

2024 Activity report

European Forum for Urban Security (Efus)

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Foreword

The highlight of Efus' rich year of work in 2024 was our eighth *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference, which we held in March in Brussels. It showed us once again how precious it is to meet in person with hundreds of member local and regional authorities and partners from various professional disciplines. No matter how efficient and ubiquitous our modern communication tools are, nothing replaces face-to-face exchanges when dealing with complex issues of urban security.

Some 30 topics were discussed at the conference, but three emerged as of particular interest to all those present: the issue of violence linked to drug trafficking, which is linked to organised crime; the issue of crises of various kinds and how to locally manage them, and the issue of democracy and how it is weakened by polarisation and the spread of disinformation. What can local and regional authorities do to prevent and counter such phenomena and better protect citizens?

Regarding drugs, there were forceful interventions highlighting how trafficking is now affecting not only what we can call traditional hotspots, but also small and medium urban areas across Europe. Speakers called for greater direct cooperation among cities – what one termed a “coalition of the willing” – to design common responses. Indeed, at the end of the year, our Executive Committee published a resolution calling for the creation of a “*coalition of 50 European cities and regions that would work together to strengthen and promote their local policies against drug-related violence and harm and demonstrate concrete results.*” We seek to have this coalition up and running in the course of 2025.

The issue of crisis management is also a key concern for our member local and regional authorities who are responsible for the safety of residents in case of ecological, industrial, man-made, or terrorism-related crisis. This is why Efus has been working for several years on building the resilience of local authorities, for example with tools enabling better communication between civil society and civil protection, or between civil protection and emergency agencies on both sides of the Franco-Belgian border.

Regarding the issue of disinformation and growing political polarisation, notably how certain political movements use the universal need for security to advocate more political control and repression, speakers called for an urban security that is based on strengthening social cohesion and crime prevention. Efus has been working for over a decade on how to locally prevent polarisation and violent extremism. More broadly,

it remains inspired in all its activities by its founding principle that urban security must be built on a balance between prevention, sanction and social cohesion.

Elizabeth Johnston, Efus Executive Director

1. Security, Democracy and Cities conference

The international and interdisciplinary Security, Democracy and Cities conference is organised by the European Forum for Urban Security every three years. Unique in its field, this event is intended for all urban security stakeholders: elected officials, civil servants, national administrations, magistrates, law enforcement agencies, social workers, researchers, and representatives of the private sector and civil society.

The [2024 edition of the conference](#) was held on 20-22 March in Brussels. Efus organised the event in partnership with [safe.brussels](#), the public organisation that manages urban security in the territory of Brussels-Capital.



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More than 700 participants representing 125 cities and regions from 26 countries (in majority from Europe) were in attendance, as well as some 150 speakers.

The prevention of drug consumption and trafficking, security technologies and artificial intelligence, crisis management, the safety of public spaces, mental health in public spaces, and gender-based violence were some of the key issues that were discussed over two and a half days.

The conference was also an opportunity to present numerous inspiring practices implemented by town and city councils and civil society organisations across Europe.

Attendees in Brussels were offered the opportunity to visit on site a dozen prevention schemes put in place in the territory of Brussels-Capital.

Following the conference, Efus (Executive Committee, member cities, associate experts and technical team in Paris) updated the [Security, Democracy and Cities Manifesto](#), which was published in September 2024.

Efus is pleased with the success of this eighth edition of its Security, Democracy and Cities conference, which shows once more the relevance of such in-person meetings of urban security policymakers and practitioners from different professional backgrounds and countries.

The next edition of the conference will be held in 2027. It will coincide with Efus' 40th anniversary!

> [Read the summaries of the conference sessions](#)

- **Selection of the host city of the 2027 *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference**

In the autumn, Efus published a call for applications to be the *Security, Democracy and Cities* 2027 conference host city.

The next edition will coincide with Efus' 40th anniversary. It will follow the Security, Democracy and Cities conferences of Brussels (2024), Nice (2021), Barcelona-Catalonia (2017), Aubervilliers-Saint-Denis (2012), Zaragoza (2006), Naples (2000), Paris (1991) and Montreal (1989).

2. Work topics

Audits and Methodology

> European project

IcARUS: Innovative AppRoaches to Urban Security

Efus led this project funded through the European Union's Horizon 2020 research programme, which concluded in August 2024. Its main objective was to rethink and adapt existing tools and methods to help security actors to anticipate and innovate, and thus better respond to emerging challenges. This cross-cutting project built on the experience garnered by Efus over some 35 years.

> Partners

Cities of Lisbon (Portugal), Nice (France), Riga (Latvia), Rotterdam (Netherlands), Stuttgart (Germany) and Turin (Italy)

Other partners: Erasmus University of Rotterdam (Netherlands), Eurocircle (France), Fondation de l'Institut de recherche IDIAP (Switzerland), Globaz, S.A. (Portugal), Kentro Meleton Asfaleias (Greece), Makesense (France), Panteion University (Greece), Plus Ethics (Spain), Salzburg University of Applied Sciences (Austria), University of Leeds (United Kingdom), University of Salford (United Kingdom).

> Coordination for Efus

Most of Efus' technical team worked on this project.

> Duration

September 2020 - August 2024

> Budget

5,291,015.74 € – 100% funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 programme

> A project in line with the European Union's key priorities

IcARUS, one of the few projects funded by the European Union's H2020 programme to be led by a non-governmental organisation, was in line with the EU's current priorities.

It was directly aimed at local and regional authorities, which are the level of governance closest to citizens, to help them improve their urban security strategies

and responses. In this respect, IcARUS contributes to fulfilling the European Union's ambition of being closer to citizens.

Furthermore, IcARUS' and Efus' approach of co-producing urban security with all the relevant actors corresponded to the EU's "whole of society" approach.

The areas in which IcARUS focused also correspond with the EU's priorities, in particular the prevention of violent radicalisation, the security of public spaces, the prevention and fight against organised crime, and strengthening research and innovation in the area of security.

More broadly, one of IcARUS' main concepts, which has long been promoted by Efus, is that security is a democratic good that must always be coupled with the respect of fundamental rights. The EU also advocates this approach.

One of IcARUS' main objectives was to build on 35 years of experience in urban security to help cities work with a long-term approach, to be more agile, and to anticipate how urban security phenomena will evolve.

IcARUS 2024 activities

- **Demonstration of the 'tools' (schemes) developed with the six partner cities**

One of the project's main deliverables were the tools, or schemes, developed with the six partner cities: Lisbon (Portugal), Nice (France), Riga (Latvia), Rotterdam (Netherlands), Stuttgart (Germany), and Turin (Italy). These schemes were all intended to address a security issue that the cities had previously earmarked as a priority. They were tested in the field, then evaluated and fine-tuned so as to be effectively implemented. The project partners also drew up recommendations for any other city that would be interested in adapting and implementing similar schemes.

The six tools are:

- *Jovem Design Lisboa* (JDL, Lisbon), a design-oriented approach to engage young people in community safety.
- *Demandez Angela* (Nice), the city adapted this scheme already used by cities around the world, establishing a network of partner hospitality venues where people finding themselves harassed on the streets can ask for support.
- *Par drošu Rīgu!* ('For a safe Riga') provides an evidence-based approach to better understand citizens' feeling of insecurity and adapt local police's tactics.
- *The Spaanse Polder Café* (Rotterdam): a collaborative approach to engage local businesses in the security of the Spaanse Polder Business Park.
- *Trick17* (Stuttgart), through a performance in public spaces based on magic, citizens are being alerted to the 'tricks' used by extremists to recruit new

followers.

- *Sbocciamo Torino* (Turin): a multi-stakeholder governance network model that provides an evidence-based approach to co-produce interventions on juvenile delinquency.

- **Use of the Design Thinking methodology to develop the six tools**

The tools mentioned above were developed by the project's partner cities with the help of Efus, the University of Salford and the IDIAP research centre. The partner cities used the Design Thinking methodology, which is focused on the needs of beneficiaries and end users, to do this work. This methodology was used throughout the project for all the activities that were conducted over a period of four years.

- **Training for the partner cities in the use of the IcARUS tools**

The six partner cities received ad-hoc training before demonstrating their tools (or schemes). This training programme was designed by the IcARUS partners, i.e., Efus, the University of York, the IDIAP research institute, Camino, and the University of Salford, together with the project's partner cities. Each session included a section on gender inclusivity led by Natalie Higham-James, Research Fellow at the University of York's school of Law. Furthermore, a training manual was produced with the aim of helping cities across Europe that were not partners in the project to adopt the IcARUS toolkit.

- **Presentation of the project in various conferences, including that of Efus**

- The project partners took part in Efus' *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference, in March 2024 in Brussels, where the project had an exhibition stand. Efus organised [a series of podcasts](#) on that occasion (see below).

- In April, the project was presented at the European Police Congress in Berlin by representatives of the Erasmus University, the city of Lisbon, the Riga municipal police, and the city of Turin.

- In April, Efus, represented by Anne Boisseau, Programme Manager, presented the project at the European Crime Prevention conference organised by [EUCPN](#) in Tallinn (Estonia).

- In May, the project was represented by the Riga municipal police at an event on community policing organised by the University of Salzburg.

- In May, the project, and more specifically the Rotterdam tool, was presented to the French city of Le Havre during a work meeting focused on organised

crime and drug trafficking.

- **The project's methodology experimented in a French city**

[Makesense](#), an international association that was a partner in the IcARUS project, used the Design Thinking methodology as part of a support mission conducted by the French Forum for Urban Security (FFSU) for the town of Lamballe Armor. This initiative responded to the objective of disseminating the project's methodology and results among Efus member cities.

- **Six policy briefs**

Throughout the project, the partnership deeply valued the role of policy in shaping sustainable urban security solutions. As such, the partners sought to ensure that the research and tools were not only theoretical but also grounded in practical applications through our pilot programmes. By working hand in hand with policymakers and local authorities, IcARUS aimed to create real, lasting impact for the future. The policy briefs reflect this commitment, offering concrete recommendations based on the pilots. These briefs are designed to guide future urban security strategies, helping to foster safer, more resilient communities. They are:

1. [Acknowledging the Key Role of Local and Regional Authorities in Preventing Radicalisation Leading to Violent Extremism](#)
2. [Building Resilient Communities: The Local Roots and Impacts of Organised Crime](#)
3. [Fostering Youth Engagement for Juvenile Delinquency Prevention](#)
4. [Implementing Evaluation Strategies in Urban Security Prevention Programmes](#)
5. [Fostering community involvement in safe public spaces](#)
6. [Unveiling the Power of Social Innovation in Urban Security](#)

> The policy briefs are available on the IcARUS section of our website, [here](#)

- **Inventory of over 100 practices**

The project partners compiled an inventory of more than 100 promising practices to prevent and tackle urban security issues. They are all integrated into a freely accessible repository, which was developed by IDIAP: icarus-urbansecurityrepository.org.

- **The IcARUS podcast series**

Efus created through IcARUS a new podcast channel and has broadcast seven

episodes in t2024, some in English and some in French (see also section on Communications below):

- Learning from the past: 30 years of crime prevention and urban security
- Grands événements sportifs, enjeux et opportunités
- Key Learnings with regards to Innovation
- Advancing Urban Security with the support of Technology
- Local strategies to prevent violent extremism
- Reportage : Immersion dans une salle de consommation à moindre risque
- Gender in Urban Security

> [access the podcasts here](#)

● **IcARUS final conference, June 2024**



The partners gathered in Liège (Belgium) in June for the project's final conference, which was also attended by many Efus members as well as a representative of the European Union, Marta Cygan, Director Innovation & Audit at the Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission.

Organised right after the General Assembly, this meeting was an opportunity to review the project's main results, notably the schemes implemented by the partner cities of Lisbon, Nice, Riga, Rotterdam, Stuttgart and Turin. Efus will now seek to capitalise on the wealth of insights and findings garnered through the four-year project with the partner cities and the other partners. Efus will look to disseminate the project's insights among its member cities and fine-tune its offer of services to European local and

regional authorities through the Innovation Studio.

The offer includes local security audits, state-of-the-art reviews, peer learning, strategic consulting, implementation of pilot projects, the evaluation and management of knowledge (in particular through training), and networking with the private sector, civil society and research organisations.

In order to carry out this work, Efus will benefit from the expertise of the European Commission's Horizon Results Booster programme, for which the IcARUS has been selected. Since November, and for a duration of four years, it is receiving support from experts with the objective of optimising its diffusion and exploitation (*more info below in the Calls for EU projects section*).

> See also the [article published on our website](#)

> All the project's deliverable are available on our [website / IcARUS page](#)

> See also the [IcARUS website](#)

Urban Safety Monitor (USM)

Efus was a partner in a project led by UN-Habitat to create a tool to monitor safety in cities according to a holistic approach. Titled the Bigger Picture Urban Safety Monitor (USM), this tool was designed as a global benchmark for safety and security in cities.

The monitor features 15 key indicators grouped into three categories – Crime, Community, and Governance –aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The monitor indicators respond to a diverse range of safety interventions, from crime prevention through environmental design to institutional capacity building and everything in between.

The Bigger Picture is also a tool for advocacy, prompting cities to engage data and knowledge more actively, to use it to support evidence-led interventions and to understand local conditions and adapt as needed to meet them.

By using the USM, city authorities and municipal officials can:

- Monitor safety trends and interventions.
- Analyse data dynamically to inform policies.
- Share best practices and evidence-based approaches.
- Identify alternative data sources for a comprehensive safety perspective.

Efus contributed to establishing the platform, including the research (data collection and analysis), consultations, writing and building.

The USM was presented during the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference in Brussels (March 2024).

> Partners: UN-Habitat, Fixed Africa
> Duration: October 2021- April 2024

> Budget (Efus) \$ 6,500

<https://urbansafetymonitor.org/>

Crisis management

> European projects

RiskPACC (Integrating Risk Perception and Action to enhance Civil Protection - Citizen interaction)

Efus was a partner in this project led by the German Fraunhofer Institute for applied research, which concluded in August. The project sought to strengthen and improve communication between citizens and civil protection agencies in order to better design practices and responses.

> Objectives

Observing that European Union Member States are faced with increasingly complex and interconnected risks, which call for more individual and collective resilience, and that such resilience depends in large part on better coordination between civil protection agencies and citizens, the project had three main objectives:

- to better understand the gap between how citizens on the one hand and authorities and civil protection agencies on the other perceive risks;
- to develop technological and methodological solutions to make communication between civil protection agencies and citizens more efficient and thus strengthen resilience;
- to incorporate in conventional approaches new forms of citizen-led data generation to better adjust practices and responses.

> Partners

Besides the Fraunhofer Institute, which led the project, and Efus, the consortium gathered 18 partners: Trilateral Research (United Kingdom); Institute of Communication & Computer Systems of the National University of Athens (ICCS, Greece); University of Warwick (United Kingdom); KEMEA Center for Security

Studies (Greece); European Organisation for Security EOS; Czech Association of Fire Officers (CAFO); Institute of Human Factors and Technology Management of the University of Stuttgart (Germany); Belgium's National Crisis Centre; University of Twente (Netherlands); Municipality of Eilat (Israel); MDA Israel; University College London (UCL) Institute for risk and disaster reduction (United Kingdom); Public Sonar (Netherlands); Stam (Italy); I.S.A.R (Germany); Lancashire Constabulary (United Kingdom); Municipality of Rafina-Pikermi (Greece); Municipality of Padova (Italy).

> Project coordinator
Fraunhofer Institute

> Coordination for Efus
Bamba Niang and Yves van de Vloet

> Duration
36 months (September 2021 – August 2024)

> Budget (Efus)
5,460,791.25 € (Efus' share: 159,986.39 €) –100% was funded by the European Commission

RiskPACC 2024 activities

- **Awareness workshop in Brussels and conclusion of the project**

On 2 July, the partners gathered in Brussels for the project's final event, which was a workshop. The partners drew insights from the pilots carried out in the partner cities (Gdansk in Poland, Heidelberg in Germany, Kalamaria in Greece, Karlsruhe in Germany, Setubal in Portugal, and the Unione della Romagna Faentina in Italy) and discussed the lessons learnt and solutions developed through the project. Each associated city shared their experience of the project, its benefits and the aspects that need improvement.

In order to showcase the project's results, a website has been set up, [Cities in RiskPACC](#). It includes the material produced by the project partners as well as existing conceptual and technological tools. Freely accessible, this website is meant to be a useful resource for any city (whether an Efus member or not) that is seeking to increase its

resilience to risks.

- **Testing the RiskPACC platform in the partner cities and regions**

In the first semester of 2024, the project partners tested the RiskPACC platform in their respective cities, each with a different disaster scenario: Heidelberg (Germany) in a case of blackout; Setubal (Portugal) of industrial accident; Unione della Romagna Faentina (Italy) of floods; Kalamaria (Greece) of earthquake; Gdansk (Poland) of floods, and Karlsruhe (Germany) of floods and of fire. All these case studies were followed by a feedback session organised with all the partners in a series of workshops held between the end of 2023 and mid-2024.

- **RiskPACC at the Security, Democracy and Cities conference**

The project partners took part in the conference, where the project had a dedicated exhibition stand and where the Fraunhofer Institute for Technological Trend Analysis intervened in the session on crisis management at the local level.

> [More information in the RiskPACC section of our website](#)

SPARROW (Solid preparedness and resilience for robust operations during disaster wilderness)

Efus is a partner in this new project led by the KIOS Excellence Centre of the University of Cyprus.

> Objectives

The SPARROW project seeks to reinforce society's resilience, to improve crisis management, and to strengthen the response capacities of emergency services in case of major digital breakdown.

> Activities

The partners work on three main aspects:

- Build an integrated platform to include all the relevant actors and give citizens, local authorities and first responders the means to co-design efficient solutions;

- Contribute to European standards and promote the guidelines of the European Committee for Standardisation (Comité européen de normalisation, (CEN) for managing crises;
- Strengthen cooperation between local, national and European institutions so that they respond to crises in a more coordinated manner.

>Efus' role

Efus is in charge of collecting inspiring practices within its network of cities and of identifying the vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure in case of major digital breakdown in cities.

> Partners

Besides Efus and KIOS, the project gathers 13 partners: Exus Software; Catalink Limited; Plan4all Zs; the Greek technology company Space Hellas Sa; Roadtwin S.R.O.; E Trikala Ae; Sitmp; Reaction Youth For The Prevention Ltd; Pravo Internet Foundation; Joafg; AMCC Consulting Ltd.; Gadsdon Steven Mark; Resilience Guard Gmbh.

> Coordination for Efus

Asma Kaouech and Bamba Niang

> Duration

September 2024 - August 2027

> Budget

3,808,562.50 € (Efus share: 255,562.50 € part Efus) - 100% funded by the European Commission

SPARROW 2024 activities

- **Kick-off meeting of the project partners**

Represented by Carla Napolano, Deputy Executive Director, and Bamba Niang, Programme Manager, Efus took part with the other consortium members in the project kick-off meeting, on 11-12 September. The event was hosted by the University of Cyprus KIOS Centre for Excellence in Research and Innovation. The partners discussed the project's work programme, who will be doing what task, and the project's administrative and financial aspects.

- **Call for an expert**

In November, Efus published a call for an expert to conduct a gap analysis and

identify best practices for critical infrastructure resilience during digital breakdowns, culminating in a “Gap Analysis and Best Practices Report” by September 2025.

- **Collection of practices and creation of a common glossary**

At the end of 2024, Efus started working on analysing gaps and collecting practices in terms of the resilience of critical infrastructures in the event of a digital breakdown in European cities. At the same time, Efus was working with the project partners to draw up a glossary of key terms, which will harmonise the vocabulary used in crisis management and in the project in general and ensure a common understanding between all the partners and actors involved. This collection and standardisation work will help to lay the foundations for more coherent and effective crisis management, while strengthening cooperation between the various project partners.

Innovation & Technology

> European project

TRANSCEND (Transdisciplinary methods for societal impact assessment and impact creation for security research technologies)

Efus is a partner in this project led by Trilateral Research Institute Ireland.

> Objectives

The project is about improving civil society engagement and assessment of civil society’s needs concerning security technologies. These technologies are increasingly present in our lives and citizens are aware of this, but in practice, they are engaged in only a limited way. This gap between development and civil society can generate mistrust among the public and also hamper the development of technologies that really respond to citizens’ needs and take into account their diverse experiences.

> Efus’ role

Efus is responsible for involving member cities in the project and for communicating its results. As such, it will organise a pilot exercise with a member city on the issue of countering crime and terrorism. More generally, Efus will inform the project’s research partners on the needs of its member local authorities.

> Partners

Besides Efus and Trilateral Research, the project gathers seven partners: the Dutch applied sciences organisation TNO; Fraunhofer applied sciences institute (Germany); European Organisation for Security (EOS); Austrian Red Cross (Österreichisches Rotes Kreuz); Oslo Institute for Research on Peace (Institutt for Fredsforskning, Norway); Moje Panstwo Foundation (Poland).

> Coordination for Efus

Bamba Niang and Anne Boisseau

> Duration

October 2022 – September 2025 (36 months)

> Budget

1,751,315 € (Efus' share: 219,125 €) – 100% is funded by the European Commission

TRANSCEND 2024 activities

- **Workshops on the pilot project led by Efus with the city of Mechelen (Belgium)**

Represented by Anne Boisseau, Bamba Niang and Ilyana Skali, Project Managers, Efus took part in two workshops on the pilot it is coordinating with the city of Mechelen (Belgium). The first was held in April with a group of local young people to test the project's methodologies and toolbox. The second one, in October, was focused on the fight against organised crime and terrorism and included local social workers. The Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur (PACA) Region (south of France) and members of the Stakeholder Board took part in this event as well as the consortium partners. DISSS implemented and organised these workshops and was to submit a report on this work and on the TRANSCEND toolbox.

- **TRANSCEND at the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference**

A representative of Trilateral Research, leader of the TRANSCEND project, presented the project during a session at the conference.

> [More information in the TRANSCEND section of our website](#)

> Read the [interview with Leanne Cochrane](#), of Trilateral Research, published on our website in November

> **Working group on Security & Innovation**

Established in 2018, the working group on Security & Innovation is a platform for the exchange of views and practices on innovative urban security strategies, whether based on the use of technologies or social innovation.

Organised Crime

> **Working group on the local roots and impacts of organised crime**

Efus is coordinating this working group presided by the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam (Netherlands). The group seeks to adapt local prevention policies to the characteristics of organised crime – in particular the fact that it is transnational – to curb the impact of illicit money flows on local security and public order; to develop adapted evaluation tools; to facilitate the transfer of promising practices among cities; to work on the impact of organised crime on European port cities and society at large, and to strengthen the prevention of human trafficking.

2024 activities

- **New MOUs with EUCPN et ENAA and participation in the Security, Democracy and Cities conference**

Efus is in relation with the European Commission's Directorate General Home Affairs (DG HOME), the European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN) and the European Network on the Administrative Approach (ENAA) in order to initiate joint activities in three areas: countering organised crime in port cities; the role of private actors in preventing and fighting organised crime; preventing the recruitment of young people by organised criminal groups. Efus signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with both organisations during the Security, Democracy and Cities conference, in March 2024 in Brussels.

Furthermore, members of the working group contributed to various sessions at the conference: Local roots and impacts of organised crime and How to use the administrative approach to reduce the impact of organised crime at the local level. The issue of organised crime was also discussed in the opening plenary session Global drug trafficking, local impacts and responses.

In the second semester of 2024, Elizabeth Johnston, Efus' Executive Director, and Carla Napolano, Deputy Executive Director, met with Jo De Cock, head of the Organised Crime and Drugs Unit at the Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) of the European Commission, to present Efus' work in this area.

Drugs

2024 activities

This area of work, which is linked to organised crime, remains a priority for many Efus member cities and an issue on which Efus works permanently.

- **The issue of drugs at the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference**

The issue of drug consumption and trafficking and the links with organised crime, was one of the key topics of the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference in March. One of Efus' Vice Presidents, and at the time outgoing Mayor of Rotterdam, Ahmed Aboutaleb, voiced the concerns of Efus member cities and regions when he stressed that drug trafficking and all its consequences on local life present a real danger to the rule of law and our democracies. Belgium's National Commissioner on Drugs, Ine Van Wymersch, called for a coalition between the private and public sectors and civil society. Delegates also stressed the need for pragmatic policies towards people who use drugs.

> Read the conference report on the session on '[global drug trafficking, local impacts and responses](#)' and on the session on '[drugs and harm reduction](#)'

- **Adoption of a resolution calling for a coalition of cities and regions to tackle drugs**

Adoption of a resolution calling for a coalition of cities and regions Following up on the positions expressed during the conference, Efus' Executive Committee adopted in December a resolution calling for a "*coalition of 50 European cities and regions that would work together to strengthen and promote their local policies against drug-related violence and harm and demonstrate concrete results.*" Such a coalition would notably implement and demonstrate local strategies to prevent and combat drug-related violence and harm, and develop tools, pilot experiments and methodologies that can be transferred to other local authorities outside the coalition.

> [Read the article published on our website](#)

> [Read the resolution](#)

- **Establishment of the European Union Drugs Agency**

The year 2024 was also marked by the official establishment, in July, of the

new [European Union Drugs Agency](#) (EUDA), which shows how important the EU considers this issue. Efus has long-standing relations with this organisation (which was, until July 2024, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, EMCDDA), and wishes to contribute to its work. It can do so notably by regularly informing its member cities on EUDA's activities, by organising the exchange of practices and with a tentative project of piloting EUDA's strategy in about 50 member cities.

Elizabeth Johnston, Executive Director, met with EUDA officials at the agency's headquarters in Lisbon (Portugal) in October, and was a speaker at the [EUDA's conference on drug-related violence](#), in November.

Representatives from several Efus member cities were also in attendance.

Polarisation & Radicalisation

2024 activities

- **Participation in the new EU Knowledge Hub on Prevention of Radicalisation**

Represented by Asma Kaouech, Senior Programme Manager, Efus made an intervention in a meeting on "Cooperation and coordination between local actors with key strategic partners", of the EU's new [Knowledge Hub on Prevention of Radicalisation](#), on 28-29 November in Granada (Spain). This new EU initiative is the continuation of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), whose objective is to "strengthen the integrated, policy driven approach to prevention of radicalisation at EU level by providing support to all its stakeholders, in particular policymakers, practitioners and researchers at different levels."

With a budget of 60 million euros, this four-year initiative is led by NTU International A/S (Denmark) and gathers as partners IPS Innovative Prison Systems (Portugal), Polish Platform for Homeland Security (Poland), Euro-Arab Foundation for Higher Studies (FUNDEA, Spain), Centre for Security Studies (KEMEA, Greece), Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (Greece), European Research and Project Office (EURICE, Greece), Deep Blue, European Centre of Studies and Initiatives (CESIE, Italy), and the Romanian National Intelligence Academy Mihai Viteazul (Romania). L'Efus will bring to the Hub its expertise in local prevention of radicalisation.

> European project

INDEED (Evidence-Based Model for Evaluation of Radicalisation Prevention and Mitigation)

Efus was a partner in this project that sought to strengthen the capacities and skills of first line practitioners and political decision makers for the planning, implementation and evaluation of initiatives aimed at reducing and countering violent extremism. It concluded in September 2024.

> Objectives

The project sought to produce a model for evaluating the prevention and reduction of radicalisation; a practical evaluation tool; practical repositories of the factors and paths that lead to or on the contrary prevent social radicalisation; targeted courses and trainings; political insights and recommendations, as well as a multilingual toolkit.

> Partners

Led by the Polish Platform for Internal Security, the project gathered, besides Efus, 17 partner organisations in 15 European countries: Free University of Brussels (Belgium); Centre of Excellence in Terrorism, Resilience, Intelligence and Organised Crime Research of the University of Sheffield (United Kingdom); University of Helsinki (Finland); Patrir Institute (Peace Action Training & Research Institute) (Romania); Vienna Centre for Societal Security (VICESSE) (Austria); Deep Blue consulting & research (Italy); Transform (Sweden); ITTI Sp; Politie Zone Rupel (Belgium); Provincial Police Headquarters in Gdansk (Poland); Hellenic Police (Greece); Rigas Pasvaldibas police (Latvia); Bremen Senate of Justice and Constitution (Germany); Centre for Security Studies (KEMEA) (Greece); Innovative Prison Systems/Qualify Just - IT solutions and consulting LDA (Portugal); General Directorate Execution of Sentences (GDES) (Bulgaria); Madrid Municipal Police (Spain).

> Coordination for Efus

Asma Kaouech and Anne Boisseau

> Duration

September 2021 – September 2024

> Budget 4,983,330 € (Efus' share: 191,236.25 €) – funded by the Horizon 2020 European research programme

INDEED 2024 activities

- **INDEED project final conference**

Represented by Asma Kaouech, Senior Project Manager, and Anne Boisseau, Project Manager, Efus took part in the final conference organised in September in Warsaw (Poland) by the Polish Platform for Internal Security, the project leader, in partnership with the International Policy & Practitioners Forum. The event brought together practitioners, policy-makers, academics and evaluators. Efus took part in a panel discussion with other experts, highlighting the importance of improved cooperation between policymakers, practitioners and researchers to better prevent and combat violent extremism.

- **Creation of an evaluation and practice reference framework**

Efus has developed an evidence-based evaluation and practice repository with the aim of giving practitioners easy access to the results of evaluations of initiatives to prevent and combat violent extremism. It was incorporated into the INDEED tools and presented at the final project conference in Warsaw.

- **Workshop on policy recommendations**

In August, Efus organised a workshop with partners in Riga (Latvia) to examine how to improve the evaluation of initiatives to prevent and combat violent extremism, and to jointly define policy recommendations. These have been integrated into all the tools developed by the project.

> *The recommendations are [available here](#)*

- **Training for Efus member cities**

In June, Efus organised an online training session for its member cities to introduce them to the INDEED tool for planning and evaluating local initiatives to prevent radicalisation leading to violent extremism. Some 20 representatives of European cities took part.

- **Training sessions and training trainers**

Earlier in the year, Efus took part in two training programmes for practitioners and experts in the prevention and countering of violent extremism (PVE/CVE). The first one, held in Bremen on 26-29 February, addressed the design and implementation of efficient evaluation of PVE/CVE initiatives. The second one, held in Madrid on 12-15 March, addressed the design of evidence-based PVE/CVE initiatives. Efus was represented in both

sessions by the cities of Lisbon, Riga, Essen and Madrid, as well as by Emma Jouenne, member of the French Smart Hub and expert in P/CVE.

- **INDEED at the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference**

The INDEED project partners took part in the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference, in March in Brussels. The project had a dedicated exhibition stand featuring information on the project's objectives and results. Furthermore, one of the conference's sessions was dedicated to presenting the project. Lastly, the project partners contributed to an episode of Efus' new podcast series on the issue of radicalisation leading to violent extremism.

> [More information on the INDEED section of our website](#)

Police & Justice

> European projects

Efus is a partner in the [PACTESUR 2](#) project on the protection of public spaces, whose main objective is to strengthen the capacities of local police forces (see below the Public spaces section).

KOBAN (identifying future capabilities for community policing)

Efus is a partner in this project led by the Netherlands police.

> Objectives

The KOBAN project seeks to strengthen the community policing approach among police forces, with a perspective based on innovation, research, practices and evidence. More widely, the project seeks to strengthen trust and respect between police and the population, and to improve the efficiency of police.

> Partners

The project gathers, besides the Netherlands police and Efus, 15 partners from 12 countries: the Polish Platform for Homeland security; the Dutch organisation for research in applied science TNO (Netherlands); Ianus technologies (Cyprus); Saher (Estonia); the Hellas research and technology centre (Greece); the Vicomtech research centre (Spain); TLX (Timelex) law firm (Belgium); Finland's Ministry of the Interior; the Radom provincial police (Poland); Valencia local police (Spain); municipality of Lisbon (Portugal); ISP Qualify Just (IT solutions and consulting IT)

(Portugal); Rotterdam Erasmus University (Netherlands); Czech police; Brussels police (POLBRU) (Belgium).

> Coordination for Efus

Marta Pellón Brussosa and Anne Boisseau

> Duration

September 2024 – August 2027 (36 months)

> Budget

3,626,353.75 € (190,500 € Efus share) – 100 % funded by the European Commission

KOBAN 2024 activities

- **Project kickoff meeting in Valencia (Spain)**

Represented by Marta Pellón Brussosa, Senior Programme Manager, and Anne Boisseau, Programme Manager, Efus took part in the project kickoff meeting, organised at the headquarters of the Valencia (Spain) local police, on 1-2 October. The partners discussed their experience of community policing in their country and regions and the project's work programme.

> More information on the [KOBAN section of our website](#)

EU-POLNET network

Operating within Efus, EU-POLNET is a network whose aims are to develop European local police forces' expertise and best practices through peer-to-peer exchanges, and to promote the role of local police in urban security at a European and international level.

> Objectives

- To promote the role and doctrines of local police in urban security policies at European and international levels.
- To organise training sessions and exchanges among local police officers and/or local police administrative staff by organising police academies in Efus member cities.
- To foster the exchange of best practices among local police forces by organising 'Exchange Days' and peer reviews on strategic and operational issues.

- To develop and coordinate partnerships between police forces and local crime prevention services (as well as with other local urban security stakeholders);

EU-POLNET 2024 activities

- **EU-POLNET at the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference**

The network partners met during the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference (Brussels, March 2024). A session on local police and cities emphasised the importance of basing police doctrine on the principles of co-production and community policing. Police chiefs from Brussels, Lisbon, Madrid and Nice stressed the importance of local police expertise in understanding community dynamics.

- **Two webinars on the diversity of police forces and the Paris Olympic Games**

Efus organised two EU-POLNET webinars in September and October. The first was on the theme of 'How to improve diversity in local and national police forces'. The speakers were Àngels Bosch, Deputy Director of Institutional Relations, Crime Prevention and Mediation at the Catalan police, Joan Roan, Senior Technician at the Security and Cross-Cutting Policies Cabinet of the Catalan government's Department of the Interior and Public Security, and Patrick Gistelinck, Director of Training and First Commissioner of the Brussels Capitale Ixelles police.

The second one, on 21 October, focused on the security of the Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games, with a presentation by Michel Felkay, Director of the Paris Municipal Police.

- **EU-POLNET representatives at the Madrid Police Academy**

EU-POLNET representatives attended the Police Academy organised by the PACTESUR 2 project in Madrid (Spain) on 12-14 November.

- **Adoption of a Charter expressing the network's objectives and *modus operandi***

The EU-POLNET partners adopted a Founding Charter that expresses the network's values, mission and *modus operandi*. All members (22 at the time of writing) have a shared online access to exchange documents and practices.

- **ID sheets and practice sheets**

The network partners have access to two different types of information sheets that present in a concise manner information they find useful: on the

one hand ID sheets which give the essential information about the different police forces that are member of the EU-POLNET network (organisation, competencies, specialised units, equipment, personnel and area of expertise), and on the other practice sheets that summarise an inspiring practice implement by a member of the network.

> [*More on EU-POLNET*](#)

> *All interested Efus members are welcome to join the EU-POLNET network.*

Contact: eupolnet@efus.eu

Public spaces

> European projects

In 2024, l'Efus was leading or taking part in two European projects focused on the security of public spaces: [**IcARUS**](#) (see above section on Audits and Methodology) and [**PACTESUR 2**](#) (see below).

PACTESUR 2 (Protect Allied Cities against Terrorism in Securing Urban aReas)

Efus is a partner in this project led by the city of Nice (France), which started in September 2023. It follows up on [**PACTESUR**](#), which concluded in December 2022.

> Objectives

The main objective of PACTESUR 2 is to better protect public spaces by fostering the design and implementation of local promising practices. The main aspect of the project will be to build the capacities of local police forces through high level training programmes and exchanges among different European local police forces. These exchanges will follow the model of the Police Academies organised in the first PACTESUR.

The project also seeks to foster the participation of citizens in efforts to better protect urban public spaces as well as public-private cooperation.

> Partners

Besides Efus, the partners are the cities of Liège (Belgium), Madrid (Spain) and

Turin (Italy) as well as the association of communes from the Italian Piedmont ANCI Piemonte.

Furthermore, the project gathers 11 associated cities and their local police forces, which are coordinated by Efus: Bologna (Italy), Bratislava (Slovakia), Brussels Capital (through safe.brussels, the institution in charge of coordinating crime prevention and security in Brussels Capital) (Belgium), Budapest (7th district) (Hungary), Gdansk (Poland), Kordelio-Evosmos (Greece), Lisbon (Portugal), Riga (Latvia), Tallinn (Estonia), Vilnius (Lithuania), and Xàbia (Spain).

PACTESUR 2024 activities

- **Exchanges among local police forces and police academies**

The project partners took part in various exchange activities in 2024:

- A workshop on the security continuum organised by the city of Liège, on 24-25 June
- An exchange between local police forces during the *Les Ardentes* festival in Liège, on 12-14 July, and a field visit organised by the city of Nice during the Carnival, on 23-26 February.
- An exchange between police forces during the Vilnius festival, on 30 August-1 September
- A colloquium of local police forces organised by ANCI Piemonte in the city of Riccione, on 19-21 September
- The representatives of the project partner and associated cities took part in two police academies in 2024: the first one was held on 13-14 May in Nice (France), and the second one in Madrid (Spain), on 12-14 November. On the occasion of the Madrid academies, Efus, who is in charge of the project's communication activities, created several video capsules to highlight the partners' practices and insights from the project. [These videos are available to all Efus members.](#)

> [More information on the PACTESUR 2 page of our website](#)

The city at night

2024 activities

- **Efus associate expert for the city of Strasbourg's nightlife policy**

Efus took part as associate expert in a mission on nightlife policy commissioned by the city of Strasbourg together with the French Bar-Bars Collective, a longtime partner of Efus. Efus contributed to establishing a diagnostic and drafting policy recommendations on nightlife safety through prevention,

mediation, harm reduction, regulations and countering gender-based violence (this latter aspect through the SHINE project). These inputs on nightlife policies interact with the city's other public policy domains, such as mobility, citizen participation, economy, culture and urban planning.

> *For more information on Efus' offer of support on nightlife policy please contact Vanina Porruncini-Hallab: hallab@urbansecurity.org*

Specific groups of population

> **Working group on senior citizens**

Efus established in 2014 a working group on senior citizens upon an initiative by the Government of Catalonia and the city of Matosinhos (Portugal).

Calls for European projects

Throughout the year, Efus monitors the European Union's calls for projects and submits applications for projects related to its areas of work, for which it gathers partners from all over Europe: member local and regional authorities, public bodies, research institutes, universities, other networks, and private sector companies. Similarly, Efus is regularly asked to participate in EU-funded projects led by other networks and organisations.

Projects selected in 2024

- **Horizon Results Booster**

The Efus-led IcARUS project, which concluded in August, is supported by the Horizon Results Booster programme, a European Commission initiative aimed at optimising the impact of Horizon Europe projects. Efus is receiving expert support to optimise the project's dissemination (better sharing of results) and exploitation (turning project results into concrete applications) strategies.

This support began in November 2024 and will last for four years.

- **AI for cities**

Efus is leading this two-year project funded by the Centre for Public Impact (CPI) in the framework of the Google.org AI Opportunity Fund. CPI is an international organisation founded by the Boston Consulting Group, which

“works in partnership with governments, public servants, and changemakers to challenge the status quo, shift mindsets, and bridge the gap between people and those in power.” The project will train urban security and crime prevention practitioners in the use of AI technologies with the aim of improving their daily work and better serve citizens. In total, 175 people from six European countries will be trained. The project will start in January 2025.

- **Respect to Protect**

Efus is a partner in this two-year project led by the Sorapán de Rieros Foundation (Spain), which supports people with mental disabilities and those in situations of social exclusion. The project aims to bridge gaps between mental health and citizen protection by training security professionals in effective prevention and intervention for individuals with mental health issues, ensuring respect and dignity. The project starts on 31 December 2024.

- **PARTESS-COM**

Efus is a partner in this project coordinated by the Austrian Institute for International Affairs. The objective is to enhance the security of religious communities and educational institutions by creating a knowledge hub offering flexible, inclusive security frameworks. Additionally, Europe-wide networking, targeted capacity-building (including simulations and tool demonstrations online and offline), and a security awareness campaign will encourage the reporting of security incidents near places of worship and religious schools. The project will start in late 2025.

- **Programme for the security of the city of Guayaquil (Ecuador)**

Efus is a partner in this programme led by GIZ, the German government’s international cooperation agency, which aims to strengthen responses to the security crisis and build resilient communities in Guayaquil, Ecuador’s largest city. Efus will be tasked with enhancing the capacities of local authorities to prevent local organised criminal groups from recruiting young people through exchange visits with European peers and targeted training sessions. This 36-month project will start in January 2025.

- **SafeSkills**

Efus will be a partner in SafeSkills, a project led by Business Tampere Ltd. that will seek to strengthen regional and local policies to enhance skills development and effectively address evolving security challenges across Europe. This project was accepted for EU funding in December 2024 and will start in May 2025. The project will focus on key areas such as crime prevention, cybersecurity and environmental security, as well as security-related research and training. Efus will be in charge of supporting local and regional authorities' policies aimed at creating a sustainable, qualified workforce in the security and safety sectors. The other partners are Rzeszów Region (Poland), the Regional Development Agency of Odessa Region (Ukraine), and Barcelona City Council (Spain).

> *For more information on opportunities for participation in EU-funded projects, please contact Pilar De La Torre: delatorre@efus.eu and/or Lauranne Homyrda: homyrda@efus.eu*

3. The network

Efus grows and new members join the network each year. They represent European local and regional authorities' geographical and political diversity.

Ten new members joined Efus in 2024: Cerdanyola del Vallès (Spain), Communauté d'Agglomération de Grand Paris Sud (France), Diputació de Barcelona (Spain), Ergué-Gabéric (France), Epinay (France), Ermont (France), Fort de France (France), Irún (Spain), Mérignac (France), and Saint-Médard-en-Jalles (France).

4. Efus' ecosystem

As an association of local and regional authorities, Efus promotes the co-production of urban security policies and works in partnership with a wide network of actors: European and international institutions, universities, associations, private sector... This ecosystem, which has grown over more than 35 years, fosters the exchange of ideas and practices across Europe and the world.

National Forums for Urban Security

The Belgian, German, French, Italian and Spanish Forums bring together Efus members in these countries and participate in Efus' activities at their national level.

> *For more information on the national forums and their activities:*

- German and European Forum for Urban Security (DEFUS)
Website: www.defus.de
Manager: Ana Rau
- Belgian Forum for Urban Security (BeFUS)
Website: www.befus.be
Manager: Laetitia Nolet
- Spanish Forum for Prevention and Urban Security (FEPSU)
Website: www.fepsu.es
Manager: Angels Vila Muntal
- French Forum for Urban Security (FFSU)
Website: www.ffsu.org
Manager: Elizabeth Johnston
- Italian Forum for Urban Security (FISU)
Website: www.fisu.it
Managers: Gian Guido Nobili and Sara Paci

> European Union & International

- **European institutions at the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference**

Several high level representatives of the European institutions, such as the Commission and the European Committee of the Regions, took part in the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference, which was held under the auspices of the Belgian presidency of the European Union. Also in attendance were delegations from Canada, Colombia, South Korea, Mexico and the United States.

- **June 2024 European elections and new Commission**

The European elections were held between 6 and 9 June 2024. The final composition of the new European Commission was confirmed in November

following the hearings at the European Parliament of the commissioners-designate. In the first semester of 2025, Efus will organise meetings cabinet members of the Commissioners for Internal Affairs and Migration (DG HOME), for Democracy, Justice, and the Rule of Law (DG JUST), and for Startups, Research and Innovation (DG Research and Innovation) to present its work and activities.

- **Common work with other transnational networks on local crime prevention**

Represented by Carla Napolano, Deputy Executive Director, Efus took part on 19 November in an online meeting with other transnational networks on local crime prevention. Following the exchanges that took place during Efus 2023 General Assembly in Mannheim, the idea is to organise two annual meetings to exchange practices, insights from research, tools and case studies, as well as to identify and analyse new trends, difficulties and opportunities. Beyond this, the aim is to develop existing networks and partnerships, strengthen mutual collaboration and jointly identify funding opportunities. Each meeting is to be organised by a different partner.

The November meeting was organised by the German Prevention Congress (DPT). It gathered, besides Efus, the German Forum for Urban Security DEFUS, the Canadian Centre for Safer Communities (Canada), the International Centre for Crime Prevention (ICPC, Canada), the Dutch Institute for Safe and Secure Space (DISS, Netherlands), Fixed Africa (South Africa), the London School of Economics and Political Science (United Kingdom) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

> Partnerships

Efus signed memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with four transnational networks during the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference:

- [**Strong Cities Network**](#), a network of over 220 cities and local authorities from all over the world specialised in the prevention of hate speech, extremism leading to violence and polarisation, as well as in the promotion of human rights
- [**Nordic Safe Cities**](#), which gathers Scandinavian cities (Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) and seeks to strengthen citizens' resilience and prevent polarisation, hate and extremism leading to violence
- [**European Crime Prevention Network**](#) (EUCPN), which is a platform for the exchange of information and inspiring practices on crime prevention

strategies

- [European Network on the Administrative Approach](#) (ENAA), which is a European exchange platform on the administrative approach to tackle organised crime (also see above, section on organised crime).

- **Meetings with representatives of Moreno, Argentina, and Cali, Colombia to explore potential membership**

In September, Pilar De La Torre, Project Development Manager, met (online) with the Director of the Security and Justice Departments of the town of Moreno, a conurbation of almost 150,000 inhabitants in the province of Buenos Aires. This municipality wants to partner with Efus to benefit from exchanges with other cities and possibly assistance in obtaining funding for its crime prevention initiatives. The mayor of Moreno, Mariel Fernández, is the first woman to hold this position in the Buenos Aires region. The city has already developed a number of prevention initiatives, particularly in the areas of youth inclusion, the fight against drug micro-trafficking, the rejuvenation of public spaces and improving coordination between social services, the police and the justice system.

In November, Elizabeth Johnston, Executive Director, and Pilar De La Torre met (online) with the Secretary of Security and Justice of the city of Cali, Colombia, to explore the possibility of joining Efus. Despite some progress, the city continues to face persistent challenges. The main causes of violence are conflicts between criminal gangs, drug-trafficking, and problems of civic coexistence. This year, the city adopted a 10-year strategy entitled *Public Policy for Security, Justice and Civic Coexistence*, which has a strong preventive component.

5. Governance and organisation

> 2024 General Assembly



From left to right: Jean-François Ona, Efus Treasurer and Project Manager at the city of Nice; Willy Demeyer, President of Efus and Mayor of Liège; Elizabeth Johnston, Efus Executive Director; Carla Napolano, Efus Deputy Executive Director.



Willy Demeyer, President of Efus and Mayor of Liège, and Elizabeth Johnston, Efus Executive Director.

The 2024 General Assembly was held on 25 June, hosted by the Liège City Council, Efus' president city. Efus Executive Director, Elizabeth Johnston, and Deputy Executive Director, Carla Napolano, presented a review of the activities carried out in 2023 and in the first semester of 2024, as well as the association's accounts for 2023 and the 2024 forecast budget, which were approved by the Assembly.

One third of the Executive Committee was renewed, as per the association's statutes: [more information here](#).

The 2024 GA meeting was followed by the final conference of the [IcARUS project](#), which concluded in August after four years of intensive work. This was an opportunity for the members in attendance to take stock of the project's results and to exchange with the partners.

> Executive Committee meeting in 2024

The Executive Committee met three times in 2024: twice online, on 26 February and 6 March, above all to prepare the Security, Democracy and Cities conference and the Manifesto's recommendations, and once in person, hosted by the city of Cologne (Germany), on 4-5 December.

> Communication

Boosting Efus' communications strategy

With the aim of raising the profile of Efus and communicating more effectively on our political positions and activities, Elizabeth Johnston, Executive Director, set up a communications strategy committee, which includes Laurence Comminette, Head of Communications for the Mayor of Liège, Efus president city, as an associate expert. Laurence has many years of experience with the city of Liège and with Efus, and deep knowledge of the urban security areas on which we work and of our audiences.

Promotion campaign for the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference

In early 2024, most of the communication efforts were focused on the promotion of the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference, in particular through an emailing campaign (five publications between January and March) and press relations.

An op-ed signed by Efus' President and Mayor of Liège, Willy Demeyer, and the four Vice Presidents, Ahmed Aboutaleb, Mayor of Rotterdam, Joan Ignasi Elena, Minister for the Interior of the Government of Catalonia, Christian Estrosi, Mayor of Nice, and Christian Specht, Mayor of Mannheim, was [published in the leading European newspaper *Le Monde*](#) a few days before the opening of the conference.

Several important media, notably from Belgium and the Netherlands, covered the conference and published reports and interviews, such as the national Belgian TV and radio channel RTBF, the Belgian financial daily *L'Echo* and the Dutch daily *Algemeen Dagblad*. Several trade publications also published articles about the conference, such as *La Gazette des Communes* (France) and *Localtis* (online media).

Return to the monthly publication of our newsletter

We resumed in September the monthly publication of our [newsletter](#), which had

been interrupted earlier in the year as our communication was mainly geared towards promoting the *Security, Democracy and Cities* conference.

The newsletter is sent to some 6,000 contacts among Efus member cities and ecosystem of experts, partners, academics and journalists. The opening rate varies between 20 and 25%, equalling to about 2,000 contacts opening the newsletter each month. This is a satisfying result, which is in line with the average opening rates of non-profit organisations in Europe.

We are looking to widen our newsletter's audience in 2025 by merging our customer relations management (CRM) database with the newsletter mailing list, which will significantly increase the number of contacts receiving it.

> The newsletters published in 2024 are [available on the website here](#).

New podcast channel

In late May, Efus launched a [new podcast channel](#) featuring a series of interviews with partners and experts, which were for the most part conducted during the Security, Democracy and Cities conference in the framework of the IcARUS project. A mailing campaign was sent on 28 May to some 6,000 contacts to announce the launch.

As of the end of 2024, Efus' podcast channel had made 11 episodes available on a wide range of issues, such as gender and urban security, organised crime, technology, and an onsite report on the Brussels safe consumption room, to name a few. The Efus podcasts are available on all the main platforms (Spotify, Deezer, Amazon Music, YouTube).

> [Click here to subscribe!](#)

Campaign for the European elections

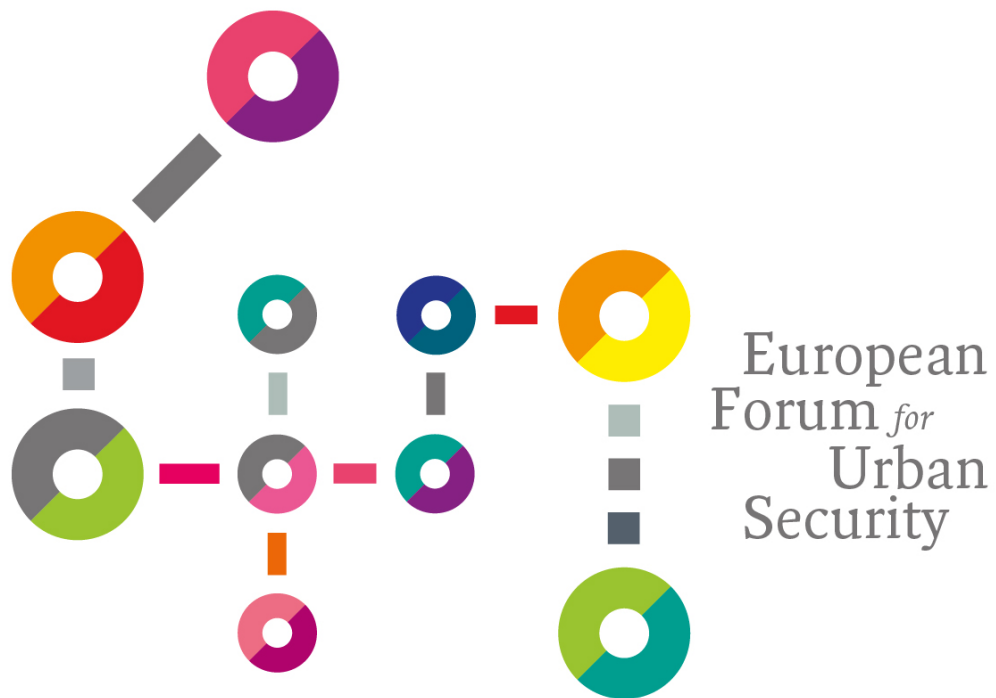
Efus endorsed the #parlement2024 campaign launched online by the Jean Monnet Institute and the TV production company CinéTévé to encourage citizens to vote in the 6-9 June European elections. Efus included the campaign's video clips, which explain tongue in cheek the role of the European Parliament, in a series of social media posts and its newsletter.

Modernisation of the Efus website

In September, we started revamping some aspects of the Efus website to make it more modern, attractive and user-friendly, without having to redo the entire architecture, which would be costly and cumbersome. This work will continue in 2025.

> Digitalisation of Efus and cyber security

Efus is constantly striving to modernise its tools and operating methods, in particular to improve cyber security. It is currently benefiting from a grant from the Ile de France Region (the [Chèque diagnostic Cyber](#) programme) to carry out a cyber audit. This opportunity will enable the technical team, based in Paris, to strengthen its resilience to cyber risks.



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