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Thread: [Europol Cracks Down on Balkan Cartel: Encrypted Chat Apps Infiltrated](#)

**realzug** - September 3, 2023, 11:56 am

Europol recently announced the successful dismantling of a major drug-trafficking organization linked to a Balkan cartel. This cartel was under investigation since January 2022 and was suspected of smuggling large quantities of cocaine from South America to Europe using sea routes. The operation, which involved collaboration from several countries including Brazil, Croatia, France, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and Slovenia, resulted in the seizure of approximately 2.7 tonnes of cocaine.

The investigation revealed that the cartel used a large boat for smuggling, with skippers of Ukrainian and Czech nationality traveling to West Africa to prepare their vessel for these operations. On August 24, an "action day" was executed, leading to 15 house searches, six arrests, and the confiscation of luxury items and cash amounting to €550,000 (\$593,000).

A significant aspect of this operation was the use of encrypted messaging apps by the cartel members. While Europol did not specify which apps were used, they highlighted the takedown of three major encrypted communication tools previously used by criminals: EncroChat, Sky ECC, and ANOM. These platforms were infiltrated and shut down by law enforcement in recent years, providing invaluable insights into criminal networks. The data from these services has been instrumental in making numerous arrests, emphasizing the role of Balkan nationals in the global cocaine trade. This is the second major cartel takedown credited to the hacking of an encrypted messaging app by European police.

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Given the recent takedowns and the reliance of criminal networks on encrypted messaging platforms, which chat app do you think was most recently compromised by law enforcement, and why?

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**Sickedrat** - March 13, 2025, 9:48 am

good work maybe bad too