



## 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 investigations 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**, based in The Hague, is **composed of 28 National Members**, who are prosecutors and judges seconded by each Member State. Liaison Prosecutors from Norway, Switzerland, the USA, Montenegro, Ukraine and North Macedonia 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 a 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 2018, Eurojust handled more than 6 500 cases, an increase of more than 20 per cent compared to the previous year. Eurojust facilitated the execution of over 700 European Arrest Warrants and more than 1 000 European Investigation Orders and provided support to over 200 joint investigation teams (JITs). Eurojust has been involved in the judicial response to the terrorist attacks occurring in Europe,

as well as the Pollino and Amaq cases, and many high-profile fraud, money laundering, drug trafficking, trafficking in human beings cases and 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 national 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 advise on whether to form a JIT, help to draft the JIT agreement, and provide funding to the JIT.

## **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, 11 third States, **Albania, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, 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 **Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the USA** have been seconded to Eurojust over the past several years. Since 2015, the number of cases in which Eurojust helped coordinate practical cooperation with third States in criminal investigations has increased by 74 %.

### 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 seven 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 2018, Eurojust provided support in 1309 cases that involved third States.

### **For further information:**

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