

Sun, sea and scams: six arrests for forging money and documents in Bulgaria



Europol supported the Bulgarian authorities to dismantle euro and ID counterfeiters active in the region

Europol supported the Bulgarian authorities to take down an organised crime group involved in currency and document counterfeiting. US Secret Service also supported the operation. During the operation, the Bulgarian authorities dismantled one print shop counterfeiting currency in a Bulgarian seaside resort and two print shops forging documents situated near the Bulgarian cities Plovdiv and Shumen.

The forgery network is suspected of forging and distributing both currencies and identification documents including driving licences. The group advertised the quality of their forgeries with a fake Bulgarian passport of the famous American actor Sylvester Stallone. The counterfeit passport was of a very high quality, with most of the security features perfectly falsified.

The investigation uncovered that some of the suspected members of this organised crime group were connected to another one previously busted in 2018. The suspects were using the same location where the Bulgarian authorities found the print shop dismantled in 2018. On the day of this bust, Europol supported the Romanian authorities in a hit against another group of euro counterfeiters.

Results:

- 30 searches of locations and vehicles
- 9 suspects detained and 6 of them arrested
- 3 528 counterfeit €100 and €500 banknotes totalling €417 128

- 7 126 counterfeit \$50 totalling \$356 300 seized

Europol facilitated the information exchange and provided analytical support.

—

Headquartered in The Hague, the Netherlands, Europol supports the 27 EU Member States in their fight against terrorism, cybercrime, and other serious and organized crime forms. Europol also works with many non-EU partner states and international organisations. From its various threat assessments to its intelligence-gathering and operational activities, Europol has the tools and resources it needs to do its part in making Europe safer.