Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Member States

1999/0809(CNS) - 29/05/2000 - Final act

PURPOSE : to draw up a Convention concerning mutual assistance between the Member States on criminal matters. EUROPEAN UNION MEASURE : Council Act establishing the Convention relating to mutual assistance between Member States of the European Union on criminal matters. CONTENT : the Council adopted the Convention after agreement was reached in the Mixed Committee with Iceland and Norway held in the margins of the Council. Following its formal adoption, the Convention was signed by all Members. The Convention supplements existing arrangements in the 1959 Council of Europe Convention on Mutual assistance and the Benelux Treaty as well as the provisions of the Schengen acquis integrated in the European Union by the Amsterdam Treaty. The provisions of the Convention supplementing the Schengen acquis will apply also to Norway and Iceland pursuant to the arrangements with these two countries. Furthermore, the Convention covers a large number of issues : it sets out rules for which proceedings assistance shall be afforded, on formalities and procedures, on sending and service of documents and on direct contacts between the authorities involved in mutual assistance. In addition, the Convention contains provisions on a number of specific forms of mutual assistance, such as restitution, temporary transfer of persons, hearing by video and telephone conference and cross-border investigation methods - that is controlled deliveries, joint investigation teams and convert investigations. Moreover, the Convention also includes important provisions on interception of telecommunications. Finally, questions on data protection have also been dealt with. The Member States are invited to apply the applicable procedures before the end of 01.01.2001.