

Migrant smuggling ring dismantled in France and Italy



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A criminal organisation smuggling approximately 1 000 migrants from Pakistan and India into various EU-countries was dismantled by the French and Italian authorities in good cooperation, with the support of Eurojust and Europol. One arrest was carried out in France and ten arrests in Italy, with two persons arrested on the basis of European Arrest Warrants. Eight premises were searched and ten phones and various documents were seized in Italy.

Eurojust held three coordination meetings to support the investigations in France and Italy and to arrange for the arrests. Eurojust financed and facilitated the setting up of a joint investigation team between the French Investigative Judge of the Specialised Jurisdiction of the Tribunal of Grand Instance of Lyon and the Prosecution Office of Torino.

The operation was concluded with the support of the OCRIEST and BMR 73 and 74 Services of the French National Border Police and the Polizia di Stato – Squadra Mobile of the Questura of Turin. Eurojust also helped to resolve outstanding jurisdictional issues. Europol provided additional support during the operation.

Authorities estimate that between 2018 and 2019, the organised criminal group earned a profit of EUR 1 million. In two places in Italy, safehouses were found, in which 34 irregular migrants from Pakistan were hiding. They have been brought to safety and a procedure for their identification has been started.