

## **The European Arrest Warrant (EAW) to be discussed at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Meeting of the EJM in criminal matters**

The European Arrest Warrant (EAW) was described in the Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 as “the first concrete measure in the field of criminal law implementing the principle of mutual recognition, the cornerstone of judicial cooperation”. It improved and simplified judicial procedures designed to surrender people for the purpose of conducting a criminal prosecution or executing a custodial sentence or spell in detention and replaced lengthy extradition procedures within the EU's territorial jurisdiction. EU countries can no longer refuse to surrender, to another EU country, their own citizens who have committed a serious crime or are suspected of having committed such a crime in another EU country, on the grounds that they are nationals.

Although the EAW has provided an efficient way to extradite suspects in a border-free EU, there is still room for improvement and issues that need to be addressed. The European Judicial Network in criminal matters (EJM-criminal), a network aiming to fight serious crime in a decentralised, flexible and horizontal way, will dedicate its 42<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Meeting to the EAW. On 24 and 25 June, at the Zappeion Megaron in Athens, policy makers, judges and theoreticians will focus during the two-day meeting on “Achieving better understanding of national laws governing the practical implementation of the European Arrest Warrant”.

More specifically, they will analyse the problems and obstacles that arise due to different legal wording of certain offences under the laws of the Member States. Light will also be shed to the practical issues of the EAW execution caused by the different national laws of Member States, with reference to the Greek experience. The practical implementation of the EAW will be thoroughly addressed in the margins of two workshops. The competences and actions of the EJM, as well as its role in assisting on the EAW will also be considered. During the second day, discussions will shift towards the protection of the financial interests of the European Union and the proposed Regulation on creating a European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO).

Minister of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights Mr Charalampos Athanasiou will hold the opening speech of the event. The meeting is organized by the Hellenic Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights and the Secretariat of the European Judicial Network.