



EU Maritime Security Strategy Action Plan 2020 Implementation report

Fact Sheet

Summary

*The **European Union maritime security strategy (EUMSS)** defines the strategic interests of the EU in the area of maritime security and explains how the EU defends those interests, in full respect of international rules and principles.*

An action plan – adopted in 2014 and revised in 2018 – facilitates the implementation of the EUMSS. It strengthens collaboration between all stakeholders across sectors and borders – within the EU and beyond – to promote stability, the rule of law and good maritime governance at the global level.

More specifically, the action plan sets actions in five cross-cutting areas and in geographical areas of key importance for the EU's maritime security interests.

Progress and achievements so far have been significant:

1. **International cooperation** has been instrumental to improve maritime security at global level:

- The EU has deepened its cooperation with the UN to build synergies in the fight against maritime crime, terrorism and piracy. The EU continues to uphold key principles for rules-based governance at sea in line with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.
- The EU has strengthened cooperation with strategic partners around the world. Naval missions and operations launched under the European Common Security and Defence Policy have contributed to fight migrant smuggling and human trafficking in the Mediterranean Sea and piracy off the Somali coast in the Indian Ocean.
- The EU has also consolidated its long-standing cooperation with NATO in a number of maritime security-related activities.

2. The EU and its Member States are strengthening interoperability and interconnectivity of national and EU-level maritime surveillance systems. This aims to enable an improved **maritime awareness** by facilitating direct, reliable, and real-time **sharing of information**. This, in turn, will support a more efficient decision-making and operational performance at sea. Objectives include:

- digitalisation of exchanges and harnessing of innovation
- improving resilience, including vis-à-vis cyber-attacks, and ensuring safe handling of sensitive and classified information.

This applies to all systems managed by European agencies and to voluntary maritime surveillance networks such as CISE and MARSUR.

3. Work on European maritime **capability development, research and innovation** increasingly benefited from national and European projects and programmes, as well as from EU defence initiatives, notably the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the European Defence Fund including its precursors.



Furthermore, new capability projects of the European Defence Agency focus on (semi-) autonomous maritime surveillance capabilities, underlying research advances through national and EU collaborative projects and programmes, including the Overarching Strategic Research Agenda.

Industrial innovation and cooperation is also being enhanced through maritime industrial clusters and prioritisation work, including the Key Strategic Activities.

4. **Risk awareness and management:** Key activities focussed on increasing the resilience of critical maritime infrastructure, the security of the supply chain, and the protection of external maritime borders. Significant efforts have been made to consolidate the capacity to address cyber and hybrid threats, climate challenges and maritime environmental disasters by applying common methodologies and capabilities for risk management, and innovative risk analysis techniques.
5. **Education and training** on EU maritime security continues to be promoted through a wide range of education and training courses at national and regional level. The European Coast Guard Function Forum acts as a catalyst for cooperation, with the EU maritime agencies exploring the follow-up of the European Coast Guard Functions Academy (ECGFA) training network project (ECGFA NET). Exercises such as COASTEX ensure effectiveness of common procedures and tactics and foster interoperability in the maritime domain.
6. **Regional cooperation** is another key aspect of the EU's action on maritime security. Expanded cooperation among Member States has led to concrete results for search and rescue and joint maritime surveillance operations. Beyond its borders, the EU continues to cooperate with external regional partners in geographic areas of strategic importance, such as the Gulf of Guinea and the western Indian Ocean region. Increasingly, the EU is also cooperating with Asian partners, in particular through the EU-ASEAN partnership.

A detailed presentation can be found in the last [report on the implementation of the EUMSS Action Plan](#)

The EU and its Member States' collaborative efforts to strengthen maritime security **also contributed to the strategic priorities defined in the EU Strategic Agenda for 2019-2024¹**, such as:

- (i) promoting the EU as a global security provider, including through supporting multilateralism and rules-based ocean governance;
- (ii) protecting EU citizens and freedoms, including by supporting the EU's digitalisation process;
- (iii) addressing environmental challenges and climate issues (European Green Deal), through enhancing the protection of EU maritime environment, minimising the impact of climate change on the oceans and a better governance for the oceans;
- (iv) strengthening regional cooperation, through enhanced sea basin collaboration.

¹ EU Strategic Agenda (2019 – 2024) <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/eu-strategic-agenda-2019-2024/>