

[Eurojust supports dismantling of football money-laundering network](#)

10 October 2018

In the context of an investigation of the Belgian Federal Prosecutor's Office, led by the investigating judge of Limburg, 44 searches were conducted this morning across Belgium. 13 searches were also carried out in other States, particularly France, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Serbia and FYROM. A total of 184 police officers in Belgium and 36 police officers in the other involved States took part in the action day.

The actual searches were performed by the Federal Judicial Police of Limburg, with the support of the Federal Judicial Police of Antwerp, Louvain, Brabant Wallon, Brussels, Halle-Vilvoorde, East Flanders, West Flanders, Mons and Cork. The operation was also supported by the Traffic Police and the Integrated Police Intervention Corps.

Simultaneous operations outside Belgium were coordinated by Eurojust, the European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit. Eurojust facilitated the exchange and sharing of information and assisted in the execution of European Investigation Orders and Letters of Request among the involved parties.

The Belgian federal investigation was initiated in late 2017, based on a report from the Federal Police Unit specialised in sports fraud. The judicial investigation covers activities performed in the context of a criminal organisation, such as money laundering and private corruption. It uncovered indications of suspicious financial transactions in the Belgian 1A football league. Certain players' agents, independently of each other, allegedly concealed from the Belgian authorities and other involved parties their commissions on player transfers, player and coach salaries, and other payments. The investigation was also extended, at the request of the Federal Public Prosecutor, to possible influence on the matches of the 2017-2018 football season.

This morning's searches were conducted at the headquarters of several football clubs that are active in the Jupiler Pro League. A number of documents and files were seized. Football club officials, players' agents, referees, a former lawyer, an accounting office, jewelers and some potential accomplices were also searched. Searches outside Belgium were mainly carried out in the offices of foreign legal entities. Documents and assets saved in bank accounts and safes were seized.

A large number of people were detained and questioned. The investigating judge will decide at a later stage on possible releases or arrests.