

Two Latvians indicted in US in 'scareware' scam

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View taken in the Main Hall of the Justice Department in Washington, DC. Two Latvians have been indicted and dozens of computers and servers seized in the United States and Europe in a crackdown on international cybercrime, the US Justice Department said Wednesday.

Two Latvians have been indicted and dozens of computers and servers seized in the United States and Europe in a crackdown on international cybercrime, the US Justice Department said Wednesday.

Peteris Sahurovs, 22, and Marina Maslobojeva, 23, were arrested on Tuesday in Rezekne, Latvia, the department said in a statement.

It said they were charged in an indictment unsealed in a [US District Court](#) in Minnesota with two counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of computer fraud.

According to the indictment, Sahurovs and Maslobojeva operated a "scareware" scheme in which [Internet users](#) are led to falsely believe that their computers have been infected with a virus.

They are then induced to supply their [credit card numbers](#) to buy [anti-virus software](#) products to repair their computers.

The department said the scam led to at least \$2 million in losses. It said the Latvian authorities have executed seizure warrants for at least five bank accounts used to funnel profits.

The Justice Department said that the FBI and international law enforcement partners had also cracked down on another [cybercrime](#) operation that victimized an estimated 960,000 users and led to \$72 million in losses.

No arrests were announced in connection with that operation, part of what the department called "Operation Trident Tribunal."

The Justice Department said the crackdown had led to the seizure of 22 computers and servers in the United States and 25 computers and servers in Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden.

Sahurovs and Maslobojeva could face up to 20 years in prison on the wire fraud and conspiracy charges and up to 10 years in prison for [computer fraud](#).

"These criminal enterprises infected the computers of innocent victims with malicious scareware, and then duped them into purchasing fake anti-virus software," US assistant attorney general Lanny Breuer said.

"We will continue to be aggressive and innovative in our approach to

combating this international threat," Breuer said.

The Justice Department said law enforcement agencies from Britain, Canada, Cyprus, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Romania, Sweden and Ukraine had provided assistance to Operation Trident Tribunal.

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