

Drug trafficking is one of the **EMPACT** priorities, Europol's priority crime areas, under the 2018–2021 EU Policy Cycle.

Drug trafficking is big business, bringing in a fifth of all profits from organised crime. It ravishes communities, endangers businesses, strains government institutions, and drags down the wider economy.

These pages give insights into the threat posed by drugs and drug trafficking, and show how they:

- › are related to other criminal activities, such as the rank exploitation of labourers
- › create a strain on government institutions
- › are linked to terrorist activities
- › have a serious impact on legitimate business
- › drag down the wider economy
- › have untold consequences for individuals, families and communities

## CONSTANT CHANGE

How drugs are used and are trafficked is constantly changing and the ways they are trafficked are growing in technical and organisational complexity. What is not changing is the profitability of the drugs trade. Every year EU citizens spend tens of billions of euros on illicit drugs.

The organised crime groups (OCGs) involved are becoming more specialised and more fully interconnected. And the overall rate of change is accelerating, partly as a result of globalisation. Activities related to trafficking are becoming concentrated in particular geographic areas, while instability in regions neighbouring the EU could have profound effects on the drug market in Europe.

Significant domestic demand already exists along all trafficking routes and may be growing, with drug trafficking acting as an additional destabilising factor in countries that are already faced with other serious political, social, health and economic problems. Developments on the Southern route “Southern route”—[from Afghanistan through Pakistan or Iran, via the Persian Gulf and East Africa](#)—are of special concern, given the potentially larger role of this route in the supply of heroin and other drugs to Europe and its negative impact on countries in Africa.

## MEETING THE CHALLENGES

These factors, taken individually and together, pose enormous challenges for Europol and its partner organisations, such as the [European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction \(EMCDDA\)](#) and [Interpol](#). These challenges are being met in a number of ways, including through:

- › systematic and ongoing analyses of the features of the drug trade and the business models underlying it, thus bolstering operational effectiveness and guiding the formulation of policy
- › partnerships between national authorities, international organisations, industry, and national governments
- › the efficient effective marshalling of resources
- › the gathering of sound information and insights in order to shape strategic responses, meet specific challenges, and identify new opportunities to fight this scourge

Europol also supports drug raids by offering criminal intelligence analysis and operational support to law enforcement, such as through Analysis Project (AP) Cola, Europol's team of specialists and analysts dedicated to tackling cocaine trafficking.

## UNDERMINING POWER AND PROFIT

These pages also look at the trafficking of drugs in particular categories including:

- › [synthetic drugs](#)
- › [cocaine and heroin](#)
- › [cannabis](#)
- › [other drugs](#)

Whatever the class of drug, a central aim of the activities of Europol and its partners, beyond the apprehension of traffickers and the interdiction of supplies, is to undermine the twin motives—profit and power—that perpetuate this scourge.

NUMBER OF ITEMS FOUND: 254

SEARCH



TYPE

Article/Story, Event, How-To Guide, Landing Page, Multimedia, News/Press Release, Operation, Page, Publication/Document

TARGET GROUP

SEARCH

CLEAR ALL



### 18 ARRESTS IN GERMANY AND SPAIN AFTER POLICE UNCOVER ONE TON OF MARIJUANA, TWO CANNABIS FACTORIES AND BUNDLES OF CASH

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE



### 100KG OF COCAINE AND 150KG OF MARIJUANA SEIZED IN MAJOR INTERNATIONAL OPERATION DISMANTLING BALKAN CARTEL

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE



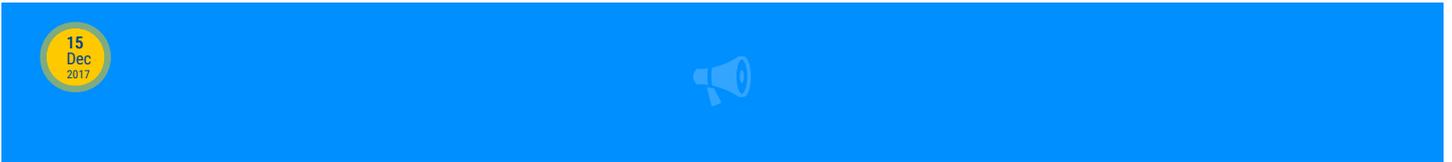
## EUROPOL REVIEW 2016 - 2017

PUBLICATION/DOCUMENT



### INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL NETWORK INVOLVED IN SYNTHETIC DRUG TRAFFICKING DISMANTLED

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE



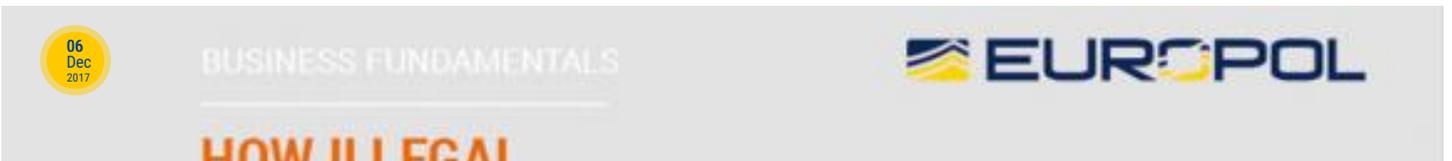
### DRUGS IN EUROPE: A BOLD LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE



### EUROPOL STRATEGIC REPORT: HOW ILLEGAL DRUGS SUSTAIN ORGANISED CRIME IN THE EU

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE



### HOW ILLEGAL DRUGS SUSTAIN ORGANISED CRIME IN THE EU INFOGRAPHIC

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### HOW ILLEGAL DRUGS SUSTAIN ORGANISED CRIME IN THE EU

PUBLICATION/DOCUMENT



### LARGE-SCALE JOINT ACTION DAY (LS-JAD)

OPERATION



## CYBER-PATROLLING WEEK

OPERATION

01  
Dec  
2017



## OPERATION DRAGON DELIVERS MAJOR BLOW TO ORGANISED CRIME

NEWS/PRESS RELEASE

01  
Dec  
2017



## JOINT ACTION DAYS 2017

PUBLICATION/DOCUMENT

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