

# Press kit

**Informal Meeting of Justice and Home Affairs  
Ministers  
Home Affairs  
25 January 2024  
Egmont Palace, Brussels**

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*This press kit contains information on the agenda for the Informal Council, press opportunities and background information on the European issues to be discussed.*

*The press kit also provides a series of royalty-free photos that can be used by the media.*

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## Agenda commented with press opportunities

### 25 January 2024: Informal Meeting of Home Affairs Ministers (Brussels)

07:15	<b>Arrival of press representatives</b> <i>Passage de Milan, 30 Boulevard de Waterloo, Bruxelles</i>
08:15 – 09:30	Arrival of Ministers to the Egmont Palace <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Handshake</u></li><li>• <u>Doorstep interviews</u></li></ul>
09:30 – 12:15	Working Session I – Strategic discussion on migration <i>(not accessible to media)</i>
12:15	<u>Family photo</u>
13:00 – 14:30	Working Lunch – Artificial intelligence and law enforcement <i>(not accessible to media)</i>
14:30 – 17:15	Working Session II – Organised crime <i>(not accessible to media)</i>
17:20	<b><u>Press Conference</u></b> Accredited media will be able to attend in-person the press conference with the Belgian Minister of the Interior, Annelies Verlinden, Belgian State Secretary for Asylum and Migration, Nicole De Moor, and European Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson. The press conference will also be broadcast on the official channels of the Belgian presidency.

## Background information

### Working Session I – Strategic discussion on migration

In recent months, the reform of the common asylum and migration has gained much-needed momentum. A historic political agreement was reached on the EU Asylum and Migration Pact and important steps were taken in other legislative files and in the enhancement of cooperation with third countries. At the same time, the situation on the ground remains worrying, with a consistently high number of asylum applications, too-low return rates, and migration policy that needs to be implemented while respecting the current legislative framework.

Reflecting on recent developments, the first part of the migration discussion takes a 360-degree view on asylum and migration in the Union to brief ministers on current challenges and the way forward. Firstly, the Commission will present an update on the migration situation in the EU and on the main migration routes. Secondly, the Council Presidency will, in cooperation with the Commission, reflect on the agreement reached on the reform of the EU asylum and migration system in December and take stock of other legislative files that remain on the negotiation table. The Presidency will also present its views on the future Council discussions on the implementation of the EU Asylum and Migration Pact. Finally, there will be a briefing on the external dimension, in particular focusing on partnerships with third countries.

A second topic that will be discussed concerns the status of displaced persons from Ukraine in the European Union. On 24 February 2022, Russia started an unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine. This was met with an unprecedented and unified response by the EU and the international community. A key component of that response was the unanimous decision by Member States to activate the Temporary Protection Directive. This triggering of the temporary protection allowed its beneficiaries not only to reside legally in the Member States granting it, but also to gain access to labour market, education and health systems, social assistance, housing and accommodation. Based on Article 4(2) of the Directive and Recital 21 of the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 the Directive was automatically extended by the Commission by two six-month periods for a period of one year until 4 March 2024. On 19 October 2023, the Council adopted a decision to extend temporary protection until March 2025 on the same legal basis. As the war against Ukraine continues into its second year, the Member States will launch a discussion on current and future complementary and alternative avenues to temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine.

## **Working Lunch - Deepfakes, mis- and disinformation – use of AI by criminal organizations – impact on LEA**

Artificial Intelligence enables the proliferation of cybercrime in general and deepfake technology in particular. In the ever-evolving landscape of law enforcement, the imperative to recognize and combat emerging forms of cybercrime necessitates the acquisition of new skills and capabilities.

The impact of these developments on information-led policing is profound, posing challenges to the authenticity of information and the vetting of digital evidence in court.

The reliability of information is a critical concern, as altered data related to demonstrations or the proliferation of deepfakes on social media depicting fleeing suspects can mislead law enforcement agencies, victims, judges and prosecutors. This uncertainty extends to the courtroom, where verifying the authenticity of digital evidence becomes crucial.

Beyond operational challenges, the rise of deepfakes and manipulated footage introduces a threat to the legitimacy and trust between citizens and the police. The potential for misleading content that puts law enforcement in compromising situations raises questions about the credibility of the information citizens receive and its impact on public perception.

This challenge is exacerbated when the identity of police officers is exposed through doxing, further eroding trust. Deepfakes and manipulated content can be employed to create false narratives, damaging the reputation of law enforcement agencies and straining community relationships.

In conclusion, the evolving nature of crimes committed online requires law enforcement agencies to adapt by acquiring new skills and capabilities. While challenges such as the authenticity of information and the erosion of trust exist, embracing AI offers opportunities for innovation, improved intelligence, and effective handling of digital evidence. The threats are paramount, emphasizing the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to tackle the malicious use of AI. The discussion will focus on the malicious use of AI and how law enforcement can address it.

An exchange of views will take place during the Informal Council to share national experiences and best practices in effectively handling AI-driven attacks and criminality, including a focus on preventing the unlawful manipulation of voters during the election process and avoiding the misuse of AI technologies that could result in damage to public authorities.

## **Working Session II – A comprehensive response to drug-related organised crime**

The afternoon session will draw particular attention to the fight against illegal drug trafficking, which represents one of the most serious internal security challenges facing Europe today. Its extent and worldwide spread call for strong and sustainable action, both at European and global level. Ministers for Home Affairs addressed this challenge from various perspectives on multiple occasions throughout 2023 and the Belgian Presidency intends to keep the topic high on the agenda.

In doing so, we will build on the implementation of existing strategies such as the EU Drugs Strategy and its Action Plan 2021-2025, and the EU Strategy to tackle organised crime 2021-2025, including significant efforts in the framework of EMPACT (European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats).

Additionally, we will take forward the most pressing actions set out in the EU Roadmap to Fight Drug Trafficking and Organised Crime published by the European Commission in October 2023, which aims to further consolidate and strengthen the EU's common efforts in 2024 and 2025 in this regard.

The Belgian Presidency intends to focus on ten priority actions where steering from Member States is particularly necessary in order to give our authorities and law enforcement agencies enhanced tools in the fight against organised crime. During the informal Council meeting, the Presidency will invite Ministers to have a closer look at three of these priorities.

The first part of the discussion will focus on the European Ports Alliance Public-Private Partnership, that aims to unite the private sector with customs and law enforcement authorities. Together, they will develop operational strategies to stop criminal networks from using European ports for drug trafficking. After attending the official launch of the partnership on the eve of the Council Meeting, the discussion will give Ministers an opportunity to exchange views on its way forward.

Secondly, the Presidency will draw attention to the importance of crime prevention in the fight against organised crime.

The third part of this discussion will focus on enhancing overall awareness regarding the potential of the administrative approach as a key component in the fight against organised crime.

## Website and sources

Website	<a href="http://www.belgium24.eu">www.belgium24.eu</a>
WhatsApp	Join us on <a href="https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029VaFqS8T4yltFsR0mvU2m">https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029VaFqS8T4yltFsR0mvU2m</a>
X	<a href="https://www.x.com/EU2024BE">https://www.x.com/EU2024BE</a>
Threads	<a href="https://www.threads.net/EU2024BE">https://www.threads.net/EU2024BE</a>
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Hashtag	#EU2024BE