

## POLICE TRADE UNION RIGHTS TO INDUSTRIAL ACTION

EuroCOP Congress 2024 was a great opportunity for its members and guests from 34 different organisations from across Europe to come together and exchange views on issues of critical importance to police officers in Europe. At the November 2024 Congress in Torremolinos (Spain), EuroCOP members held a panel debate and a workshop about what is possible and achievable in regard to potential “Industrial Action that could be taken by Police Trade Unions”.

In the European Union, the right to take industrial actions, including the right to strike, is guaranteed by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Art. 28 states that “Workers and employers [...] have, in accordance with Union law and national laws and practices, the right to negotiate and conclude collective agreements at the appropriate levels and, in cases of conflicts of interest, to take collective action to defend their interests, including strike action.”

Unfortunately, the right to industrial action is subject to various limitations in European countries, as it clearly emerged during the panel debate between **Armando Ferreira from Portugal, David Kennedy from Scotland** and **Unn Alma Skotvold from Norway**. Also the national situations varies- in Norway the right to strike was used only 3 times in 30 years! Portuguese and Scottish colleagues had to be more creative. During the follow-up workshop EuroCOP members were exchanging best practices on how to fight and challenge for their workers’ rights despite national restrictions.

The main task of police officers is to keep our society safe and secure. This will be possible only if the police forces can operate in an environment of equality, safety and support, provided with relevant rights and resources. And this can be guaranteed only if Police officers across Europe would have equal rights to industrial action.

**#protectingtheprotectors**

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