

## Five arrested in Europe in black market sting (Update)

February 13 2014, by David Rising

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This photo provided by the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice on Thursday, Feb. 13, 2014 shows weapons and ammunition purchased by undercover police. Five men have been arrested in Germany and the Netherlands in a sting operation against a website allegedly used to sell illegal drugs and weapons, authorities said Thursday. The site brings buyers and sellers together to sell black market goods, including drugs, guns and stolen credit cards. Undercover police purchased drugs, including several thousand ecstasy pills, and weapons through the sites. (AP Photo/Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice)

Five men have been arrested in Germany and the Netherlands in a sting operation against a website allegedly used to sell illegal drugs and weapons, authorities said Thursday.

A 21-year-old German man was arrested Tuesday in Bad Nauheim, near Frankfurt, on charges of computer fraud, membership in a criminal organization and drug violations on a European warrant issued by the Netherlands. The same day, prosecutors in the Netherlands said a man from Utrecht, 29, and two men from the eastern city of Enschede, aged 30 and 31, also were arrested on similar charges.

The four are accused of helping run the illegal online Internet portal Black Market Reloaded and its successor Utopia, whose servers are in Germany, Dutch authorities said. The site brings buyers and sellers together to sell black market goods, including drugs, guns and stolen credit cards, authorities said.

Undercover police purchased drugs—including several thousand ecstasy pills—and weapons through the sites, Dutch prosecutors said.

In their searches of the suspects' homes, German and Dutch authorities seized computers, hard drives, USB sticks, as well as a virtual Bitcoin wallet with some 500,000 euros (\$680,000) worth of the electronic currency.



This photo provided by the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice on Thursday, Feb. 13, 2014 shows a gun purchased by undercover police. Five men have been arrested in Germany and the Netherlands in a sting operation against a website allegedly used to sell illegal drugs and weapons, authorities said Thursday. The site brings buyers and sellers together to sell black market goods, including drugs, guns and stolen credit cards. Undercover police purchased drugs, including several thousand ecstasy pills, and weapons through the sites. (AP Photo/Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice)

A fifth suspect, who was already in detention in the Netherlands after being arrested last year on charges of smuggling drugs to Germany, was re-arrested on new charges of involvement with the website and for attempting to organize an assassination from behind bars.

The 46-year-old Dutchman allegedly asked undercover officers to "bring

someone to the other world," Dutch prosecutors said.

"The target was to have been subjected to extortion, then killed," they said in a statement.



This photo provided by the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice on Thursday, Feb. 13, 2014 shows 54 red ecstasy pills purchased by undercover police. Five men have been arrested in Germany and the Netherlands in a sting operation against a website allegedly used to sell illegal drugs and weapons, authorities said Thursday. The site brings buyers and sellers together to sell black market goods, including drugs, guns and stolen credit cards. Undercover police purchased drugs, including several thousand ecstasy pills, and weapons through the sites. (AP Photo/Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice)

None of the suspects' names were released.

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