

14 ARRESTS IN SPAIN AFTER COCAINE FOUND IN BOXES OF A4 PAPER

10 Feb 2020

[Press Release](#)



Europol supported the Central Narcotics Unit and the Central Money Laundering Unit of regional Catalan police (Mossos D'esquadra) in arresting 14 members of an international criminal organisation trafficking [cocaine](#) and [laundering money](#). Ten members of the criminal organisation have been sent to prison.

DIFFERENT WAYS TO LAUNDER THE MONEY

The investigation began in December 2018 when 1 413kg of cocaine was found at a company near Barcelona. The drugs were hidden inside 800 boxes of A4 paper that came from Brazil. The true content of the boxes was only discovered when a company employee took one of the boxes and dropped it by accident. Two people were arrested in Spain and the investigation revealed that ten people had been smuggling drugs from Brazil as part of a criminal organisation.

To launder the money they gained from [drug trafficking](#), the suspects created a whole business structure with different companies, such as real estate investments or fashion stores in Barcelona. Another way to launder money was to use people ('mulas') that periodically made small cash deposits at several bank branches.

14 SEARCHES AND 2 MARIJUANA PLANTATIONS DISMANTLED

On 4 February the regional Catalan police carried out 13 simultaneous house and company searches to dismantle the structure of this smuggling organisation, and, together with the Spanish National Police (Policía Nacional), carried out one house search on the Balearic Island of Mahon. Money in several currencies, mobile phones, four simulated weapons, three cars, two motorcycles and several properties were all seized and two [marijuana plantations](#) were dismantled.

Two Europol experts were deployed for on-the-spot support to extract data from the mobile phones of two of the detainees. A member of Spain's Europol National Unit also assisted during the action day.

CRIME AREAS

[Drug Trafficking](#) • [Cannabis](#) • [Cocaine and heroin](#) • [Money Laundering](#)

TARGET GROUPS

[General Public](#) • [Law Enforcement](#) • [Academia](#) • [Professor](#) • [Students](#) • [Researcher](#) • [Press/Journalists](#) • [Other](#)

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