

# Coordinated arrests of international drug trafficking group

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The national authorities of Germany, Denmark, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK and Norway, with the active support of Eurojust, have taken down an organised crime group (OCG) involved in drug trafficking. The investigation showed that a transport company based in the Netherlands was involved in smuggling large quantities of drugs to several European countries. Police suspect that the drugs were transported by truck, along with legal cargo, from Spain into the Netherlands, and redistributed to other countries.

As the result of an investigation lasting one year in many countries, coordinated arrests of the main suspects of the OCG were conducted. Dutch suspects were arrested in the following countries: one in the Netherlands, one in Germany, one in Spain, three in Italy, one in Sweden, one in the UK, and three in Norway.

Seizures were conducted in all countries, for a combined total of 4 tonnes of hashish, 200 kg of amphetamines, 64 kg of cocaine, 45 kg of MDMA, and 25 kg of heroin. As an expansion of the Eurojust case, 50 suspects were charged in Norway.



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## **Criminal activities of the OCG**

In 2017, the number of violent activities, including shootings, increased in Oslo. The Norwegian authorities initiated an investigation into an OCG, with clear links between southern countries and Nordic countries, but also involving countries in central Europe. Due to the cross-border dimension of the investigation, a Eurojust case was opened in September 2018, which targeted the alleged Moroccan and Dutch main suspects, including Dutch trucking and transport firms.

## **Eurojust's crucial role**

Eurojust's involvement was instrumental in coordinating the actions in all countries. Eurojust organised five coordinating meetings in one year, during which information was shared and strategic decisions were taken. To ensure an efficient investigation and prosecution, Eurojust assisted in overcoming legal obstacles by advising on jurisdictional issues and reaching an agreement on the best place to prosecute. Eurojust swiftly set up a joint investigation team (JIT), financed by Eurojust, with Norway, Denmark and Sweden to speed up the criminal investigations into the OCG and enable the swift gathering of evidence and sharing of information.

**#Justice Done**

A Norwegian court recently sentenced one of the main suspects to 19 years' imprisonment and confiscated more than EUR 4.5 million.

A Danish court recently sentenced two suspects to two and six years' confinement, respectively.

A German court recently sentenced one perpetrator to eight years' imprisonment for the possession of illicit drugs.