



## Equipping the EU to tackle the mafia

Committees: Special committee on organised crime, corruption and money laundering

**The EP's special committee on organised crime looked at a range of options on Monday aimed at tackling organised crime across the EU. They included a Union-wide definition of mafia-related crimes, the possibility of seizing criminal assets and using them to benefit the community, new rules on public procurement and the creation of an EU prosecutor.**

"There is not one [EU] country that does not have to deal with mafias. There is not a single significant business area that is waterproof, where there is not any concrete sign of this phenomenon. This is a constant threat to the internal market and citizens", said Salvatore Iacolino (EPP, IT), during the debate. He is drafting a set of proposals for the special committee on organised crime, corruption and money laundering.

### EU should act together against organised crime

Different legal definitions of organised crime in different EU countries hamper efforts to coordinate the fight against mafia-type activities at EU level. While Italy has a specific criminal code for them, Denmark and Sweden lack any specific legal provisions and Spain and the UK, among others, follow different policing and criminal-justice approaches. A single legal definition of mafia-type criminal activity that fully covers the phenomenon is therefore essential, says the committee document.

An EU prosecutor should be established, as is already provided for by the EU treaties. His or her office would be in charge of coordinating efforts to defend member states' financial interests and giving input to national authorities, for instance in tackling fraud in accessing EU funds.

### Hitting the financial interests of mafia networks

It should be possible to seize criminal property as a preventive measure, before any conviction is handed down, as is the case in Italy, the UK and Ireland, to preclude mafia organisations from having any havens for their assets. Drawing from the Italian and Spanish legal systems, Mr Iacolino also suggests allowing confiscated assets, such as buildings or vehicles, to be allocated for social uses benefitting the community.

Measures adopted in one EU country to exclude firms from public tenders should also be applicable immediately in the whole of the Union in order to cut off one of the most lucrative sources of finance for organised crime, says Mr Iacolino's working document. Exclusion should be enforced in case of any serious offence against a public administration and take place before the final judgment is made.

These are some of the many suggestions in the document. MEPs also discussed four separate papers on asset confiscation, drug cartels, trafficking in human beings and cybercrime. For more information, go to the links on the right.

### Background

# Press release

The special committee on organised crime, corruption and money laundering was set up to assess the impact of mafia-type activities on the EU economy and society and to recommend legislation and other measures to equip the EU to respond to these threats at international, European and national levels.

*Special committee on organised crime, corruption and money laundering  
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