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International Smuggling Ring to Russia Dismantled – Eurojust

By AFP

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Jean-Etienne Minh-Duy Poirrier / Flickr (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Coordinated raids in five countries have led to the arrest of three people suspected of smuggling goods to Russia that could have military uses, EU judicial agency Eurojust said on Tuesday.

Authorities in Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Canada, and the Netherlands conducted a joint investigation into the export of technological and lab equipment that contravened EU-wide sanctions imposed after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Dutch police began the probe at the end of last year, which led to the uncovering of "a web of enterprises which were used to circumvent the ban on exports to Russia," according to Eurojust.

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The Dutch tax authority FIOD said a 56-year-old man and a 57-year-old man were arrested on suspicion of being the directors of the Dutch firm shipping goods to Russia via Eastern Europe.

A 54-year-old woman was also arrested on suspicion of assisting in the operation.

Dutch public broadcaster NOS said the goods smuggled were worth hundreds of thousands of euros (dollars).

The European Union has already hit Russia with 12 rounds of unprecedented sanctions since the Kremlin launched the war on its neighbor in February 2022.

An EU official said last week that Brussels aims to impose a new round of sanctions on Russia next month to mark the second anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine.

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