

Plymouth City Council EU Referendum Scrutiny Review
Plymouth City Council
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Email to Scrutiny@plymouth.gov.uk.

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Dear Sir

I offer the following submission to Plymouth City Council's EU Referendum Scrutiny Review which is offered solely from the perspective of crime, policing and community safety in the city.

Individual Member States remain responsible for ensuring internal security within their own borders but with growing and complex threats posed by continental criminality, EU members increasingly rely on the support and assistance from other countries.

As part of UK policing, Devon and Cornwall Police benefits from a number of European agencies and treaties aimed at increasing co-operation, security and intelligence sharing.

A number of such are outlined here.

Europol - the European Union's law enforcement agency. Europol's main goal is to achieve a safer Europe by assisting Member States tackle serious international crime and terrorism.

Europol assesses that the biggest security threats to EU citizens come from terrorism, international drug trafficking and money laundering, organised fraud, counterfeiting of the euro currency, and people smuggling. New dangers are also accumulating, in the form of cybercrime, trafficking in human beings, and other modern-day threats.

Eurojust - the EU's Judicial Cooperation Unit which coordinates investigations and prosecutions and improves the cooperation between Member States. Eurojust supports EU countries to make their investigations and prosecutions more effective when dealing with cross-border crime.

European Judicial Network- a network of national contacts for the facilitation of judicial cooperation in criminal matters.

Schengen Information System – This is the largest law enforcement exchange platform in Europe, containing over 62 million alerts on wanted persons and objects which led to over 128,000 police actions in 2014.

European Agenda on Security – This agreement assists the police and other law enforcement services in different Member States to share data and better cooperate against cross-border crime. Member States can rely on support by EU Agencies to improve information exchange, increase operational cooperation, and through supporting actions such as training and co-funding.

Eurodac - The EU asylum fingerprint database to address data protection concerns and to help combat terrorism and serious crime. When someone applies for asylum or is apprehended having crossed an external border, their fingerprints are transmitted and updated to the Eurodac central system within 72 hours,.

European Criminal Records Information System – This supports information exchange between EU law enforcement authorities. Approximately 100,000 messages are exchanged between national authorities each month.

European Arrest Warrant – Applied throughout the EU, the European Arrest Warrant replaced lengthy extradition procedures within the EU's territorial jurisdiction. It improves and simplifies judicial procedures designed to surrender people for the purpose of conducting a criminal prosecution or executing a custodial sentence or spell in detention.

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

Financial Intelligence - A platform bringing together Financial Intelligence Units from the Member States is now fully in place. Its purpose is to detect and disrupt terrorist finance and money laundering activities and packages to deter money laundering. FIU's closely cooperate with EUROPOL.

Internet Referral Unit - Europol's Internet Referral Unit aims to help reduce the volume of terrorist material online.

Prüm - An information exchange tool offers automated comparison of DNA profiles, fingerprint data and vehicle registration data – which are key to detecting crime and building an effective case for prosecutions.

Border Package and Smart Borders: The Border Package to be presented before the end of the year will create a European Border Guard with much stronger obligations in terms of cooperation. The Smart Borders initiative – planned for 2016 – will provide for a much more effective EU entry/exit system permitting to trace the movements of third country nationals across the EU's external border. This information could be highly valuable for law enforcement

The EU debate is a complex matter. I do not offer an opinion on whether the UK should remain a member.

However, given the provisions set out above, I am of the view that there are clear benefits to the public and policing in Devon and Cornwall by being a member of the EU.



Tony Hogg
Police and Crime Commissioner