

Action against Italian mafia in Spain: 32 arrests

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Supported by Eurojust and Europol, authorities in Spain and Italy have taken action against two organised crime groups (OCGs) with suspected links to the 'Ndrangheta mafia and allegedly involved in drug trafficking, money laundering and extortion. The OCGs operated in Italy (Milan area) and Spain (Ibiza).

In an action carried out in Spain, 32 suspects were arrested and a total of 40 places were searched across Ibiza, Barcelona, Malaga and Tenerife. Furthermore, EUR 300.000 in cash, 18 kilograms of amphetamine and 4.5 kilograms of cocaine were seized, as well as firearms and ammunition. Also, during the operation a cannabis plantation with 600 plants was dismantled.

The investigation in Italy focused on a mafia-type criminal organisation based in Milan that also operated in Ibiza. The head of the OCG is assumed to be related to the boss of one of the most powerful Calabrian 'Ndrangheta families. The OCG is allegedly involved in extortion, drug trafficking and money laundering, through many economic activities, and linked also with the Sicilian Cosa Nostra mafia.

It is believed that the OCG was able to fully exert its power on the territory of Ibiza according to the mafia modalities and patterns that normally are exercised only in Italy.

In Spain, the investigation focused on an OCG involved in drug trafficking and money laundering. The suspects allegedly used sailing boats to import large quantities of cocaine from South America to be sold in Ibiza. The criminal network also ran several businesses in Ibiza to mask their illegal activities, including real estate businesses and rental apartments for tourists.

Thanks to the information provided by Italian authorities, it was established that two members of the OCG who had settled in Ibiza allegedly belong to the 'Ndrangheta family and are involved in committing extortion in Ibiza to the detriment of local businessmen.

The case was opened at Eurojust by the Italian authorities in April 2022. The Agency hosted two coordination meetings to facilitate judicial cooperation and provide support for the coordinated investigative efforts, including the organisation of an action day in Spain.

Europol supported this investigation by providing tailored expertise and extensive analysis support and facilitating the exchange of information through its secure channels. During the live phase of the operation, a Europol mobile office was deployed to Spain to facilitate the real-time exchange of information.

This case falls under the EMPACT Operational Action 2.3 on 'Ndrangheta and the Sicilian mafia, the first EMPACT action led by the National Antimafia Directorate (Direzione Nazionale Antimafia) in which Eurojust is co-leader with Europol.



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The following authorities took part in the investigation:

- Spain: Court of the First Instance No. 3 of Ibiza (Juzgado de Instrucción 3 de Ibiza); Balearic Superior Court (Fiscalía Superior de Baleares); the Civil Guard (Guardia Civil)
- Italy: Public Prosecutor's Office of Milan (Procura della Repubblica Milano)

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