

Two euro counterfeiting rings dismantled

24 October 2018

✘ Under the direction of the French and Italian authorities, and with the support of Eurojust and Europol, 22 arrests by the French Judicial Police (DCPJ) and the Italian Carabinieri took place on 16 October in France and Italy. Two criminal networks suspected of producing and distributing counterfeit banknotes in France and Italy were dismantled.

In February 2018, the French investigative judge of Nancy requested the assistance of Eurojust in a counterfeiting case, after the French National Police received a tip about distribution of fake banknotes. Investigations led to a euro counterfeiting production site in Naples, Italy. The organised criminal group (OCG) produced counterfeit EUR 20, 50 and 100 banknotes. The banknotes were then distributed in France via another OCG.

Two [coordination meetings](#) were held at Eurojust between France and Italy. At the second coordination meeting, in May, a [joint investigation team](#) (JIT) agreement was signed, the [first JIT agreement between the two Member States](#). Eurojust provided the necessary financial and logistical support for this JIT to help coordinate the parallel investigations. The JIT was decisive in the success of this action.

On the 16 October action day, French police were active in Italy, and Italian police were active in France. Nine suspects were arrested in France, and nine premises were searched. In Italy, 13 suspects were arrested, five in execution of European Arrest Warrants, and printing and digital equipment was seized.

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□ The Corporate Communications Unit drafts and publishes press releases, in cooperation with the National Desks and some administrative units, on behalf of Eurojust. Occasionally, press releases are jointly prepared by Eurojust and other agencies such as Europol and OLAF, the European Union's Anti-Fraud Office.

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[Victims of kidnapping and slavery](#)

29 October 2018

✘Romanian and UK authorities successfully took down an organised crime group involved in human trafficking for exploitation – forced labour, false imprisonment and money laundering.

In a series of early morning raids carried out on 16 October in east London by the Met's Modern Slavery and Kidnap Unit, eight premises were searched. Eight suspects were arrested. Four suspects appeared in court on 18 October, charged with conspiring to hold a person in slavery or servitude and money laundering. They were remanded in custody. The other four suspects arrested in the UK were released under investigation, and further enquiries are ongoing in relation to their involvement in trafficking offences.

On the same day, seven searches were simultaneously carried out in Romania by the Directorate for Investigation of Organized Crime and Terrorism, Territorial Office of Vrancea and Romanian Police. Seized in the searches were five automobiles, approximately GBP 37 000 (in Romanian and UK currency), gold jewelry, several laptops and mobile telephones, as well as bank documents and cards issued by the UK authorities. Additionally, in Romania, two men and two women have been heard on suspicion of modern slavery and money laundering offences and placed under judicial control.

Eurojust, via the Romanian and UK Desks, supported this case from the beginning, and held a coordination meeting to map out the judicial strategy. A joint investigation team (JIT) between the UK and Romania was formed in September 2017 and was extended for one year. Funding for the JIT was provided by Eurojust.

Thirty-three potential victims of trafficking were rescued (24 men, 4 women and 5 children) from the London addresses and brought to safety.

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