

Illegal sale of dangerous steroids in France halted, 24 arrests

□The Hague, 20 February 2020

With the support of Eurojust, authorities in France, Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine have dismantled a criminal network, which sold large quantities of illegal and dangerous anabolic steroids, mainly on the French market. During an action day, 24 suspects have been arrested in Slovakia, including the leader of the criminal network. Thousands of pills and ampoules of anabolic were found in Poland and Ukraine and thousands of Euros in cash were also seized. The estimated profits for the organised criminal group (OCG) amounted to approximately 2 million Euro.☒

The OCG operated from Slovakia and was active in the wholesale import of anabolic steroids from China and other East Asian countries. The drugs were processed into pills and ready-to-use injections in Poland and offered online via websites which were managed from Slovakia. The illegal drugs were transported from Slovakia and Poland. Over the last months only, at least 9.300 kilos of steroids have been sold to customers, in particular in France, but in other countries as well.

Anabolic steroids are often used in amateur sports as well as in gyms and fitness centers to enhance performances and the creation of muscle mass, but pose serious health risks and can be lethal when overdosed. For this reason, the production and sale of these performance enhancing drugs are banned worldwide.

In view of the health risks and the illegality of the activities, investigations started in France in 2017. An investigating judge at the High Court in Paris opened a case at Eurojust towards France, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland and Ukraine. The arrested persons are of Slovak, Polish and Ukrainian origin. They are suspected of large-scale illicit drug trafficking and money laundering.

Eurojust supported a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) and organised three coordination meetings as of February last year. Further judicial support was given to the action day, which was held this week in Slovakia. Europol assisted in providing analytic support and information on assets of the criminal network.

The actions were initiated and supported by the Tribunal Judiciaire of Paris, the specialized OCLAESP health and environment unit of the French Gendarmerie Nationale, the Slovakian Regional Prosecutor's Office Žilina, the National Criminal Agency of Slovakia, the Silesian Remote Division of the Department for Organised Crime and Corruption of the National Public Prosecutor's Office in Katowice (Poland) and the Central Police Bureau of Investigation in Katowice, as well as the Prosecutor General's Office and Security Service of Ukraine.

Remarks by President Charles Michel before the Special European Council

First of all, I would like to express my condolences after this tragic attack in Germany this morning.

We will start our summit about the next European budget. The last weeks we have worked very hard with all the leaders and I am grateful to the leaders for the hard work we have done together.

There are many interests, many concerns, and they are all legitimate. But I am convinced it is possible to make progress in the next hours or in the next days. I am convinced that everything is on the table in order to decide.

First of all, I would like to offer my condolences in the wake of the horrific attack in Germany, and to express our support for the victims, their loved ones and all the German people.

In a few hours we will begin the summit. A considerable amount of work has been done over the past several weeks to try to reconcile the different points of view. There are many different concerns, priorities and interests, and we must aim to bridge the differences in order to come to a decision together.

I would of course like to thank the Heads of State and Government with whom we have worked so hard in recent weeks to reconcile the different views. I am well aware that the final steps in reaching a compromise are always the most difficult, but I believe we have all the elements we need to be able to make a decision. (*pronounced in French*)

[Visit the meeting page](#)

Market makers and authorised primary dealers who are using the exemption under the SSR – XLS

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