
10 ARRESTS IN INTERNATIONAL PICKPOCKETING CASE

13 Oct 2016

[Press Release](#)

The Hague, the Netherlands

In a joint effort to tackle the growing phenomenon of international pickpocketing, Europol today supported an operation carried out by the German Federal Police (Regional Investigation Unit Berlin), and the Romanian Police, to dismantle an organised crime group (OCG) involved in this criminal activity.

Today's action resulted in the arrest of 10 Romanian suspects who were pickpocketing in the centre of Berlin.

Initiated by the German authorities, the investigation uncovered 197 offences linked to 44 suspects. Total losses amount to approximately EUR 150 000.

The strategy behind this operation was established during an operational session chaired by Europol at its headquarters in The Hague, in collaboration with representatives from the German Federal Police, the Romanian FAST¹ unit and Craiova County Investigation unit as well as the Irish National Police. Following this meeting, 17 arrest warrants were issued by the German Public Prosecutor and served in both Germany and Romania.

Regarding the modus operandi of the perpetrators, the investigators discovered the following:

- The OCG members carried out most of their criminal activity in one of the main Berlin railway stations;
- The perpetrators employed the 'escalator trick' to steal valuables from their victims;
- The stolen money was sent to Romania via bank transfers and the assets were transported as parcels through coach companies.

Committed to tackling this rising criminal activity facilitated by cross-border mobility in recent years, Europol believes that cooperation among Member States is the key factor in the dismantling of international OCGs.

¹Fugitive Active Search Team

CRIME AREAS [Organised property crime](#)

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