

Europol: several counterfeit medicines and protective equipment during a pandemic

34,000 counterfeit surgical masks were seized in March

The Europol Police Office notes that several counterfeit medical, sanitary and pharmaceutical products have emerged during the pandemic. Cybercrime is also increasing as a result of teleworking. -- March 27th, 2020

Europol Director Catherine De Bolle points out that such criminal activities are unacceptable since they can endanger human lives during a public health crisis.

In March, 34,000 counterfeit surgical masks were seized in an international operation. The counterfeit medicines include antivirals, malaria, and vitamins, according to DPA, the German news agency.

Less secure online links.

Europol is particularly alert to cybercrime in the past few days when many people work from home, where their data and web connections may be less secure and allow connections to their organizations' systems. Criminals exploit the pandemic for social engineering and the spread of malware.

Fraudsters are changing their methods.

Europol expects a rapid increase in fraud as fraudsters adapt their methods very quickly and exploit fears and the care of the victim during a medical crisis. For example, €6.6 million was transferred to a Singapore company to buy alcohol gels and face masks, which were never delivered.

Europol also warns of known fraud when criminals present themselves as health authorities. It is expected that shops and medical institutions will be the targets of organized burglaries.

Slovenia has ordered three million masks ... which it did not receive, though this also has many things to do with the incompetence of the people ordering said masks.

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