

Council Conclusions on Strengthening Judicial Cooperation with Third Countries in the Fight against Organised Crime

Thomas Wahl

At the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting held on 13/14 June 2024, ministers approved [conclusions on strengthening judicial cooperation with third countries](#) in the fight against organised crime. The conclusions come along with conclusions on setting up a European judicial organised crime network (→ [separate news item](#)). They are key elements of efforts taken by the Belgian Council Presidency in the justice area to step up the EU's fight against drug trafficking and organised crime (→ [eucrim 4/2023, 317](#)).

The Council calls on Eurojust and Member States to identify third countries with which reinforced cooperation is important for the fight against organised crime. A relevant criterion could be the number of "high value targets" located in third countries covered by requests for judicial cooperation. Other measures should include the following:

- Sharing of expertise and best practices among experts experienced in judicial cooperation with priority third countries, including liaison officers, liaison magistrates and diplomatic representations;
- Seconding Eurojust liaison magistrates to third countries in select cases;
- Eliminating difficulties in judicial cooperation with third countries, in particular extradition.

With regard to the latter aspect, the Commission is invited to prepare and regularly update a briefing package for engagement with priority third countries, including relevant data on the level of law enforcement and judicial cooperation. This briefing package can be used in diplomatic contacts with the respective third country. In addition, the Commission and Member States are invited to organise dedicated "Team Europe" dialogues with priority third countries, with the presence of high-level representatives of the Commission and relevant Member States, to specifically discuss how to improve judicial cooperation on all sides.

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