

EC TRIES TO REMEDY THE LACK OF EU STATISTICS ON CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Published at: 09-08-2006

Source: Portal EUROPE



The European Commission adopted August 8 a Communication on "Developing a comprehensive and coherent EU strategy to measure crime and criminal justice". The Communication contains an EU action Plan for the development of EU statistics on crime and criminal justice over the period 2006 - 2010. The action plan outlines the stepwise approach, in coordination with Member States and other concerned entities, towards the objective of accessible high quality quantitative information to be used for prioritising action to fight crime, benchmarking performance and evaluating implemented measures. The Commission has also decided to set up a group of experts to support the implementation of the action plan, specifically on the Justice, Freedom and Security policy needs for data on crime and criminal justice.

The Communication, foreseen by the Council and Commission Action Plan implementing The Hague Programme, outlines the coordinated activities of Directorate Generals Justice, Freedom and Security (JLS) and Eurostat, their respective expert groups and other bodies involved in the implementation of the action plan, to avoid duplication of work and unnecessarily burden the Member States.

"The development of European Union statistics will allow us to begin to assess and compare the magnitude of the problem of crime in the various regions in the EU, to monitor the development of these problems and to evaluate how best to solve them. ", says Vice-President Franco Frattini Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security.

The expert group will consist of four categories of experts versed in developing common indicators to measure crime and criminal justice, and in the identification of policy needs. Representatives of Member State, Candidate and Acceding country administrations in the field of justice and home affairs will represent just over of half of the membership. Representatives from European and international bodies, networks and organisations with expertise in the area of crime and criminal justice will comprise the second and third categories, with the remaining members drawn from the academic and private sectors. The first EU statistics on crime and criminal justice, consisting of compilations of national data, will be published by Eurostat by the end of 2006. These data will be carefully examined with respect to quality aspects, but further work will need to be undertaken in conjunction with the new expert group and with Member State national statistical authorities in the context of the Community Statistical Programme (CSP) - to develop EU level statistics based on a common methodology. The objective is to produce harmonised statistics for some areas later in the five-year period.