## Basic information

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|---|---|
| **1997/2091(COS)**<br>COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) | Procedure completed |
| Fight against organized crime: a European action plan<br>**Subject**<br>7.30.30 Action to combat crime | |

## Key players

### European Parliament

| Committee responsible | Rapporteur | Appointed |
|---|---|---|
| LIBE Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs | CEDERSCHIÖLD Charlotte (PPE) | 19/06/1997 |

| Committee for opinion | Rapporteur for opinion | Appointed |
|---|---|---|
| JURI Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights | MARTIN David (PSE) | 18/06/1997 |
| CONT Budgetary Control | BÖSCH Herbert (PSE) | 16/06/1997 |

### Council of the European Union

| Council configuration | Meetings | Date |
|---|---|---|
| General Affairs | 2104 | 1998-06-08 |
| Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) | 2099 | 1998-05-28 |

## Key events

| Date | Event | Reference | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|
| 21/04/1997 | Non-legislative basic document published | 07421/1997 | Summary |
| 14/05/1997 | Committee referral announced in Parliament | | |
| 27/10/1997 | Vote in committee | | Summary |
| 27/10/1997 | Committee report tabled for plenary | A4-0333/1997 | |
| 20/11/1997 | Debate in Parliament |  | |
| 20/11/1997 | End of procedure in Parliament | | |
| 08/12/1997 | Final act published in Official Journal | | |
| 28/05/1998 | Debate in Council | | |

| Technical information | |
|---|---|
| **Procedure reference** | 1997/2091(COS) |
| **Procedure type** | COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) |
| **Procedure subtype** | Commission strategy paper |
| **Legal basis** | Rules of Procedure EP 148 |
| **Stage reached in procedure** | Procedure completed |
| **Committee dossier** | LIBE/4/08888 |

Documentation gateway

**European Parliament**

| Document type | Committee | Reference | Date | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Motion for a resolution | | B4-1330/1996 | 28/11/1996 | |
| Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading | | A4-0333/1997<br>OJ C 358 24.11.1997, p. 0003 | 27/10/1997 | |
| Text adopted by Parliament, single reading | | T4-0570/1997<br>OJ C 371 08.12.1997, p. 0165-0183 | 20/11/1997 | Summary |

**Council of the EU**

| Document type | Reference | Date | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|
| Non-legislative basic document | 07421/1997 | 21/04/1997 | Summary |

# Fight against organized crime: a European action plan

1997/2091(COS) - 20/11/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Charlotte CEDERSCHIÖLD (PPE, S) on the action plan to combat organized crime, the European Parliament calls for the Union to pay close attention to the fight against organized crime and take comprehensive and coordinated measures based on the principles of democracy and respect for human rights, given the scope of the problem. It therefore: - calls on the Council to ratify, no later than the end of 1998, all the conventions and other binding legal acts which provide for measures to combat organized crime, - calls on the Commission to take the necessary measures to implement the recommendations resulting from the action plan by exercising the right of initiative vested in it by the Amsterdam Treaty in this respect, - calls on the applicant countries to participate fully in the planned measures. Parliament believes that the creation of the European judicial area must go hand-in-hand with the establishing of a European area for the rights of the defence and procedural guarantees, particularly with regard to extradition. On a general note, Parliament regrets that the action plan has been drawn up without its being consulted pursuant to Article K.6 of the Treaty. Whilst welcoming the political guidelines and the timetable of measures to be implemented, it draws attention to certain gaps in the choice of measures. In particular, it considers that the Council has ignored crucial issues while devoting attention to items of lesser importance. More specifically, it regrets the fact that the Council does not address the question of whether, in future, organized crime should be combated by harmonizing the definitions of major criminal offences and the provisions relating to criminal procedure, or by improving cooperation. Parliament regrets the fact that certain Member States continue to express reservations on grounds of sovereignty and proposes giving priority to improving cooperation between Member States in all fields in which cooperation is possible (quoting as an example the very effective Nordic cooperation on the harmonization of computer systems for the police, courts, customs and coastguards). In particular, it proposes that Member States should aim for harmonization in all areas in which cooperation has not produced satisfactory results and advocates the gradual approximation of the criminal justice systems in the Member States by setting minimum standards. Regarding the recommendations proper, it calls for: - a common definition of the concept of organized crime; - full involvement of applicant countries in Community measures to combat organized crime; - inclusion of Belarus among the countries with which the Union must cooperate; - exclusion from Member State and EU tendering procedures of persons who have committed offences linked with organized crime; - use of the Structural Funds to reinforce judicial bodies and law enforcement agencies (especially in less urbanized areas); - incorporation of the Europol budget into the Community budget; - reinforcement of cooperation between Member States and the Commission's Anti-Fraud Unit (UCLAF); - development of codes of conduct for certain 'threatened' professions such as notaries, lawyers, accountants and auditors; - a

study of high-technology crime; - inclusion in international agreements of appropriate provisions relating to delays in implementing letters rogatory; - approximation of Member States' legislation on interference with fundamental rights where different definitions hinder efficient cross-border investigations; - approximation of legislation concerning evidence, offences, etc. Parliament also draws attention to gaps in the programme concerning civil society as a basic instrument in the fight against organized crime and advocates measures to promote education on the concept of legality. Finally, it calls for the establishing of appropriate surveillance systems for modern communication methods and the preparation of measures relating to special investigation methods, which must be strictly confined to the needs of inquiries in order to prevent the misuse of this type of investigation.

# Fight against organized crime: a European action plan

1997/2091(COS) - 21/04/1997 - Non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: to present an action programme in the field of Justice and Internal Affairs on the fight against organized crime. CONTENT: the document presented by the high-level panel (experts from the Member States in the field of policing, justice and customs) sets out 15 political guidelines and some thirty recommendations in a detailed programme to be implemented in accordance with a specific timetable. The establishment of a European network between the judicial authorities of the fifteen Member States and the transformation of EUROPOL into a Federal Police Office with investigative powers is one of the most far-reaching measures. The main recommendations include: - adopting a multi-annual training and research programme on organized crime; - strengthening the directive on money laundering; - a study of high-technology crime; - implementing an anti-corruption policy; - mobilizing the potential offered by the structural funds (ESF and URBAN) in order to prevent cities from becoming the favoured haunt of organized crime; - compiling a black list of operators implicated in organized crime; - protecting means of payment against fraud and counterfeiting; - making better use of the potential of PHARE and TACIS in the fight against crime. The programme does not, however, institute a European judicial area. It merely represents the first step in this direction. The high-level panel notes in this respect that some Member States are still most reluctant to see criminal harmonization. However, a number of priorities have been consolidated, such as: - the effective implementation of instruments already adopted; - the implementation of judicial cooperation at a level comparable to that which exists between police forces; - closer cooperation with third countries (especially associated countries) and the international and other organizations involved; - the development of new preventive instruments. The implementation of this programme will be regularly monitored by the heads of state and government, who will hold an initial meeting in 1998.