

# 12 arrests in Europe for Trojan horse cybercrime

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The European police agency Europol said Monday it has backed national forces in a two-week crackdown on cybercrime mostly by tech-savvy youngsters, leading to 12 arrests in France, Norway and Romania.

Nine [police](#) took part in the operation launched at the start of December, which led to a number of house searches as well as the seizure of several computers and Internet accounts.

Europol's deputy director Wil van Gemert said "crimes committed online remain an urgent and increasing challenge" so police "have to join forces across borders ... to protect the users and prevent young individuals from pursuing a criminal path."

The 12 people detained, mainly either still in their teens or early 20s, were accused of using remote access Trojans that can run undetected on systems and spy on victims computers.

Such malware can scoop up personal data such as passwords or [credit card information](#) on infected systems. It can also enable hackers to operate the computer's webcam from a distance.

Those arrested in Romania were suspected of trying to carry out cyberattacks on US companies based in the country.

A Europol spokeswoman told AFP "it seems unlikely that the detained individuals were part of the same organisation."

"The scale of the activities has been diverse, however the exact scale will become clear during the next stages of the investigation process."

It appeared however that "financial profit is not a likely to have been the main objective for the people detained in Norway."

Norwegian police announced they had arrested five men aged between 16 to 24.

"These were young people, who we hope now that the police have

become involved will stop such activities," said a leading police chief Havard Aalmo.

He said it was unfortunate that often "young hackers start off modestly and then become involved in more serious and larger Internet crimes."

Europol did not release the numbers of how many people were arrested separately in France and Romania.

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