

General Programme "Fundamental rights and justice": specific programme "Criminal Justice", 2007-2013

2005/0039(CNS) - 14/12/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by Inger **SEGELSTRÖM** (PES, SV), by 483 votes for, 54 against and 8 abstentions, approving the position taken by its competent committee on the "Criminal Justice" specific programme, whilst bearing in mind the deliberations in Council. Parliament approved a series of amendments seeking to clarify the proposal. In its consolidated version, the following amendments are integrated into the text:

- a recital states that the programme should facilitate the implementation of the mutual recognition principle by improving mutual knowledge on previous convictions passed in the European Union, in particular through the creation of a computerised system of exchange of information on criminal records;
- bearing in mind the importance of visibility of the Community funding, the Commission should provide guidance to facilitate that any entity receiving a grant under the programme properly acknowledges the support received;
- the **general objectives** were re-formulated. These are: to promote judicial cooperation; to promote the compatibility in rules applicable in the Member States to improve judicial cooperation, and to promote a reduction in existing legal obstacles to the good functioning of judicial cooperation with a view to strengthening the coordination of investigations; to improve the contacts and exchange of information and best practice between legal, judicial and administrative authorities and the legal professions; and to improve mutual trust with the view to ensuring protection of rights of victims and of defendants;
- the **specific objectives** were also re-formulated, and new ones added, including: eliminating obstacles created by disparities between the judicial systems of Member States and promoting the necessary approximation of substantive criminal law concerning serious crime; further enhancing the establishment of minimum standards concerning aspects of procedural criminal law with the view to promoting the practical aspects of judicial cooperation; encouraging Member States to step up cooperation with Eurojust in combating of cross-border organised and other serious crime; promoting measures aiming at effective re-socialisation of offenders, in particular of juvenile offenders;
- target groups were more precisely defined;
- actions supported under the programme may now include: **national projects** within Member States; and specific **transnational projects** of Union interest presented by at least two Member States (and not three, as the Commission had suggested) or by at least one Member States and one other state which may either be an acceding or a candidate country under the conditions set out in the annual work programmes;
- Parliament clarified implementing procedures, and the distinction between decisions to be adopted in accordance with the regulatory procedure with scrutiny and decisions to be adopted in accordance with the advisory procedure;
- to implement the programme, the Commission will adopt an annual work programme, by the end of September specifying its specific objectives, thematic priorities, a description of accompanying measures and, if necessary a list of other actions.

- Parliament insisted on better monitoring by the Commission on all levels.