

# Operation Dismantles Criminal Organisation Trading Illicit Refrigerant Gases



## News

Thomas Wahl

One of OLAF's operational priorities is the fight against the illegal trade in refrigerant gases (also called F-gases or hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)), which are heavily regulated in the EU due to their major potential impact on the environment (→ [eucrim 3/2021, 143-144](#)). On 30 June 2022, OLAF and the Guardia Civil informed the public about the [successful dismantlement](#) of a Spanish-based criminal network involved in the illicit trade of the gases. The network used false documents in order to import the gases from China to Spain and then illegally sold them in domestic black markets. The profits from this illicit trade were afterwards laundered and spent on luxury items, such as luxury cars and real estate.

OLAF supported the operation (dubbed "Marum") as an intelligence hub and established the international route of the suspected shipments. The operation, in which also the Spanish Tax Authority and Europol participated, resulted in the arrest of 27 persons (including the leaders of the organisation) and the seizure of 110 tonnes of different types of harmful gases, with an estimated value of €11 million.

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ISSN: 1862-6947

<https://eucrim.eu>

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The project is co-financed by the Union Anti-Fraud Programme (UAFP), managed by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).



Co-funded by  
the European Union