

# **Combating illicit drug trafficking: criminal acts and penalties, minimum provisions. Framework Decision**

2001/0114(CNS) - 23/05/2001 - Legislative proposal

**PURPOSE:** To develop harmonised measures laying down minimum provisions for criminal acts and penalties in the field of illicit drug trafficking. **CONTENT:** Given the international nature of drug trafficking, Member States have awarded the European Union some authority over coordinating a comprehensive drugs policy. Four main elements to date have guided Community action in this field: - Reduction in demand; - Reduction in supply; - International co-ordination; and - Co-ordination at national and EU level. More recent EU anti-drugs policy, formulated in "The European Union's Action Plan on Drugs 2000-2004", calls for greater harmonisation of definitions and penalties for illicit drug trafficking. The Action Plan explicitly calls on the Commission to draw up measures aimed at realising the objectives set out above. The Commission has decided to propose this framework decision in order to lay down minimum provisions on the constituent elements of criminal acts and penalties in the field of illicit drug trafficking. The need to adopt a common and clearly-defined approach to the problem of illicit drug trafficking should also be seen in the context of the future enlargement of the European Union. Lastly, the aims of this framework decision cannot be achieved by the Member States, given the transnational dimension of the offence, and can therefore best be attained by the European Union, in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.