

OLAF Supports Raid in Poland against Illegal Business in Medical Products

News

Thomas Wahl

On 3 February 2021, OLAF reported that Polish police successfully raided premises of a criminal gang that did business with counterfeit and illegal pharmaceutical products. OLAF coordinated the operation which also involved authorities in France and Italy.

Investigations revealed that an internationally operating organised crime group imported active substances from Asia to Poland where they were shipped to other countries for production of counterfeit medicines. Then the products, which partly mocked well-known brands, were sold in Europe and the US via online shops. In addition, the gang traded with genuine pharmaceutical products that were stolen from production plants. The Polish police in Poznań arrested 13 persons, seized hundreds of thousands of counterfeit medicine products and drugs (worth € 5.6 million) and confiscated instrumentalities and proceeds of crime, such as luxury vehicles and cash money.

Ville Itälä, Director-General of OLAF, highlighted the added value of OLAF in coordinating and facilitating the exchange of data and information which has proved crucial in the case. He also stressed that the operation showed that the criminal activities not only defrauded citizens, but also posed a real risk to people's health. Therefore, OLAF is increasingly mandated with saving the citizens' lives.

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