

# JOINT ACTION DAY TARGETS COUNTERFEITERS ON THE DARKNET

20 Sep 2017

[Press Release](#)



A joint action day carried out by seven EU Member States and coordinated by Europol has resulted in the arrest of 53 criminals active on the Darknet. The arrestees were involved in buying and/or selling counterfeit euro banknotes on illegal Darknet marketplaces, such as AlphaBay and Hansa Market.

In February 2017, Austrian authorities dismantled an illegal euro banknote print shop in Vienna and arrested one person. The data retrieved from this operation mainly related to illegal euro banknote counterfeiting on the Darknet. Among the documents seized, investigators found details of 33 different European and non-European countries to which the arrested person had sent counterfeit money.

Due to the international character of the case, Europol coordinated the information available and shared it with the countries concerned. In addition a joint action day was strategically planned, with the objective of targeting buyers and vendors active on the most popular Darknet marketplaces. The timing for the action (May-June 2017) was chosen to precede international operations by the United States (FBI) and the Netherlands, focusing on taking down two of the most popular Darknet marketplaces – Alpha Bay and Hansa Market.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a listing on AlphaBay Market. The URL is `alphabaywyrktqn.onion/listing.php?id=2...`. The page header includes the AlphaBay Market logo, a user profile icon, and a balance of 875 MyAutospec. A navigation bar contains links for HOME, SALES (15), MESSAGES (34), ORDERS, LISTINGS, BALANCE, FEEDBACK, FORUMS, API, and SUPPORT. The listing title is "20x (1000 €) High Quality notes, maybe the best, you get online". The description reads: "Hey Guys! And once again, we changed our production place. We are back now in our home country (Balkan is enough to know), but we still ship from inside European Union. Its better for us to produce here, police is very easy to control, so we have no problems here. We have done a lot again, with colour and making the product better. When you buy, you get our best note, features: - ...". The listing includes a "Buy Now" button for 259.96 EUR and a "Vendor Level 5" badge. A table of features is also present:

	Features	Features
Product class	Physical p	Origin country
Quantity left	Unlimited	Ships to
Ends in	Never	Payment
		Escrow

The left sidebar contains "LISTING OPTIONS" (Contact Seller, Favorite Listing, Favorite Seller, Alert when restock, Report Listing) and "BROWSE CATEGORIES" (Fraud: 38162, Drugs & Chemicals: 205922, Guides & Tutorials: 13451, Counterfeit Items: 7448, Digital Products: 15465, Jewels & Gold: 1598, Weapons: 3643, Carded Items: 3563, Services: 7055, Other Listings: 3455, Software & Malware: 2852, Security & Hosting: 718). The bottom left has "SEARCH OPTIONS" with fields for search terms, listing type (All, Fixed Price, Auction), product type (All, Digital, Physical), price range (EUR 0.00 to EUR 99999.99), origin country, ships to, and order by.

EU Member States involved in the successful joint action day were Austria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Slovakia and Spain. Fifty-three criminals were identified and arrested; 2049 counterfeit euro banknotes were seized during 77 house searches across Europe.

The excellent results of the joint action day prove that anonymity on the Darknet no longer exists. By acting together the European law enforcement community, coordinated by Europol, has sent a clear message that we have the means to identify criminality and strike back, even in areas of the Dark Web.



CRIME AREAS

Cybercrime • Forgery of money and means of payment • Euro Counterfeiting

TARGET GROUPS

General Public • Law Enforcement • Academia • Professor • Students • Researcher •

[Press/Journalists](#) • [Other](#)

OPERATIONS

[Joint Action Days \(JADs\)](#)

SUPPORT &

[Operational coordination](#) • [Information exchange](#)

SERVICES

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