

Dark web hitman identified through crypto-analysis



Europol supported the Italian Postal and Communication Police (Polizia Postale e delle Comunicazioni) in arresting an Italian national suspected of hiring a hitman on the dark web. The hitman, hired through an internet assassination website hosted on the TOR network, was payed about €10 000 worth in Bitcoins to kill the ex-girlfriend of the suspect.

Europol carried out an urgent, complex crypto-analysis to enable the tracing and identification of the provider from which the suspect purchased the cryptocurrencies. The Italian police then reached out to the identified Italian crypto service provider, who confirmed the information uncovered during the investigation and provided the authorities with further details about the suspect. The timely investigation prevented any harm to be perpetrated against the potential victim.

Europol's European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) and the Joint Cybercrime Action Taskforce (J-CAT) hosted at Europol supported this investigation with operational analysis and expertise.

The [Joint Cybercrime Action Taskforce \(J-CAT\)](#) at Europol is a standing operational team consisting of cyber liaison officers from different countries who work from the same office on high profile cybercrime investigations.

Headquartered in The Hague, the Netherlands, Europol supports the 27 EU Member States in their fight against terrorism, cybercrime, and other serious and organized crime forms. Europol also works with many non-EU partner states

and international organisations. From its various threat assessments to its intelligence-gathering and operational activities, Europol has the tools and resources it needs to do its part in making Europe safer.