

**PRESS RELEASE****More than 5 million potentially dangerous toys seized in 21 countries**

The second Europol-coordinated operation Ludus II led to the seizure of hazardous toys with a total value of more than EUR 18 million

Between October 2021 and 31 January 2022, Europol coordinated operation Ludus II targeting trafficking of counterfeit toys and other goods. Ludus II, led by the Spanish Civil Guard (Guardia Civil), Spanish National Police (Policia Nacional) and the Spanish Customs authorities (DAVA) and co-led by the Romanian Police, involved law enforcement authorities from 21 countries in total. The EU Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) also supported the operation, while the World Customs Organisation (WCO) took part as an observer and provided secure communication with its members to support the operational activities.

The seizures made during the operation include counterfeit and illegal puzzle games, videogames and related characters, board and card games, dolls and puppets from famous TV series, bricks for children and clothing and accessories from famous brands. The seized goods harboured risks such as chemical exposure, strangulation, choking, electric shock, damage to hearing and fire hazards . This was the outcome of an analysis of the EUIPO on these alerts, which led to the setting up of the first operation Ludus in 2020 [/hyperlink to the report/](#).

During the operational phase of Ludus II, law enforcement authorities performed checks and inspections to detect illegal shipments and storage. A number of raids followed online investigations initiated on e-commerce platforms. The majority of fake toys were imported from East Asia to the EU, UK and the US. Authorities detected intellectual property rights violations, lack of CE markings and EU Declarations of Conformity, and the presence of undesired dangerous substances.

**Operation Ludus II in a nutshell**

- Seizures worth nearly EUR 18 million
- More than 5 million counterfeit toys
- 2 600+ administrative/health prevention cases opened
- 99 individuals reported to judicial authorities
- 1 459 individuals reported to administrative/health authorities
- 72 online markets checked
- 30 websites shut down

**Operational highlights**

In the Lazio and Campania regions, the Italian Financial Corps (Guardia di Finanza) intercepted and seized a large amount of illegal puzzle games coming from an Asian country. The toys were stored in two warehouses.

The French Customs authorities (Direction Générale des Douanes et Droits Indirects) disrupted a regular supply of counterfeit toys, which were sold via a famous e-commerce platform. The investigation, named Pokezone, allowed authorities to detect a large amount of products, which were being sold on the internal markets of France and six other countries.

### **International front against fake toys**

Europol coordinated the operational activities, facilitated the communication exchange and provided operational analysis. Europol also supported the activities with technical expertise.

Europol's IPC3 (Intellectual Property Crime Coordinated Coalition), which supported the investigation, is a project to combat intellectual property crime co-funded by the EUIPO (European Union Intellectual Property Office).

EU Member States: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.

Third-party countries: Cote d'Ivoire, North Macedonia, United Kingdom and United States.