

# 2019

## Finnish Customs Enforcement



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# Mind your Customs

During the past decade, our operational environment changed greatly. Online trade increased and became a permanent thing perhaps surprisingly quickly. Individuals can participate in world trade by purchasing their commodities from any location in the world, even directly from manufacturers.

Technological advances have emerged at a dizzying speed. Almost everyone has a personal “office” in their pocket, and technology enables things that we could not even dream of ten years ago. At the same time, technological developments have presented new threats especially in the cyber environment. Completely new methods for countering these threats have been required of Customs.

Changes in our operational environment have forced us to rely on preparation instead of planning. Each day and each work shift involve just that, preparation.

Customs is a special authority. We are the only government agency that sees through the processes of its own area of tasks from start to finish. Customs issues authorisations for foreign trade, facilitates cross-border goods trade, supervises the legality of goods flows, and ultimately investigates criminal offences within cross-border goods traffic. The customs enforcement sector extends its operations through the entire range of Customs tasks, all the time. Authorities acquire and exchange information long before goods have even moved from their countries of origin. Physical control measures are carried out in warehouses, companies and arrival locations of goods. Intelligence is gathered for preventing, uncovering and investigating criminal offences.

Today, customs enforcement work involves real information work.

Through international and domestic cooperation between authorities, by analysing vast masses of information, and by targeting control measures based on risk assessment we are protecting society, the environment and people who rely on the safety and security of our society.

As our operational environment has changed, a whole new range of tasks has emerged alongside the two traditional fields of customs operations, namely those of the facilitation of foreign trade and of enforcement.

Our third range of tasks involves supporting other agencies in their responsibilities and in achieving their objectives. Besides information and expertise, Customs provides support in the form of concrete enforcement work concerning information networks, and in the form of physical control measures. For Customs to support other authorities is vital for our society, as this allows our co-authorities to operate efficiently in their



own tasks without needing to reserve personnel and technology for completing the same tasks as Customs sees to. This is a natural role for Customs, as customs activity and cooperation are, by tradition, international and global in nature. Support from the customs enforcement sector to other authorities is appreciated, and there is great demand for extending support through technological developments and changes in the operational environment.

We should look after this role and task! In 2019, the customs enforcement sector achieved record results, a fact for which we owe thanks to our highly professional personnel.

Continuous development across our entire sector that supports the enforcement process has helped make progress in all our fields of operation. Complacency is a sure killer of progress, which means that we should resiliently continue our development work, despite the already excellent results. Special emphasis in the development work of the near future will involve improvement of the operational surroundings of customs enforcement, and on the recognition of risks and anomalies which is already well underway. The efficiency and results of these sectors lie at the core of the customs enforcement sector, also from the viewpoint of the authorities who cooperate with us.

An efficient enforcement sector that yields results is an advantage to Finnish Customs, and to all of Finnish society. We should look after it! The best way to do this is to always maintain a professional level of work.

I thank you for the past year and wish you a good start to the new decade!

**Sami Rakshit**  
**Director of the Enforcement Department**

# Crime overview

In recent years, the profile of crimes investigated by Finnish Customs has changed and become more demanding. The criminal investigations increasingly consist of demanding and time-consuming international entities, in which one has to connect traditional methods of crime investigation to cybercrime investigation methods. An example of this development is the dramatic increase in the cases of aggravated tax fraud and aggravated narcotics offences, with increasing professional snus smuggling in the background, as well as the trade in narcotics moving to the Darknet. On the other hand, the criminal activity is increasingly in the hands of organised criminals capable of violence.

The total number of customs crimes has been on the decline for several years. Also in 2019, the total number of crimes was lower than the previous year, with 7 835 cases. The reduction in the total is explained, for example, by the considerable decrease in standard narcotics offences. This decrease is mainly due to the significant decrease in the cases of uncovered letters seized in postal traffic. Through international cooperation between authorities, large Darknet marketplaces such as Silkkitie and Sipu-likanava have been closed down. As a result, a clear market manager is missing from the market, which

has led to a situation where smaller marketplaces constantly appear and disappear on the Internet. The flipside of this phenomenon is that the quantities of narcotics seized in postal consignments have grown, since the orders from the marketplaces have become larger.

Finland's geographical position between the east and the west neighbouring Russia, as well as having an external EU border, brings challenges to crime prevention. Finland is commonly used as a transit country for smuggling illegal products. Good flight connections and other traffic connections have strengthened the role of Helsinki Airport as a transit staging post for illegal assets arriving from Asia to Europe. Legal foreign trade structures, transit and incorrect goods descriptions are used systematically, and individuals as well as organised criminal groups are involved in this activity.

The successful targeting of customs crime prevention describes the high level of impact of the prevention of customs offences in 2019. The impact amounted to 66.2 million euros. The sum is divided almost evenly between taxes evaded through crime, the value of goods not seized in solved cases and the recovered proceeds of crime. Each of these amounted to more than 20 million euros.



## Narcotics offences

Despite the popularity of new psychoactive substances and the growth of online sales of narcotics, the traditional ways of smuggling and traditional narcotics have maintained their position on the Finnish narcotics market; cannabis and amphetamine are still common and the use of cocaine is increasing. Sweden's role as an assisted area in the narcotics trade to Finland has strengthened. Narcotics are imported to Finland mainly from the Baltic countries and Western Europe via Sweden, especially along a northern overland route as well as by air and in ship traffic. Postal and express courier consignments are also used, especially in the narcotics trade on the Darknet. As a new phenomenon, Finland has been impacted by the smuggling of large lots of cocaine in sea containers from South America; possibly for transit purposes. Narcotics are smuggled via Finland both to Russia and Europe and from other Nordic countries especially to Norway. Finland is also, to some extent, used as a transit country for precursors and not yet classified pre-precursors smuggled from Asia to Europe and used in the manufacturing of narcotics.

In 2019, Finnish Customs investigated less narcotics offences than in the previous year, 2 020 cases in total. The number of aggravated narcotics offences was significantly higher than in previous years with 389 cases. The number of individuals suspected of aggravated narcotics offences also grew significantly in 2019 compared to previous years. Of the suspects, approximately half were foreign citizens.

In 2019, Customs seized 1 714 kilos of narcotics in total, which is almost 700 kilos more than the year before. The seizures predominantly consisted of khat, of which a large quantity was seized last year, 1 310 kilos. Khat is smuggled directly from the regions of production, Africa and Israel, and the seized quantities vary yearly depending e.g. on the share of fresh or dried khat.

Cannabis is the most commonly used narcotic in Finland. In 2019, the quantity of seized hashish was on an average level of 47 kilos, but the greatest quantity of marijuana of the 2010s was seized, 256 kilos. The country of dispatch is often Spain and the substance is smuggled in the commercial goods traffic, passenger traffic and as express courier consignments. Because of how arduous and risky it is, the home growing of marijuana has lost its position since the peak years in the beginning of the 2010s.

The quantity of cocaine seized by Customs, 32.9 kilos, and the quantity of heroin, 7.3 kilos, were also of a record level. However, when compared to other narcotics, the substances are still used quite marginally in Finland in comparison with other Nordic countries and Western Europe. Especially the seizures of heroin were largely transit consignments intended for Southern Europe.

In 2019, the LSD seizures were at the average level of recent years, 3 670 units. However, the quantity of seized amphetamine and methamphetamine was much smaller than in previous years, 24.2 kilos in total. Based on wastewater examinations by the national Institute for Health and Welfare, amphetamine is still used in large quantities at least in the Helsinki region, whereas methamphetamine seems to have disappeared almost entirely from the Finnish narcotics market. Amphetamine arrived in Finland in passenger traffic by sea from Estonia and Sweden, from where it was smuggled also along the northern overland route. Ecstasy, profiled as a "party drug" for young adults, was seized in significantly smaller quantities in 2019 than the previous year, amounting to 40 940 tablets.

The majority of criminal cases connected to narcotic medicines are detected in the postal and courier traffic from Europe. The greatest seizures by number of pieces are often carried out when discovered in connection with the investigation of traditional smuggling. In 2019, Customs seized more narcotic medicines than the previous year, 116 970 tablets. The commonly used narcotic medicine Subutex was seized in half the quantity of the previous year, 14 870 tablets. Subutex is smuggled in large consignments from France and in smaller quantities by post from other countries. Furthermore, clonazepam (Rivotril, Rivatril) has maintained its popularity among the addicted.

In 2019, Customs seized clearly less GBL than the year before, 14 litres. The drop is explained by GBL being classified as a narcotic substance in Lithuania, which formerly was the main country of dispatch.

New psychoactive substances from European market places, ordered via Darknet and often originating from China, are still a problem and their health risks are significant. For the time being, the supply of psychoactive substances seems to be renewing slower than before.

## Doping and medicine offences

Doping substances and medicines are smuggled to Finland both through conventional methods and via online shops. The majority of seized substances are detected in the postal and courier traffic, mainly in foreign mail at Helsinki Airport, in addition to which significant seizures are carried out also in connection with investigations regarding air, vehicle, railway and ship traffic. In recent years, Customs has detected several large illicit transits and customs warehouse deposits of doping substances and medicines. In 2019, the number of doping offences (206) investigated by Customs corresponded with the previous years. Doping substances seized amounted to 298 330 tablets/ampoules, which is almost less than half of the number seized in a few single large



shipments the previous year. The majority of the seizures were anabolic steroids. The number of medicine offences (681) corresponded also with previous years, and medicines were seized slightly more than the previous year, 83 840 tablets. Of these, most cases included clenbuterol, salbutamol, poppers products, melatonin as well as different medicines used for cancer, thyroid problems, erectile dysfunction and pain.

### **Economic crime**

The number of tax fraud cases has increased for several years. In 2019, the number was higher than the previous year, 1 362 cases. The number of aggravated tax fraud cases was also higher, 149 cases, and they are still mainly connected to highly taxable products such as snus and cigarettes, and to value added tax. VAT frauds are mainly detected at border crossing points in southeastern Finland. They are often connected to temporary warehousing and the linking of sales with the goal of claiming unsubstantiated tax refunds, as well as circulating goods and customs clearance papers.

In recent times, the professionalisation of snus smuggling and illegal snus trade has kept the Customs Investigation Unit very busy. The number of snus cases and seizures remained large in 2019 as well; Customs seized 4 940 kilos of snus in total.

Snus is imported from Sweden and from the Baltic countries to Finland through an increasingly wide range of methods. Snus is especially popular among the young: According to cancer organisations, nearly every fourth 18-year-old boy already uses snus. Snus is also sold to minors, and has been observed as early as in elementary schools.

The illegal import of cigarettes to Finland and via Finland to the European market has continued in a systematic fashion. Cigarettes are mainly detected at customs offices on the eastern border. Cigarettes are concealed in trunks or vehicle structures of trucks, vans and passenger cars arriving from Russia. In 2019, the number of cigarettes detained in customs offences was 2.7 million, which corresponds with the average of the recent years. Cigarettes are usually authentic ones from Russia or Belarus. The smuggling is usually carried out by criminal organisations, but one third of the cigarettes is seized from individual passengers.

Alcohol seizures by Customs have decreased in the last few years. The seized quantity was lower in 2019 than the previous year, 1 270 litres. A total of 323 390 litres of alcohol was placed under tax consideration. Large quantities of low-cost alcohol are imported in an organised way mainly from the Baltic countries, and allegedly for personal use, but are sold illegally to other parties primarily on the Internet. Alcohol tax reductions implemented in

Estonia and Latvia last year may increase passenger imports to Finland, and under this guise, unlawful commercial imports.

Environmental crimes and intellectual property offences that are classified as economic offences have remained relatively few. The constant growth of the online market and direct flights between Helsinki-Vantaa and the Far East have increased the number of counterfeit products arriving by postal and air freight. The range of counterfeit trademark goods in electronic trade is broad. In 2019, Customs stopped counterfeit clothes, shoes, electric guitars and designer lamps, among other goods. Only a

few cases of food fraud come to the attention of the Finnish authorities on a yearly basis. During the last few years, customs controls of foodstuffs have mainly consisted of fruit and vegetable controls.

Weapons seizures are on the increase. In 2019, customs seized 232 weapons, of which the majority were gas weapons. Gas weapons are brought to Finland in passenger cars or sent to Finland by mail. Firearms and their parts as well as explosives are ordered from inside the EU through Darknet and by using express freight and postal services.

## Customs in preventing European crime threats

Finnish Customs is a professional and respected operator in the prevention of international and organised crime. Customs takes active part in preparing the EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment, and each year implements and coordinates several international enforcement operations combating illegal cross-border traffic of persons and goods. Through enforcement operations, as well as efficient criminal intelligence and investigation, Customs conveys and receives a real-time overview of criminal activity in Europe, and of its diverse manifestations.

The EU policy cycle is a method for combating serious and organised international crime, implemented by the EU in 2010. The cycle focuses on the current crime situation in the EU and monitors new crime trends. The activity is based on the Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA) drafted by Europol. The cycles last four years at a time, and are divided into several operational stages. Focal topics as concerns enforcement and crime prevention by Finnish Customs include operative plans that are determined annually, and implemented as joint EMPACT projects<sup>1</sup>. EU Member States and EU organs and agencies, as well as outside partners, are jointly responsible for implementing action plans.

EMPACT projects aim at combating serious crime threats in Europe. Altogether ten crime priorities are set out for the 2018–2021 period<sup>2</sup>. Police, Customs and the Border Guard agree jointly on the coordination and tasks of each authority in various projects. The national responsibilities of Finnish Customs concern missing trader frauds (MTIC), excise tax frauds and environmental offences. Customs also conducts operative actions and international enforcement operations on other priority areas as well. In 2019, Customs has carried out EMPACT-related operations, for example, in combating the smuggling of weapons and narcotics.

EMPACT cooperation and national enforcement operations require seamless joint activity and dialogue amongst authorities and operators. The impact assessment following the planning of joint measures and operations involves several stages and singled-out factors that test the designated and shared processes and practices of operational units. Sometimes, management and understanding of operational entities can be challenging. On the other hand, cooperation and an active work culture have been the strong points of the entire field of authorities in Finland, including Customs. This gives us a firm basis on which to build on in future years.

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<sup>1</sup> EMPACT, European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats

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<sup>2</sup> EUROPOL, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/empact>

# Enforcement Department functions

## Intelligence and Analysis (ATI)

The task of the operational unit for Intelligence and Analysis (ATI) at the Enforcement Department of Finnish Customs is, for its part, to be in charge of risk management and crime prevention at Finnish Customs. Thus, ATI is also part of the crime prevention organisation of Finnish Customs.

The basic functions of the operational unit aim at reaching the strategic goals of the Enforcement Department and of Finnish Customs. The central objective is to protect society by ensuring goods safety as well as by combating cross-border crime and the shadow economy in such way that the measures have societal impact and are cost effective. The intelligence and analysis work is a success factor of the knowledge management within the field of enforcement at Finnish Customs.

The main operating principle of Finnish Customs Investigation is “security through cooperation”. Extensive national and international cooperation and efficient utilisation of technological solutions in analysis are prerequisites for productive intelligence activity. At a national level, ATI works in close cooperation with various ministries and their subordinate central agencies, especially with the Police and the Border Guard, since there is PCB cooperation (Police, Customs and the Border Guard) also within the field of crime intelligence. There is international cooperation especially with the EU, with different law enforcement organisations and with third countries.

Customs targets its enforcement and analysis work especially at passenger and goods traffic arriving in Finland. ATI merges the analysis and intelligence work into an integrated process. Through its work, ATI supports the intelligence led of Finnish Customs by producing information to the management through intelligence and analysis activities pertaining to customs crime prevention, through common intelligence activities of the PCB authorities and using the methods of Customs risk management. ATI also produces high-quality enforcement objects.

The unit for Intelligence and Analysis works in close cooperation with the international traffic processes managed by Customs. This way, the activities of customs crime prevention and enforcement can be efficiently targeted, minimizing any inconvenience to the legal traffic.

## Presentation of investigation operations

The strategic goal of criminal investigations at Finnish Customs is to uncover and investigate crime related to foreign trade in a competent and modern way. The mission of criminal investigations is “security through cooperation”. This calls for large-scale cooperation both nationally and internationally. On a national scale, cooperation between Customs, the Finnish Border Guard and the Finnish Police is important, and cooperation with other law enforcement authorities, such as the Tax Administration, is becoming closer all the time. Internationally, investigation operations utilise on a daily basis extensive cooperation networks set up with EU member states and a range of third countries.

Investigation operations are carried out under the Enforcement Department, and they are responsible for the prevention and preliminary investigation of customs offences in Finland. Investigation operations focus particularly on the prevention of international financial crime, as well as cross-border and serious crime. The expertise of Finnish Customs in international trade and logistics allows investigation operations to produce unique added value in the national field of crime prevention. Finnish Customs Investigation has eight investigative units, operating under the regional responsibility principle. Some 250 people work in crime investigation operations.

The guiding principle behind crime prevention activities are their close integration into the customs clearance process. Investigation operations involve broad expertise in the structures and processes of foreign trade. This enables activities to be targeted effectively at the prevention of the shadow economy and criminal activities, while being able to minimise any adverse impact of these operations on legal foreign trade. By promoting legal trade and detecting illegal trade, investigation operations also improve the effectiveness of markets by providing all market parties with even-handed opportunities to compete. In fact, investigation operations at Finnish Customs focus specifically on criminal activities that exploit the structures and payment systems of foreign trade in goods. Online crime is another key area for criminal investigations at Finnish Customs, and this is one area where Finnish Customs leads the way, also on an international scale.

Every year, Finnish Customs investigates some 8 000 suspected customs offences. Common cases that are investigated are those classified as smuggling, customs clearance offences, tax fraud and narcotics offences in their various forms. Offences related to pharmaceuticals, doping substances and snus also keep Finnish Customs busy. In preventing and investigating these offences, investigation operations also focus on tracing and reclaiming illicit profits. The results of activities aimed at recovering illicit profits are important for law enforcement, both in terms of the public's sense of justice and the correct proportionality of punishments. Overall, criminal investigations at Finnish Customs have produced excellent results.



Doping substances seized by Customs.

# Finland's presidency of the CCWP

Our EU presidency, which officially started in July 2019, in practice started already in January at the beginning of Romania's presidency. This is because we are in the middle of a group of three states, whose term Croatia will end during the latter half of this year. "Common border – common goals" was selected as the motto of customs enforcement in these three countries to emphasise not only the general duties of customs authorities, but also the eastern border, which is what all of these three member states have in common.

General themes of Finland's presidency were sustainable development, openness, high-quality legislation and national security. Law enforcement cooperation associated with security focused separately on the significance of internal security. This was also reflected in customs cooperation, in which we emphasised the role of customs authorities in law enforcement in the EU to improve general awareness of the significance of customs authorities in crime prevention in all member states.

## Closer cooperation between customs authorities and Europol

We selected cooperation between authorities and the shared use of data systems as the two leading themes of the Customs Cooperation Working Party (CCWP). In terms of the former, our aim was to draw attention to cooperation between different customs authorities and Europol, for which Austria had already laid a solid foundation during its presidency. We were also supported by a CCWP report, prepared under Sweden's leadership,

proposing that the views of customs authorities be taken better into consideration in the Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA).

This cooperation with Europol was highlighted in various ways during our presidency with the help of our close cooperation with Europol's representatives. Our goal was to make the role of customs authorities more visible in the entire field of internal security. In addition, our purpose was to prepare a new action plan, tenth overall, for the CCWG and finish the previous action plan. In the expert group, our key goals were to develop a coordination mechanism on the basis of joint operations and, above all, to revise the partly outdated guide on the organisation of customs operations.

## Key goals were reached

Even though certain parts of the previous action plan needed to be finished during Croatia's presidency, we were able to complete the new action plan and revise the operation guide. As a result, the CCWP has a complete programme for the next two years, with its priorities supporting the EU's political law enforcement programme. This was also one of our goals. The key themes of our presidency were communicated to the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI), and this will hopefully support the operating capacity of customs authorities in law enforcement.

During our presidency, the CCWP convened five times, and the expert group held three meetings. In addition, we held a customary joint meeting



with the Law Enforcement Working Party (LEWP). The LEWP is responsible for cooperation between police authorities in the Council. We also kicked off the first joint meeting with the Working Party on Dual-Use Goods (DUWP) which also resulted in a concrete project in the new action plan.

### **Presidency calls for large-scale cooperation**

In addition to acting as a chair at various meetings, the presidency involves cooperation, communication and planning in various forms. Making decisions requires constant meetings, for example, with Europol, Frontex, the EU Commission, the Council's Legal Service and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). What is more, we worked nationally in close cooperation with different ministries, such as the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

In addition to permanent meetings, an EPCC meeting was held at Europol during Finland's

presidency, with the police commissioners and directors general of customs authorities of the member states participating. The conference largely emphasised our theme of closer cooperation between different authorities in Europe, increased influence of customs authorities at Europol and the better interconnection of data systems in the future.

In November, we also organised a seminar in Finland together with OLAF. Its leading themes were the better defending of shared assets and the development of data exchange and analytics. The conference focused on the rapid growth of electronic trade and its impact on customs processes.

Even though our work is largely done, our group of three countries will hold the reins until Midsummer, after which the next trio will take over. In addition to the aforementioned themes, the next presidents need to consider how to complete Brexit and how to arrange customs cooperation with the UK afterwards.

## **OLAF conference in Vantaa**

In November 2019, as part of Finland's Presidency of the Council of the EU, OLAF and Finnish Customs organised a joint conference on EU fraud in the city of Vantaa. The conference attracted a hundred or so participants from EU member states, the Commission and the WCO. One of the giants of online trade, Amazon, represented the business sector.

The theme of the conference was the intensifying pace at which international trade is migrating to online channels, thus posing new types of problems for customs authorities. In the Netherlands, for example, online trade doubled its figures over the years 2017–2018, while traditional goods movements, such as shipments by sea, grew by 5–6 percent over the same period. This development forces Customs to undertake its tasks as part of a much quicker process, often with less information at its disposal.

The customs duties from international trade make up 13 percent of the EU's budget, while VAT has a share of 11 percent. In addition to national fiscal interests, online shopping is thus also a factor for the EU's own resources. Besides avoiding taxes, the growth in online trade also provides ample opportunities for trade in illegal goods. Whereas traditional trade usually takes place between commercial operators, from business to business, online

trade allows consumers to make purchases directly from a trader or manufacturer in another country, from business to consumer. This phenomenon can also be seen in the narcotics trade, where buyers, especially in the case of designer drugs, can order the substances from an online shop without having to pay anything to intermediaries.

Due its anonymity and the enormous volumes involved, online trade enables illegal trade. It forces customs authorities to sift through millions of small consignments in their efforts to uncover narcotics, illegal medicines, doping substances, counterfeit products and cases of tax evasion. As a result, customs authorities must change the way they conduct their risk analysis, intelligence activities and criminal investigations to enable more extensive use of data processing and new technological innovations.

Alternatives for new practices and techniques were presented at the conference, but there was also discussion about the fundamental question of how OLAF could be more efficient in helping authorities in the member states combat crime occurring in online trade. OLAF's status puts it in a strong position to obtain, share and analyse data on trade, and this requires smooth exchange of information between the member states and OLAF.

# Economic crime

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## Waste tax evasion – aggravated tax fraud

In November 2018, Finnish Customs, together with the Finnish Police, investigated a waste offence, where a Lappeenranta-based entrepreneur was suspected of burying waste on their strawberry farm. The strawberry farm was searched in a joint operation of various authorities. The operation involved the Police of Southeast Finland, the National Bureau of Investigation, the Finnish Defence Forces, Lappeenranta Region's Environmental Office, the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, the Regional State Administrative Office, Lappeenranta's building control department, the Tax Administration and Finnish Customs. The role of Finnish Customs was to investigate whether the strawberry farmer evaded taxes through their activities. Based on this, the case was investigated as an aggravated tax fraud.

During the preliminary investigation, it was discovered that the entrepreneur had, for several years, buried and dumped various waste fractions

on their land. A specialist prepared a waste audit report, for which the volume and type of waste were determined using different methods, including laser scanning, drones and digging. The investigations showed that a total of 2 191 m<sup>3</sup> of waste had been buried and dumped. A number of samples were taken from the premises to investigate soil contamination. On the basis of the material produced, the Tax Administration prepared a tax audit report, indicating the amount of waste tax the strawberry farmer should have paid for their waste.

The preliminary investigation has been completed, and the case entered indictment proceedings in October 2019. On the basis of the Tax Administration's audit, the entrepreneur evaded approximately EUR 150 000 in waste taxes, subject to excise duty. Therefore, the property from the entrepreneur equalling this amount was confiscated during the preliminary investigation.





## Inaccurate information in exports

In 2013, the Corporate Audit unit of Finnish Customs inspected a tax warehouse of a forwarding company. During an administrative audit, it was discovered that 6.6 million litres of duty-free petrol had been loaded onto a ship and the load placed under an export procedure. As an authorised warehousekeeper, the forwarding company should have declared the transfer of petrol as a duty-free delivery in its tax return.

In the export procedure, the exporter and the owner of the petrol was a Finnish limited liability company, while the forwarding company acted as an authorised warehousekeeper for the duty-free petrol and as an agent in exports. Norway was declared as the destination country. Later, Finnish Customs discovered from the vessel's monitoring information that the vessel carried its load to the Netherlands, not Norway as originally declared.

In the preliminary investigation, there was reason to suspect that the fuel consignment exited the duty suspension arrangement when it was transferred from the temporary warehousekeeper's warehouse by using an inaccurate administrative document. This resulted in an excise duty liability of approximately EUR 4.3 million, and both companies are jointly responsible for its payment.

Finnish Customs suspects that the forwarding company which acted as a temporary warehousekeeper had, on the basis of inaccurate information obtained from the limited liability company, issued

an inaccurate declaration on fuel exports, which resulted in tax consequences. During the investigation, it was determined that this case cannot be regarded as a minor neglect of the reporting or disclosure obligation or as a minor violation of procedural regulations, as the criminal activities concerned goods that represent a high tax risk.

### **Aggravated tax fraud and aggravated customs clearance offence**

The case has been investigated as an aggravated tax fraud and an aggravated customs clearance offence. There has been reason to suspect that the authorities were provided with information about the exports of fuel subject to excise duty in Norway, even though the cargo had no buyer or recipient in Norway at the time of exports. Therefore, the authorities were provided with inaccurate information about the recipient of the goods. The Finnish limited liability company, which held the obligation to declare, did not correct or cancel the inaccurate customs declaration and, therefore, was party to the illegal removal of the goods from the duty suspension arrangement.

The preliminary investigation has ended, and the case involving five persons suspected of criminal activities entered indictment proceedings at the end of 2019.

# Doping substances and medicines to Europe from the U.S. via the Åland Islands

In November 2016, economic crime investigators at Turku Customs were contacted by the Åland mobile customs control team who had inspected a warehouse in the Åland Islands and found substances they suspected were doping substances and medicines. The substances originated in the United States, and were meant to undergo customs clearance for free circulation in the Åland Islands. The substances were seized and sent for examination to the Customs Laboratory.

The preliminary investigation by Customs revealed that an online trade company based on Jersey sent the products, that were of U.S. origin, to a company in the Åland Islands that offered so-called fulfillment services. In other words, the company in the Åland Islands saw to the customs clearance of goods sent by its client, kept them in its warehouse, and received files on sales from its client. For sending sales files, the client on Jersey had access to the server of the company in Åland. After the Jersey company sold products online, the Åland-based company packaged them and sent them to consumers in the EU territory. Products also ended up in mainland Finland. For maintaining an unbroken supply chain for online trade, the company in the Åland Islands kept real-time stock on behalf of its client. This enabled the client engaged in online trade to secure an optimum flow of goods to the Åland Islands.

The first stage of the preliminary investigation focused on six TI transits from the United States to Finland. As the investigation progressed, it expanded to cover 39 customs clearances of several products classified as medicines and doping substances, as well as products prohibited or restricted from entering the EU, or subject to a licence or a separate notification to authorities. Furthermore, product labels on food supplements that were classified as foodstuffs displayed prohibited or vague claims on health effects. All products lacked the name and contact details of the company responsible for the business activity in the EU.

## Declarations in breach of customs legislation

During the preliminary investigation, customs officers itemised over 2 000 imported products. Of these, 166 were classified as medicines by the

Finnish Medicines Agency. The investigation revealed that the company in the Åland Islands used incorrect or erroneous commodity codes in its customs declarations. Furthermore, as an indirect representative, the company cleared the products sent by its overseas client to Finland in breach of customs regulations by entering its own details in the customs declaration as those of the declarant, and by failing to disclose the client's details.

By indicating incorrect commodity codes, the company evaded customs duties and excise tax, as well as some of the VAT it was to pay. This activity also helped the company to bypass veterinary border controls, as well as import controls on medicines and food supplements.

Moreover, the company acted against the law in failing to notify Customs about the details of the client who was responsible for authorisations concerning importation, distribution and resale, and for declarations on food supplements.

## Almost one million medicine and doping tablets

The preliminary investigation revealed that about 772 000 tablets classified as medicines were imported from the United States to Finland. The importation of the tablets would have required a permit from the Finnish Medicines Agency. About 200 000 doping tablets were also imported to Finland. According to the Customs Laboratory, the active ingredient in the tablets was the DHEA hormone, or dehydroepiandrosterone. The online shop sold more than 460 000 medicine tablets and over 90 000 doping tablets to consumers in Finland and elsewhere in the EU.

The criminal activity generated proceeds of at least 2.2 million euros. The proceeds comprised not only unlevied customs duties and taxes, but also due payments to authorities, product sales and billing for services.

When the case was brought under charges in December 2019, the prosecutor determined that it involved an aggravated doping offence, an aggravated tax fraud, an aggravated customs clearance offence, a medicine offence, a smuggling offence, and a doping offence.

THSCAN MBT215-HL



TULLI



TULLI

# Snus

## Smuggling of Killapods nicotine sachets

On 7 March 2019, Finnish Customs received a report from DPD, a parcel delivery company located in Vantaa, according to which it had a pallet full of snus delivered from another country in its facilities. Customs officers inspected the cargo and discovered that it contained several cardboard boxes shipped from Lithuania.

During the inspection, the cardboard boxes were found to contain 4 800 cans of Killapods snus in packages of ten cans each. The total weight of the products was roughly 132 kg. The appearance of the Killapods cans and their packaging made them look like snus, but the cans were furnished with a label saying that the products do not contain any tobacco. The cans contained sachets to be placed inside the mouth, i.e. nicotine pads; they looked different to snus sachets, which contain tobacco, as they were completely white.

Soon after the inspection, a man arrived at the DPD facilities to pick up the shipment. When the



man noticed that Finnish Customs officers were present, he ran out of the building and escaped in a private car. However, the customs officers saw the car's registration number. After a few hours on the same day, the man returned to the DPD facilities to pick up the seized shipment. Finnish Customs apprehended the man on suspicion of smuggling.

The seized nicotine bags were delivered to the National Institute for Health and Welfare for investigation to determine their nicotine content. It was discovered that the products contained 6.5–8.8 mg of nicotine per sachet. According to the statement issued by the Finnish Medicines Agency, sachets containing more than 4 mg of nicotine are regarded as prescription medicines in Finland.

During the preliminary investigation, it was discovered that the apprehended man had received two prior shipments from Lithuania via DPD, and these shipments contained the same products. The first shipment weighed roughly 13 kg and the second 130 kg. Finnish Customs suspects that the man had sold the previously received nicotine bags. The case was investigated as three separate smuggling cases, which are now under indictment proceedings.

# Narcotics

## The cocaine situation

According to a UN report on drugs (UNODC, World Drug Report 2019), production volumes of cocaine have doubled globally during the period 2013–2017. There was a growth of 25 % from 2016 to 2017. In 2017, nearly 2 000 tonnes of 100 % cocaine was produced.

It has been estimated that coca plant growing zones in 2017 measured a size of 245 000 hectares, which is approximately 15 % more than the year before. When considering a longer time period, areas in e.g. Colombia grew by 252 percent from 2013 to 2018.

In 2017, 1 275 tonnes of cocaine was seized. The majority of this, 78 %, was seized in North and South America. Europe's share was approximately 11 %.

In 2017, the number of cocaine users was estimated at 18 million people. When this number is examined side by side with the increased supply of cocaine, it can be concluded that cocaine use has increased on a global scale.

### Cocaine in Europe

According to a report on drug markets (EU Drug Markets Report 2019) by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and Europol, cocaine trade is the second largest form of drug trade in Europe after cannabis trade. Cocaine trade had an estimated value of 9.1 billion euros in 2017. Approximately four million people in the EU used cocaine in 2017. The majority of users are in Western or Southern Europe, but the use of cocaine is becoming increasingly common elsewhere in Europe as well. There are signs of growing cocaine markets in Northern and Eastern Europe.

Cocaine seizure numbers in the EU are at a record high, and cocaine is more readily available than before. In 2017, 140 tonnes of cocaine were seized in the EU across a total of 104 000 separate seizures. The cocaine sold wholesale has been incredibly pure, often even exceeding 85 per cent.

Traditionally, there has been a lot of cooperation between Italian and Colombian crime groups in cocaine trade, but now other groups have raised their profiles, among them Albanian-speaking crime groups. Several organised European crime groups

also operate in Latin America. This enables the control of the entire supply chain as well the acquisition of large quantities of cocaine at a lower price from near the areas of production.

Bribery and violence related to the cocaine trade are a growing problem in the EU. Previously, the problem was more significant outside of Europe, but toughening competition between organised crime groups has led to an increase in violence and bribery especially in the larger European ports.

Cocaine mostly arrives in Europe in sea containers. The volumes of cocaine seized from containers have increased. Cocaine usually arrives in Europe through the Netherlands, Belgium or Spain. From these countries, the cocaine is transported further either in trucks or passenger cars, depending on the size of the shipment that is being transported. Increasingly, smaller shipments are also being delivered as postal consignments or express courier consignments. These activities very often involve the use of the Darknet.

In Europe, cocaine is distributed by national organised crime groups, among them Albanian-speaking, Moroccan and West African groups. Motorcycle gangs also play a strong role in cocaine trade. The use of digital technology, for example, Darknet, social media and mobile apps, has greatly increased the resale of cocaine.

There are some signs of cocaine being produced in Europe, especially with regard to the end stage of the production process.





Cocaine cache in a container's refrigeration unit.

## Cocaine in Finland

Cocaine use and seizures of cocaine have remained at a high level since 2016. The quantities seized by Finnish Customs in individual seizures have noticeably increased in the last few years, and nowadays they are usually measured in kilograms rather than grams. In 2019, a record amount of cocaine, more than 30 kilograms, was seized in connection with cases investigated by Customs.

The effects of the increased cocaine production in South America and the smuggling of larger shipments to Europe are starting to show also in Finland. The smuggling cases uncovered during 2019 have clearly demonstrated that international organised crime has taken on a stronger role in the smuggling of cocaine to Finland. Especially the role of Albanian-speaking crime groups has dramatically grown, and not only in the smuggling of cocaine. Cocaine is smuggled into Finland in ship traffic, by air passengers, either concealed in clothing or internally in the body, and by post.

Cocaine would not be smuggled into Finland if there was not a demand for it here. According to wastewater surveys performed by the Finnish National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), the use of cocaine in the Helsinki region has greatly increased since 2016. When in 2015 the average amount of cocaine used per day was 25 mg per 1 000 inhabitants, in 2019 cocaine use at its highest point was nearly 150 mg per day per 1 000 inhabitants. According to THL, the share of 25–44 year olds who have tried cocaine has clearly grown. In 2006, two percent of this age group had tried cocaine, when in 2018 the corresponding number was between five and six per cent.

## Rip-off as a smuggling method

In September, Finnish Customs uncovered the first smuggling case in Finland where the so called rip-off method was used. A total of approximately 12 kilograms of cocaine was seized at the time at Vuosaari Harbour from inside the refrigeration unit of a container that had originally departed from South America.

Typical for rip-off smuggling is the hiding of prohibited substances or goods among legal cargo or in the structures of a unit transporting legal cargo. Companies engaging in legal goods traffic are often completely unaware that the unit they are transporting contains something illegal. The aim is to remove the goods being smuggled from the transport unit before the cargo arrives to its actual destination.

Finnish Customs caught wind of the smuggling event because of an earlier attempted break-in by two men into the container. A dock worker had noticed two men dressed in high-visibility vests in the Vuosaari container yard and thought that they were repairmen. Repairmen occasionally visit the harbour. When the dock worker tried to talk to the men, they covered their faces and left. The dock worker reported the incident to the authorities.

Customs inspected the container and inside its refrigeration unit found a total of 12 packages, all of which contained approximately one kilogram of cocaine. The purity of the cocaine was 82–86 per cent. Had the seized cocaine shipment been cut, approximately 60 000 doses would have been obtained, and the street value of the shipment would have been approximately 2.9 billion euros. The preliminary investigation in the case is yet to be concluded.

# Silkkitie

The dark web marketplace Silkkitie (known as the Valhalla) and its contents were seized in Spring 2019 by Finnish Customs (Tulli) in close cooperation with the French National Police (La Police Nationale Française) and Europol. For several years, narcotics and other illicit goods were sold via this marketplace, which was one of the oldest and internationally best-known Tor trade sites.

After the Silkkitie (Valhalla) site was shut down by the authorities, some of the Finnish narcotics traders moved their activities to other illegal trade sites in the Tor network. The impact of the take-down was significant in terms of the impact on the dark web environment and the value of the data assisting further actions tackling crime on the dark web.

A coordinated law enforcement approach was adopted by the Finnish authorities and was key to the success of the investigation. Their approach embraced the EU strategy for to tackle crime on the dark web, which involves participation of law enforcement agencies from across EU Member

States, operational third parties and other relevant partners, such as Eurojust. Europol is co-ordinating this strategy and has created a Dark Web Team to deliver a complete approach including:

- sharing information;
- identifying threats and targets;
- providing operational support and expertise in different crime areas; and
- developing tools, tactics and techniques to conduct dark web investigations.

The team also aims to enhance joint technical and investigative actions, organise training and capacity-building initiatives, together with prevention and awareness-raising campaigns – a 360° strategy against criminality on the dark web.

## Janey Young

European Cybercrime Centre – EC3  
Team Leader - Dark Web Team



# The marijuana situation

According to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the value of cannabis trade in the European Union is approximately 11.6 billion euros. Cannabis trade is the largest form of drug trade in the EU and, as such, a significant source of income for criminals. The number of cannabis (marijuana and hashish) users in the EU has been estimated at 25 million people.

Marijuana is produced both within the EU and outside the EU. Among the countries outside the EU, Albania has already for several years been the most significant producer of marijuana for the EU markets. Production has increased in the other Western Balkan countries as well. Marijuana also arrives on the European drug markets from production areas in West Africa and South East Asia.

Traditionally, the Netherlands has been a significant source of marijuana in Europe. Annually, more than 5 000 marijuana growing establishments of different sizes have been uncovered in the Netherlands, most of them indoors. However, the number of seized plants did decrease in 2016–2017. Then again, it has been observed that cannabis growing in Spain has increased significantly. There are also signs of cooperation between Dutch and Spanish crime groups. This may be one of the reasons why the marijuana that has arrived in Finland in recent times frequently has been of Spanish origin.

It is difficult to estimate cannabis production volumes in Europe. Cannabis production in the Netherlands in 2017 has been estimated at approximately 520 tonnes.

## Marijuana in Finland

Finnish Customs seized a total of 255 kg of marijuana in 2019. The street value of the seized marijuana is approximately 5.1 billion euros, and it would have been possible to obtain as many as 630 000 doses from it.

Furthermore, the investigation units of Customs established that there had been, in connection with several different series of offences, hundreds of kilograms of marijuana brought into Finland that already had ended up in distribution.

Marijuana arrives in Finland among commercial goods traffic, as express freight consignments and in passenger traffic. The individuals who function as couriers represent several different nationalities. In many cases, the country of origin of the marijuana is Spain, from where crime organisations manage the smuggling operations to Finland and other parts of Europe. High quality marijuana is either grown in

Spain or brought there from Africa or from elsewhere in Europe.

There are usually non-Finnish persons behind the smuggling of marijuana to Finland. The newest arrivals in the marijuana smuggling scene are the numerous smugglers and wholesale distributors of Albanian origin that were uncovered in the autumn of 2019. Another significant group participating in the smuggling and distribution of marijuana are West Africans, of whom especially Gambians have actively organised the smuggling of marijuana.

The smuggling and distribution of marijuana significantly involves cash. Customs has indeed during 2019 seized hundreds of thousands of euros in cash, which is suspected to be proceeds from marijuana that has been smuggled to Finland and sold here. In connection with the seizures of cash, several so-called cash couriers suspected of aggravated money laundering have been apprehended.

It can be concluded that even though the home growing of marijuana as a phenomenon has been discussed, traditional smuggled marijuana is not losing its foothold in the Finnish market.



# Medicines

## Illegal imports and sales of poppers

Investigation units of Finnish Customs have investigated smuggling and pharmaceutical offence cases, in which “poppers” have been imported into Finland and resold at adult entertainment stores and through their online stores. Poppers are liquid substances that are used as sexual stimulants and for other recreational purposes.

Poppers often contain amyl nitrites that are inhaled from small bottles. Many amyl nitrites have been classified as pharmaceuticals since 2013. Therefore, a permit from the Finnish Medicines Agency is required to import and sale poppers.

During preliminary investigations, Finnish Customs seized roughly 2 500 popper products in Southern and Western Finland in early 2019. On the basis of information obtained during initial stages of preliminary investigations, there was reason to suspect that some 40 000 popper products had been imported into Finland between 2013 and 2019.

During preliminary investigations, the Economic Crime Investigation Unit of Finnish Customs

obtained information from other countries through mutual assistance, according to which some 90 000 popper products had been delivered from abroad to a store being investigated. On the basis of this information, it was possible to calculate the criminal proceeds gained at this store, i.e. sales gains from illegally acquired products. Criminal proceeds were estimated at approximately EUR 1.5 million. Unlike in many other cases, the authorities were able to recover assets nearly equalling the full amount of the criminal proceeds from the suspects. In other words, the suspects may lose their assets at a value of EUR 1.5 million to the state.

During the preliminary investigation, Finnish Customs interviewed several individuals who are suspected of being responsible for stocking popper products in their adult entertainment stores. The preliminary investigation of all parts of the case will be completed during 2020.



# Passenger intelligence and the role of the EU's Passenger Information Units in the processing of passenger name records in air traffic

Criminal activities are becoming more and more international. Cross-border crime means that criminal activities are carried out in several countries and illegal goods subject to restrictions are carried across borders to gain as much profit as possible at as low risks as possible.

PNR (Passenger Name Record)

PIU (Passenger Information Unit)

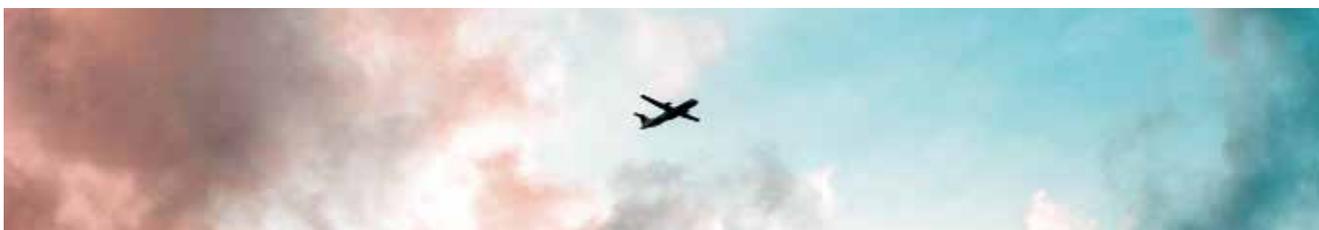
While cybercrime is also becoming a more common form of customs offences, larger batches of illegal goods are physically moved to the market via commercial transport services and by actual people. In the 2010s, the increased threat of terrorism has made it necessary to monitor, for example, passenger traffic more effectively. This is why the role of passenger intelligence has grown. Passenger intelligence uses data about border-crossings by passengers collected by the authorities and travel service providers. Because privacy is a basic human right, the authorities need to balance between basic rights and the duty to protect societies.

For this purpose, the EU has issued Directive (EU) 2016/681 on the use of passenger name record (PNR) data for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences and serious crime. The directive was enforced by a law, which required that official activities be initiated no later than on 1 June 2019. At the same time, Passenger Information Units (PIU), started in 2018, reached an official status. Serious crime means that, on the basis of national laws, criminals can be sentenced to at least three years of impris-

onment. In Finland, this only applies to aggravated offences. The scope of application of the directive covers several customs offences, such as aggravated narcotics offences and aggravated tax fraud (Annex II). Annex I of the directive defines PNR data in air traffic (19 different records) as data, which passengers usually give when making a reservation and which the authorities have not confirmed. Finland has reported to the EU Commission that the directive applies, in Finland, to travel inside and outside the EU.

## PIUs in EU member states

The EU PNR Directive requires EU member states to establish a PIU for the purposes of processing PNR data and exchanging information on an international scale. The Finnish PIU operates under the Police of Finland, and it also includes representatives of Finnish Customs and the Finnish Border Guard. However, PCB information arriving to the PIU unit is not transferred directly under the risk analysis of Finnish Customs. An agreement has been signed on the disclosure of PNR data with the largest airlines. Finland has more than 21 million annual air passengers, and the Police of Finland, Finnish Customs and the Finnish Border Guard should be able to profile targets from this group. Sufficiently efficient data processing systems are key elements in the processing of a large amount of PNR data. PNR data can be compared with the databases of the Police of Finland, Finnish Customs and the Finnish Border Guard, possibly helping to prevent serious crime and terrorist offences. PNR data can first be saved for six months, and subsequently for five years as anonymous data.



# Customs transit used to smuggle doping substances

In customs transit, goods that have arrived in the EU are transported outside the EU, either directly or via customs warehousing. During customs transit, goods are under customs supervision. If the goods warehouse location is changed many times or goods are transferred between different countries, the transport of the goods may not be regarded as customs transit. Helsinki Airport makes Finland a central hub in terms of customs transit, for example, because of its good flight connections between Asia and Finland. Large volumes of goods are also transported to Russia via Finland.

According to observations made by Finnish Customs, customs transit has been used systematically to illegally import doping substances in recent years. Finnish Customs has discovered that doping substances and pharmaceuticals are transited between different countries and between customs warehouses located in different countries, until they are removed from the scope of transiting and most likely remain inside the EU. Goods can also be declared as removed from the EU, even if they remain in illegal markets inside the EU. Customs transit via the EU often follows a specific route, and customs declarations may include inaccurate information, so that the shipment cannot be determined to contain doping substances, pharmaceuticals or other restricted or illegal goods.

## Seizure of hundreds of kilos and millions of euros of doping substances

In 2018 and 2019, Finnish Customs investigated a case, involving the illegal transiting, customs warehousing, possession and distribution of doping substances in the EU area. Under customs supervision in the autumn of 2018, Finnish Customs uncovered the customs transit and customs warehousing of 900 kg of illegal doping substances and pharmaceuticals. The value of the seized doping substances was estimated at EUR 2.5 million. During the preliminary investigation, Finnish Customs discovered that the substances were originally delivered in four batches as air cargo from China to Finland via Germany, Poland and Turkey. In November 2018, Finnish Customs seized three batches from a customs warehouse located in Kymenlaakso. The fourth batch had been shipped from Finland to Lithuania and forwarded to a warehouse in Estonia. When the batch was forwarded once more, it was stopped in Estonia and delivered to the Customs Laboratory

for further examination, along with the three other batches. An employee in charge of the operations of the customs warehouse was suspected in this case. During the investigation, it was discovered that the non-EU company that received the doping substances and pharmaceuticals had been discontinued, and that pharmaceuticals were not part of its operations.

The seized batches of doping substances and pharmaceuticals included anabolic steroids, growth hormones, testosterone and other pharmaceuticals classified as doping substances. All products were illegal, industrially manufactured and only intended for use as doping substances. Furthermore, the manufacturer indicated in labels on the product packages was not a legal or registered pharmaceutical company.

Finnish Customs investigated the case in cooperation with authorities from other countries and Europol as an aggravated doping offence, a pharmaceutical offence and an unauthorised engagement in professional healthcare operations.

## We protect society by preventing crime related to doping substances and pharmaceuticals

In these types of criminal cases, doping substances and pharmaceuticals are distributed to illegal markets in the European Union by using legal logistics chains. In recent years, Finnish Customs has seized very large quantities of doping substances and pharmaceuticals transported via legal logistics chains. International cooperation between authorities in Finland and inside and outside the EU has played an important part in uncovering these criminal activities.

Large batches of seized doping substances and pharmaceuticals are often illegal in the EU, consisting of illegal pharmaceuticals or counterfeit medicines. The supply chain for pharmaceuticals must be legal, ranging from the manufacturer to the wholesaler and distributor. Pharmaceuticals must also be delivered to legal recipients. The distribution of large batches of doping substances and pharmaceuticals produces considerable criminal proceeds – hundreds of thousands or even millions of euros.

In the cases it has investigated, Finnish Customs has also fulfilled the requirements laid down in the EU Falsified Medicines Directive, demanding member states to ensure cooperation between competent medicines-related authorities and customs authorities. Therefore, the activities of Finnish Customs also improve public health in Europe.

# Virtual currencies

## Modern technology in criminal activities

Criminals take advantage of various opportunities offered by modern technology. In recent years, procedures, tools, online platforms and applications that offer anonymity and hide the points of origin have spread rapidly.

Operating in data networks is quick, easy and international, which is why they have become an integral part of the operating environment for criminal activities. Currently, many areas of customs crime, such as the smuggling of and trade in illegal products, focus on the encrypted Tor network, anonymous instant messaging applications and virtual currencies, of which Bitcoins are the most popular among criminals. They act as payment instruments, for example, in illegal trade of narcotics, guns, child pornography, hacked data and services taking place in the Darknet. Bitcoin is an open-source cryptocurrency based on decentralised blockchain technology, which criminals can use to make payments anonymously across data networks.

In Finland, criminal investigators are increasingly running into virtual currencies. In addition to narcotics offences they are used, for example, in money laundering, fraud, extortion and pyramid

schemes. New virtual currencies are also created continuously. Although recent virtual currencies controlled by business groups do not offer the anonymity that decentralised cryptocurrencies do, their use, for example, as money laundering instruments may increase.

The number of encrypted instant messaging applications and their new properties keeps on increasing and their strong privacy protection and high level of information security make them highly popular among criminals. Crime prevention is a challenge not only because many instant messaging applications, used particularly to buy and sell narcotics, have advertised that they will start accepting their own electronic payments inside the application.

Social media channels are used in recruiting people for criminal activities and in the illegal trade of products subject to high taxes. Online marketing can reach areas and people that would otherwise be outside the scope of supply. What is more, social media channels help to reach minors, for whom social media marketplaces and groups offer an easy way to participate, for example, in the snus trade.



Image: Lehtikuva

Finnish Customs uses effective control and investigation measures, as well as modern technical equipment and data systems. By means of cooperation with authorities from other countries, Finnish Customs has succeeded in taking over and closing a number of significant Darknet marketplaces and tracing the origin of virtual currency transfers. Customs Investigation closely monitors the development of devices,

applications, platforms and payment methods used in data networks and reacts to new requirements by offering training to criminal investigators and by developing methods and tools of investigation. By combining the investigation of online crime with conventional methods of criminal investigations, Finnish Customs has, in recent years, been able to respond to the development of criminal activities and to uncover large-scale cybercrime.

## Electronic sales platforms and difficult questions of proof

Online shops are rapidly taking over conventional stores. This trend has also facilitated illegal trading, such as the cross-border smuggling of goods. People can make online purchases anonymously, while massive sales volumes make the operations well-protected. Furthermore, online trade may not need any middlemen, as the Darknet makes shopping possible on a personal computer. Online trade also involves questions related to evidence, for which the Supreme Court of Finland has recently defined guidelines.

### The Supreme Court's guidelines for online trade

In its recent preliminary rulings, the Supreme Court has defined that the recipient indicated on a postal package can very likely be regarded as the person who ordered the shipment and that the indicated recipient can be considered to be otherwise aware of an incoming delivery. According to the Supreme Court's current stand, the recipient marked on a postal package comprises, therefore, significant evidence to prove who ordered the specific package.

Then again, no-one can be considered to be guilty on the grounds that their guilt can be regarded as highly likely. Instead, full evidence is required to judge anyone guilty. According to the Code of Judicial Procedure, this means strong evidence presented by the prosecutor so that there can be no reasonable doubt of the defendant's guilt. Therefore, different court instances have taken a preliminary stand on what type of additional evidence is required to judge anyone guilty in situa-

tions where the recipient marked on a postal package denies that they have ordered the package.

What makes the question of evidence even more problematic is that, due to self-incrimination protection, the defendant in a criminal case is not obligated to stick to the truth or issue any statement. However, the non-issuance of a statement can be considered to be damaging to the defendant, but only to the extent that it does not violate their right not to contribute to the investigation of their guilt. As a result, the burden of proof, i.e. the responsibility to produce evidence persuasive enough to establish the truth of facts, is held completely by the preliminary investigators and prosecutors.

Two cases, in which the recipient of a postal package denied having ordered a postal package containing narcotic substances and refused to have any knowledge of the package, are presented below. In both cases, the recipients had a history of being involved with narcotic substances. In the first case (Supreme Court 2019: 2), the Supreme Court found that there was sufficient evidence of a narcotics offence. In the second case (Supreme Court 2018: 3), the Supreme Court rejected the prosecutor's demands.

Case 1: Sufficient evidence of a narcotics offence (Supreme Court 2019: 2)

A person was prosecuted for a narcotics offence on the grounds that they had imported narcotic substances. A letter, containing 250 blotter papers of 25C-NBOMe, was sent by post from another country with the person's name and address.

## **Use of virtual currency**

It was found that the defendant used virtual currencies in the transaction. The Supreme Court stated that virtual currencies are also used for many legal purposes, and their use as such cannot be regarded as proof of guilt. In this case however, the Supreme Court noted that, three days prior to mailing the shipment from Spain to Finland, 160 euros had been transferred from the defendant's bank account to the sender's bank account. It was also considered to be indisputable that 160 euros would have been a sufficient amount to pay for the shipment of narcotic substances. These factors supported the fact that the defendant can be considered to be guilty.

## **The defendant's living conditions**

The defendant was found to have moved into a new apartment only one week before the suspected crime. At the same time, the defendant had withdrawn their restriction to have their personal data disclosed. According to the Supreme Court, it was unlikely that another person could have used the defendant's address to order narcotic substances, provided that the other person should have known the defendant's new address so quickly after the move into a new apartment and the withdrawal of the restriction to have personal data disclosed.

## **Credibility of the defendant's story**

The Supreme Court stated that the defendant's story was of a general nature and did not include many details. Furthermore, the defendant's responses to questions presented were mainly very brief. The story of creditors was mainly mentioned in passing, and the defendant did not otherwise provide any details of their claims. In addition, the story did not present any facts or incidents that would have supported the claim of harassment or intentional damage. In summary, the Supreme Court found that the defendant's story was not supported by any other evidence.

## **The defendant's prior judgements related to narcotic substances**

The Supreme Court stated that prior judgements are generally insignificant in considering whether the defendant is guilty of the crime for which they are being prosecuted. However, if the defendant's prior criminal history and the crime of which they are suspected, for example, have the same modus operandi and share other similarities, prior judgements may also have an impact on the current

case. According to the Supreme Court, any impact of prior judgements on evidence considered in criminal cases should always be considered with particular care and caution.

The Supreme Court stated that there was no reasonable doubt of the defendant's guilt.

## **Case 2: Insufficient evidence of a narcotics offence (Supreme Court 2018: 3)**

A person was prosecuted for a narcotics offence on the grounds that they had imported narcotic substances by post. A letter, containing 10 grams of strong amphetamine, was sent from another country with the defendant's name and home address.

No evidence to support the defendant's guilt was obtained through an inquiry regarding the defendant's bank account or through a house search conducted in the defendant's apartment. Furthermore, no evidence of the use of virtual currencies was presented.

The Supreme Court also stated that no evidence of the defendant's activities that would support the defendant's guilt was presented. The defendant's story was brief and partly supported the prosecutor's evidence. However, it was so consistent and credible that the Supreme Court rejected the prosecutor's demands.

## **Crime prevention is becoming more difficult**

In addition to conventional trading, illegal trade is increasingly shifting towards electronic networks, setting new demands for the investigation of crime. New skills are needed to obtain evidence and to prevent crime in general. This is why Finnish Customs has acquired new technological and other skills to develop its activities. Resources focus increasingly on quality, not on quantity.

Last year, Finnish Customs was able to shut down significant Darknet sites, such as Silkkitie and Sipilikanava. This showed that the authorities are still keeping up with new trends and, through continuous development and personnel training, are able to respond to criminal threats in networks. Thousands of buyers of narcotic substances had let themselves be lulled into the delusion that the long hand of Finnish Customs cannot reach them if they operate anonymously in the Darknet.

Online trade knows no boundaries, be it legal or illegal. The prevention of smuggling via online channels calls for close international cooperation in investigation, in detecting new trends and in sharing competence between the authorities.

# Combating money laundering and terrorism

The inter-governmental Financial Action Task Force (FATF), operating under the OECD, conducts international cooperation for combating money laundering, terrorism and the financing of weapons of mass destruction. The FATF issues recommendations to member countries, and monitors their implementation through annual questionnaires and regular country-specific assessments and follow-up reports.

Currently, the FATF has 37 member countries and two regional organisations including the European Commission. The FATF has dozens of partnership members and observers globally, including the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and Europol. The FATF was founded in 1989, and Finland joined as a member in 1991.

The FATF has issued 40 recommendations on preventing terrorism and the funding of weapons of mass destruction, a combat to which its member countries are politically committed. The FATF also supervises the activity of its members in implementing recommendations. Country-specific assessments comprise two aspects. On one hand, countries are assessed in terms of how well they implement FATF recommendations. On the other hand, they are assessed in terms of the efficiency of their authorities in combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

## Assessment of Finland

The FATF assessed Finland's input in the combat against money laundering and terrorism financing in 2019. The previous assessment in 2007 was lighter, and focused exclusively on the technical harmonisation of recommendations and national legislation. As a process, a country-specific assessment is lengthy and thorough, as it takes altogether two years and is based on extensive written material, on-site visits, and on an FATF plenary meeting. In Finland, six government ministries and 14 authorities combating money laundering and terrorism financing, including Customs, participated in the assessment. The assessment started with written preparations in autumn 2017, and the report on the compatibility of legislation was completed in May 2018. The FATF assessment team that comprised eight persons who spoke with authorities, businesses and interest groups during their two-week assessment period in Finland in the summer of 2018. The assessment culminated in a two-day review of the almost 200-page assessment report on Finland in the FATF plenary meeting in Paris in February 2019. The country assessment report on Finland was published on 16 April 2019.

In its assessment, the FATF evaluated a total of 11 aspects relating to money laundering and terrorism financing. According to the country assessment, the prevention of money laundering and of the financing of terrorism is at a reasonably good level in Finland when assessed as a whole. In the four-stage assessment, Finland gained the highest possible score in international cooperation against money laundering and terrorism financing. Finland achieved the second-highest score in the recognition of risks relating to money laundering and terrorism financing, as well as in cooperation between authorities, in producing and utilising financial information on terrorism financing, and in investigating and prosecuting money laundering. On the other hand, the FATF assessment team concluded that Finland should further develop the supervision of the prevention of money laundering and terrorism financing. Scant resources available to authorities have played a major part in the supervision. Furthermore, the FATF's view is that supervision should be based more on recognised risks.

Based on the country assessment, Finland was placed under intensified monitoring until the end of 2023. This means that Finland must issue an annual follow-up report on the progress in correcting the observed shortcomings. The first follow-up report by Finland will be discussed in the FATF plenary meeting in June 2020.

A working group facilitating mutual cooperation between authorities was set up already in 2018. In the group, representatives of authorities develop cooperation and practices for the prevention of money laundering and terrorism financing. Customs has participated in the working group since the start of 2020.

## Cash controls in focus

From the Customs viewpoint, cash controls were the most interesting aspect in the country assessment. Cash controls fall under FATF recommendation No. 32 that concerns cash couriers. Finland's implementation of the recommendation received the second-highest score in the four-step assessment scale. The score rose by an entire category from the previous assessment. However, there was also room for development, as the FATF noted the need to enhance the use of forfeitures in cross-border cash transports. In addition to cash controls, the efficiency of Finnish Customs in combating money laundering and terrorism financing was also assessed in terms of intelligence and investigation, and of controls on dual-use products.

# CBRNE at Customs

The abbreviation CBRNE refers to hazards resulting from chemical substances (C), biological pathogens (B), radioactive material (R), nuclear weapons (N) and explosives (E), as well as from the misuse of related knowhow. In 2017, the Ministry of the Interior issued the first national CBRNE strategy. Finnish Customs participated in preparing the strategy. Customs is a member of the CBRNE expert group of the Ministry of the Interior.

## International and domestic cooperation

The CBRNE activities were further developed at Customs in 2019. In June, representatives of Finnish Customs acquainted themselves with the CBRNE activities of Swedish Customs in Stockholm, ongoing since 2004. In Stockholm, we received useful information for our own CBRNE work with regard to training, equipment and cooperation between different authorities. In November, representatives of Swedish Customs visited enforcement and occupational safety experts at Finnish Customs. During the visit, thoughts were shared on CBRNE work and development of CBRNE work, as well as on cooperation between Finnish and Swedish Customs, for example with regard to food sniffer dogs.

The representatives of Swedish Customs familiarized themselves with radiation controls at Vuosaari Harbour and at Helsinki-Vantaa airport, where the other activities of Airport Customs was also presented to them. The visitors were impressed by the cooperation between Finnish Customs and the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority (STUK).

Finnish and Russian Customs have a permanent radiation control sub-group that meets regularly. In 2019, the group met in Murmansk, Russia. The next meeting will be in Finland in June 2020, and there will also be a joint radiation control exercise in Finland in March 2020.

In 2019, Finnish Customs participated in exercises arranged by authorities in Uusikaupunki, Oulu, Helsinki, Tampere and Loviisa, among other locations. In addition to radiation control, the exercises focused on other measures needed in case of a major accident, such as communications, evacuation and general situation management.

## Emergency action plan pilot project

Extensive occupational safety instructions have been drawn up at Airport Customs, and these were



supplemented in 2019. The instructions and training regarding the use of protective equipment were also updated. Based on occupational safety risk assessment, the model accordant with the emergency action plan pertaining to these instructions will be put into practice, and will be adapted to the operational environment at customs offices. Other authorities are also interested in the emergency action plan used by Customs.

## Infectious disease exercise at Helsinki-Vantaa Airport

In December 2019, Airport Customs arranged a joint authority exercise at Helsinki-Vantaa Airport in cooperation with other authorities. The focus of the exercise was infectious diseases (C-biological threats) and preparing for them. The exercise was a continuation of a previous one organised at Postal Customs in October 2018, when customs officers partook in a simulated drill where a letter containing a dangerous chemical dissolved, and practiced the required measures and cooperation between authorities. The multiple-authority exercise in December took place after a planning meeting held by all the participating authorities held in September, and a preliminary exercise held in November.

The December exercise received considerable media attention due to the time when it was held, and because of the subject matter it focused on. According to its practice, on the day preceding the exercise Customs published a press release that was circulated in social media, as well. Quickly after the press release, various social media channels showed comments on “a cover-up by the authorities” and “typical attempts at cover-ups”, linking the multiple-authority exercise organised by Customs with the discussion on Finnish citizens returning from the al-Hawl refugee camp in Syria. There were

even conspiracy theories in social media about people being secretly returned to Finland. Social media commentators also questioned the reason for the exercise organised by Customs, as well as the trust given to authorities. Furthermore, the Finnish Customs Twitter account was trolled. As the exercise was linked with the political debate that was going on at the time, Customs released a statement saying that it would ensure the transparency of the exercise through real-time pictures and video footage.

Despite the upheaval, the exercise went on with excellent results. The purpose of the exercise was to see how instructions and procedures issued by Customs worked in exceptional circumstances, and whether they were up-to-date. Moreover, the exercise focused on dialogue between different authorities. The participating authorities concluded that there was a need to organise similar exercises also in the future.

## Food controls and product safety

### Misleading food packaging labels discovered – Russian nectar was artificially coloured juice

Food controls by Finnish Customs uncovered a batch of beverages sent last summer from Russia. The batch contained nothing like the products it should have according to its packaging labels. The shipment of approximately 1 000 kg contained several different beverages that were to be sold to consumers as fruit and berry nectars. According to the labels on the bottles, the products contained no additives. However, examinations conducted in the Customs Laboratory showed that each bottle contained colourants and preservatives.

The composition of nectar is closely defined in legislation, and no food package can offer inaccurate information about the product composition or properties. Therefore, the product packaging labels were misleading to consumers, and the import of the shipment was not permitted. The importer was also given an opportunity to make the shipment saleable by covering any inaccurate information using labels approved by Finnish Customs. However, the importer decided to return the products to the seller. The products were returned while under supervision.

#### Every tenth product stopped in 2019

In total, Finnish Customs examined the compliance of nearly 2 900 food products and food contact materials with applicable regulations in 2019. Of these, more than 1 000 products were examined among declared goods, while the remaining samples were selected, on the basis of risk evaluations, from batches imported for inner markets. The import or

placing on the market of every tenth product was forbidden, as the products did not meet the requirements set out in legislation. Minor non-conformities were discovered nearly as frequently. Like in previous years, examinations mainly targeted fresh fruit and fruit products, as well as fresh vegetables and vegetable products, totalling roughly 800 product batches. Most non-conformities were discovered in various beverages and dietary supplements.



# Food sniffer dogs to control African swine fever

Private importing of meat and dairy products from outside the EU is not permitted. This means that travellers cannot bring any meat or dairy products from these countries.

During 2019, Finnish Customs seized roughly 12 000 kg of forbidden meat and dairy products from travellers and postal deliveries. Of this volume, some 1 500 kg were discovered by food sniffer dogs.

Aino, the first sniffer dog of Finnish Customs to detect animal-based food products, started working in June 2018. During 2019, measures to control ASF were boosted further by starting to train a new food sniffer dog. Sniffer dog Rico will start working at Helsinki Airport. In recent years, ASF has spread in Asia, and passenger volumes between Finland and Asia are high.

Rico was presented to the media at Helsinki Airport on 13 August 2019. At the event, Vytenis Andriukaitis, EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, and Jari Leppä, Finland's Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, talked about the prevalence of ASF and the importance of controlling it. Commissioner Andriukaitis thanked Finland for

showing a shining example that controlling ASF and protecting pig farmers is possible.

Food sniffer dog Rico's task is to discover animal-based food products carried by air passengers at Helsinki Airport. Rico will also work in harbours in the Helsinki region.

## Information screens and cooperation

To improve the effectiveness of the supervision of meat and dairy products imported by travellers and to increase communication and awareness of the situation, Finnish Customs has started to build an information screen system, covering the entire eastern border and all key airports. The information screens will communicate information to warn people of animal diseases. Receptacles for food waste are also arranged at border-crossing points, into which travellers can voluntarily discard any forbidden meat and dairy products.

Finnish Customs has worked closely with the Finnish Food Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Finnish Border Guard.

## African swine fever

The spreading of the African swine fever (ASF) presents a significant financial threat of tens of millions of euros to Finland's pig farming and meat industry. Travellers play an important part in the prevention of ASF and other similar animal diseases, as viruses can spread via food products, such as snacks, and goods infected by these. Finnish Customs has increased the supervision of food imports, for example, by training more dogs and communicating more intensely.

ASF, a highly contagious haemorrhagic viral disease of domestic and wild pigs, presents a serious threat to European pork production. The disease is deadly to pigs, and there is no cure or vaccination. However, the disease does not spread to humans. The disease has not been detected in Finland, while it has been discovered in eastern parts of the EU, in all Baltic countries and in eastern neighbours of the EU. The disease spreads from one country to the next through animals and human negligence.

ASF was first detected in north-eastern parts of China in July 2018, after which it has spread rapidly nearly throughout China. The disease has also spread to China's neighbouring countries.



Image: Jukka Pätynen, The Finnish Kennel Club

## Aino, the Customs sniffer dog of the year, has exceeded all expectations

The Finnish Kennel Club nominated the service dogs of the year at the Dog Fair Finland in December 2019. Aino, Finland's first food sniffer dog, was chosen as the Customs sniffer dog of the year. The Golden Retriever, together with her handler Seija Kontunen, has been an excellent success in her pioneering work. Aino can detect all meat and dairy products, processed and packaged in different ways. In 2019, Aino detected roughly 1 150 kg of prohibited meat and dairy products.

Started in June 2018, Aino has proven to be effective, economical and visible in preventing and uncovering the import of meat and dairy products in helping to prevent the spread of animal diseases from third countries into the EU. Aino has played an important part in the attempts of Finnish authorities to intensify the supervision of food products on the border between the EU and Russia, for example, to control ASF. This cooperation between different authorities has also raised

interest on an international scale. Aino's work has been demonstrated to representatives of different EU member states and the EU Commission.

Aino mainly works on the eastern border, but she can also offer help in other locations, such as Helsinki Airport. Aino's largest single find consisted of 44 kg of meat. It was discovered from suitcases packed inside the trunk of a vehicle about to enter Finland from Russia, wrapped, for example, inside rainwear, linen, plastic and tinfoil. Bags of spices and garlic were placed next to the stash. Although a lot of trouble had been taken to package the products, Aino detected them from a great distance and headed determinedly directly towards the car's trunk.

Aino does not take her work too seriously. She is enthusiastic about everything, and interested in everything that happens around her. She is not afraid of going off and exploring new things, just out of curiosity.

# Customs dog Jutta

In honour of 25 years of cooperation between the Russian and Finnish customs services, Oleg Gubaydulin, Deputy Head of Federal Customs Service of Russia, gave a black Labrador Retriever called Jutta as a gift to Finnish Customs. Jutta came to Finland on 10 July 2019 at the age of 16 weeks. Before her arrival, normal border formalities related to the import of animals were completed. Jutta was checked by a border vet, and she also underwent the customs clearance procedure, as her entry into Finland was regarded as commercial import.

In Finland, Jutta is stationed at Helsinki Airport Customs where she will work in cargo, postal traffic and passenger control. Jutta will specialise in detecting narcotic substances.

She is open, courageous, independent and curious, and she has an enormous appetite! So far,

Jutta's shifts have mainly consisted of environmental studies, physical and coordination exercises and, during the past few weeks, also of smell and search exercises. Jutta has just the right personality for the demanding tasks of a customs dog.

She will start basic training at the end of January and should be a fully fledged customs dog in May.



## Служебная собака по кличке Ютта

Заместитель руководителя ФТС России Олег Губайдулин подарил Таможне Финляндии лабрадора черного цвета в честь 25-летия таможенного сотрудничества России и Финляндии. Лабрадора назвали Юттой. Ютта прибыла в Финляндию 10 июля 2019 года в возрасте 16 недель. Перед приездом в страну были выполнены все необходимые формальности, связанные со ввозом животных. Пограничный ветеринар провел осмотр собаки, также было осуществлено декларирование, так как ввоз считался коммерческим.

Место работы Ютты в Финляндии - это авиа таможня аэропорта Хельсинки-Вантаа, где собака будет работать на грузовом и пассажирском направлениях, а также с почтовыми отправлениями. Специализация Ютты – это поиск наркотических средств.

По характеру Ютта открытая, смелая, самостоятельная и любопытная, у нее очень хороший аппетит. В данный момент ее рабочие смены главным образом состоят из занятий, связанных с окружающей средой, из физических упражнений и упражнений на координацию. В течение нескольких последних месяцев собака также проходила обучение по распознаванию запахов и выполняла упражнения по поиску. По своим особенностям Ютта хорошо подходит для выполнения требовательной работы таможенной служебной собаки.

В конце января Ютта приступит к основной профессиональной подготовке для служебных собак, а в мае она должна уже быть полностью готова к выполнению своей работы.

# Crime statistics

<b>Crime overview</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Offences	9 656	9 581	9 409	8 943	<b>7 835</b>
<b>Suspects of offences</b>					
Foreigners total	4 010	3 216	2 902	2 919	<b>2 856</b>
<b>All suspects</b>	<b>9 066</b>	<b>8 950</b>	<b>8 525</b>	<b>8 222</b>	<b>7 520</b>
<b>Impact of customs crime prevention (EUR million)</b>					
Recovered proceeds of crime	10,70	19,30	28,00	26,10	<b>20,50</b>
Value of goods not seized	1,79	197,40	5,03	4,17	<b>21,49</b>
Evaded taxes	3,45	8,12	48,11	8,64	<b>24,20</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,94</b>	<b>224,82</b>	<b>81,14</b>	<b>38,91</b>	<b>66,19</b>

<b>Tax frauds</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Aggravated tax fraud	69	109	83	116	<b>149</b>
Standard offence	226	183	181	251	<b>256</b>
Petty tax fraud	561	622	822	927	<b>957</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>1 086</b>	<b>1 294</b>	<b>1 362</b>

<b>Narcotic-related offences</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Aggravated narcotics offence	199	254	271	281	<b>389</b>
Narcotic offence	1 819	2 810	2 829	2 403	<b>1 527</b>
Preparation of a narcotics offence	88	39	39	12	<b>34</b>
Illicit consumption of narcotics	206	84	90	57	<b>70</b>
<b>All narcotics offences</b>	<b>2 312</b>	<b>3 187</b>	<b>3 229</b>	<b>2 753</b>	<b>2 020</b>

<b>Seized drugs</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Seized amphetamine (kg) (incl. methamphetamine)	135,9	56,2	58,8	46,3	<b>24,2</b>
Seized hashish (kg)	29	67	675	34	<b>47</b>
Seized heroin (kg)	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,1	<b>7,3</b>
Seized khat (kg)	1 038	812	2 304	711	<b>1 313</b>
Seized cocaine (kg)	5,9	8,6	3,5	8,2	<b>32,9</b>
Seized marijuana (kg)	63,9	25,4	115,2	199,9	<b>255,6</b>
Drug seizures in cases investigated (kg)	1 277	1 036	3 175	1 060	<b>1 714</b>
Seized LSD (doses)	2 729	14 143	4 950	6 039	<b>3 671</b>
Seized ecstasy (tablets)	9 791	107 000	19 034	187 784	<b>40 935</b>
Seized buprenorphine (tablets)	18 675	20 994	15 136	33 375	<b>14 868</b>

<b>Medicine offences</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Medicine offence	124	144	110	80	<b>117</b>
Medicine violation	682	710	632	633	<b>564</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>681</b>
Seized medicines (tablets)	282 908	225 564	265 406	56 009	<b>83 843</b>

<b>Doping offences</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Aggravated doping offence	29	35	6	13	<b>9</b>
Doping offence	154	49	37	50	<b>47</b>
Petty doping offence	160	160	186	167	<b>150</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>206</b>
<b>Seized doping substances</b> (tablets/ampoules)	110 442	28 188	121 301	587 445	<b>298 326</b>

<b>Seized snus (kg)</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 204</b>	<b>3 442</b>	<b>2 390</b>	<b>6 744</b>	<b>4 940</b>

<b>Seized cigarettes (million pcs)</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,4</b>	<b>4,3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2,7</b>	<b>2,7</b>

<b>Alcohol offences</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Alcohol offence	7	1	3	3	<b>4</b>
Alcohol violation	0	0	0	4	<b>1</b>
Petty alcohol offence	884	606	339	358	<b>321</b>
Aggravated alcohol offence	3	3	1	0	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>894</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>328</b>

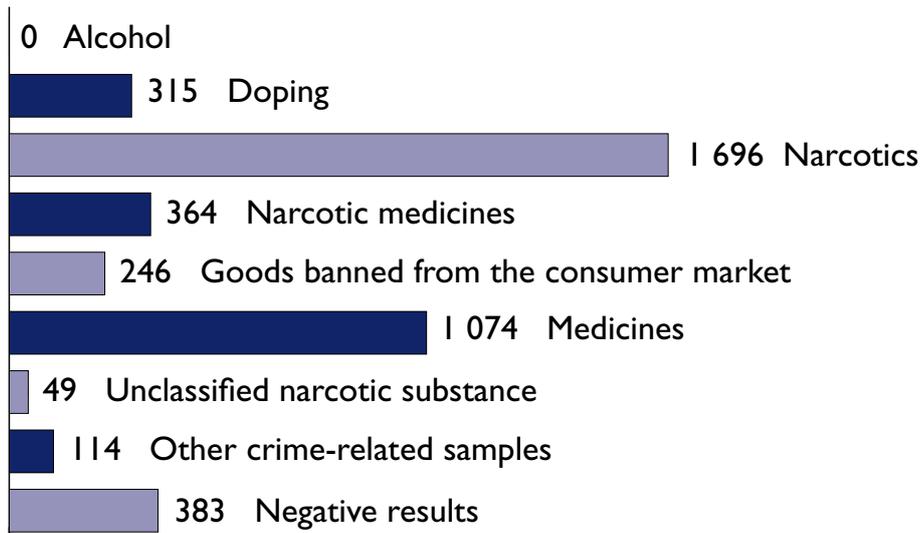
<b>Alcohol seizures (litres)</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Neutral spirits	12	32	6,5	210	<b>0,5</b>
Others	4 459	425	1 051,0	2 320	<b>1 272,0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 471</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>1 057,5</b>	<b>2 530</b>	<b>1 272,5</b>

<b>Firearms offences</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Aggravated firearms offence	4	5	1	2	0
Firearms offence	17	28	22	31	33
Petty firearms offence	31	129	96	143	146
Firearms violation	2	1	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>179</b>

<b>Seized weapons</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Gas weapons	264	187	96	127	187
Firearms	23	31	16	20	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>232</b>

## Customs offence investigations (number) – Illegal imports in 2019

Source: Customs Laboratory



[tulli.fi/en](https://tulli.fi/en)

