

Signature of Working Arrangement between Eurojust and Latin American judicial authorities

Frequently Asked Questions

Why does Eurojust cooperate with countries outside the European Union and how?

Organised crime groups (OCGs) are increasingly operating on a global scale. As these crimes know no borders, efforts for cooperation outside the European Union (EU) need to be stepped up. Eurojust serves as a gateway for cooperation with countries outside the EU. This is done in various ways, by either concluding an International Agreement and seconding a Liaison Prosecutor to Eurojust, signing strategic Working Arrangements with relevant authorities in non-EU countries, or via the Network of Contact Points in non-EU countries.

What is a Working Arrangement?

Working Arrangements are an important tool for cooperating with third countries (non-EU Member States) and judicial networks and associations outside the EU to enable strategic cooperation to combat serious organised crime. These arrangements allow the exchange of strategic information between the relevant judicial authorities and the sharing of best practice.

Currently, Eurojust has concluded Working Arrangements with the Ibero-American Association of Public Prosecutors Offices (AIAMP), Panama and Nigeria. On 10 July 2024, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Peru also signed Working Arrangements with Eurojust.

Why are these Working Arrangements important, both for Eurojust and the countries involved?

Working Arrangements are the formal base for structural and strategic cooperation with third countries, in order to exchange information and jointly combat serious organised crime. These arrangements underline the common principles and aims for cross-border cooperation and the establishment of direct links and contacts for concrete collaboration.

Does a Working Arrangement mean a representative or Liaison Prosecutor will be posted at Eurojust? What does a Liaison Prosecutor do?

A Working Arrangement does not provide for the appointment of a Liaison Prosecutor at the Agency. Currently, twelve countries outside the EU have Liaison Prosecutors at Eurojust: Albania, Georgia, Iceland, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States. Their postings are based on an Agreement on Cooperation.

Liaison Prosecutors at Eurojust can open cases or requests for cross-border cooperation with EU Member States and other countries with Liaison Prosecutors (as long as at least one EU Member State is involved). Vice versa, National Members at Eurojust can open cases towards and request assistance in investigations and prosecutions from Liaison Prosecutors.

What is the difference between a Working Arrangement and an International Agreement or Agreement on Cooperation?

Agreements on Cooperation provide the possibility to exchange operational information, including evidence and personal data, between Eurojust and the national judicial authorities of the countries involved in a systematic way. They can also be the base to post a Liaison Prosecutor at Eurojust.

However, Working Arrangements are instruments that Eurojust can conclude directly with the judicial authorities of a third country if the Agency identifies a strategic interest to cooperate. Agreements on Cooperation, also referred to as International Agreements, are negotiated by the European Commission and approved by the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament.

How often do you cooperate with the countries involved and how many cases do you have with them?

Between January 2020 and July 2024, thirty major cases of judicial cross-border cooperation with the six countries involved (Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama and Peru) have been opened at Eurojust, with EU Member States' authorities asking for concrete cooperation. These cases involve organised crime, drug trafficking and money laundering. Of all the countries involved, Ecuador has already been involved in a [joint investigation team](#) (JIT) on two occasions.

What are Eurojust Contact Points?

Eurojust has over seventy Contact Points around the world, to establish rapid contacts between prosecutors from EU Member States and their counterparts in third countries whenever a crime extends beyond the borders of the European Union. The Contact Points can work alongside EU Member State authorities during an investigation, either remotely or by attending coordination meetings at Eurojust. However, they cannot exchange operational or personal data if no Agreement on Cooperation has been signed.

Contact Points are appointed by the office of Prosecutors General, national courts or the Ministry of Justice. Their assistance may include providing information on how to submit a request for Mutual Legal Assistance, providing information and legal advice, facilitating the execution of extradition requests or setting up [joint investigation teams](#) (JITs). Currently, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru have all appointed Contact Points for relations with Eurojust, as well as five other Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Paraguay and Uruguay).

Are there other forms of cross-border judicial cooperation via Eurojust?

Eurojust hosts and implements two specific programmes for enhanced judicial cooperation with third countries: EuroMed Justice (EMJ) and Western Balkans Criminal Justice (WBCJ).

The EMJ project aims to develop sustainable cooperation mechanisms for cross-border judicial cooperation between Member States of the European Union and the South Partner Countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine* and Tunisia). It is hosted by Eurojust and brings together the most relevant stakeholders in the field of criminal justice from the South Partner Countries, participating EU Member States, representatives from EU bodies and international organisations active in the field of justice and security.

WBCJ is implemented by Eurojust to strengthen cooperation within the Western Balkans and between the region and the European Union in the fight against organised crime and terrorism, involving Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo**, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

*This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the initial positions of the Member States on this issue.

**This designation is made without prejudice to positions on status and is in accordance with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.