

Lithuanian Investigators Find No 'Unlawful Interference' in DHL Cargo Plane Crash

By [AFP](#)

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Lithuanian police search the area where a DHL cargo plane crashed. **Petras Malukas / AFP**

Lithuania's authorities said Friday that police investigators had found no evidence of "unlawful interference" in the deadly crash of a DHL cargo plane last month, which had triggered suspicions of foul play.

The crash near Vilnius Airport, which killed one crew member of the plane coming from the German city of Leipzig, immediately raised questions over whether it could be connected to a recent series of sabotage cases some Western officials have blamed on Russia.

"Preliminary analysis of the... flight data recorder and cockpit voice recorder, as well as evidence collected at the crash site, has not revealed any evidence of unlawful interference," Lithuania's Justice Ministry said in a statement.

Investigators reached the preliminary conclusion after traveling to Germany to examine the flight recorders, which were recovered several days after the crash. However, Lithuania's Prosecutor General's Office said in a separate statement Friday that the criminal investigation had "not ruled out any version" of the incident.

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The plane crashed about a kilometer (0.6 miles) from the Vilnius Airport, hitting buildings as it skidded several hundred meters. Prosecutors said 16 people whose homes were burnt down afterward were officially recognized as victims.

The crash killed the Spanish pilot and injured the three other crew members — another Spaniard, a German and a Lithuanian. Germany had raised the possibility of outside involvement in the disaster, arguing that it could have been "another hybrid incident" from Russia.

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, European countries have often used the term "hybrid" to describe actions against them that they believe originate from Moscow.

Lithuanian officials had in the weeks preceding the crash probed alleged acts of incendiary devices being planted on cargo planes.

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