

Illegal mobile application with more than 100 million users taken down in Spain



The application, available on several websites and platforms, was streaming videos and TV channels

Europol supported the Spanish National Police (Policía Nacional) to dismantle a criminal group distributing illegal video streams. The investigation also involved law enforcement authorities from Andorra and Portugal.

The investigation started in October 2018 when the Spanish National Police received complaint reports from the Motion Pictures Associations, Football Association Pretoria, the Premier League and the Spanish Football League (La Liga Espanola de Fútbol) about a mobile application illegally distributing video streams. The application, downloaded by more than 100 million users via different websites, illegally offered the streaming of videos and TV channels.

The investigation identified a number of connected websites and platforms located in Spain and Portugal with connections to servers in Czechia. The

Spanish company behind the illegal activity earned its profits through advertisements. Through the computer infrastructure and power, they were able to sell user information to a company related to botnet and DDoS attacks. Investigators estimate the overall illegal profits at more than €5 million.

Results

- 3 house searches (2 in Spain and 1 in Andorra)
- 4 court orders to take down domains
- 20 web domains and servers blocked
- 4 arrests (3 in Spain and 1 in Andorra)
- Bank accounts frozen
- 1 server taken down in Portugal and another one under investigation in Czechia

Europol supported the investigation with operational coordination and analysis. Europol supported the action day with the deployment of a virtual command post. This enabled operational coordination, also supported by Eurojust. During the action day, Europol's experts cross-checked operational information in real-time and provide support to the investigators in the field.

Europol's IPC3 (Intellectual Property Crime Coordinated Coalition) which supported the investigation is a project co-funded by the EUIPO to combat intellectual property crime.