
FOREWORD

When Justice and Home Affairs cooperation was officially introduced in the European legal order by the Treaty of Maastricht, several new policy fields slowly entered European law: asylum and immigration law, criminal law, police studies. Since the Treaty of Amsterdam this new policy area is referred to as the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice. It has been divided into two main subjects: borders, visa, asylum and immigration, and civil law in the first pillar; and police and judicial cooperation in the third pillar.

Important elements are common controls at the external borders following the abolishment of internal controls. As a consequence of the completion of the internal market a common visa, asylum and immigration policy has been put in place. Police cooperation between national authorities and in the context of Europol is an important tool for guaranteeing adequate security conditions for citizens of the Member States. Criminal law cooperation is necessary to combat crime.

Through the Tampere Programme of 1999, the Area was developed at a relatively high speed. Events such as 11 September 2001 and 11 March 2004 have illustrated the need and urgency for close cooperation in criminal law throughout Europe, not least to combat terrorism. In November 2004, the European Council launched the follow-up programme of 'Tampere': the Hague Programme, along with a detailed Action Plan in June 2005.

The department of European Law of the Law School of Erasmus University Rotterdam has from the beginning taken the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice as one of the focal points of its research. One of the achievements was the publication of a handbook by De Zwaan and Bultena: *Ruimte van Vrijheid, Veiligheid en Rechtvaardigheid* [Area of Freedom, Security and Justice], in 2002. A special course for students of criminology and Dutch law is taught at the Law School as well, and the subject is part of the research in the Research School for Safety and Security in Social Issues (*Onderzoeksschool Maatschappelijke Veiligheid*).

In view of this focus on the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, and in view of the potentially far-reaching influence of the Hague Programme for the European citizens, the department of European Law organized a two days international conference on 23 and 24 June 2005 in Rotterdam, with over 120 participants from all over Europe. Prominent speakers from politics (European Commissioner Frattini, Dutch Minister of Justice Donner), the civil service (from the European Commission, from the Council, and from national ministries), non governmental organizations, and from the academic world (speakers from Turkey, the UK, and Germany for instance) discussed the new developments from many different angles.

This book represents the reflection of the conference: many speakers and participants cooperated to produce this first evaluation of the Hague Programme. In view of its different character only civil law cooperation is not covered in this publication.

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