
EUROPOL SUPPORTS EU PROJECT TO FIGHT PAYMENT CARD FRAUD

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[Press Release](#)

Europol's European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) has supported an 18-month EU-funded project against payment card fraud, initiated by UK authorities, which has resulted in the arrest of 59 individuals, 32 prosecutions and 17 convictions as well as the disruption of five organised crime groups misusing electronic payments.

During the final meeting for Project Sandpiper in London today, it was stressed that a total of 52 812 compromised card numbers were recovered during the operations, with estimated savings to the banking industry of over GBP 23 million. The EU-based criminals were misusing financial credentials in mainly remote overseas destinations.

Head of the European Cybercrime Centre, Troels Oerting, said: "The criminal networks involved in this sophisticated electronic payment crime have been taken down as a result of many months of hard work by police officers and prosecutors in the European Union. Through the international cooperation of law enforcement authorities, the European Commission and Europol, as well as cooperation with the financial industry, European customers' payment transactions are safer. We continue our fight against this crime. The criminals continue to develop new methods for stealing our identities, money and ideas online, and we have to continue and further develop operations like Sandpiper and Skynet."

The phenomenon of card-not-present (CNP) fraud is on the rise, accounting for 60% of all fraud losses on cards issued in the European Union, according to card fraud statistics published by the European Central Bank (ECB) in February 2014. A new EU-funded project, codenamed Skynet, is launched this month and focuses on international cooperation to combat online CNP fraud. Six EU Member States are involved in the project.

EC3 at Europol provided analytical support and organised regular coordination meetings on the project at its headquarters. In addition, Europol's information and analysis systems were used to exchange and cross-check the intelligence received from Member States. Operations and projects such as Sandpiper and Skynet demonstrate the crucial role of the exchange of information and intelligence through Europol's channels and the importance of international coordination of such operations.

[Learn how to protect yourself from becoming a victim of electronic payment fraud](#)

For further information about Europol, please contact:

Lisanne Kusters, Europol Corporate Communications, +31 70 302 5001

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