

DARK WEB DRUGS NETWORK SUFFERS ALMOST 300 ARRESTS ACROSS NINE COUNTRIES

Posted on May 3, 2023



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cryptocurrency.

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A major 'dark web' marketplace for drugs has been “[halted](#)” following a multi-continental investigation that resulted in the arrest of 288 suspects. The EU’s law enforcement agency Europol, working alongside other international bodies, also seized over 100 firearms, almost a tonne of drugs—including MDMA, LSD, and ecstasy pills—and more than €50 million in cash and [cryptocurrency](#).

FBI Deputy Director Paul Abbate [said](#) the raid “presents a stark warning about the real-world consequences of virtual activity” and “the criminal and often life-threatening reality of what lurks within that realm.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANpGbdR6b1w>

The operation, dubbed 'SpecTor,' as an apparent nod to the dark web [browsing protocol](#), has seen the detention of many “[high-value targets](#).” Among others, 55 have been arrested in the UK, 153 in the U.S., 52 in Germany, 10 in the Netherlands, and five in France. Europol said in a [statement](#) that it

has been compiling intelligence packages based on troves of evidence provided by German authorities, who successfully seized the marketplace’s criminal infrastructure in December 2021. These target packages, created by cross-matching and analysing the collected data and evidence, served as the basis for hundreds of national investigations. The vendors arrested as a result of the police action against Monopoly Market were also active on other illicit marketplaces, further impeding the trade of drugs and illicit goods on the dark web.

Those arrested, the agency added, were involved in selling or buying goods on the “Monopoly Market,” a dark web marketplace, which has been seized. Some of these are already being prosecuted, according to the U.S. Justice Department, which [described](#) the sting as the “largest international operation against darknet trafficking of fentanyl and opioids.” Investigations continue into those behind the dark web marketplace.