

# International criminal network involved in synthetic drug trafficking dismantled

18 December 2017

On 12 December 2017, a coordinated international operation supported by Eurojust and Europol took down an organised crime group (OCG) involved in the production and trafficking of drugs and psychotropic substances and in money laundering.

The law enforcement and judicial authorities of Iceland, the Netherlands and Poland carried out joint operations against this organised crime group consisting mainly of Polish nationals. The operations were coordinated via a Coordination Centre established at Eurojust with the active participation of Europol. As a result of these operations, 8 suspects were arrested, 30 locations were searched and different types of drugs seized. Moreover, cash and other assets (such as cars, apartments and bank accounts) in excess of EUR 1,8 million were seized. The high value of asset seizure is also the result of the simultaneous financial investigations – initiated from the beginning of the case and targeting the proceeds of crime.

These successful joint operations are the result of the continuing and fruitful cooperation amongst the law enforcement and judicial authorities of Iceland, the Netherlands and Poland, facilitated by Eurojust and Europol.

Over the last twelve months, Eurojust and Europol organised several operational meetings to ensure the coordination of parallel investigations opened in Iceland, the Netherlands and Poland against this crime group. Eurojust also facilitated the simultaneous execution of mutual legal assistance requests and European Arrest Warrants, and the development of coordinated strategies for the joint operations. Europol provided in-depth operational analysis and supported the joint operations by deploying mobile offices on the ground and participating in the Eurojust's Coordination Centres.

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## **ESMA updates its MiFID II Q&As on transparency and market structures**

The purpose of these Q&As is to promote common supervisory approaches and practices in the application of MiFID II and MiFIR. They provide responses to questions posed by the general public and market participants in relation to the practical application of transparency requirements. This update includes new answers regarding:

- The scope of the tick size regime;
- Application of MiFID II after 3 January 2018, including issues of 'late transposition';
- Equity transparency;

- Non-equity transparency; and
- Pre-trade transparency waivers.

The Q&A mechanism is a practical convergence tool used to promote common supervisory approaches and practices. ESMA will periodically review these Q&As on a regular basis to update them where required and to identify if, in a certain area, there is a need to convert some of the material into ESMA Guidelines and recommendations.

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## **Serbian murder suspect arrested in Spain with Eurojust's support**

In the evening of 14 December, the Spanish Guardia Civil apprehended a dangerous and armed fugitive, a Serbian national nicknamed "Igor the Russian", in the Province of Teruel, Spain. A shooting occurred during the arrest, and two officers of the Guardia Civil and a third Spanish citizen tragically died as a result.

The arrested fugitive was sought by the Italian Authorities for two murders and other serious crimes committed in Italy. The Public Prosecution Office of Bologna, which coordinated the Italian investigation carried out by the Italian Carabinieri, sought the support of the judicial and law enforcement authorities of Spain, Serbia, Austria and France to identify the fugitive's whereabouts and apprehend him. Their fruitful collaboration and mutual support was instrumental to Thursday's apprehension.

In particular, the Italian and Spanish authorities formed a close partnership to secure the arrest of this dangerous fugitive, coordinated by Eurojust and supported by the Italian Central Directorate for Anti-drugs Services (Direzione centrale per i Servizi antidroga – DCSA).

Within the framework of this close cooperation, the Italian and Spanish authorities exchanged several rogatory letters, shared operational information and organised technical and operational activities on Spanish territory.