

Agreement on cooperation between Eurojust and Albania

2018/0807(CNS) - 06/09/2018 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted, under a special legislative procedure (Parliament's consultation), the report by Laura FERRARA (EFD, IT) on the draft Council implementing decision approving the conclusion by Eurojust of the Agreement on Cooperation between Eurojust and Albania.

The committee recommended that Parliament **approve the Council draft** on the conclusion by Eurojust of the Agreement on cooperation between Eurojust and Albania with a view to strengthening judicial cooperation in the fight against serious crime, in particular organised crime and terrorism.

The Eurojust-Albania Cooperation agreement follows the model of similar agreements concluded by Eurojust in the past (for example, Eurojust-FYROM, Eurojust-US, EurojustNorway, Eurojust-Switzerland, etc.). These cooperation agreements provide, inter alia, for liaison officers, contact points and the exchange of information.

The explanatory statement accompanying the report recalls that, according to the UN and Europol Albanian criminal groups are among internationally leading ones in the trafficking of heroin, cocaine, and cannabis (UN Office on Drugs and Crime's 2017 report; see also the EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment 2017). And according, for example, to the US Department of State organised crime continues to remain a concern for most Albanians with a network of criminal organisations involved in drug trafficking, extortion, bribery, money laundering, prostitution, and human trafficking. In addition, Albania has been a candidate country for EU membership since 2014.

The conclusion of the agreement will foster the fight against such crime and is in the interest of Albania and EU Member States as organised crime is a transnational problem.