

# Eurojust's Report on Impact of COVID-19 on Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters

## News

Anna Pinggen

On 17 May 2021, Eurojust published its report on [the Impact of COVID-19 on Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters](#). With this report, Eurojust intended to identify specific difficulties in the application of the most widely used instruments of judicial cooperation resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. It also aimed to identify the most frequently committed crimes directly linked to the pandemic.

In its report, Eurojust concluded the following:

- ○ ■ Although the measures taken during the pandemic – such as lockdowns, curfews, and border closures – have impacted the physical transfer of a requested person to the country that issued [the European Arrest Warrant \(EAW\)](#), the EAW mechanism remains functional.
- Judicial authorities of the Member States often turned to Eurojust with specific queries on the feasibility of the execution of the [European Investigation Order \(EIO\)](#) prior to issuing it. Problems arose in cases in which the physical presence of a person was required, as in hearings of witnesses or suspects. Similar problems were encountered with [mutual legal assistance requests \(MLAs\)](#).
- [Joint investigation teams \(JITs\)](#) have been affected by measures related to Covid-19. Both the measures and the pandemic hindered efficient cooperation between JITs by making joint action days difficult to plan and by preventing travel on the part of JIT members. In this regard, Eurojust amended its JIT funding programme and provided the JIT members with a secure communication platform to maintain communication and cooperation.
- Despite the pandemic, Eurojust remains fully operational by coordinating meetings, installing coordination centres, and supporting practitioners.
- Organised crime groups (OCGs) have been using the pandemic as an opportunity to gain illegal financial profit by taking advantage of the demand for specific pandemic-related items (e.g., committing fraudulent sales of disinfection and protection items).

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