

Joint Statement on the Spanish EU Council Presidency For a secure, resilient and future-proof Europe

Brussels / Madrid, 03 July, 2023

The *Confederation of European Security Services (CoESS)* and the *Asociación Profesional de Compañías Privadas de Servicios de Seguridad (APROSER)* very much look forward to the Spanish EU Council Presidency. It comes at a decisive stage of EU policymaking and will reflect the many drivers of change impacting European society, economy and public security. With the European Commission and Parliament approaching the end of their term, we wish the officials in charge every success in finding consensus on a diverse range of dossiers, but also in building the foundation for a future-oriented, more resilient, European Union.

Recognising the value of private security services to European citizens and economy

The Spanish Presidency will lead negotiations in EU Council on highly relevant dossiers for public security - notably the Commission's proposals for a European Artificial Intelligence Act (EU AI Act). At the same time, we witness an intensifying discussion at EU-level around a better protection of Critical Infrastructure and public spaces, for instance against the malicious use of drones. The private security sector plays an increasingly indispensable role in enhancing the resilience of supply chains, Critical Infrastructure and public spaces against diversifying, hybrid threats, which is why we hope for a pro-active engagement of the Presidency with our industry.

Our proposals to the Spanish EU Council Presidency:

- We invite the Spanish EU Council Presidency to engage with our sector, notably with CoESS and APROSER as the representative and officially recognised employers' organisations in the private security services, on relevant dossiers mentioned in this statement and beyond.
- In particular, we call on the upcoming Presidency Trio, initiated by the Spanish Presidency, to follow-up on [Council Recommendation of 13 June 2002](#) and the [Council Conclusions of 07 June 2021](#) and to host a roundtable of national authorities overseeing the private security services in order to discuss matters of common interest - such as resilience of Critical Infrastructure and the protection of public spaces in the face of changing threat scenarios. In case it would be considered advisable we are keen to support this initiative.

Adapt legislation to realities in a changing security landscape

European society is facing an unprecedented array of drivers of change, such as climate change, consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the war against Ukraine, the rapid development of disruptive technologies, inflation and labour shortages. In one way or another, these drivers impact public security: challenges in the protection of public spaces and Critical Infrastructure emerge at the same time as the entire security community, including private security, deal with the integration of new technologies into security solutions as much as with labour and skills shortages. We call on the Presidency to always consider the human aspect when working on respective EU legislation.

Our proposals to the Spanish EU Council Presidency:

- Assess the impact of EU legislation on both public security and the security officers. For instance, the EU AI Act is of the highest importance for both law enforcement and private security and should reflect the highest quality provisions in human oversight (Art. 14) as well as legal certainty and adequate administrative burden for businesses. Legal certainty also requires a swift agreement on the text in inter-institutional negotiations.
- We highly welcome the adoption of Directive 2022/2557 on the Resilience of Critical Entities (CER Directive) and call upon the Presidency to foster an exchange on its transposition in the different EU Member States. It is important to ensure an adequate protection of Critical Infrastructure in Europe based on legislation that guarantees effective quality control of security officers protecting Critical Entities, for example with the help of [Standards](#).

Public security empowered through qualified workers

In the private security services, like in many other industries, labour and skills shortages pose a strategic challenge to the industry's sustainability. And, unlike other industries, this development also poses a threat to public security. Together with our Social Partner UNI Europa, we have looked into this matter with the help of EU-funding and identified a wide range of solutions and recommendations to be taken at EU- and national level (available at www.securityskills.eu). The Spanish EU Council Presidency can help create an environment for businesses, and Social Partners, to effectively deal with this issue and help businesses and workers meet rising market demand in public security.

Our proposals to the Spanish EU Council Presidency:

- We hope that the Presidency will support the exchange of solutions and best practices on tackling skills shortages at EU level - for instance through the promotion of the EU Year on Skills and pro-active initiatives on topics such as AI literacy.
- In practical terms, it is important that no additional burden is put on businesses, and security companies in particular, to allow for an effective deployment of staff. While the highest

levels of quality are required in the training and background checks of security officers, the EU must respect Member State competencies and not introduce unnecessary burden on security companies, as per the Commission proposal for a Delegated Act supplementing Directive 2022/2557 on the Resilience of Critical Entities (see [here](#) for further information).

Enforce the provision of high-quality security services to European citizens

Although the regulation of private security services is rightly a national competency, EU legislation can play an important role in guaranteeing the provision of high-quality security services to European citizens. Quality control provisions as per the CER Directive and qualitative provisions on human oversight within the EU AI Act are only two examples. A major barrier to enforcing quality in the security services are, however, the EU Public Procurement Directives. As it stands, public procurement policies and practices, which are a direct consequence of the outdated EU Public Procurement Directives, incentivise some bidders in the market to ignore social criteria, weakening the positive impact of collective bargaining and impacting negatively working conditions and quality of services - ultimately affecting public security in a negative way.

Our proposals to the Spanish EU Council Presidency:

- Together with our European Trade Union, UNI Europa, we call for a revision of the current EU Public Procurement Directives and advise the Spanish government to engage on this topic in the context of the upcoming EU elections and the drafting of a new European Commission Work Programme (see our Social Partner Declaration [here](#)).
- We underline the strategic importance of cross-sectoral and sectoral Social Partners in EU policymaking, guaranteed by Art. 151 of the European constitution and recently recognised again in the [Council Recommendation on strengthening Social Dialogue in the EU](#). Social Partners, such as CoESS and APROSER, are not mere industry representatives, but an actor to be recognised in EU policymaking that should be pro-actively consulted on policy initiatives impacting operations and working conditions in the security services.

CoESS and APROSER are committed to supporting the Spanish EU Council Presidency in its efforts to not only close important dossiers of the current legislative term, but also to anticipate needs for future reform at EU-level and to promote a pro-active engagement between law enforcement authorities and the Social Partners in the security industry across Europe.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'V' followed by a long horizontal stroke and a small loop at the end.

Vinz van Es
President
CoESS

A handwritten signature in blue ink, featuring a series of connected loops and a final downward stroke.

Angel Córdoba Díaz
President
APROSER



About CoESS

CoESS acts as the voice of the private security industry, covering 23 countries in Europe and representing 2 million security officers, over 45,000 companies and generating a turnover of over €40 billion. The private security services provide a wide range of services, both for private and public clients, ranging from Critical Infrastructure facilities to public spaces and government and EU institutions buildings. CoESS is active in European Sectoral Social Dialogue with UNI Europa and numerous EU Expert Groups, including the EU Operators Forum for the Protection of Public Spaces.

About APROSER

APROSER is the Spanish Professional Association of Private Security Services Companies. Active since 1977 and founding member of CEOE and CoESS, its members provide more than 70% of the private security services carried out in Spain, employing a similar percentage of the approximately 100.000 professionals of sector. According to the latest data available, 1,571 companies operate in the Spanish Private Security sector with a turnover of 4,431 million euros in 2021. APROSER's activities focus on defending the sector and its associates in the guarding and cash in transit activities.