

# OLAF Helps Knock Down Rum Smugglers

Thomas Wahl



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European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

## News

With the support of OLAF, law enforcement authorities in Spain, the Netherlands, Honduras, and Guatemala succeeded in stopping the activities of a criminal group that smuggled fake rum from Central America via the Netherlands to Spain. [OLAF reported on 6 July 2021](#) that the network invented a sophisticated scheme and production process, which involved not only the liquor but also bottles and labels. Investigations resulted in the seizure of roughly 340,000 bottles with an estimated value of €4.5 million. Hundreds of suspicious containers were detected, and an illegal production plant was dismantled in Honduras. OLAF mainly coordinated the exchange of information between the national customs and law enforcement authorities and provided risk analyses, which helped detect suspicious containers. In February 2020, OLAF already reported on the seizure of a part of the fake rum bottles which were destined for the Spanish market (→ [euclid 1/2020, 12](#)). Investigations against the network lasted several years.

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