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Alleged Russian Mobsters Detained in Spain

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Six Russian citizens and a Ukrainian have been detained by the Spanish Civil Guard, the El Mundo newspaper reported Tuesday.

The Spanish daily said that the arrests were "a new blow to the Russian mafia in Spain."

A civil guard force of 180 agents, led by the anti-corruption prosecutor, carried out the operation at 6 a.m. on Tuesday. The detainees, suspected of money laundering, are believed to be connected with the Tambov and Taganskaya organized crime groups, El Mundo reported.

Two Russians reportedly "established infrastructure" that allowed them to mastermind crimes from Tarragona in Spain's Catalonia region by directing the work of their subordinates.

Investigators have found that the detainees have ties to Russian politicians and the Colombian drug cartels Cali and Medellin, El Mundo reported.

A civil guard representative told the TASS news agency that there is an eighth detainee. The

Russian Embassy in Madrid is currently “establishing the circumstances” of what happened, TASS reported.

The Russian mafia has been a longstanding problem for Spain. Its network of criminal groups extends throughout the country and its masterminds have ties with high-ranking Russian officials.

In March, the Spanish civil guard, on Russia's request, detained four Russians accused of fraud and the laundering of €15 million ($16.6 million), the RBC news agency reported.

Last May, Spanish authorities issued an arrest warrant for 12 Russian officials suspected of ties with Tambov mafia chief Gennady Petrov. Investigators said they had evidence of the group's involvement in arms trafficking, drug smuggling, extortion, bribery, and money laundering.

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