

Romanian THB ring disrupted in France

7 July 2017

A joint action day on 19 June in France and Romania led to 23 arrests (13 in France and 10 in Romania) for suspected involvement in a human trafficking ring and participation in a criminal organisation.

In 2011, French police became aware of thefts committed on the Metro in and around Paris by young adult and underage Romanian nationals. The level of these crimes peaked in 2015 and 2016, when France hosted very large international events (the Paris Climate Change Conference (COP 21) and the Euro football competition).

Young potential thieves, belonging to family clans from Iasi and Roman in Romania, were regularly trafficked from Romania to France. The thieves reside in one building in Saint-Denis, and are supervised by adult organisers. Every morning, between 6:00 to 10:00, groups of children and young adults leave the building to commit crimes on the Metro.

The action was led in France by the Brigade for the protection of minors of Paris, conducted by an investigative judge, and in Romania by the Directorate for Investigation of Organized Crime and Terrorism, Iasi Territorial Office, and Brigade for Combating Organized Crime, as well as Border Police Iasi. Of the 39 suspects identified, 31 are minors. The value of the stolen goods is estimated at approximately EUR 600 000 since 2011.

Preparations for the action day were made possible by the signing of a joint investigation team (JIT) agreement between France and Romania, funded and supported by Eurojust.