

**Catherine Bearder MEP**

**Response to MOJ Call for Evidence received via Citizen Space**

**Q1. What are the advantages and/or disadvantages to businesses and/or individuals in the UK of EU civil judicial cooperation? You may wish to focus on a particular instrument.**

There are fantastic advantages to both British businesses and individuals through civil judicial cooperation. Businesses can trade across borders with confidence that they will be protected. (For example the new European Patent).

**Q2. What is the impact of EU civil judicial cooperation on UK civil and family law?**

No response.

**Q3. How is civil judicial cooperation necessary for the functioning of the internal market? Which aspects support and/or hinder it?**

No response.

**Q4. Are there any areas where EU competence in this area has led to unintended and/or undesired consequences for individuals and companies in the UK? Please give examples.**

No response.

**Q5. What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of the opt-in for the UK?**

The opt-in has some definite advantages that allow the UK to make judgments on EU measures which are not compatible with Common Law for example. However, I believe that there are disadvantages. The main one being that it can lead to points where the UK's influence is limited in negotiations which end up affecting our citizens.

**Q6. What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of the cross-border requirement for the UK's national interests?**

No response.

**Q7. What impact might any future enlargement of the EU have on civil judicial cooperation?**

Further expansion of the EU will be a challenge and an opportunity. There will be an increased market for businesses and individuals to move into but the judicial cooperation will need to ensure that there is the same peace of mind that currently exists.

**Q8. What future challenges and opportunities are there in the area of EU civil judicial cooperation?**

No response.

**Q9. What are the advantages and/or disadvantages to the UK of the EU's powers to act internationally in this area?**

There are massive advantages to the UK and every country in the union for the EU to act internationally in this area. Any expansion in trade or free movement of people (by new member states joining for example) requires further cooperation for businesses and individuals to allow them to get the best out of the market safe in the knowledge their rights will be protected wherever they trade in the EU.

**Q10. What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages to the UK of action being taken at an international rather than EU level?**

Action taken at an international level would be improved through the EU negotiating as one bloc. We would then be negotiating as the largest trading bloc in the world with a population of half a billion rather than as a country of 60 million. The UK is hugely dependent on its trade with the European Union both for manufacturing parts, raw materials and for its food and services. Outside the EU, it would not have the negotiation strength to hold larger more vibrant economies to get better deals than the EU could which would ultimately lead to disadvantages for all our international businesses.