



Europol: co-operation on law enforcement

Summary: Europol is the EU law enforcement organisation that handles criminal intelligence. Its aim is to improve the effectiveness of and co-operation among the competent authorities of the member states in preventing and combating international organised crime and terrorism.

The establishment of Europol was agreed at the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992. Based in The Hague, Netherlands, it began full operations on July 1, 1999.

Its mandate includes:

- ◆ Drug trafficking
- ◆ Illicit immigration networks
- ◆ Terrorism
- ◆ Forgery of money especially the euro
- ◆ Trafficking of people including child pornography
- ◆ Money laundering

Europol supports member states by:

- ◆ Facilitating the exchange of information between Europol liaison officers (ELOs, who are representatives of member state national law enforcement agencies, seconded to Europol)
- ◆ Providing operational analysis in support of operations
- ◆ Producing strategic reports, including threat assessments, and crime analysis on the basis of information supplied by member states
- ◆ Providing expertise and technical support for investigations and operations in the EU under the supervision of the relevant member states.

Europol is funded by contributions from member states. Its budget in 2008 was € 66.4 million. It has a staff of 600 of whom 120 are ELOs. It is responsible to the Council of Ministers for Justice and Home Affairs.

For more information on EU law enforcement:

www.europol.europa.eu