

BELGIAN AND ITALIAN AUTHORITIES ARREST EIGHT SUSPECTED MEMBERS OF THE COSA NOSTRA

16 Sep 2020

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On Tuesday 15 September, Italian State Police (Polizia di Stato Servizio Centrale Operativo) and Belgian Federal Police (Federale Politie/Police Fédérale) supported by Europol, arrested eight individuals (all Italian nationals, three of whom lived in Belgium) with known ties to the Italian crime syndicate Cosa Nostra. They are suspected of mafia association, attempted murders and trafficking drugs and weapons.

This operation puts an end to an infamous and deadly mafia feud that had been going on among alleged members of the Cosa Nostra in Belgium (Liège and Maasmechelen) and Italy (Favara in Sicily) between 2015 and 2018. The violence that arose from this clan war was most likely related to cocaine trafficking disputes.

During the joint raid, more than 160 police officers including members of the Belgium Special Weapons and Tactics team, helicopters and police dogs were deployed. The armed suspects and the four firearms found during the house searches (one in Belgium and three in Sicily) hinted to investigators that the feud was likely still ongoing.

Europol supported the investigation by facilitating the information exchange and providing analytical support and operational coordination.

This case was also supported by the EU's ISF ONNET project (Internal Security Funds), led by the Italian Anti-mafia Directorate (DIA, Direzione Investigativa Antimafia), which provides financial and operational support to tackle all types of organised crime groups.

CRIME AREAS

[Mafia-Structured Organised Crime Groups \(OCG\)](#)

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