

## **EuroCOP spoke about violence against the police at Law Enforcement Working Part LEWP meeting**

EuroCOP has been invited by the Belgian Presidency to speak at the meeting of the Law Enforcement Working Party. On the 8th of May in Brussels **Angels Bosch**, Member of the EuroCOP Executive Committee, presented EuroCOP's position on violence against the police to representatives of EU Member States.

In November 2022 EuroCOP has had the opportunity to discuss this issue at the LEWP meeting. However, since that time EuroCOP has observed various developments in this area.

Angels Bosch has presented **EuroCOP's position paper on violence against the police and EuroCOP's main findings:**

In Europe we face pandemic of violence against the police.

Violence against the police takes various forms from verbal abuse and hate crimes, sexual assaults and physical violence. The development of social media creates its own specific challenges and the future will bring even more hybrid threats.

EuroCOP has gathered some data from Spain, Germany, Sweden, Belgium and France. This data show, that violence against the police is clearly on the rise.

Violence against the police costs public money. A detailed assessment of financial consequences of violence against police has been carried out in Spain. According to these estimations, the costs of violence cases faced by Police and Civil Guard officers in Spain accounted for 417m Euros in 2021.

It is also important to keep in mind social costs of violence against the police. Violence against the police results in medical leave and no-show of officers at the workplace. Every injury, that results in sick leave, costs the police in lost time. Costs are associated with spending money on treatment, and potential difficulties in resourcing shifts. Another important issue is psychological harm and trauma, that result from assaults.

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## **EuroCOP spoke about violence against the police at Law Enforcement Working Part LEWP meeting continued.....**

EuroCOP believes, that there is a need of common European response. **During the LEWP meeting Angels Bosch has been advocating for establishment of a central repository of data in the EU as regards incidences of violence against police officers.** This will help to understand the roots of the problem, exchange best practice between Members States and adapt safety awareness training programs for police officers.

Angels Bosch has also presented best practice examples from Spain, England and Wales as well as United States, where data on violence against the police is collected and published.

EuroCOP has presented a detailed plan towards establishment of EU repository of data on violence against the police:

As a **first step**, intelligence has to be gathered in order to understand the state of play in the EU: which countries are collecting data on violence against the police, how often this data is updated, what are the categories of assaults, is this data further assessed and used e.g. for the purpose of safety trainings of police officers.

As a **second step**, compatible national systems shall be established to collect data on violence against police officers. Once data is collected at national level:

- Member States shall keep data safe and up to date (on a yearly basis);
- Member States shall share data with e.g. Eurostat in order to establish a repository of comparable data at EU level;
- Eurostat shall aggregate data and analyse it in order to understand roots of the problem, identify trends and the most common forms of violence.

As a result, Member States shall use available data and their analysis to adapt their awareness training programs for police officers and exchange best practice.

**EuroCOP stays committed to bring this topic high onto the EU agenda and is continuously engaging with representatives within EU institutions.**