

Scotland Yard to draft in overseas policemen to fight foreign crime wave

A new unit comprising of specialist foreign policemen is being created by Britain's biggest police force, it emerged today.



Metropolitan Police headquarters, New Scotland Yard Photo: AP

By Telegraph Reporters

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Scotland Yard is reportedly creating the "foreign legion" of European police officers to fight the growing problem of overseas criminals throughout London.

The Metropolitan Police has applied for European Union funding to finance the team of detectives and specialist officers from foreign forces.

The officers in the unit, comprised as part of Operation Nexus, would not have powers of arrest and would operate mostly in plain-clothes roles, the Times reported.

But they would be able to wear their national uniforms if a situation required and take part raids, suspect interviews and help facilitate sharing of intelligence of forensic data.

Under the plan, up to 30 officers would be initially deployed on the capital's streets over the next three years. They will also work alongside officers from the British Transport Police and City of

London Police.

Romania and Poland officers have signed up to the unit and senior officers are in talks with police their counterparts in Lithuania and Ireland. If successful, the scheme could be widened, according to the newspaper.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, head of specialist crime, said the Met was trying to make the force "match-fit" with London's ethnic mix. "We are accelerating our ability to deal with crime," he told the Times.

"As long as we have a population as mixed as that of London, we want to have more and better linkages to other countries.

"We cannot afford not to be good at this. This is about being good at dealing with offenders wherever they come from."

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, the Met Commissioner, visited Bucharest two months ago as part of the force's efforts to increase cooperation with Romanian.

According to the 2011 Census, almost one in four Londoners were not British nationals.

The Operation was established after it emerged that more than a quarter of the 300,000 suspects the Met arrests each year were foreigners.

Last year 10 officers were seconded with Scotland Yard to counter the wave of petty crime throughout the capital.

The Romanian officers, who all spoke English, were especially recruited due to their knowledge of the Roma community.