

OLAF Helps Unravel Illegal Gas Import

Thomas Wahl



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News

With OLAF's support in collecting intelligence on a suspicious cargo shipment from China, Dutch authorities were able to [seize 14 tonnes of illicit refrigerant gases](#) bound for the EU. The successful operation involved the Netherlands, Lithuania, and Poland. It was coordinated by OLAF and ultimately carried out in the port of Rotterdam at the end of June 2020.

The import of gases into the EU is subject to strict quotas and regulations. The cargo from China was destined for a Lithuanian company that was not registered or even allowed to receive such imports under EU rules. The potential environmental impact would have been huge. The gases would have had a high global warming potential, equivalent to 38 return flights from Amsterdam to Sydney.

OLAF Director-General *Ville Itälä* highlighted the following: the operation shows that OLAF's operational priorities in the environmental field are becoming increasingly important, thus contributing to the new European Commission's ambition to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 with its European Green Deal. Preventing illegal imports, which can have devastating effects, from entering into the EU protects citizens, the environment, and legitimate trade.

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