

# Successful results from intensified judicial cooperation in 2017

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Today, Eurojust President Ladislav Hamran presented the [Annual Report 2017](#) to the LIBE Committee of the European Parliament. Last year, nearly 4 500 prosecutors, judges and police officers from all over the European Union and beyond came to Eurojust to work together to solve serious cross-border crimes. They referred nearly 2 700 new cases to Eurojust in a wide range of crime areas, including organised crime, terrorism, cybercrime and migrant smuggling.

Judicial coordination delivers concrete results: in ten high-level cases in which Eurojust made a fundamental difference, national authorities in the EU Member States were able to make 345 arrests, seize more than EUR 30 million in assets, and collect vital evidence.

*'Fifteen years ago, we prosecutors interacted via cumbersome diplomatic channels and crime was different, much more confined within national borders than today', said President Hamran. 'In 2017, criminals cross borders but we still have 28 Member States with different jurisdictions, each with its own set of rules, for example for the admissibility of evidence. But thanks to the tailor-made support Eurojust can give to national authorities, we can effectively coordinate our investigations and connect the national jurisdictions for criminal law. This support and cooperation make a real difference on the ground and allow us to work together in a spirit of trust, cooperation and partnership.'*



Mr Hamran also stressed the importance of judicial cooperation tools that have become so essential in fighting cross-border crime, including the European Arrest Warrant, freezing orders, the European Investigation Order and possibility to create Joint Investigation Teams, legal instruments which prosecutors were only dreaming about fifteen years ago.

Mr Hamran highlighted three cases that unfolded in 2017. Each demonstrates the type of results achieved and the support Eurojust can offer to national authorities:

-  **Eurojust can help deliver justice across borders, even within 24 hours.** A murder case in Hungary was solved within 24 hours, thanks to Eurojust's 24/7 On-Call Coordination and facilitation of European Arrest Warrants and European Investigation Orders (click on image to enlarge).
- **Eurojust can provide practical, tailor-made support to complex, multilateral investigations, allowing Member States to coordinate simultaneous arrests and make important seizures of criminal assets.** One example is *Operation Santa Lucia*. An apparently local drugs seizure in

Italy in 2015 turned out to have a multilateral dimension connecting several mafia-type networks engaging in drugs smuggling and money laundering. The investigation spanned several years and resulted in the simultaneous arrest of 33 people in Italy, Germany and Spain in July 2017. During the action day, prosecutors from Germany, Italy and Spain gathered at a coordination centre at Eurojust's premises in The Hague: custom-made facilities allowed real-time secure exchange of information with the national authorities and the teams in the field. EUR five million and 1 000 kilograms of drugs were seized and taken off the streets (click on image to enlarge).

- **Eurojust also supports justice beyond EU borders to discover cases with important implications for the internal security in Europe.** Eurojust has four Liaison Prosecutors permanently working side by side with the National Members seconded from the 28 EU Member States at Eurojust's headquarters in The Hague. The Liaison Prosecutors also bring cases with important implications for the internal security of the European Union. In 2017, the Liaison Prosecutors from Switzerland at Eurojust referred a football-related case, following suspicion of bribery, criminal mismanagement, fraud and forgery of documents. Links far outside the Swiss borders were discovered and the investigation ultimately involved France, Greece, Italy and Spain in addition to Switzerland itself. This investigation culminated in an action day: carefully timed, simultaneous, and coordinated by the national prosecutors from our coordination centre at Eurojust. Important assets were seized in Italy, one suspect was interviewed in Switzerland and valuable evidence was preserved.

## **Facing up to future challenges**

Eurojust remains fully committed to providing swift and tailor-made assistance to prosecutors around the European Union and building further on the trust and partnerships it has created. This cooperation is especially important, considering the expected rise in international crime activity in the coming years, with a modest estimate being that the average growth in casework for Eurojust will be approximately nine per cent each year, meaning that by 2027, nearly 7 000 cases could be referred to Eurojust annually.

Mr Hamran invited the LIBE Committee to carefully consider how the institutions can find a structural solution to Eurojust's financing needs in the upcoming discussions on the 2019 and 2020 budget to enable Eurojust to face up to the future challenges and continue to support justice across borders.

Infographics:

See also: [Questions and answers on Eurojust](#)

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For more information related to the relevant ongoing criminal proceedings in the football related case, please see the [press release of October 2017](#), or contact the Communication services of the Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland at [info@ba.admin.ch](mailto:info@ba.admin.ch).

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