

DOUBLE BLOW TO DARK WEB MARKETPLACES

03 May 2019

[Press Release](#)



Die Plattform und der kriminelle Inhalt wurden beschlagnahmt

durch das Bundeskriminalamt
im Auftrag der Generalstaatsanwaltschaft Frankfurt am Main
im Rahmen einer international koordinierten Operation.

The platform and the criminal content have been seized

by the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA)
on behalf of Attorney General's Office in Frankfurt am Main
in the course of an international coordinated law enforcement operation.



[Pressemitteilung](#)



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Silkkitie (known as the Valhalla Marketplace)

- › Those responsible for the world's second largest illegal online market in the dark web, Wall Street Market, were also arrested in Germany, and two of the highest-selling suppliers of narcotics were arrested in US.
- › Finnish authorities shut down Silkkitie earlier this year. When the same traders moved their activities to another illegal trade site on Tor, German authorities brought their illegal activities to an end

The German Federal Criminal Police (Bundeskriminalamt) shut down the Wall Street Market, under the authority of the German Public Prosecutor's office. They were supported by the Dutch National Police (Politie), Europol, Eurojust and various US government agencies (Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service, Homeland Security Investigations, US Postal Inspection Service, and the US Department of Justice). The Silkkitie (known as the Valhalla Marketplace) and its contents was also seized by Finnish Customs (Tulli) in close cooperation with the French National Police (La Police Nationale Française) and Europol. Europol was assisted by Bitdefender, an internet security company advising Europol's European Cybercrime Centre (EC3).

Europol supported coordinated law enforcement approach across Europe and the US was key to the success of these two investigations. Europol's Executive Director, Catherine De Bolle, commented: "These two investigations show the importance of law enforcement cooperation at an international level and demonstrate that illegal activity on the dark web is not as anonymous as criminals may think."

OVER 1 150 000 USERS AND 5 400 VENDORS ON THE WALL STREET MARKET

The online marketplace Wall Street market was the world's second largest dark web market, enabling the trade in drugs (including cocaine, heroin, cannabis and amphetamines), stolen data, fake documents and malicious software. The illegal platform was exclusively accessible via the Tor network in the so-called Darknet and aimed at international trade in criminal goods. Most recently, more than 63 000 sales offers were placed on the online marketplace and more than 1 150 000 customer accounts and more than 5 400 sellers registered. For payment, the users of the online marketplace used the crypto currencies Bitcoin and Monero. The alleged marketplace officials are said to have received commission payments of 2 to 6 percent of the sales value for the settlement of illegal sales of the platform.

This operation led by the German authorities has seen the arrest of three suspects and as part of the house searches carried out, the police officers seized over €550 000 in cash, alongside cryptocurrencies Bitcoin and Monero in 6-digit amounts, several vehicles and other evidences, such as computers and data storage. In the US, during the investigation by the Attorney General in Los Angeles, two of the highest-selling suppliers of narcotics were arrested.

FINNISH CUSTOMS SEIZED ENTIRE WEB SERVER AND CONTENTS OF VALHALLA

The Silkkitie has been operating on the The Onion Router (Tor) network since 2013. Based on the findings of the investigation, Finnish Customs also made a significant Bitcoin seizure.

For several years, narcotics and other illicit goods have been sold via this marketplace. Silkkitie is one of the oldest and internationally best-known Tor trade sites. After the Silkkitie (Valhalla) site was shut down by the authorities, some of the Finnish narcotics traders moved their activities to other illegal trade sites in the Tor network, such as Wall Street Market.

DEDICATED DARK WEB TEAM IN EUROPOL'S EC3

One of Europol's initiatives is to create a coordinated law enforcement approach to tackle crime on the dark web with the participation of law enforcement agencies from across EU Member States, operational third parties and other relevant partners, such as Eurojust.

To achieve this goal, Europol has established a dedicated Dark Web Team to work together with EU partners and law enforcement across the globe to reduce the size of this underground illegal economy. It will deliver a complete, coordinated approach:

- › sharing information;
- › providing operational support and expertise in different crime areas;
- › developing tools, tactics and techniques to conduct dark web investigations;
- › identifying threats and targets.

The team also aims to enhance joint technical and investigative actions, organise training and capacity-building initiatives, together with prevention and awareness-raising campaigns – a 360° strategy against criminality on the dark web.

A shared commitment across the law enforcement community worldwide and a coordinated approach by law enforcement agencies has once again proved their effectiveness. The scale of the operation at Europol demonstrates the global commitment to tackling the use of the dark web as a means to commit crime.

CRIME AREAS

TARGET GROUPS

ENTITIES

ORGANISATIONS

SUPPORT &

SERVICES

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

[European Cybercrime Center \(EC3\)](#)

[Drug Enforcement Administration \(DEA\)](#) · [Eurojust](#) · [Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\)](#)

[Operational coordination](#)

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