Human Trafficking" took place in Malta, organised under the Maltese Presidency of the Council of Europe. Experts, politicians and civil society representatives discussed the role of technology in the prevention of trafficking, the protection of victims and the punishment of perpetrators, while respecting human rights. Rebecca Buttigieg emphasised the dual role of technology, which can be used by traffickers but also as a positive tool if governed ethically. Marja Ruotanen recalled the 20th anniversary of the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking,



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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highlighting its importance and the need for coordinated and innovative actions. The conference reaffirmed the commitment of member states to promote human rights-based responses in the digital context, with a particular focus on the new Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, which aims to ensure the use of AI that respects democratic values in the fight against trafficking.

[Norway: GRECO ends compliance procedure following reforms in central government and law enforcement](#)

The Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) successfully concluded the Fifth Round compliance procedure for Norway, recognising significant progress in promoting integrity and preventing corruption in central government and law enforcement. Norway has introduced continuous ethical training for members of the government and updated integrity guidelines, although GRECO recommends strengthening non-criminal sanctions and transparency in contacts with third parties. The Norwegian police have fully implemented all recommendations, with ethics policies, a dedicated team, updated code of conduct, mandatory training and strengthened integrity checks in recruitment and during career development.

## EUROPOL

[Crypto investment fraud ring dismantled in Spain after defrauding 5 000 victims worldwide](#)

On 25 June 2025, the Spanish Guardia Civil, with the support of Europol and law enforcement agencies from Estonia, France and the USA, arrested five members of a criminal network specialising in cryptocurrency investment fraud, responsible for laundering €460 million stolen from over 5,000 victims worldwide. The operation led to five arrests and as many searches in the Canary Islands and Madrid. The organisation used a global network of associates and bank accounts in Hong Kong to manage the illicit funds. Europol has supported the investigation since 2023 by sending experts to the field. Online fraud poses a serious threat to the EU's internal security, which is on the rise and facilitated by the use of artificial intelligence.

[New report: major developments and trends on terrorism in Europe in 2024](#)

In 2024, 14 EU Member States reported 58 terrorist attacks, with 34 successful, 5 failed and 19 foiled; 449 persons were arrested for terrorism-related offences in 20 countries. The Europol TE-SAT 2025 report highlights how terrorism and violent extremism remain priorities, with a worrying increase in minors involved, often vulnerable due to isolation or mental health problems. Online communities radicalise young people, promoting violence and exploiting digital platforms. Geopolitical developments, such as the conflict in Gaza and the war in Ukraine, fuel extremist narratives and radicalisation. The collapse of the regime in Syria and the new leadership of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham worry about future threats. The increasing use of artificial intelligence for propaganda and encrypted platforms for terrorist communications amplifies the risk.



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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## [8 arrests for migrant smuggling and drug trafficking across the Mediterranean](#)

Europol supported the Spanish Policía Nacional in an operation against a criminal network trafficking migrants and drugs between Spain and Morocco. The gang trafficked more than 200 people, profiting more than EUR 2.5 million. The operation resulted in eight arrests, the seizure of 22 kg of cannabis, 10,800 hallucinogenic drug tablets, almost 50,000 euros in cash, vehicles, boats, weapons and electronic devices. The migrants, often housed in poor conditions, paid up to EUR 14,600 for the clandestine journey by sea. The network used minors as captains in smuggling operations, exposing them to exploitation and risks. Europol coordinated the investigation with analysis and field support. Smuggling of migrants represents a complex security challenge and requires a joint effort by European authorities.

## [Bulgarian authorities arrest 18 for smuggling migrants across its southern border](#)

A criminal network trafficking Syrian migrants from Turkey to Western Europe was dismantled thanks to an operation led by the Bulgarian authorities with the support of Europol. On 3 June, 18 people were arrested in five Bulgarian cities. The network used modified vehicles with hidden hiding places to smuggle migrants, who paid up to EUR 8,500 for the journey. False documents and the Hawala financial system were used to support the activities. Europol coordinated the investigation, providing analytical, operational and technical support. Greece, Romania and Moldova also participated in the operation.

## [Europol coordinates operation against terrorist content online targeting minors](#)

On 27 May, Europol coordinated a day of reporting against jihadist, right-wing extremist and terrorist propaganda aimed at minors, with over 2,000 links reported. Europol's new task force combats the increasing involvement of minors in serious crime, as they now participate in more than 70 % of criminal markets. Terrorist groups exploit the vulnerabilities of young people and technologies, including artificial intelligence, to create manipulative content (videos, memes, images) aimed at recruiting them. Male minors are often portrayed as “warriors” while females are indoctrinated to support the cause. Propaganda also uses victimhood narratives to stimulate emotions and violence. Europol continues to support the prevention and investigation of such content to protect minors and society.

## **INTERPOL**

### [INTERPOL releases new information on globalization of scam centres](#)

According to an INTERPOL update, online scam centres fuelled by human trafficking have spread globally, involving victims from 66 countries. Originally concentrated in South-East Asia, these centres are now also present in the Middle East, West Africa and Central America. About 90% of the facilitators come from Asia, with an average age between 20 and 39 years, mostly men. The victims, attracted by false job advertisements, are detained and forced into social engineering scams, often



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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suffering severe abuse. Since 2023, INTERPOL has been reporting this global crisis with an Orange Notice. Operations in 2024 dismantled centres in the Philippines and Namibia. The increasing integration of technologies such as artificial intelligence facilitates the creation of fake job offers and “deepfake” profiles used for romance scams and sexual extortion. The routes used for trafficking are intertwined with trafficking in drugs, weapons and protected species, increasing criminal complexity. INTERPOL emphasises the need for enhanced international cooperation and partnerships with NGOs and tech companies to effectively counter this global threat.

### [New INTERPOL report warns of sharp rise in cybercrime in Africa](#)

According to INTERPOL's 2025 report, cybercrimes in Africa account for an increasing share of crimes, reaching 30% in West and East Africa. Online scams, particularly phishing, are the most prevalent crimes, followed by ransomware, business email compromise (BEC) and digital sextortion. In 2024, South Africa and Egypt recorded the highest number of ransomware attacks. Attacks also hit critical infrastructure and government databases in Kenya and Nigeria. BEC fraud fuels criminal organisations such as the Black Axe syndicate. Sextortion involves blackmail based on real or artificial intelligence-generated images. Law enforcement agencies report shortcomings in legal frameworks, training and tools to combat cybercrime. Only a minority of countries have reporting systems and databases for threats. International cooperation and cooperation with the private sector needs significant improvement. However, some countries have strengthened laws and operational capabilities, demonstrated in operations such as Serengeti and Red Card, with over 1,000 arrests. The report recommends strengthening regional cooperation, prevention and the use of emerging technologies. This assessment is part of INTERPOL's AFJOC initiative, supported by the UK, which also involves private partners such as Kaspersky and Trend Micro.

### [Emerging criminal threats targeted by INTERPOL's European Regional Conference](#)

The 52nd INTERPOL European Regional Conference took place from 2 to 4 June in Athens, with over 150 senior representatives of European and international police forces. The conference addressed the main security challenges in Europe, including risks related to organised crime, the misuse of artificial intelligence, environmental crimes and human trafficking. Michalis Chrysochoidis, Greek minister, emphasised the importance of cooperation, intelligence and technology to counter these threats. Dimitrios Mallios, Head of the Hellenic Police, highlighted Greece's strategic role and the need for coordination and trust between police forces. Ahmed Naser Al-Raisi, President of INTERPOL, reiterated the commitment to technological innovation and global collaboration to combat transnational crime. Valdecy Urquiza, INTERPOL Secretary General, highlighted the challenges posed by new technologies and the importance of sharing data and resources. The renewal of the European Committee and new initiatives to improve information sharing and the fight against organised and cybercrime were also discussed during the conference. The European region remains the most active within INTERPOL.



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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## **EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS (FRA)**

### Commission seeks feedback on the guidelines on protection of minors online under the Digital Services Act

The European Commission has released draft guidelines under the Digital Services Act (DSA) to help platforms accessible to minors ensure high levels of privacy, safety, and security for children. These guidelines apply to all platforms except micro and small enterprises and promote a privacy-by-design approach.

Key points:

- The guidelines follow a risk-based approach, allowing platforms to adapt their protective measures based on the level of risk their services pose to minors.
- Measures platforms should implement include:
  - Age assurance systems to reduce exposure to harmful content.
  - Setting child accounts to private by default.
  - Adapting recommender systems to avoid harmful content loops.
  - Allowing children to block/mute users and avoid being added to groups without consent.

The guidelines were developed through consultations and workshops with stakeholders, including children (via Better Internet for Kids), platform providers, civil society, and experts. The public consultation deadline has been extended to 15 June 2025, following a successful stakeholder workshop. The final guidelines are expected by summer 2025. In parallel, the Commission is developing a privacy-preserving age-verification app, ahead of the EU Digital Identity Wallet launch in 2026. The app will be open-source and help platforms verify users' age without collecting personal data. Additionally, the Commission is preparing a Digital Fairness Act to address further digital issues affecting minors not covered by the DSA.

## **EUROPEAN COUNCIL**

### Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine: Council extends economic restrictive measures for a further 6 months

The European Union has renewed its restrictive measures against the Russian Federation in response to its continued actions destabilising Ukraine. These economic sanctions were initially introduced due to Russia's involvement in Ukraine and have been significantly strengthened following the large-scale military aggression.

The sanctions include a wide range of sectoral measures, such as restrictions on:

- Trade, finance, energy, technology, and dual-use goods
- Industry, transport, and luxury goods
- Imports of seaborne crude oil and petroleum products from Russia



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

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Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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- Access to SWIFT for several Russian banks
  - Broadcasting activities of Kremlin-backed disinformation media
- Measures are also in place to prevent sanctions circumvention. Alongside economic sanctions, the EU has adopted:
- Individual restrictive measures (asset freezes and travel bans) on numerous persons and entities
  - Restrictions on relations with Crimea, Sevastopol, and non-government-controlled areas in eastern and southern Ukraine
  - Diplomatic measures condemning Russia's actions
- The EU reaffirms its strong support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, its commitment to a just and lasting peace, and insists that no decisions about Ukraine be made without Ukraine's involvement. The EU is also prepared to adopt further sanctions if needed, to maintain pressure on Russia.

**Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime: EU imposes restrictive measures on five Syrian individuals associated with the former Assad regime for supporting crimes against humanity and for fueling sectarian violence**

The European Union has imposed restrictive measures under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime on five individuals involved in serious human rights violations in Syria. Three of them are former members of the Syrian Republican Guard and Armed Forces, responsible for crimes such as torture, extrajudicial killings, and cruel treatment of prisoners under the al-Assad regime, and for inciting sectarian violence that led to civilian casualties. The other two individuals are Syrian businessmen who supported the regime by managing its financial interests abroad, including in Russia, and helped fund atrocities such as the use of chemical weapons against civilians.

Sanctions include:

- Asset freezes
- Prohibition on providing funds or economic resources
- Travel bans to the EU

These measures are part of the EU's broader effort to address and respond to serious human rights abuses worldwide. The EU maintains the right to adopt further measures as the situation evolves.

**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

**Human rights breaches in Georgia, Iran and Mali**

The European Parliament has adopted human rights resolutions addressing serious concerns in Georgia, Iran, and Mali.

Georgia



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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Parliament expresses deep concern over arbitrary detentions, harassment of journalists, and attacks on democracy and civil society. It condemns the arrest of journalist Mzia Amaglobeli as politically motivated and calls for her immediate release. MEPs urge the Georgian government to release all political prisoners, repeal repressive laws, and restore democratic freedoms, including media independence. They also advocate for sanctions against those responsible for democratic backsliding and increased EU support for Georgian civil society.

## Iran

Parliament strongly condemns the treatment of Dr Ahmadreza Djalali, highlighting his unfair trial, torture, and denial of medical care. MEPs demand improved conditions, legal access, and family contact for him. They call for a moratorium on executions, the abolition of the death penalty, and targeted measures in response to Iran's detention of EU nationals. Parliament also urges the EU to label the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organisation and activate UN human rights mechanisms.

## Mali

Parliament condemns the dissolution of political parties, repression of the opposition, and violations of democratic rights. It demands the release of political detainees and an end to intimidation. MEPs denounce the violence and terrorism plaguing the country and call for accountability for human rights abuses, including those linked to the Wagner Group/Africa Corps. The resolution also addresses concerns about irregular migration driven by insecurity and urges Malian authorities to fulfil their responsibilities.

## [Fight against child sexual abuse: updated rules to address new technologies](#)

The European Parliament has adopted its position on a legislative proposal aimed at strengthening the ability of EU member states to effectively combat child sexual abuse. This initiative responds to the evolving nature of abuse, particularly with the rise of new technologies, and ensures that crimes can be prosecuted whether they take place online or offline. One of the key elements of the proposal is the update of legal definitions related to child sexual abuse and exploitation, including the explicit criminalisation of highly realistic deepfake material generated using artificial intelligence. Such material, even if artificially created, would be treated the same as real abuse content under the law. MEPs also called for tougher penalties for several offences, such as non-consensual sexual acts involving children above the age of sexual consent, the recruitment of minors for exploitation in prostitution, the possession and distribution of abuse material, and offering financial incentives to commit CSA crimes. In addition, they proposed removing any limitation periods for these crimes, recognising that victims often come forward only many years after the abuse. This would also allow victims to seek compensation without a time limit. The Parliament aims to bring EU law up to date with technological developments by introducing provisions that criminalise the use of AI systems



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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designed primarily to facilitate abuse. Other technological offences include the live-streaming of abuse and the dissemination of related material online. To improve investigations, MEPs support the use of undercover operations and covert surveillance where necessary. An important part of the text also addresses the concept of consent. Parliament wants to introduce a specific definition for cases involving children over the age of sexual consent, ensuring that interactions between peers are not criminalised unless there is an element of coercion, dependency, or abuse of trust. However, impersonating a peer to deceive a child would be treated as an aggravating circumstance. Support for victims is another cornerstone of the Parliament's position. Assistance should be free of charge and include medical and forensic examinations, access to gender-sensitive care, and sexual and reproductive health services. These should be provided in line with the Barnahus model, which brings all relevant services together under one roof to protect and support child victims.

The proposal also encourages the involvement of third parties, such as civil society organisations, in reporting suspected crimes, reinforcing a collective responsibility in protecting children. As Rapporteur Jeroen Lenaers stated, the law is ambitious — but when it comes to protecting children, ambition is essential. There should be no statute of limitations on justice for child victims, and the law must evolve to address the realities of abuse in the digital age. Following the adoption of this position, negotiations with the Council will begin to agree on the final version of the legislation.

### **EYE2025 (European Youth Event): 9,000 young people engaged in EU democracy**

At the European Youth Event (EYE), held at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, thousands of young people from across Europe gathered to discuss the future of the EU. Representing 160 nationalities, around 9,000 participants aged between 16 and 30 took part in a rich and diverse programme of activities aimed at promoting civic engagement and dialogue between youth and EU institutions. Over two days, the event featured around 450 activities, including panel discussions, interactive workshops, quizzes, guided tours, networking sessions, and artistic performances. Many of these took place outdoors in the EYE Village, a space coordinated by the European Youth Forum, while others were held inside the Parliament building, including livestreamed debates from the hemicycle that reached an additional online audience. The event was organised in collaboration with various EU institutions, international organisations, civil society groups, and youth organisations, with many young people directly involved in shaping and leading the programme. About 40 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) participated in discussions, helping bridge the gap between EU decision-makers and the younger generation. Parliament Vice-Presidents played key roles throughout the event. In the opening, Sabine Verheyen highlighted the importance of youth participation in shaping future EU policies. Nicolae Ștefănuță contributed to a session focused on the EU's next long-term budget, while Pina Picierno delivered a powerful closing speech celebrating the creativity, passion, and energy that young people bring to European democracy. In her closing remarks, Picierno



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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emphasized that engaging young citizens is essential not only for policy development but also for the very legitimacy and vitality of European democracy. Verheyen added that the Parliament is working to ensure youth voices are systematically integrated into legislative processes. One initiative under consideration is a “youth check,” which would allow selected young people to participate in parliamentary committee meetings and provide feedback on draft legislation, helping to make EU policies more responsive to the needs and concerns of younger generations.

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

### Sudan: renovating the Chulukea Peace Centre

With the support of the European Union, the Chulukea Peace Centre in West Habila, Sudan, has been transformed from a modest, under-equipped meeting space into a vital hub for unity, resilience, and community development. Situated at a strategic crossroads near several neighbouring villages, the Chulukea community, home to about 2,600 residents, relies on farming, livestock, and small-scale trade. The renovated Peace Centre now serves as a key gathering place, fostering dialogue, decision-making, and collective responses to challenges like climate change and local conflict. Previously built with basic materials and lacking proper shelter or sanitation, the centre struggled to accommodate community meetings and essential discussions, especially during harsh weather. Its renovation addressed these needs by adding new rooms, a shaded gathering area, improved sanitation facilities, and a secure fence for privacy and safety. A solar energy system now provides power, enabling more frequent and reliable use of the space. These upgrades have enhanced the centre’s role as a platform for peacebuilding, training, and resource sharing. It has become a space where people come together for meetings, social events, and conflict resolution, strengthening social cohesion and encouraging modern, safer building practices. Local leaders have praised the transformation, noting the centre’s increased capacity and renewed role in community life. Thanks to the Ma’an Aqwa project and the involvement of Catholic Relief Services, the Chulukea Peace Centre now stands as a symbol of hope, resilience, and collaboration—bringing people together and supporting sustainable development in a region shaped by environmental pressures and past tensions.

### Breaking down barriers: PAFMI boosts migrant integration in Europe

The ‘Partnerships and Financing for Migrant Inclusion’ (PAFMI) initiative has demonstrated how innovative funding strategies and strong collaboration can significantly improve the integration of non-EU nationals in EU Member States. Led by the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) and supported by funding from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the project tackled key obstacles that migrants often face — such as limited access to the labour market, social exclusion, discrimination, educational barriers, and complex administrative systems. Through four pilot projects in Belgium, Finland, Italy, and the Netherlands, PAFMI provided personalised support



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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to more than 3,000 migrants. These efforts included training, mentoring, and access to microloans, empowering individuals to gain new skills, enter the workforce, and move towards economic independence. The results have been promising: hundreds of families participated in integration activities, professionals were trained in inclusive financial practices, and many migrants received tailored coaching and support. Dozens of microloans also helped foster entrepreneurship and self-employment. Looking ahead, the CEB plans to compile and share a final report outlining best practices and lessons learned from the pilots. This will be presented to the European Commission and shared with national authorities and networks involved in integration efforts, with the goal of encouraging wider adoption of the PAFMI model. Ultimately, the initiative has shown that with the right resources and partnerships, migrant inclusion can be more effective, sustainable, and enriching for society as a whole. By promoting a forward-looking and balanced approach, PAFMI offers a blueprint for unlocking the potential of migrants and building stronger, more cohesive communities across Europe.

## EUROPEAN BORDER AND COAST GUARD AGENCY (FRONTEX)

### EU external borders: Irregular crossings drop by 20% in first 5 months of 2025

In the **Central Mediterranean**, 22 700 irregular crossings were recorded in the first five months of 2025, reflecting a slight increase (+7%) compared to the same period last year.

Libya remains the main country of exit for migrants on this route, with a significant increase this year offsetting an almost 90% decline in departures from Tunisia, as the Tunisian authorities are stepping up their efforts to curb irregular migration. The **Eastern Mediterranean** was the second most active route in January-May, with 15 600 irregular crossings, representing a 30% drop compared to 2024. On the **Western African** route, the number of arrivals fell by a third to almost 11 100. The main nationalities on this corridor were Malian, Senegalese and Guinean. This significant drop can be attributed to multiple factors: stronger border controls and migration policies in Mauritania, poor weather conditions, and enhanced cooperation between the EU and countries of departure. Joint Spanish-Moroccan patrols have also played a key role in disrupting smuggling activities near the Canary Islands. Many risk their lives to reach Europe, embarking on the perilous journey across the Mediterranean in unseaworthy boats. The [International Organization for Migration](#) estimates that in just the first five months of this year alone, 651 people lost their lives at sea. On the **Channel** route, the number of migrants attempting to cross into the United Kingdom increased by 17% compared to last year to 25 540. Recent months have seen an uptick in Channel crossings. Smuggling networks operating in the area are adapting, using simultaneous departures to increase the number of successful crossings. This tactic puts more lives at risk in an already dangerous stretch of water as it hinders the search and rescue efforts of the national authorities.



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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## Frontex supports European countries with EES pre-registration

Frontex has developed a mobile application to support European countries with the implementation of the new Entry/Exit System (EES) and to facilitate border checks for travellers. The *Travel to Europe* mobile app allows non-EU travellers comfortably to pre-register travel document data and facial image for the EES before arriving at a border crossing point. It also allows travellers to provide their replies to the conditions of entry questionnaire. In simple terms most of the information that border guards would have to insert to EES about a third country national at the border crossing point could be sent with the app in advance, allowing faster entry or exit. The app will go live in selected travel hubs and remains voluntary for Member States and travellers. The first confirmed go-live will take place in Arlanda Airport Sweden this year, in parallel Frontex is planning jointly with Dutch, French and Italian authorities' pilots in selected major entry points in 2026. In addition, Portugal and Greece and Hungary have expressed interest for the implementation of app. "The app is ready to be used with the start of the EES in the coming autumn. Frontex has done its part, developed a scalable and secure app. Now it is up to every Member State to integrate the app with its national systems. Although its voluntary, we encourage EU countries to make maximum use of it. It's not for every border crossing point, but we see a clear added value in big travel hubs, where the time savings brought about by the app would make a real difference," said Frontex Deputy Executive Director Uku Särekanno in his keynote at Identity Week Europe 2025 held in Amsterdam on 17-18 June. The purpose of voluntary EES pre-registration is to reduce processing times at the border, benefitting both national authorities and travellers. The app does not replace border checks but aims at making them smoother and faster.

## EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGION

### In Kyiv, EU cities and regions emphasise that path to EU membership requires deep involvement of Ukraine's local authorities

On June 6, the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) emphasized that a decentralised and inclusive reconstruction process will be vital for Ukraine's successful recovery and its aspirations to join the European Union. This statement was made during the third International Summit of Cities and Regions held in Kyiv, which gathered leaders from local and regional authorities. The summit was convened by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and saw significant participation from the CoR, including its president Kata Tüttö, representing Budapest City Council, and Antje Grotheer, chair of the CoR's Working Group on Ukraine and president of the Bremen State Parliament. Both reaffirmed the steadfast commitment of EU cities and regions to support their Ukrainian counterparts amidst the ongoing challenges posed by Russia's invasion. The urgency of these challenges was



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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underscored just hours prior to the summit, when Kyiv was struck by a series of drone and missile attacks, resulting in civilian casualties. Antje Grotheer visited one of the apartment blocks damaged in the overnight assault, highlighting the harsh realities faced by local communities. Discussions at the summit focused on critical issues such as expanding bomb shelter infrastructure, assisting war victims, revitalizing regional economies, strengthening energy systems, and preparing Ukrainian administrations for the adoption of EU regulations and effective management of EU funds. This summit occurred weeks before the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Rome, a key international event aimed at mobilizing and coordinating support for Ukraine's reconstruction, reform, and modernization efforts. The messages delivered by CoR representatives aligned closely with recommendations presented earlier in May by the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine, a coalition co-founded and supported by the CoR as its secretariat. The Alliance advocates for sustained, structured dialogue involving Ukrainian local and regional authorities throughout the reconstruction process. It calls for their formal participation within frameworks such as the Ukraine Donor Platform, the promotion of municipal partnerships, and enhanced capacity-building opportunities for local governance. The membership of the Alliance includes a broad spectrum of territorial associations, regions, cities, private organizations, and public institutions, notably the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. Such collaborative efforts underline the essential role of decentralized governance in ensuring Ukraine's resilient and inclusive recovery.

## EU local leaders join a coalition of coastal regions at UN Ocean Conference

From June 7 to 13, 2025, the United Nations Ocean Conference was held in Nice, France, co-hosted by France and Costa Rica, gathering a diverse assembly of governments, international organizations, scientists, civil society, and private sector representatives to promote the sustainable use and conservation of oceans, seas, and marine resources. The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) played an active role at the event, joining forces with other EU institutions, elected officials, and key decision-makers from coastal cities and regions worldwide to advocate for resilient and inclusive global ocean governance.

Central to the conference was the launch of the Ocean Rise & Coastal Resilience Coalition during the summit on June 7. This global initiative aims to unite 1,000 coastal cities and regions, representing one billion inhabitants, to collectively address sea-level rise and other climate change impacts by fostering shared adaptation strategies and resilience-building efforts. The CoR's participation ensures that the perspectives and needs of Europe's coastal regions are represented at this critical international forum. As the conference drew to a close, the adoption of the Nice Ocean Action Plan was anticipated, marking a political commitment to enhancing local and regional authorities' (LRAs) involvement in global ocean governance. The CoR delegation strongly advocated for transitioning from purely



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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multilateral frameworks toward a multilevel governance approach that fully integrates LRAs. Given their significant responsibilities in managing biodiversity, tourism, infrastructure, fisheries, and climate adaptation at the local level, meaningful inclusion of these authorities is crucial for achieving effective, resilient, and equitable governance of ocean resources. The CoR's stance underlines the essential role of regional and local actors in shaping policies that respond to both global challenges and local realities.

### Shaping a human-centred AI future: conference in Malta brings local, regional and EU leaders together

The Committee of the Regions' SEDEC commission convened a high-level conference in Malta, hosted by the Eastern Region in partnership with the Local Councils' Association (Malta). The event gathered leading EU, national, and local figures to explore the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Europe's cities and regions. Key speakers included Malta's Ministers for the Interior and Employment, Byron Camilleri, and for Finance, Clyde Caruana, who outlined the government's strategic approach to responsible digital transformation and the integration of AI across various sectors such as public administration, security, and workforce development. The conference featured active engagement from Local Mayors, members of the Maltese delegation to the European Committee of the Regions, and prominent SEDEC Commission representatives, including Chair Heike Raab. Discussions emphasized the necessity of aligning AI-driven innovation with social inclusion and democratic values to prevent certain communities from being left behind amid rapid technological progress. Anthony Chircop, President of the Eastern Region, stressed the importance of policy keeping pace with AI's expanding influence in everyday life to safeguard inclusive progress. Heike Raab highlighted the unique role of local and regional authorities in understanding AI's societal impact, advocating for a people-centred and rights-based digital transition where AI serves sustainable growth and smarter governance without compromising transparency or fairness. EU Commissioner Glenn Micallef, via video, underscored AI's growing role in combating harmful online content and protecting vulnerable groups, especially children. Participants examined challenges including the EU's Artificial Intelligence Act and the digital skills gap, sharing practical examples of AI applications in public services such as intelligent mobility, community safety analytics, and citizen-facing chatbots. With the European Commission preparing to outline the post-2027 long-term budget, local leaders underscored the critical need for targeted digital investments at the regional level to bridge innovation disparities and foster equitable development. The conference reaffirmed sub-national governments' essential role in embedding democratic oversight and ethical principles into AI development. Both the Local Councils' Association and the Eastern Region committed to continuing dialogue and cooperation aimed at advancing a smarter, fairer digital transition throughout Europe's territories.



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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## **EUROPEAN DEFENCE AGENCY (EDA)**

### **Fourth phase of EU forum plots resilient energy path for defence**

On June 17–18, EU defence representatives convened in Warsaw for the inaugural conference of the fourth phase of the EU’s flagship initiative on defence and sustainable energy. The programme aims to reduce the military sector’s reliance on fossil fuels while enhancing operational resilience and energy security. The event gathered approximately 140 delegates from 25 countries, including 23 EU Member States, Norway, and Serbia, under the umbrella of the Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in the Defence and Security Sector (CF SEDSS). Managed by the European Defence Agency (EDA) and financed by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Energy, the conference was hosted by Poland’s Ministry of Defence as part of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council. Although CF SEDSS IV formally commenced in late 2024, the Warsaw conference marked the first plenary session of this new phase, setting strategic priorities through 2028. With the EU’s climate goals targeting a 90% net emissions cut by 2040 and climate neutrality by 2050, defence ministries are increasingly called upon to act. EDA’s Director of Industry, Synergies and Enablers, Sean White, emphasized the link between energy sustainability and defence resilience, highlighting the importance of energy efficiency, smart infrastructure, and reduced fossil fuel use. Polish Armed Forces Deputy Chief, Krzysztof Zielski, stressed the need for proactive leadership in shaping future defence energy policy, underlining its importance for European stability. Katarzyna Smyk, Head of the European Commission Representation in Poland, noted that the energy transition offers military forces an opportunity to enhance capability and secure strategic autonomy, underscoring the value of civil-military collaboration. Paweł Wronka, representing the Polish General Staff, further highlighted the military’s role in protecting critical energy infrastructure amid daily cyber threats. Discussions focused on the advantages of renewables and digitalisation, particularly in light of vulnerabilities exposed by the war in Ukraine. Threats such as hybrid attacks on maritime infrastructure were also addressed. The forum unveiled a wide-ranging agenda featuring plenaries, technology exhibitions, and crisis-response simulations. Focus areas include battery storage, smart buildings, and protection of energy assets. The conference also reviewed progress from past initiatives like the Symbiosis Project, which explores coexistence between offshore wind farms and military operations—an example of effective civil-military synergy. With over 50 proposed projects and 15 studies generated since 2015, CF SEDSS IV seeks to expand cooperation and innovation. The Warsaw event marked a renewed momentum for transnational engagement in defence-related energy sustainability.

### **EU Commission, EDA sign financial agreement; more EDF projects for EDA**



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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On June 25, the European Commission and the European Defence Agency (EDA) advanced their collaboration in the defence sector by signing a Financial Framework Partnership Agreement (FFPA), reinforcing long-term strategic cooperation, particularly in connection with the European Defence Fund (EDF). The FFPA establishes a stable and structured framework for the Commission and EDA to streamline the annual signing of Contribution Agreements, thus expediting support for cooperative defence initiatives under the EDF. This mechanism is designed to foster a durable institutional partnership aligned with the objectives of the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). One of the FFPA's primary goals is to simplify and accelerate the financial and administrative processes related to the indirect management of EDF projects, enabling the more effective mobilisation of EU resources in pursuit of strategic autonomy in defence. To date, the Commission has delegated to EDA the management of 24 EDF-funded projects. With the new agreement in place, that number is expected to surpass 40, with a cumulative value of approximately €300 million. This new arrangement formalises the evolving relationship between the Commission's Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space (DG DEFIS) and EDA, consolidating their cooperation on defence innovation and project implementation. Importantly, the FFPA enhances synergy between the European Defence Innovation Scheme (EUDIS) and EDA's Hub for Defence Innovation (HEDI), ensuring the effective coordination of their complementary roles. Since the EDF's launch in 2021, DG DEFIS and EDA have worked closely through annual Contribution Agreements. The FFPA now guarantees both continuity and improved coherence in the development of EU defence capabilities. The agreement reflects a broader commitment to strengthening the EU's defence and security architecture, ensuring timely support for innovation, technological advancement, and strategic resilience across Member States.

## EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGION

### National Cybersecurity Strategies: What's new in the EU's national cybersecurity policymaking

The European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) has unveiled an updated version of the National Cybersecurity Strategies (NCSS) Interactive Map, a dynamic digital platform that provides a comprehensive overview of national cybersecurity strategies across the EU. Designed as a central hub for information and collaboration, the map offers insights into how EU Member States are translating their cybersecurity strategies into concrete actions. It highlights strategic objectives, implementation efforts, and best practices, demonstrating the concrete steps taken to safeguard Europe's digital future. The platform reflects the collective efforts of national competent authorities, Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs), public-private partnerships, and innovation bodies. It promotes transparency, shared learning, and alignment with EU cybersecurity regulatory



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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frameworks, including the NIS2 Directive. Policymakers, researchers, and practitioners can access up-to-date information on how each Member State is advancing its national cybersecurity agenda to meet evolving legislative requirements. While the map provides a snapshot of the current situation, it will continue to evolve as Member States enhance their cybersecurity measures. The Interactive Map allows users to explore detailed information on individual countries' strategies, track the development of national policies over time, and understand common cybersecurity objectives both nationally and as mandated by EU legislation. It also illustrates how strategies are implemented through policies and action plans designed to achieve a high level of cybersecurity aligned with EU priorities, while providing an overview of key national cybersecurity actors such as competent authorities and CSIRTs. Thanks to its user-friendly design, the map serves as both a knowledge repository and a tool to encourage deeper collaboration among Member States, institutions, and other stakeholders. ENISA has played a direct role in supporting EU Member States in the development and implementation of their national cybersecurity strategies by offering guidance aimed at building trust, resilience, and transparency. The agency published the National Capabilities Assessment Framework (NCAF) and, in 2022, developed the NCAF Tool to assist Member States in assessing the maturity of their strategies and strengthening cybersecurity capabilities at both strategic and operational levels. ENISA plans to update the NCAF in 2025, reaffirming its commitment to enhancing the cybersecurity posture of the EU.

## New Cyber Blueprint to Scale Up the EU Cybersecurity Crisis Management

On June 6, 2025, the Council of the European Union formally adopted the revised Blueprint for cybersecurity crisis management, marking a significant advancement in the EU's capacity to respond effectively to large-scale cyber incidents. This updated framework reflects the evolving threat landscape, where increasing geopolitical tensions have underscored the urgent need for enhanced cyber crisis preparedness and coordination across Member States. The revision was propelled by findings from ENISA and the EU's inaugural report on the State of Cybersecurity, which highlighted the growing complexity and scale of cyber threats confronting Europe. Recognizing that existing crisis management procedures required modernization, the European Commission proposed this update in February 2025 to establish new mechanisms and strengthen the Union's collective resilience. The swift adoption of the Council Recommendation during the Transport, Telecommunications, and Energy Council underlines the priority placed on cybersecurity within the EU's broader Preparedness Strategy. Key EU officials emphasized the Blueprint's role as a practical, no-room-for-improvisation tool to facilitate cooperation among Member States and EU institutions in managing cyber crises affecting critical infrastructure and public security. ENISA has played an instrumental role throughout this process, supporting the EU cyber crisis community through operational management of the CSIRTs Network and the EU-CyCLONe platform, as well as



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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conducting situational awareness activities, crisis simulations, and dedicated training programs. The revised Blueprint clarifies interactions among the numerous actors involved, enhances the entire cyber crisis lifecycle, and reinforces implementation efforts aligned with the rapidly evolving threat environment. ENISA commits to bolstering Member States' and EU bodies' operational capacity by facilitating information sharing, aligning standard operating procedures, and fostering interoperability across networks. The agency also aims to support the development of a common cybersecurity taxonomy to unify communication and response efforts. Future initiatives include leveraging lessons learned from past exercises and crises, with plans to test and refine the Blueprint during upcoming EU-wide cybersecurity drills. Overall, the adoption of this Blueprint represents a vital step towards an integrated and coordinated EU cyber crisis management framework, enabling a stronger, more resilient digital Europe through enhanced collaboration across civilian, law enforcement, defence, and private sector stakeholders.

### Supporting NIS2 implementation through actionable guidance

On June 26, 2025, the EU Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) published a technical guideline designed to assist digital infrastructure operators and managed service providers in implementing the security requirements outlined in the NIS2 Implementing Regulation. The NIS2 Directive establishes mandatory cybersecurity risk management obligations for 18 critical sectors, including digital infrastructure, energy, transport, and health, which Member States must transpose into national law. Specifically, the cybersecurity provisions for digital infrastructure and ICT service management are further detailed in the European Commission's Implementing Regulation 2024/2690 of October 17, 2024. ENISA's new guidance aims to support companies in these sectors by offering practical advice to facilitate compliance with this regulation.

Juhan Lepassaar, ENISA's Executive Director, emphasized the agency's commitment to prioritizing NIS2 implementation through fostering greater alignment and simplification of cybersecurity practices across Europe's critical sectors. This technical guidance was developed collaboratively with the NIS Cooperation Group and the European Commission, incorporating feedback from the private sector via a public consultation process. The document addresses a wide range of cybersecurity measures, including policies on risk management, incident handling, supply chain security, cryptography, access control, and human resources security, among others.

The scope of the guideline encompasses key actors such as DNS providers, cloud service providers, data centres, content delivery networks, managed security providers, online marketplaces, social networking platforms, and trust service providers. Importantly, the guidance is non-binding and does not supersede national frameworks; companies are advised to consult their national authorities to fully understand their obligations under NIS2.



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

**IECLO DIRECTOR: Prof. Anna ORIOLO**  
Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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In parallel, ENISA has linked the security measures required by NIS2 to the European Cybersecurity Skills Framework (ECSF), recognizing that workforce capabilities are crucial for effective implementation. To this end, ENISA published a complementary guidance document mapping NIS2 roles and responsibilities to ECSF profiles, outlining specific tasks and offering practical examples to support organisations in developing the necessary cyber skills.

Through these efforts, ENISA continues to promote enhanced cybersecurity maturity and resilience across the EU's critical sectors by providing actionable guidance and supporting the development of a skilled cybersecurity workforce.

## **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**

### IAEA Director General's Introductory Statement to the Board of Governors

Over recent months, the IAEA Director General has been actively engaged in supporting bilateral negotiations between Iran and the United States aimed at reaching a mutually acceptable agreement to ensure the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. Last week, he visited Cairo and held meetings with Egyptian and Iranian officials, thanking Egypt for its constructive role. The IAEA plays an impartial and essential role in this matter and will be central in verifying any new agreement. The Director General presented a quarterly report on Iran's NPT Safeguards Agreement, including findings of man-made uranium particles at three undeclared sites—Varamin, Marivan, and Turqzabad—where Iran has failed to provide credible technical explanations and has hindered verification efforts by sanitizing the locations. The Agency concludes these sites were part of an undeclared, structured nuclear programme involving undeclared nuclear material, and it cannot confirm whether this material remains outside safeguards. Iran's decision to stop implementing modified Code 3.1 further undermines the Agency's verification capacity and violates legal obligations. The rapid build-up of over 400 kg of highly enriched uranium presents serious proliferation risks. The Director General urged Iran to fully cooperate, stating that without such cooperation, the IAEA cannot verify the peaceful nature of Iran's programme. He emphasized that diplomacy, supported by rigorous IAEA verification, is the only viable path forward and encouraged both Iran and the United States to act with wisdom and determination. Stabilizing Iran's nuclear situation would immediately advance peace and prosperity in the Middle East.

### Director General Grossi's Statement to UNSC on Situation in Iran

The IAEA confirmed that Israel launched a military operation targeting nuclear facilities in Iran, with the Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant being the only confirmed site directly struck. The above-ground section of the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant, where uranium was enriched up to 60% U-235, along with all critical electrical infrastructure, was destroyed. While the underground cascade hall appears physically intact, the power loss may have damaged centrifuges. Radiation levels outside Natanz



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Department of Legal Sciences  
(School of Law)  
University of Salerno  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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remain normal, with no external contamination detected, though internal radiological and chemical contamination is present but manageable. Military activity has also been reported near Iran's Fordow and Esfahan nuclear sites, but the IAEA currently lacks detailed information on those. The Director General condemned all attacks on peaceful nuclear facilities as violations of international law and emphasized that such actions could have grave consequences for regional and global safety. He urged all parties to show maximum restraint and reaffirmed that dialogue and diplomacy are the only sustainable solutions. The IAEA remains in close contact with Iranian authorities, has activated emergency response mechanisms, and is ready to deploy experts to ensure nuclear safety and non-proliferation. The Director General reiterated his readiness to travel to Iran and engage with all relevant actors while stressing the importance of protecting IAEA personnel.

## **International Maritime Organization**

### [IMO, ILO, ICS, ITF unite in call to protect seafarers against criminalization](#)

Global maritime leaders from the IMO, ILO, ICS, and ITF reaffirmed their commitment to fair treatment, due process, and coordinated action to protect the rights of seafarers, emphasizing that those detained in connection with their duties must be treated with dignity and respect for their human rights. Speaking at a joint event at IMO Headquarters in London, they acknowledged the ongoing concern over the unfair criminalization of seafarers, which undermines industry confidence and affects global trade. The IMO highlighted the importance of shared global responsibility, stronger legal protections, and increased awareness, while the ILO stressed the need for enforcement of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) and better understanding among judicial authorities of seafarers' unique circumstances. The ICS called for enhanced cooperation to ensure seafarers are not unjustly targeted, and the ITF warned that criminalization is a growing crisis requiring urgent implementation of existing guidelines, data collection, and accountability. Case studies presented during the event illustrated the impact on individuals from across the maritime sector. The IMO and ILO have adopted new guidelines on the fair treatment of seafarers accused of crimes, covering due process, protection from coercion, and maintenance of rights to wages, medical care, and repatriation during legal proceedings. Participants urged further concrete actions, including improved training for judges, stronger industry coordination, support from insurers, and protection protocols in logistics and supply chains. They highlighted that criminalization disrupts crew changes, destabilizes global shipping, and imposes unjust burdens on seafarers, calling for systemic reform to prevent abandonment and ensure their rights are upheld globally.

## **United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)**

### [UNICRI and Italy Strengthen Cooperation to Address Transnational Threats](#)



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(School of Law)  
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84084 Fisciano (SA) - Italy  
[www.ieclo.org](http://www.ieclo.org)  
[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)



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The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the Department of Public Security of the Italian Ministry of the Interior signed a new Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen their collaboration in addressing complex criminal phenomena. The agreement was formalized at the Viminale in Rome by Prefect Vittorio Pisani and UNICRI Acting Director Leif Villadsen, in the presence of senior officials from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and representatives from the diplomatic and law enforcement communities. The MoU expands cooperation into key security areas such as the use of artificial intelligence in crime prevention, cybersecurity, protection of critical infrastructure, and tracking illicit financial flows. It also promotes joint research, training, and the sharing of best practices with a focus on rights-based approaches to public security. Prefect Pisani emphasized that the agreement is a strategic tool to consolidate expertise and foster effective cooperation in tackling global crime. Villadsen highlighted the alliance as a commitment to building safer, more just, and cohesive societies. With nearly six decades of joint work, the renewed partnership reinforces Italy's vital role in supporting UNICRI's mission and sets the stage for continued efforts to advance legality, human rights, and security at both national and international levels.

## AD HOC TRIBUNALS

### Ksc signed agreement on enforcement of sentences with Belgium

On June 12, 2025, the Kosovo Specialist Chambers (KSC) and Belgium signed an Agreement on the Enforcement of Sentences in Brussels. The agreement allows individuals convicted by the KSC to serve their prison sentences in Belgium, dependent on KSC designation and Belgian approval.

KSC President Ekaterina Trendafilova emphasized the importance of sentence enforcement for effective international criminal justice and appreciated Belgium's support, encouraging other nations to enter similar agreements.

Belgium's Central Authority Head expressed that the agreement signifies Belgium's commitment to international justice and the proper functioning of the KSC, aligning with previous agreements between the EU and Kosovo, which state that final sentences should be served outside Kosovo.

### Taylor Defence Counsel Courtenay Griffiths, KC Passes Away

The Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone has learned with great sadness of the death of Courtenay Griffiths, KC. Mr Griffiths represented former Liberian President Charles Ghankay Taylor during his war crimes trial before the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague. On 31 August 2023, he was appointed as pro bono counsel at the request of Mr Taylor. Mr Griffiths served as Lead Counsel for Charles Taylor from his appointment in July 2007 until the end of the trial phase in May 2012. Previously, Mr Griffiths had practiced law before the Bar of England and Wales. Principal



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Defender Ibrahim Yilla described him as “unyielding and eloquent beyond measure in presenting his case before the Special Court.”

RSCSL President Justice Richard Lussick remembered Griffiths as “a fine lawyer.” Registrar Binta Mansaray called him “forceful and kind”. The RSCSL extends its condolences to his family. May he rest in eternal Peace.



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[info@ieclo.org](mailto:info@ieclo.org)