

# #JusticeDone

## Rare books recovered in Romania and 12 individuals sentenced in connection with EUR 2 million London warehouse heist

Rare historical books worth an estimated EUR 2 million, including first editions of works by Galileo Galilei and Isaac Newton, were stolen from a postal warehouse in London in 2017. The criminal organisation involved, composed of Romanian nationals, had a history of committing complex, high-value thefts and had managed to avoid detection and prosecution by mainly operating outside Romania.



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On trial in the UK, **12 suspects pleaded guilty** to conspiring to commit burglary between December 2016 and April 2019 and to one count of conspiracy to conceal, disguise, convert, transfer and remove criminal property. Each was sentenced to 3 to 5 years in prison. A **13<sup>th</sup> suspect is set to stand trial** in March 2021.



**16 September 2020** – Following the execution of a **European Investigation Order**, a house search led by the Romanian Directorate for Investigating Organized Crime and Terrorism (DIICOT) and police uncovered the rare books buried underground in the county of Neamt.



National Desks at Eurojust continued to support the judicial follow-up, including facilitating the **transfer of judicial proceedings** from Romania to the UK.



**January 2020** – The **kingpin of the group was arrested** by Monza *Carabinieri* for the Protection of Cultural Heritage in Turin, Italy. This arrest led to the retrieval of the rare books.

**June 2019** – **15 suspects linked to the criminal organisation were arrested** in the UK and Romania. 45 addresses were searched across the UK, Romania and Italy.



Following the EUR 2 million warehouse heist in 2017, a **joint investigation team (JIT)** was set up between judicial and law enforcement authorities in Romania, the UK and Italy, with support from Eurojust and Europol. The JIT provided the authorities with the necessary judicial coordination, information exchange and analytical tools to carry out various investigation activities.

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These sentences bring a successful conclusion to a complicated three year investigation, which identified and convicted a previously unknown Romanian organised crime gang ... I am proud the Met investigation team, working with the Romanian National Police and the Italian *Carabinieri*, have brought their offending to an end.”

**Andy Durham**

Detective Inspector in charge of the investigation

