



Q & A

Eurojust and external cooperation

What is Eurojust?

Eurojust is the **European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit** to stimulate and improve the **coordination of investigations and prosecutions** and the **cooperation between the competent authorities of the Member States** in relation to **serious organised cross-border crime**. At the request of a Member State, Eurojust may also assist investigation and prosecutions concerning a particular Member State and a non-Member State (third State) if a cooperation agreement has been signed or an essential interest in providing such assistance is present. The **College of Eurojust is composed of 28 National Members**, based in The Hague, who are prosecutors and judges seconded by each Member State. Liaison Prosecutors from Norway, Switzerland, the USA, Montenegro, Ukraine and FYROM are also currently posted at Eurojust.

How do we operate?

Eurojust's key roles and powers include responding to requests for assistance from the competent national authorities of the Member States or third States that have a Liaison Prosecutor at Eurojust or a cooperation agreement. Eurojust can also request Member States or third States to undertake investigations or prosecutions. National Members and Liaison Prosecutors carry out Eurojust's mandate to **coordinate the work of the national authorities at every stage of criminal investigation and prosecution**. Eurojust's three major judicial cooperation tools are **coordination meetings, coordination centres and joint investigation teams**. Further, Eurojust hosts the secretariats of the **European Judicial Network, the JITs Network and the Genocide Network**, and provides logistical support to the European Judicial Cybercrime Network and the Consultative Forum of Prosecutors General.

What crime types are handled by Eurojust?

The main crime types dealt with by Eurojust are **fraud, drug trafficking and money laundering**. Eurojust has also stepped up its activities in fighting **terrorism** (87 cases in 2017, including the attacks in Berlin, Paris and Brussels), **cybercrime, migrant smuggling, and trafficking in human beings**.

Can you report any notable successes?

In 2017, Eurojust handled 4 125 cases, including 2 698 new cases (2 550 cases registered), an increase of more than 10 per cent compared to the previous year. Damages caused by organised criminal groups in the European Union in 2017 are estimated to amount to more than EUR 250 million. Thanks to the efforts of Eurojust, more than EUR 30 million in assets was seized in over 300 searches, more than 1 000 mutual legal assistance (MLA) requests were facilitated, and 345 members of criminal networks were arrested. Eurojust has been involved in the judicial response to the terrorist attacks occurring in Europe, as well as the Panama Papers case, the FIFA and Uzbekistan corruption cases, the MH17 investigation, BlackShades, Silk Road, and many high-profile migrant smuggling cases.

What are our judicial cooperation tools?

Coordination meetings

Eurojust's coordination meetings bring together both law enforcement and judicial authorities from Member States and third States, allowing for strategic, informed and targeted operations in cross-border crime cases and the resolution of legal and practical difficulties resulting from the differences in the 30 existing legal systems in the European Union. Eurojust is a proactive coordinator and offers its facilities, as well as accommodation and travel reimbursement, for up to two participants per State, translation services, and expertise in judicial cooperation in criminal matters to national authorities dealing with serious cross-border crime cases. Eurojust also provides the options of videoconferencing and holding coordination meetings outside Eurojust to make the best use of available resources and accommodate the needs of practitioners.

Coordination centres

The tool to set up a coordination centre within Eurojust was developed in 2011 to coordinate simultaneous operations between judicial, police and, if need be, customs authorities. In many regular Eurojust coordination meetings, national authorities reach agreement on conducting joint actions and the setting up of a Eurojust coordination centre. Coordination centres provide a unique opportunity for the real-time exchange of information and centralised coordination of the simultaneous execution of, inter alia, arrest warrants and searches and seizures in different States. Coordination centres expedite the timely transmission of additional information that is urgently needed to execute such measures and newly issued mutual legal assistance (MLA) requests. The growing number of coordination centres held each year demonstrates the growing popularity of this operational tool among domestic authorities and National Desks at Eurojust in the fight against cross-border crime in Europe. These joint operations, involving the national prosecutorial authorities, are further confirmation of the added value of Eurojust.

Joint investigation teams

Joint investigation teams (JITs) are very effective in cross-border cases. A JIT is an international cooperation tool based on an agreement between competent authorities — both judicial (judges, prosecutors, investigative judges) and law enforcement — of two or more States, established for a limited duration and for a specific purpose, to carry out criminal investigations in one or more of the involved States. JITs facilitate the coordination of investigations and prosecutions conducted in parallel in several States or in cases with a cross-border dimension. Eurojust can provide advice on whether to form a JIT, and also in drafting the JIT agreement.

Eurojust's activity beyond EU borders



Cooperation agreements with third States

Eurojust can formally cooperate with third States with which it has signed cooperation agreements for the exchange of judicial information and personal data. Currently, 10 third States, **Albania, FYROM, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the USA**, have concluded a cooperation agreement with Eurojust, 6 of which have also appointed a Liaison Prosecutor at Eurojust.

Liaison Prosecutors at Eurojust

Third States that have entered into a cooperation agreement with Eurojust may second a Liaison Prosecutor to Eurojust. Liaison Prosecutors for **FYROM, Montenegro, Norway, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the USA** have been seconded to Eurojust over the past several years. In 2017, Liaison Prosecutors at Eurojust registered a total of 148 cases. As the Liaison Prosecutor for Montenegro took up duty only in December, Montenegro was only involved in 4 Eurojust cases as a requested State.

Eurojust contact points

To enhance and facilitate cooperation between the judicial authorities of the Member States and third States, Eurojust continuously strives to extend its network of judicial contact points outside the European Union. Forty two States worldwide have now Eurojust contact points in place. Eurojust is actively working towards enhancing cooperation with the States of the Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) region and invites them to also appoint a specific contact point for Eurojust for counterterrorism matters. In 2017, Eurojust provided support in 258 cases that involved 48 third States, including without contact points.