

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000031/24
to the Commission
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)
(8 January 2024)**

Subject: European cooperation in the Epstein investigation

US Judge Loretta Preska ordered the file containing the list of names to be unsealed as part of a lawsuit against Epstein's accomplice, Ghislaine Maxwell, who is currently serving a 20-year prison sentence for crimes she committed in cooperation with Epstein.

As the head of a vast sex trafficking network, Epstein exploited underage girls up until 2019 when he was arrested and he committed suicide. However, the records remain available. The Epstein list contains 187 names that emerged from thousands of pages of court documents naming friends, victims and individuals suspected of conspiring with the American financier. The names implicate high-ranking members of the US leadership and accusations have also been made against members of the European political-economic elite.

Publishing the list containing the names of prominent individuals who are in some way connected with the Epstein scandal can help dismantle international child sex abuse rings in the US and the EU.

In view of this, can the Commission answer the following:

1. What is its take on the cooperation of the European judicial authorities in the Epstein case and the possibility of an EU-wide investigation?
2. Does it not consider that the national judicial systems now have a duty to look into relevant cases, as a priority, in order to contribute to the international investigation and help dismantle paedophile rings?

Submitted: 8.1.2024

**Answer given by Commissioner Reynders on behalf of the European Commission
(6 March 2024)**

Law enforcement and administration of justice in specific cases falls within the competence of national authorities. The European Commission has no competence to intervene in individual cases or to instruct law enforcement and judicial authorities. It is for national authorities to assess if they have jurisdiction and, if so, to decide whether they will launch investigations and then prosecute criminal offenses committed in the context of the Epstein scandal.

Should they decide to do so, there are judicial cooperation tools both within the Union and with the United States, such as the EU-US Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance, that would allow them to request evidence from or otherwise cooperate with other Member States or the United States.
