

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0723/04
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to the Council

Subject: Creation of an observatory to study the phenomenon of organised mafia-type crime and similar forms of criminality in the EU

Increased economic and financial flows and the globalisation of the economy have given rise to the appearance and consolidation of transnational organised crime in Europe, which grows and proliferates through structures and strategies whose territorial boundaries no longer correspond to the confines of an individual state.

The reported presence in the EU of a veritable crime multinational entails the management of vast activities, including the trafficking of human organs and tissues, illegal immigration and the sexual exploitation of women and children, drug trafficking, illegal arms trading, trading waste (including radioactive waste) and trafficking animals and works of art.

Recent high-level police investigations have confirmed the existence of operative links between the mafia in Europe in its various forms, international terrorism and South American paramilitary organisations.

The 'European crime prevention network' produces limited operative evidence and excludes the participation of MEPs.

In view of the above, does not the Council consider it vital to set up, as a matter of urgency, an observatory, with a representative from the European Parliament, to carry out a far-reaching and coherent study of the phenomenon of organised mafia-type crime and similar forms of criminality in European countries by means of an in-depth investigation of the causes and the devastating effects of such crime in social and economic terms, and to propose suitable solutions to reduce existing discrepancies in penalties between the different legal systems of individual Member States?