

The European Police Union (**EPU**) is a European federation of police officers, which unites police unions and associations from all over the Europe. First of all, it is a non-profit, non-governmental and totally independent police organization dedicated to the promotion of inner security within the Europe. As an umbrella organization of national European trade unions EPU has made it its internal goal to advance the cooperation among various police unions all over Europe. Externally, especially in the bodies of the European Union (**EU**), EPU pursues the protection and advancement of the social, professional, economic, cultural and health related interests of all employees operating in the field of internal security in European countries, as well as their further development through the social dialogue.

Members of European Police Union jointly represent over 800,000 police officials. The EPU's mission is to protect and secure their rights and benefits through effective representation and professional relationships with the national governments and EU's institutions. That calls the EPU to focus on police-specific themes which have immediate consequences for policing and the reinforcement and improvement of work-related issues, as well as the legal standing of police officials in a safer Europe.

The creation, protection and further development of the European Union as a values-based community in a space of peace, security and the rule of law is one of the outstanding achievements of the past and a major challenge for its future. Police officers in the member and candidate countries of the European Union contribute considerably to the realization of these goals with their personal commitment, in many cases even at the risk of their own health and lives. Therefore they should be fully and equally entitled to the political solidarity and social security in order to be able to accomplish their daily difficult and risky tasks and to provide for themselves and their families.

Priorities in this are income creation and regulation, working hours and conditions, social benefits, health care and the protection in case of accidents. The European Police Union protects the interests of police officers in the whole Europe and is strongly committed to the creation and improvement of a social security in line with the living circumstances and conditions in the respective member and candidate countries of EU.

The EPU monitors processes of all of its affiliated police unions as far as work and employment conditions and the salaries are concerned. This includes developments within the police sector in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Romania, Spain, Poland, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Lithuania, Latvia, Croatia, Malta, Portugal and Hungary.

European Police Union is also actively participating and following all recent research and studies in different fields concerning police work. Besides all of that, it effectively promotes the positive role of a police profession, not only in Europe, but in the whole world.

Membership to the EPU is open for all individuals and legal entities, especially for police unions (syndicates) and professional police associations as well as for partnerships with legal capacity wishing to promote internal security and safety in Europe.

Due to its regulatory and unifying position, as well as continuous inputs from its members, EPU is perfectly aware of all security-related developments that take place in Europe as well as any concerning/relevant issues.

Each and every day, we see, hear and experience how our society is becoming a more unwelcoming place. Civilians are protesting against the higher costs of living, cutbacks in social security, poverty and corruption in our countries, and are turning their backs on Europe - a Europe where the gap between rich and poor continues to grow.

Organized crime has (due to open borders) increased in almost all European countries. Human trafficking, trade in heavy weaponry, narcotics, fraud and internet crimes are increasing also. More and more heavy automatic weapons are being used for criminal offences. Excessive forms of aggression and violence are increasing on a large scale. Europe is turning into an unsafe place to live, visit and to operate business in. It is also becoming more of a target for terrorists who use the most horrifying violence to reach their goals. It is not a question of whether your country will be the next victim of a terror attack, but a question of when.

Recent and ongoing "Europe's Migration Crisis" is not handled properly and adequately. For instance, there are serious shortcomings in European screening and admission policy for refugees, which involves a general absence of funding, capacity and resources. Police forces in the Netherlands, Germany and the Balkan countries are under-staffed, under-funded and under-equipped to process large flows of refugees. The European Police Union has reached these alarming conclusions after it surveyed police officers in these countries.

Police personnel and civilians throughout Europe have been placed under an unacceptable amount of pressure because more and more austerity measures are being implemented in the security sector. Police officers are the first ones to encounter the consequences of these glaring shortages in staff, resources and organisation. There is insufficient protection against infectious diseases, and besides that officers are not being given the training required to deal with new security challenges they are now facing. There is a serious shortage of adequately qualified personnel. Also, extra tasks involving refugee support and anti-terror activities can only be performed effectively if the required funding is available.

All of this results the security and safety of police officers and the whole European society to be under serious threat. Understaffing and poor organisation of immigration check points result in a situation where many refugees slip through the "net", meaning that the national safety of EU's member and candidate states is at high risk. A real risk, as witnessed by recent large scale terrorist attacks in Paris, Brussels and Manchester. With current staffing and resources, police-

officers in Europe are unable to streamline the reception of refugees and prevent potential terrorists from travelling amongst them without being noticed. Besides all of the risks, the endangerment of Europe has caused the tourists to increasingly avoid our countries and to travel to those ones that feel significantly safer.

Despite major concessions by Europe, aimed at stopping alarming developments in security-related risks, not enough initiatives are currently being taken to follow up political promises with actual actions.

Due to austerity measures and wrong decisions in the field of security, safety cannot be properly safeguarded on the streets, and at the ports and airports. Capable police officers are falling victim of cut-backs, or are prematurely leaving the police force due to sub-standard and unsafe working conditions, while further investments are needed in greater detection capacity, training, weapons and equipment for police agencies and its officials.

EPU has not only noticed major differences in the knowledge, expertise, attitude, bureaucracy and effectiveness of our leaders in Europe, but also that not enough is being done to acknowledge security risks within and beyond national borders.

The shocking truth is that many (member and/or candidate) countries are not suitably prepared to deal with a major emergency. In the long-term, it is nigh on impossible to maintain a heightened terror alert throughout Europe. Police officers and their fellow service providers are reaching the end of their mental and physical capacities. This increased exhaustion will lead to decreases in alertness and vigilance.

A great deal of research has been carried out into how to counter crime and terrorism within Europe and beyond. This pile of scientific data offers a broad and comprehensive insight into developments and trends in security over the years, which means we now have a rich source of information (academic & professional) at our disposal.

But we have noticed that many pieces of expensive and time-consuming (scientific) research is quickly consigned to libraries and is only dusted off to serve as study material for new, expensive research projects. After recent attacks and the persistent threat of terror in Europe, it became painfully apparent that many years of implementing a policy of 'see, hear and keep quiet' in the EU has caused us to pay a heavy price for our security.

For quite a few years, the EPU has attempted to highlight the failings of the 'it will be fine, no need to worry' approach adopted by our politicians. Often enough, we warned our government leaders that security could no longer be guaranteed in their perceived European utopia.

In a joint statement by the European Commission (in response to the attack on *Charlie Hebdo*), a plea was made to form partnerships to counter the use of illegal firearms in the EU. This can

only be done by improving the exchange of information between European countries. Ministers also feel it should be possible to modify agreements in the Schengen Treaty, in order to offer more comprehensive access to the Schengen Information System. A call was also made to establish a framework for storing and exchanging the details of European passengers.

EPU fully support these initiatives because, in our opinion, they cannot be introduced quickly enough to reduce security risks within Europe and beyond. However, what is missing in these security-related issues, are essential structural measures which must be taken to address major security risks experienced by police officers, not to mention the poor working conditions that accompany them.

In order to tackle security in a truly effective manner, Europe will have to move away from expensive investments in pseudo-security and start directly investing in security issues that really matter.

The time has now come for an 'extreme' make-over of Security in Europe. EPU member countries urgently need a European Union with the collective strength and ability to address several key areas within the field of security. Only a well coordinated and integrated Europe will be able to deal with the countless challenges being faced by our countries when it comes to reduced levels of security. There is no shame in not knowing something; the real shame will come if we do not (want to) learn our lessons and decide to ignore things. Requesting help from external experts is not a sign of weakness, but actually a sign of strength.

And this is another area where EPU can and wants to be of help; to improve interaction between the various players in the field of security, so a comprehensive strategy can be realized to address ambiguity in security-related issues in our (member) countries. EU's rules must be implemented in a comparable manner within member and candidate countries. The increase in cross-border criminality requires more intensive collaboration. This is only possible if norms, methods and actions have been effectively coordinated.

Labor Unions, and not just the police ones, regularly face the problem that agreements in national and European laws and regulations are not being complied with and/or are being breached. We waste a lot of energy fighting unlawful acts by governments and even human rights breaches. We believe EU must perform more proactive monitoring, and even impose sanctions, to ensure that its regulations and guidelines are actually translated into national legislation. And not just that, they also have to closely and continuously monitor and make sure that they are fully implemented at all times and no matter what. Once again, we have noticed that our core values in the field of (social) security and human rights are becoming blurred and that our national interests are at risk.

The Working Hours Act features legislation which is regularly and structurally breached by many European police organizations. Unfortunately, 60-hour working weeks, which are not

compensated (in holidays or salary), are fairly commonplace. This also applies to 24-hour shifts and only 2 days leave per month.

The guideline by the European Council of 12th June 1989, concerning the implementation of measures to improve the health of employees at work, is being breached or is barely being implemented, whereby the health and safety of (police) employees is not being safeguarded. The two main requirements in this guideline, which are regularly ignored, are:

1. *Because there are still too many work-related accidents and illnesses; preventive measures must immediately be taken, or current measures must be improved, in order to protect the health and safety of employees, whereby a higher level of protection is realized;*
2. *Because, in order to safeguard a higher level of protection, employees and/or their representatives must be informed about risks to their health and safety, and about measures which must be taken to reduce or eliminate these risks; it is necessary for them - via a fair participation agreement - to contribute to national laws and/or practices so the required protective measures can be implemented.*

The right to form trade unions is acknowledged in labor law, which also identifies the relationship between employers and trade unions. Unfortunately, rights relating to police trade unions are still being breached, and many national governments are still trying to destabilize police unions. Here are few of real-life examples from affiliated EPU police unions:

- *Immediate stop of premiums to be automatically deducted from salaries (union encounters financial difficulties);*
- *Refusal to grant access to union offices (government owns the premises);*
- *Changes to laws and regulations, without consulting the unions;*
- *Cancellation of CLA with union x and a new stricter CLA agreed with union y.*

European society and national governments expect the police force to act in a professional manner at all times, so public order and safety can be maintained. Due to an increase in incidents involving physical violence against people of authority in Europe, it is becoming increasingly difficult to meet these expectations.

Many events have taken place which have had a major impact on the safety and sense of security of police officers. There is an increasing work-related dissatisfaction within the European police sector. Police officers are afraid to report incidents of violence and aggression fearing the reprisals. We witness in many countries that more and more police officers are choosing to call in sick because they are afraid to patrol streets. In some case, false emergency calls are being

made so that police patrols can be ambushed. If such incidents take place in areas where many conflicts are encountered (or in so-called “NO GO areas”), police officers will be less willing to risk their own health and lives in order to protect local residents.

Poor working conditions and terms of employment not only serve as a breeding ground for corruption (thus endangering the integrity of the whole police forces) but also result a worrying increase in the number of police officers who experience severe (financial) pressure, are diagnosed with PTSD or even commit suicide. Police officers who are under physical and mental stress can form a risk to themselves and/or their immediate surroundings (colleagues and civilians). In several countries, police officers are being placed in a social program due to poor financial conditions in their work sector.

For example, in Lithuania, there is a major shortage of police officers because of low salaries and long working day/weeks. As a result, university graduates who have only followed 6 weeks of police trainings are being thrown straight into the police force. Many women are joining the police force due to attractive pregnancy and maternity schemes. However, replacements are not being sought during such periods of absence (1 year, with an extension of up to 2 years), which means other colleagues are burdened with the extra workload.

Last year in the Republic of Serbia police officers had to go into a “Hunger Strike”. First one of its kind, not only in Serbian, but in the whole European security sector. This radical decision has been made because Serbian Ministry of Interior keeps making promises to resolve problems in regards’ to socio-economic status of police officers and their working conditions and has not fulfilled any of them. In addition to that, International Monetary Fund (IMF) keeps pressuring Serbian Government to implement budgetary cuts in security sector, or what they like to call the “necessary” saving measures. Therefore, thanks to IMF and implementers of their disastrous anti-security policy in Serbia the salaries of those employed in police have been cut twice recently totaling of 17%, their Per Diems have been cut from 20 Euros to 1.15 Euro, while most experienced experts have been sent to early retirement and the most eminent antiterrorism unit has been abolished.

Now, this is scary and represents an alarming problem for the Europe as a whole, because since the start of Migrant Crisis through Serbia on daily basis goes between 4,000 and 6,000 immigrants. To those people Serbia is just a transit route, but also a first stop where they have to be identified, properly screened and registered by Serbian police. Unfortunately, during that process Serbian police officers are experiencing many problems and challenges, and most of them have to do with recent budgetary cuts requested of Serbian Government by IMF. It’s ban on disposal of the funds impedes and prevents adequate professional work to be performed by Serbian police at the borders, it also exposes them to the greater loads of work which inevitably leads to failures (*passing the security by suspicious persons – potential terrorists*) and represents a huge threat to the police officers, their families, friends and colleagues (*anybody whom they come into contact*) by the carriers of serious infectious diseases while not having necessary

protective means and required equipment. Being aware of it, many officers are avoiding to go to work by taking sick leave which on one side reduces the security of the state, while on the other hand it is becoming a real burden on the budget.

International Monetary Fund probably does not care about safety and security of people living in Serbia, which to them represents nothing more but a profitable financial colony. But, they need to understand and be fully aware that their pressuring – forced budgetary savings in security sector is effecting not only safety and security of small country but the whole EU, especially now during the migration crises and growing terrorism threats on the grounds of Europe.

Senior police officials in other countries are also unwilling to prioritize the safety of their police officers. An example from Spain: a senior police officer in the mounted police made a statement about wearing helmets; he thought it looked ugly, and thought the safety of his officers was less important than their appearance. Unfortunately, such attitudes are encountered more frequently than one would expect, and form a risk to the safety of police officers. For example, this also occurred in Bulgaria, when a senior official felt police officers had to salute him as they passed by. Officers in civilian clothing were also required to do the same. And because he could not check if this group of police officers was actually saluting him, undercover agents were forced to identify themselves (for him).

Police officers require personal protection equipment if they are to work in a safe and healthy manner. We can confirm that equipment of suitable quality is not always available in the required numbers, especially in Eastern European countries.

Police officers in Europe have regularly lost their lives or have been heavily wounded due to ineffective or missing equipment. Most of the time they are not issued bullet-proof vests; they receive poorly maintained vehicles, which present a risk to passengers as well as other road users and pedestrians; toxic lead carbonate is being used by forensic teams, while it has been prohibited for industrial use.

EPU has also registered how police officers are being exposed to contagious infectious diseases. In Italy, for example, 45 police officers contracted TBC in 2014. Vaccinations should be free of charge to police personnel in order to prevent the spread of such contagious infectious diseases (hepatitis B/A, DTP, etc.).

Too many police officers are over-weight and in poor physical condition. It is important for them to remain fit and healthy at all times. This could be achieved by making sport mandatory and by providing the necessary and adequate facilities.

Police officers are exposed to physical risks when walking the beat and when driving at high speeds, often without having to obey traffic laws. But they do not receive special protection by law, because drivers are always held responsible for their actions. They thus run the risk of being

involved in accidents and then being taken to court, while they are expected to respond to emergencies as quickly as possible.

And there is ambiguity in procedures aimed at offering legal and physical protection to officers. Society expects a great deal from police, but they cannot be expected to give their best without thinking about their own safety. There are protocols for protecting delinquents and criminals, but officers are not given the same level of protection. There are also ambiguities in procedures concerning the detention of foreign nationals. Spanish legislation fails on this front because people can be deprived of their freedom for violations, but they cannot actually be charged. Legislation must thus be introduced which makes a distinction between offences and violations.

Political interests are being prioritized above basic police interests. Police work is sometimes hindered for obscure reasons and police investigations are regularly suspended because the interests of third parties are prioritized ahead of the public interest. Such practices should not be encountered in democratic countries. Nonetheless, police forces throughout the world still encounter them on a regular basis, which has a demotivating effect on officers.

Research done in 2010, into working conditions and work perception among police officers in the Netherlands, led to the following conclusions: excessive workload (40%), too few police officers for the work at hand (72%), unable to resolve important cases (51%), too much paperwork and bureaucracy (81%), aggression and violence (44%) and poor computer systems (71%). 78% of all survey respondents said that the violence has become more extreme over the past five years. Besides that, 54% of police officers in the Netherlands feel that their work is under-appreciated by senior officers, 63% of them by Dutch inhabitants and 90% by Dutch politicians. Unfortunately, we are sure that these figures have only increased since 2010.

Police officers in Europe should be able to count on EU institutions which, as part of their duty of care as good employers, are able to offer the required personal care while establishing an appropriate framework for safety.

As already stated, people are losing respect for police officers and politicians; therefore EU will have to take measures on this front in order to restore the public's respect, trust, authority and appreciation for the police force and for those on public positions.

A step in the right direction could involve European politicians openly admitting that we are unable to guarantee basic safety to our citizens due to the stifling effect of austerity measures and heightened risk of terrorism. Politicians should stop telling people that 'everything is under control', but concede that a 100% guarantee cannot be given for security. Pseudo-solutions are being presented, which are in no way effective. If a 100% security guarantee cannot be given, let us at least do everything we can to minimize the risks and to maximize the safety of those securing us.

EU, now more than ever, deals with extensive problems of border-crossing criminality, a rapidly increasing flow of refugees and an intensity of aggressive extremism and violent terrorism.

European integration cannot be stopped, so the establishment of full European cooperation between various national police agencies has become a necessity. But, in order for it to truly work, certain minimum standards have to be established. Police officers, who ensure our safety while risking lives and limb, deserve the very best protection and work conditions!

That is why EPU has started its major project “*Minimum Standards for Maximal Security*”, with a goal **to establish minimum standards for the European police officers when it comes to their Uniforms, Equipment and Training.**

Aiming to achieve that, the European Police Union has created and conducted the specific survey in order to identify extreme differences and deviations among police forces in different European countries. Once identified them, the next step was looking for their cause, which could have come from one of two sides:

- it is either the *Law* that is the problem, in which it is regulated badly or not regulated at all; or
- it can be the *Practice*, in which the law is not implemented, or simply it is violated.

In order to do that the scientific approach was used. EPU has set up a work group (with members from various countries), which have investigated the breaches in the basic rights (and social entitlements) of police officers in Europe. The benchmarks for this research were the requirements stipulated in the European Social Charter and the National Legislations.

With this project, when it comes to policing the most important question has been answered: **HOW can the security and safety of police officers, offenders and all other participants be improved in cases when police powers (non-fatal and deadly force) are used?**

1. By updating the legal framework

According to the international law and the human rights standards the activities of the police service determine the behaviour of the officers of the institution and the requirements on their professional realization.

The main issues in the legal framework as regards the use of force are two:

- Lack of or unclear procedures on the use of force;
- Lack of or too general policy as regards the use of force.

2. By improving technical security (uniform & equipment)

The officers must have appropriate police equipment in order to successfully discharge their duties.

Police equipment includes a few extremely indispensable items. The police badge (ID), uniform shirts and trousers are an indispensable part thereof. A truncheon, pepper spray and a gun are necessary, too. The police shoes, gloves and the bullet-proof vest, the wireless set, the handcuffs and the flashlight are also in the list.

The badge and the uniform clothing have a psychological effect. They are distinctive marks of the police officers and a clear sign for both the offenders and the public that the law enforcement officer is in the right place. They designate policeman as part of the executive power, and not as an ordinary person.

A pepper spray may be used first when force needs to be discharged. It is not deadly and its effect is short-lived. The spray completely disables the attacker and enables the officer to take control and handcuff him. The police truncheon is usually used when the spray is not enough to stop an assailant. Sometimes the spray enervates the offender, but a truncheon should also be used to stop his assault.

The police taser gun is a comparatively new part of police equipment which is used more and more frequently, but not in all European countries. It can neutralize an offender without causing death or significant injuries.

In some cases use of firearm is needed to prevent a deadly threat. Firearms are used as an extreme measure because innocent people may die, but the police officer will not stand good chance against a gun or a submachine gun if he doesn't have a firearm.

The shoes, gloves and bullet-proof vest protect the hands, legs and vital organs from injury when confronting offenders. Studies show that the bullet-proof vest increases the officers' chances of surviving by 14 times during a gunfight., and yet not all police officers in Europe are provided with them.

The police belt must bear the listed equipment. The various holsters, pockets and holders must be reliable and ensure fast and safe officer's access to the necessary items, at the same time not allowing easy disarming by others. This is mainly valid for firearms. There are various holster models designed with double and triple locking.

This list is non-exhaustive, and depending on the specific tasks and situation it may be extended, but the listed equipment saves lives of many law enforcement agents on daily basis all around the world, and on the other hand its none-availability in certain

countries is highly responsible for lost lives and endangerment of police officers and third parties, as well.

3. By providing high-quality police training

The adequate procedures, studies and analyses of the practice provide better protection to the individual officer. It is extremely important for police officers to undergo proper training. It not only increases the chances of using force safely and securely and of surviving in a confrontation, but holds them and their departments harmless against prosecution as well. Where the officer's training is adequate, he will apply lawful force. According to the law, the police departments are in charge of the officers' training on when and what force they should use.

The basic initial police training is not enough. To ensure high-quality training their frequent and mandatory retraining must include:

- ***Legal training***: information and studying the legal updates, analyses and practice;
- ***Techniques and tactics for the use of force***: improvement and exercising the techniques and the decision-making model (training by scenarios).

Furthermore, the officers' training must be ongoing; it should be conducted with the necessary intensity and should build up a way of their thinking, especially in stressful and high-pressure situations.

Our analysis has shown that a number of police departments in Europe conduct training with their officers once a year – prior to the annual tests, but there are some that do it “on paper” only and not in practice. This is far from what is necessary for the police officers to be able to apply these techniques under stress. In a state of stress they will react instinctively – they will hit, kick and fight, but this may turn ineffective or pointless depending on the circumstances. To be useful, the training should be realistic and intensive enough, without causing traumas to the trainees. In addition, we should not train police officers for the force use techniques only, but we should train their readiness for overcoming any possible resistance, too, by means of appropriate cases and mental activity training exercises. The training should be effective, safe and sufficient.

By signing the *Treaty Establishing the European Community* in Rome on 26.03.1957 the foundations of a closer alliance among the nations of Europe uniting the countries' actions towards ensuring economic and social progress by removing the barriers dividing Europe were

laid.

The parties on the Treaty were seeking to optimize the life and work conditions of their people by coordinating their actions to guarantee sustained economic development and common policy by eliminating the differences existing between the regions and the backwardness of the less developed areas.

The implementation of police powers is governed by international and national/governmental statutory regulations and by procedures of individual police departments, but this does not ensure a centralized and uniform understanding of police activities policy.

There are standards in place for the use of force, but they are not secured by equipment and training standards. It has resulted that today, even in a 21. Century, we have some police officers on the streets of Europe with all of the necessary equipment, while others patrol with their handguns only. Thus the officer is deprived of the possibility to use all means of applying lawful force. If an officer is unable to apply the full model of force grading or to apply gradation when using the auxiliary means, he will be forced to exceed the minimum necessary force or endanger his health and life, as well as the health and life of all involved in the incident.

The high public and social importance of the security and public order services requires permanent and high responsibility for the methods, forms and means ensuring their effectiveness. The present realities do not allow us to ignore problems such as terrorist acts, refugee waves and other crises which, even if bypassing some regions, have considerable impact on the security of all people in Europe.

We deeply believe that the introduction of uniform minimum criteria and standards of technical provision, training and work organization could be an important factor for optimizing and improving the security and public order services activities, which will guarantee a minimum standard for providing the security 'service' to every citizen and region of Europe.

The absence of equipment and outfit standards not only creates conditions for inequality and discrimination of some police officers compared to others, but also brings about a risk for the health and life of those who perform their duties using outdated individual protection means or working in an environment which lacks them altogether. Thus, not only the police officers' life, but the life of citizens who receive different quality of the security service and feel differently secured or unsecured within the European frames are jeopardized.

The introduction of minimum standards for the officers of European police sector as regards to their uniforms, equipment, training, payment, trade-union rights and protection, as well as of a clear definition of 'security sector' and 'security service' is of paramount importance in ensuring the EU citizens' security in all member-states. The issue of minimum standards is becoming increasingly vital on the background of the right of free movement within EU and the citizens'

expectations for ensuring an equal level of security and personal protection, as well as an equivalent quality of the services and assistance rendered by the officers whenever necessary.

Prior to introducing those uniform minimum standards for European police officers it is necessary for them to be clearly defined; for the structural units on national and European level forming it to be identified and for the service provided to the citizens by this sector to be described in detail. The ambiguity regarding the structural units forming the security sector is an obstacle to implementing specific measures for its reforming. It renders impossible the uniting of similar organizations and most of all, attaining of the goals set out in EU Strategy “*Europe 2020*”.

As we, over 800.000 police officers united in European Police Union, share our deep belief that European citizens should have guaranteed identical level of security and personal protection, equivalent quality of services and assistance of the police officers in time of need, no matter the country of the European Union they are in, we also find it necessary that the institutions of European Union should take immediate actions to develop certain minimum standards that provide police officers and their professional organizations guaranty in several directions. First of all, such standards should be established in the aspects of police **uniform, equipment and training**.

It is an absolute necessity to adopt:

- *the general minimum standards for the uniforms type, quality and wearing/replacement periods; - Appendix I*
- *the general minimum standard for the type and quality of the individual protection and safety means (equipment & vehicles); - Appendix II, III-a & III-b*
- *the minimum standards for the professional training and retraining. - Appendix IV*

Developing minimum standards in the aspects of **uniform, equipment and training** is the minimum that EU can and should do as of now. That is why this is EPU’s first collective major step. However, European Police Union will continue to fight for syndical rights and the adequate protection of the police officers, because in order for them to fulfill their duties they should be in state of independent means, fully protected by the law, well trained, properly equipped and highly motivated.