

# 7 ARRESTED IN SPAIN FOR SMUGGLING SOME 300 MIGRANTS TO FRANCE

07 August 2018

*Press Release*

- The Spanish National Police has arrested 7 individuals suspected of large-scale migrant smuggling
- It is estimated that the organised crime group has facilitated the entry into Spain of almost 300 migrants
- The criminals would arrange for the smuggling of migrants from French-speaking African countries to Northern Spain, and from there on to France

With the support of [Europol's European Migrant Smuggling Centre \(EMSC\)](https://www.europol.europa.eu/about-europol/european-migrant-smuggling-centre-emsc) (<https://www.europol.europa.eu/about-europol/european-migrant-smuggling-centre-emsc>), the Spanish National Police has dismantled an organised crime group suspected of facilitating large-scale migrant smuggling between French-speaking African countries and France. It is estimated that this criminal network has facilitated the entry into Spain of almost 300 irregular migrants, before arranging for their subsequent smuggling to France.

During an action day end of July, six suspects were arrested in Guipuzcoa (Northern Spain) and one in Madrid. Eight migrants awaiting to be smuggled to France were also rescued from a safe house in Guipuzcoa. Europol supported the investigation with analytical capabilities in-house and the deployment of an expert to San Sebastian (Spain) with a mobile office and UFED (Universal Forensic Extraction Device).

The organised crime group, made up of individuals of Sub-Saharan origin, arranged for migrants to be smuggled from French-speaking African countries (Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal) to Spain by boat, usually providing them with fake documents. Upon their arrival at the Spanish coast, the migrants were contacted by members of the criminal organisation who would arrange for their transfer to safe houses in Northern Spain, and from there on to France.

Highly well organised, this criminal network was operating from the Spanish city of San Sebastian, with ramifications in Bilbao, Madrid and France.

## THE EUROPEAN MIGRANT SMUGGLING CENTRE (EMSC)

The increasing involvement of organised criminal networks in facilitating illegal immigration in recent times called for an enhanced and coordinated response from European law enforcement agencies. Europol was tasked with strengthening its capabilities and launched the European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC) in February 2016. The centre focuses on geographical criminal hotspots, and on building a better capability across the EU to fight organised people smuggling networks operating in them.

For more information on EMSC's activities and trends in migrant smuggling, read the [EMSC 2 years activity report](https://www.europol.europa.eu/publications-documents/two-years-of-emsc) (<https://www.europol.europa.eu/publications-documents/two-years-of-emsc>).

Further details available on the press release of the [Spanish National Police](https://www.policia.es/prensa/20180804_1.html) ([https://www.policia.es/prensa/20180804\\_1.html](https://www.policia.es/prensa/20180804_1.html)).

Watch the video (<https://youtu.be/T6H3JDpNgwo>)

## CRIME AREAS

[Facilitation of Illegal Immigration \(/crime-areas-and-trends/crime-areas/facilitation-of-illegal-immigration\)](/crime-areas-and-trends/crime-areas/facilitation-of-illegal-immigration)

## TARGET GROUPS

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[Researcher \(/target-groups/researcher\)](/target-groups/researcher) • [Press/Journalists \(/target-groups/press-journalists\)](/target-groups/press-journalists) • [Other \(/target-groups/other\)](/target-groups/other)

## COUNTRIES

[France](#) • [Spain](#)

## ENTITIES

[European Migrant Smuggling Centre \(EMSC\) \(/entities/european-migrant-smuggling-centre-emsc\)](/entities/european-migrant-smuggling-centre-emsc)

## SUPPORT & SERVICES

[Operational coordination \(/support-services/operational-coordination\)](/support-services/operational-coordination) •

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