

THE FRENCH GENDARMERIE AND GREEK HELLENIC POLICE SWOOP ON EURASIAN MAFIA

20 Apr 2018

[Press Release](#)

Over 30 suspects arrested in a series of coordinated raids in Caen and Thessaloniki



On 17 April 2018, more than 300 hundred officers from the French Gendarmerie and Greek Hellenic Police, with the support of Europol and Eurojust, targeted suspects in Caen and Thessaloniki believed to be part of a Eurasian organised crime group comprised mainly of Georgian and Armenians individuals responsible for over 120 acts of shoplifting in France, and 50 residential burglaries in Greece. 17 suspects were arrested in France, and 14 in Greece. Among those are 4 higher ranking thieves-in-law, including the top leader of this Eurasian criminal network, and 2 '*smotryashiy*' (regional coordinators).

The sting follows a lengthy and complex investigation looking into the activities of this Caucasian criminal network believed to be very prolific: it is estimated that the network committed 2 to 5 house breakings every day in Greece, and between 10 to 15 acts of shoplifting in France, totalling several millions euros of damage.

The organisation was hierarchically structured and defined by rigid rules, including the provision of funds to the '*obshak*', a fund used as a common financial deposit.

Europol supported the investigation for the past year and a half by facilitating the exchange of information. On the action day, 2 Europol experts were deployed in Thessaloniki, and one in Caen, to allow for real-time exchange of information and cross-checks of the data gathered in the course of the action against Europol's databases.

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