

Press release

Minister Browne attends the Justice and Home Affairs Council in Luxembourg

From [Department of Justice \(/en/organisation/departments-of-justice/\)](/en/organisation/departments-of-justice/)

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Minister James Browne represented Ireland at the Justice and Home Affairs Council held in Luxembourg on 8 and 9 June 2023.

Key items for discussion at the Home Affairs Council included an agreement on a General Approaches for the Asylum and migration management Regulation and Asylum procedure Regulation. The lunch discussion focused on Combatting violent extremism and terrorism before Ministers discussed the overall state of the Schengen area and Visa policy in Schengen Council format. The day concluded with a state of play on Russia's aggression against Ukraine, including an update on temporary protection for people fleeing the war and finally an update on access to data for effective law enforcement.

Speaking on the key topic of asylum and migration, the Minister said:

"Ireland welcomes the General Approaches agreed yesterday on the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation and the Asylum Procedure Regulation which are two key proposals under the EU Migration and Asylum Pact, the aim of which is to create a fairer, more efficient, and more sustainable migration and asylum system across the EU. This has been a longstanding challenge for the EU and there have been significant efforts made in recent times to progress reform in this area so agreement this week was crucial in that regard. Ireland fully supports the work done at EU level to get agreement on these key measures which will see migration dealt with in a more uniform, comprehensive and holistic manner and we will continue to work with our EU partners to deliver change."

The Justice Council began with Ministers agreeing a General Approach on five legislative proposals including the Directive amending Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, Directive on asset recovery and confiscation, Directive against strategic lawsuits against public participation, Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence and Directive on the definition of criminal offences and penalties for the violation of Union restrictive measures. Ministers also had a detailed exchange of views on the Investigation and prosecution of violations of EU restrictive measures. At the working lunch, Ministers discussed the Judicial aspects of the fight against organised crime. The Council concluded with a state of play on the European Public Prosecutor's Office, and EU accession to the European Convention on Human Rights.

Speaking on the approval of a General Approach for the Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence, the Minister said:

"As we know, there is currently no specific piece of EU legislation that comprehensively addresses violence against women and domestic violence, and Ireland welcomes the approval of this General Approach which is an important step in the process. This Directive will be the first Act specifically addressing this type of violence, by filling identified gaps in protection, access to justice, and support for victims. However, we should always be striving to maximise the tools available to tackle this important issue and, while this measure is very welcome, we have more work to do in this field."

Speaking on the topic of organised crime, the Minister said:

"Today's discussion covered a variety of important topics in the Justice area, and Ireland welcomes the agreements reached by the Council on a number of measures many of which have a particular focus on tackling organised crime. This is a priority area for the Swedish Presidency and it is a testament to them that we have been in a position to progress these key proposals. We are in a time where cross-border crime is constantly evolving and it is crucial that the innovation of organised criminals is met with greater innovation on our part. The challenges we face are by definition transnational and Ireland welcomes all efforts to develop a joined up EU approach to confront them."

Whilst in Luxembourg, Minister James Browne also addressed a joint event in the European Court of Justice to mark the 50th anniversary of Ireland and Denmark's accession to European Union, which was then the European Economic Community.

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