

# **Fight against organised crime, judicial cooperation: unit Eurojust. Initiative Portugal, France, Sweden, Belgium**

2000/0817(CNS) - 17/05/2001 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament approved the report by Mrs Evelyne GEBHARDT (PES, D) relating to the initiative to support judicial cooperation in criminal matters with non-binding amendments. Although in March this year the Provisional Judicial Cooperation Unit began work, Parliament has always seen this as a first step towards the setting up of Eurojust. Moreover, the Parliament wants Eurojust to be also competent in combating environmental crime and to be able to launch joint investigation groups. Eurojust should receive information from criminal records from Member States, it should have access to the Schengen information system and should be able to ask for information from the Commission's anti-fraud Unit OLAF. It should moreover contribute to the mutual recognition of court judgements in the field of criminal law. With regard to the organisation of Eurojust, each national member shall be appointed for a period of four years and the President shall be elected by Eurojust and the two Vice-Presidents from among its members, for a term of two years. Their mandate shall be renewable. The objectives assigned to Eurojust shall be: - to stimulate and improve the coordination of investigations and prosecutions between Member States, taking account of requests and information from the national authorities and the competent bodies; - to improve cooperation between the competent national authorities particularly by encouraging the use of modern techniques for judicial assistance and the acceleration of procedures for the execution of letters rogatory and for the mutual recognition of judicial decisions in criminal matters; - to otherwise support the competent authorities of the Member States in order to improve the effectiveness of their investigations and prosecutions.