



EUROPEAN UNION

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Daniela Martinez and I am excited to be the President of the European Union this year. I am currently 17 years old and a senior here at International School of Cancun. In my free time I like to listen to music, go out with my friends and play games. At this moment I'm not sure of what I want to study. Even so, I am looking forward to studying abroad.

My first experience as a delegate was in 9th grade. At first I was very nervous, since Model UN was new to me. After some time, I really enjoyed the idea of participating in more MUN conferences. I have participated in all 3 past conferences of CancunMUN. This year, I am very honored to have the opportunity to be the President of the European Union for my last CancunMUN conference. Last year I was introduced to a new committee, the European Union. I was interested in the committee, since it follows a different procedure from the standard Model UN. The purpose of this committee is to encourage peace, manage economic crises, social conflicts, and political affairs.

For this conference, I expect commissioners to be prepared, responsible, respectful and maintain a professional environment during the sessions. At the same time, I do expect commissioners to be excited and have fun during CancunMUN. I look forward to working with all of you and having a great MUN experience! I encourage everyone to check the background guide, but remember this is a guide. It is important for all commissioners to do their own research to be well prepared and informed about the topics.

If you have any doubt or concern feel free to contact me via my email martinez.d@ciac.edu.mx. I look forward to meeting all of you, good luck!

Hello commissioners!

My name is Mauro Zurita, and this year I have the honor of being vice president for the European Commission in this year's MUN. I am 15 years old and I'm currently in 10th grade. In my free time, I mostly like to play football, watch movies or play video games. Especially sci-fi games. Once I graduate I'd like to study avionics and eventually become an airplane pilot.

This will be my second MUN conference. My past experience in MUN has been in CancunMUN, where I participated as a senator in the United States Senate. I have a deep appreciation towards international politics and the European Commission, making me proud and excited to be your vice president this year. As for the committee, the purpose of the European Commission is to promote the well being and security of its citizens while also addressing all of the problems and crises that the citizens of each state face. Whether national meaning country wise, internal meaning members of the EU or international, beyond the European Union.

As for you, we expect every commissioner to be respectful to other people and to follow all of the procedures forming part in this commission. I look forward to seeing all of you in person. If you have any doubts or questions feel free to contact me at mauro.zurita@ciac.edu.mx.

Make sure to look at the guide, just keep in mind it does not contain everything and you will have to do your own research. Make sure to study well, investigate and overall have a good experience in MUN. I look forward to seeing you. Good luck.



COMMITTEE MISSION

The European Union is an entity above its independent members, it creates a common market for European goods and represents Europe in an international stage. It was created after World War II in order to foster lasting peace and work together towards prosperity, integrating its members both politically and economically to achieve growth. Now, over 75 years later we still strive to reconcile nations, give humanitarian aid to the people and to help countries grow both economically and politically.

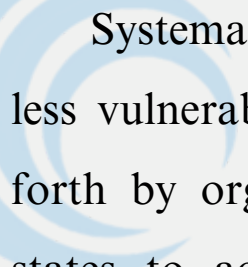


Topic A: Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking in the Balkans

Introduction

The Balkan countries serve as a hub for illegal drug trafficking and organized crime due to their strategic location, which connects Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. The smuggling route through the Balkans, known as the Balkan Route, was initially recognized as a primary migratory pathway. Over time, the UNODC began referring to it as a passage for smuggling heroin from Afghanistan and other Middle Eastern countries into Europe. In recent years, it has become a key passage for many other illicit drugs, including cocaine from South America, cannabis (marijuana and hashish) from Morocco and Albania, as well as synthetic drugs like MDMA (ecstasy), methamphetamine, and Captagon, which is widely produced and traded in the Middle East.

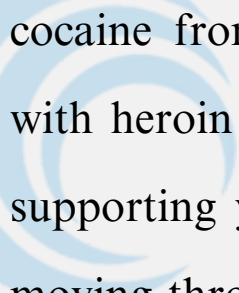
Criminal organizations in the Balkans are involved in more than just drug trafficking, as they also engage in human trafficking, arms smuggling, and money laundering. More than 65% of the groups involved in drug trafficking simultaneously engage in other criminal activities. These groups take advantage of weak governments, corruption, and poorly controlled borders to continue their activities, creating serious problems for regional stability and the security of the European Union. As a result, illicit drug consumption remains a major issue within the EU, with Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, France, and Croatia among the countries reporting the highest levels of use.



Systematic solutions are urgently needed to make the Balkans less vulnerable to the international and local trafficking brought forth by organized crime groups. This topic will drive member states to address policy issues ranging from public health to policing and surveillance. Although this topic incorporates a regional focus, its effects are felt throughout Europe and are part of a larger drug abuse issue that is prevalent throughout the continent. Furthermore, highlighting the domestic issues of drug consumption and culture within EU countries may also be a point of relevance for this commission.

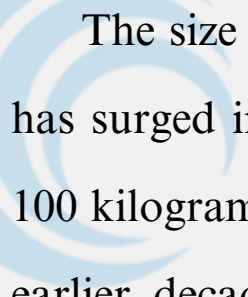
History

Around the 1980s, the use of illicit drugs experienced a surge in the European Union due to the emergence of the Balkan Route. The main drug trafficked was heroin, originating in Afghanistan before being transported through Turkey and ultimately reaching the Balkan countries. Years later, due to the Yugoslavian wars in the 1990s to the 2000s, the rise of organized crime syndicates involved in drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and human trafficking intensified, turning the region into a major hub for illicit activities. Organized crime groups such as the Albanian, Croatian, Serbian, Montenegrin, and Bosnian mafias had significant control over the illicit drug problem in the European Union. These organized crime syndicates then expanded their operations, creating new routes such as the Southern Route, the Northern Route, and the Caucasus Route. The Southern Route primarily handles



cocaine from South America, the Northern Route deals mainly with heroin and synthetic drugs, and the Caucasus Route plays a supporting yet crucial role by serving as a transit zone for drugs moving through Central Asia, Russia, and the Middle East before reaching Eastern Europe and the EU. These three new routes connect with the Balkan Route and provide more merchandise for smuggling.

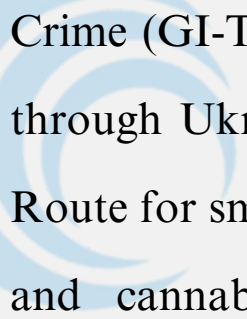
The involvement of Europol and its partner organisations, such as the EMCDDA and Interpol, has been crucial in preventing the expansion of crime and illicit drugs within the Balkan countries and the EU. They have arrested major members of these mafias, confiscated illegal weapon contraband, improved their networks for investigating, and prevented human trafficking with operations such as “Operation Hydra” or “Operation Focal Point”. Member states such as Germany, France, and Italy have led anti-crime efforts, strengthening legal frameworks and supporting Balkan law enforcement to prevent this issue. The Balkan states within the EU that have been directly affected by this issue, such as Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Greece, and Slovenia, have collaborated with Europol and Interpol to create operations and prevent smuggling. They have also collaborated with non-EU members directly affected, such as Albania, Kosovo, Bosnia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, to strengthen border patrol.



The size of individual heroin shipments along the Balkan route has surged in recent years, with seizures now frequently exceeding 100 kilograms per shipment, compared to a few dozen kilograms in earlier decades. This escalation reflects both the adaptability of organized crime groups and the challenges faced by law enforcement. Downstream seizures in EU countries like Austria, Germany, and the Netherlands have shattered records, with Austria alone seizing 102 kg of heroin in 2022 alongside other drugs. In 2022, 110 tonnes of cocaine were seized at the port of Antwerp alone. Belgium, the Netherlands, and Spain still remain the main destination countries for cocaine in Europe. Additionally, over 83 million adults in the EU have used illicit drugs at least once in their lifetime according to the European Drug Report 2022. In 2021, an estimated of at least 6,166 overdose deaths were recorded in the EU, creating a great concern for European individuals and their health.

Current Situation

The current landscape of organized crime and drug trafficking in the Balkans is characterized by an alarming escalation in both the scale of operations and the complexity of criminal networks. The ongoing war in Ukraine has significantly impacted drug trafficking routes, leading to a shift in traditional pathways. According to a report by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized



Crime (GI-TOC), the conflict has disrupted established drug flows through Ukraine, resulting in an increased reliance on the Balkan Route for smuggling various illicit drugs, including heroin, cocaine, and cannabis. This shift has intensified competition among organized crime groups operating in the region, as they adapt to new market demands and logistical challenges.

The rise of synthetic drugs, such as new psychoactive substances (NPS) and opioids like fentanyl, create additional challenges for law enforcement agencies. A collaborative training event held in December 2024 aimed to enhance regional responses to these emerging threats, gathering law enforcement officers from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia to share intelligence and best practices. In response to these escalating challenges, several measures have been implemented at both national and international levels. The European Commission adopted a new EU Roadmap on October 18, 2023, aimed at combating drug trafficking and organized crime. This roadmap outlines 17 actions focused on strengthening preventive efforts, dismantling high-risk criminal networks, enhancing cooperation with international partners, and bolstering the resilience of logistics hubs against exploitation by criminal organizations. Additionally, initiatives such as the EMPACT 2022 cycle emphasizes cross-border cooperation among law enforcement agencies from EU member

^I European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats have become permanent frameworks for addressing serious organized crime across Europe.



states and Western Balkan countries to tackle drug trafficking effectively.

While there have been efforts to fight organized crime and drug trafficking in the Balkans through international cooperation and policy initiatives, the situation remains critical. The ability of criminal groups to adjust to changes in geopolitics requires continuous attention and new methods to stop their activities. As member states collaborate to put strategies from recent plans into action, it will be important to address both immediate threats and the deeper problems to achieve lasting stability in the region.





Points to consider:

- How can the European Union strengthen law enforcement cooperation to combat drug trafficking in the Balkans?
- How critical is the illicit drug problem and organized crime in your country?
- To what extent should the commission focus on punishment and persecution to minimize crime?
- What other IGOs/UN organizations can be involved in helping alleviate these issues?
- What is your country doing to resolve this issue?
- How can border patrol be strengthened to prevent contraband?
- How can the European Union tackle corruption and weak governance in the Balkans to reduce organized crime?

Useful links:

<https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/balkan-route>

<https://e-erim.ief.hr/pojam/balkanska-ruta?locale=en>

<https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/24039/1/Opioidtrafficking.pdf>

https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/how-eu-fights-illicit-drug-trafficking-2023-06-26_en

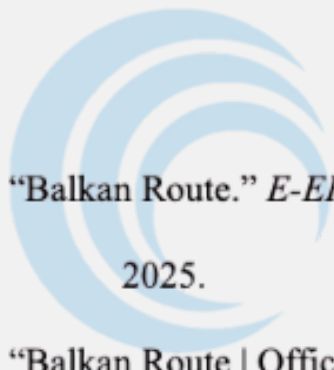
<https://telegrafi.com/en/drug-routes-in-the-Western->

[Balkans%2C-how-much-it-costs-and-which-country-consumes-the-most](https://telegrafi.com/en/drug-routes-in-the-Western-Balkans%2C-how-much-it-costs-and-which-country-consumes-the-most)



COUNTRY BOX

Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Croatia
Republic of Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden



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www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/IFF_report_2015_final_web.pdf.
- “EU Drug Market: Heroin and Other Opioids — In-Depth Analysis. - Drugs and Alcohol.”
Drugsandalcohol.ie, June 2024,
[https://doi.org/European%20Monitoring%20Centre%20for%20Drugs%20and%20Drug%20Addiction,%20Europol.%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20\(2024\)%20%20%20EU%20drug%20market:%20heroin%20and%20other%20opioids%20%E2%80%94%20in-depth%20analysis..](https://doi.org/European%20Monitoring%20Centre%20for%20Drugs%20and%20Drug%20Addiction,%20Europol.%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20(2024)%20%20%20EU%20drug%20market:%20heroin%20and%20other%20opioids%20%E2%80%94%20in-depth%20analysis..) Accessed 9 Mar. 2025.
- “European Drug Report 2023: Trends and Developments | Wwww.euda.europa.eu.”
Wwww.euda.europa.eu, www.euda.europa.eu/publications/european-drug-report/2023_en.
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Balkan Insight, 17 July 2023,
balkaninsight.com/2023/07/17/ukraine-war-may-increase-drug-trafficking-on-balkan-route-report/. Accessed 9 Mar. 2025.
- <https://www.facebook.com/telegraficom>. “Drug Routes in the Western Balkans - How Much Does It Cost and Which Country Consumes the Most?” *Telegrafi*, 26 Nov. 2022,
telegrafi.com/en/drug-routes-in-the-Western-Balkans%2C-how-much-it-costs-and-which-country-consumes-the-most/. Accessed 9 Mar. 2025.



Krasniqi, Kole. "Organized Crime in the Balkans." *European Scientific Journal, ESJ*, vol. 12, no. 19, July 2016, p. 204, <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2016.v12n19p204>.

Opioid Trafficking Routes from Asia to Europe.

www.drugsandalcohol.ie/24039/1/Opioidtrafficking.pdf.

"Organized Crime in the Western Balkans." *Trends in Organized Crime*, vol. 11, no. 4, Oct. 2008, pp. 430–36, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12117-008-9050-0>.

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SPEAKING POINTS 5 Minutes Statement -Intersessional Meeting of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drug -Panel on Drug Supply Europol's Contribution in the Fight against Drug Trafficking.

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"UNODC Promotes Concerted Efforts to Confront the Challenge of Cocaine Trafficking from South America to the Balkans." *United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime*, 2021,

www.unodc.org/unodc/gpcd/news/2024/unodc-promotes-concerted-efforts-to-confront-the-challenge-of-cocaine-trafficking-from-south-america-to-the-balkans.html.



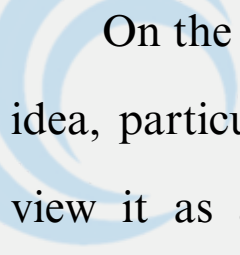
Topic B: Establishing a Strong European Defense Union

Introduction

Establishing a European Defense Union (EDU) is crucial in times like these. With the new Trump administration and the changing landscape of global leadership, the European Union can no longer fully depend on NATO to ensure the safety of its citizens in times of war. Currently, only 23 out of the 27 countries in the European Union are part of NATO. This Defense Union would include all 27 EU member states.

The European Union is an essential partner for NATO. The two organizations share common values, strategic interests, and a majority of member countries. They collaborate closely in crisis management and capability development, addressing hybrid threats, tackling challenges posed by growing strategic competition, and building the capacities of their common partners in the east and south.

However, many countries already in NATO are reluctant to spend additional funds on top of what they already contribute to NATO. They also see little point in being responsible for two separate organizations. If NATO goes to war, they are obligated to provide military support, and the same would apply if the EDU were to engage in conflict. Many countries view this as a duplication of efforts and a waste of resources.



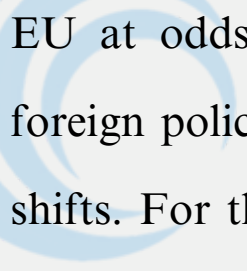
On the other hand, some countries see the EDU as an excellent idea, particularly those that are not already part of NATO. They view it as a proactive measure for prevention. After all, what country would dare declare war on a European nation, knowing it would essentially mean declaring war on the entire EU?

This committee would not only address potential conflicts of war but would also focus on issues such as migration across the EU and overall matters related to the safety and security of European citizens.

History

Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine has exposed Europe's security vulnerabilities. Despite almost doubling their defense expenditure since 2014, European nations on average still spend below NATO's 2% of GDP guidelines, while the U.S. finances nearly two-thirds of NATO's military budget. At the national level, fiscal constraints limit European sovereigns' capacity to boost military expenditure. As a consequence, European governments are exploring joint financing options for defense, such as EU-backed bonds, other supranational currencies or the EDU.

Under Trump's previous presidency, the US has withdrawn from key international agreements from the Paris Agreement to the Iran Nuclear Deal, and pursued trade policies that often put the




EU at odds with its historical ally. The unpredictability of US foreign policy highlighted Europe's vulnerability to external power shifts. For the EU, Trump's re-election should act as a catalyst to deepen inner integration and pursue a more coherent, independent foreign policy.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, re-elected for a second term, has prioritised defence as a key pillar for completing the European Single Market and establishing a robust European Defence Union. Von der Leyen announced a white paper on the future of European defence within the first 100 days of her new Commission. The EU's new High Representative, Kaja Kallas and the new Commissioner for Defence, Andrius Kubilius, have been entrusted with the task. Since December 2024, the European Parliament's former subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) is now a full standing committee. This decision aligns with citizens' concerns, parliamentary priorities, and also with CESI's demands, as it reflects the new importance EU defence policies have.

Current Situation

The United States has repeatedly threatened to reduce military and economic support to the European Union. A recent survey of European experts indicated that a complete U.S. withdrawal from Europe would be as destabilizing as a Russian nuclear attack. The



new Trump administration's policies, including potential negotiations with Russia without EU involvement, demands for greater European financial contributions, and trade disputes, raise serious concerns about the reliability of the U.S. as an ally. J.D. Vance's speech at the Munich Security Conference further amplified these anxieties.

Europe faces an increasingly complex security environment, marked by growing demands for the EU to act as a more capable, coherent, and strategic global actor. The EU possesses a unique set of instruments to promote peace and security. A comprehensive approach, as outlined in the Strategic Compass, is essential for addressing the multifaceted crises and security threats of today and the future. Tensions and conflicts continue to shape the European landscape. The ongoing war in Ukraine has prompted many to consider whether an EDU, with Ukraine as a member, could have deterred the invasion.

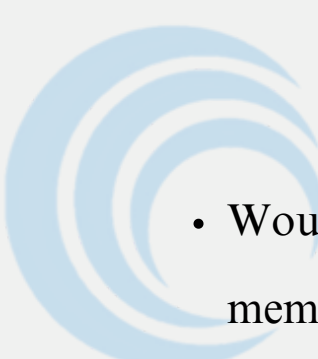
In February 2025, France and Germany argued over the future direction of European defence. France advocates for greater strategic autonomy and the development of independent European military capabilities, while Germany emphasizes the importance of maintaining close ties with the United States and NATO. The same could be said for other Eastern states that have recently expressed

concerns about the EDU, fearing that it could undermine NATO's role and weaken the transatlantic alliance. They prioritize the U.S. security guarantee and view NATO as the primary guarantor of their security.



Points to Consider:

- How would NATO and other geopolitical organizations perceive the EDU, and what actions might they take in response?
- What would be the reactions of countries within and outside of Europe to the establishment of the EDU?
- How would member states finance the EDU and ensure adequate funding for its operations?

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- Would participation in the EDU be mandatory for all EU members?
 - Is an independent defence union truly necessary, or are existing security arrangements sufficient?
 - Would non-EU European countries, such as the United Kingdom, be permitted to join the EDU?
 - How would the EDU affect the EU's relationship with the United States, particularly in terms of trade and other vital partnerships?
 - What implications would the EDU have for EU member states that are also part of NATO? Would they need to choose between the two organizations?
 - Would the EDU possess sufficient strength to effectively counter threats from Russia, the United States, and other global superpowers?



Useful Links:

- <https://www.politico.eu/article/donald-trump-destroy-european-union-brussels/>
- https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2025/03/10/european-companies-are-stunned-by-trump-s-tariff-threats_6738992_19.html
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/07/world/europe/europe-self-defense-trump.html>
- <https://ecfr.eu/article/letter-from-washington-why-trump-wont-like-europes-ukraine-plan/?amp>
- <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/02/15/franco-german-split-over-european-defence-strategy-widens>





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The goal of the European Union is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its citizens within its borders.

