

# Germany investigates large-scale password theft

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German authorities are investigating the suspected theft of passwords for some 18 million email addresses.

Interior Ministry spokesman Harald Neymanns said Friday an analysis by Germany's Internet security agency determined that about 3 million of the affected addresses were German. It's not clear where the others were from.

The agency analyzed the hacking at the request of prosecutors in the northern town of Verden, but officials gave no details on who owned the accounts, citing data protection laws, or how they learned of the password theft. The agency says it's working with email providers to determine how to inform people who may be affected.

In a separate case, German authorities said in January that an analysis of hijacked computer networks has turned up about 16 million compromised online accounts.

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