# Fight against organized crime: exchanges, training and cooperation. 1998-2002 FALCONE programme

1997/0916(CNS) - 20/10/1997 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: joint action establishing a programme of exchanges, training and cooperation for persons responsible for action to combat organized crime (Falcone programme). SUBSTANCE: the programme, to which a budget of ECU 10 m is assigned, will be established for the period 1997-2001 and will ensure the implementation of certain recommendations from the action plan to combat organized crime(see COS0548). The programme is aimed at those responsible for combating organized crime, i.e. judges, public prosecutors, police and customs departments, public tax authorities, authorities responsible for combating fraud and other representatives of professional circles who may be involved in the implementation of some of the recommendations in the action plan. The measures to be carried out will concern the following fields in particular: - training: improving mutual knowledge of regulations, etc, concerning the fight against organized crime and preparation of teaching modules for actions involving continuing training; - operational cooperation projects concerning combating organized crime: coordinated measures involving several Member States and one or more categories of persons responsible (customs officials, judges, etc) designed to improve skills and operational methods of combating organized crime (e.g. joint surveillance operations, etc.). Specific expert missions in the framework of the implementation of the procedure for the mutual assessment of national provisions relating to the fight against organized crime may also be financed (CNS97912); - visits to and seminars at the premises of specialized public bodies; - research and specialized studies: particularly comparison and evaluation of instruments directly or indirectly applicable to the fight against organized crime, new legislative initiatives or feasibility of pilot projects; - exchange of information between those responsible for combating organized crime: assistance in establishing networks of contact points between judicial or other authorities, development of databases or telematics networks incorporating legislation with a bearing on the fight against organized crime. In order to avoid duplication of effort, if a measure is financed under the Falcone programme no funding may be provided from other Justice and Internal Affairs sections of the Union budget or other Community programmes. Projects must involve at least two Member States in order to be eligible for Community support, which must not exceed 80% of the total cost of the measure. The applicant countries may participate in the programme, as may other third countries. The Commission will be responsible for the administration of the programme (including its financial aspects) and for drawing up the annual programme for the joint action. It will be assisted by a committee consisting of representatives of the Member States. A procedure is laid down which the Commission is to use in assessing projects. The European Parliament and Council are to be informed annually of the results of the projects financed.