

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001379/25
to the Commission
Javi López (S&D), Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(3 April 2025)**

Subject: Police and security cooperation between Europol and the Dominican Republic

The fight against organised transnational crime, internal security, and respect for and compliance with the law are objectives shared by the countries of the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. Police cooperation between the two regions is key to ensuring safer societies for our citizens. The cooperation agreements signed by Europol with third countries are of great importance in this regard.

The Dominican Republic is one of the most stable and safest countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, with one of the lowest homicide rates in the entire region and excellent bilateral cooperation on internal security with many European Member States. However, the Dominican Republic and Europol have not signed cooperation agreement, as this would require the country to be declared a 'country of interest' by the European Commission (DG HOME).

In light of the above:

1. Does the Commission intend to add the Dominican Republic to its list of countries of interest to Europol?
2. What action is being taken in this regard and what progress has been achieved?

Submitted: 3.4.2025

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(3 June 2025)**

In accordance with Article 23(4) of Regulation (EU) 2016/794 ⁽¹⁾, Europol may conclude working arrangements enabling cooperation with third countries.

Europol negotiates working arrangements with priority partners, which are included in a list endorsed by the Agency's Management Board.

The Dominican Republic does not feature on Europol's list of priority partners, and, due to both policy considerations pertaining mainly to operational needs as expressed by Member States and resource constraints, in line with the Agency's new External Relations Strategy 2025+ ⁽²⁾, no addition to that list is envisaged for the time being.

In accordance with Article 25(1)(b) of Regulation (EU) 2016/794, Europol may transfer personal data to a third country on the basis of an international agreement concluded between the EU and that third country pursuant to Article 218 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Further to a Commission Recommendation, the Council of the EU can authorise the Commission to negotiate with a third country, on behalf of the EU, an international agreement enabling the exchange of personal data with Europol.

At the moment, no Council authorisation for the opening of such negotiations with the Dominican Republic exists, nor is a relevant Commission Recommendation planned.

The Commission is in a constant dialogue with Europol, to closely coordinate on external relations, so that Europol's cooperation with external partners, from the point of view of both working arrangements and international agreements, is complementary in achieving the EU objectives in the fight against organised crime and terrorism.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2016/794 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) and replacing and repealing Council Decisions 2009/371/JHA, 2009/934/JHA, 2009/935/JHA, 2009/936/JHA and 2009/968/JHA (OJ L 135, 24.5.2016, p. 53-114), hereinafter referred to as 'Regulation (EU) 2016/794'.

⁽²⁾ Europol Programming Document 2025-2027, Annex XI: External Relations Strategy 2025+, adopted on 10 December 2024, available at https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/Europol_Programming_Document_2025-2027.pdf.