



PROFILE

Europol At A Glance

By Heather Tucker

With its Headquarters in The Hague, most residents and visitors to the Netherlands will have heard of Europol, the European law enforcement agency. Europol handles criminal intelligence and so aims to improve effectiveness, cooperation and partnership between the Member States of the European Union in the combating of serious organized crime and terrorism.

Some further facts and information you might not have known about Europol:

- Europol stands for The European Police Office
- Europol's establishment was agreed in the Maastricht Treaty on European Union on the 7th of February 1992
- Europol is accountable to the Council of Ministers for Justice and Home Affairs
- It runs a 24-hour a day service
- Budget for 2008: €66.4 million
- The first project was the Europol Drugs Unit (EDU), which began on January 3rd 1994. On the 1st of January 2002 Europol's mandate was extended to include all forms of serious crime.
- Full activities from the headquarters in The Hague began on July 1st 1999
- The Europol buildings were previously used as the Headquarters of the Gestapo in the city during World War II
- Europol has no executive powers and its officials are not allowed to make arrests or act without the approval of the national authorities
- At present, Europol only acts on request and three preconditions must be met for them to be involved:
 1. Two or more Member States must be affected
 2. Factual evidence that an organised criminal network is involved must be provided
 3. The case must be within Europol's mandate.

www.epo.org/about-us/office/mission.html

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