

## Empty invoices for over a billion PLN

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Officers of the Central Anti-corruption Bureau and the Masovian Customs and Tax Office detained 19 entrepreneurs who used unreliable invoices to settle VAT. This is the result of an investigation into the activities of an organized criminal group involving nearly a thousand business entities. The investigation is supervised by the Warsaw-Praga District Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw.

On 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024, 19 people from the Mazovian, Greater Poland, Łódź, Subcarpathian, Lower Silesia, West Pomeranian, Silesian and Lesser Poland provinces were detained. Over 300 officers conducted procedural activities simultaneously in 130 locations across the country. Extensive accounting documentation and memory media were secured in the places of residence and places of business activity of the detainees.

The arrests are related to an investigation conducted by officers of the CBA Branch Office in Kraków together with officers of the Mazovian Customs and Tax Office into the activities of an organized criminal group that issued and used unreliable VAT invoices to settle tax liabilities.

The investigation findings show that in the years 2012-2021, the criminal group produced so-called empty invoices, which did not reflect actual economic events for the purchase of IT, transport, consulting services and goods. Entrepreneurs from the Mazovian, Greater Poland, Łódź, Subcarpathian and Lower Silesian provinces as well as accounting offices participated in the procedure.

Some of the entities acted as intermediaries who searched for other business entities interested in using fictitious invoices to reduce tax liabilities. The value of the invoices issued exceeded one billion złoty.

The detainees were brought to the District Prosecutor's Office of Warsaw-Praga in Warsaw. They were charged with forging VAT invoices, money laundering, issuing unreliable invoices, providing false information in VAT returns, and violating the rules of subsidies. The prosecutor filed applications for the application of temporary arrest against 4 people. The amount of property security is almost PLN 9.5 million.

#### Effects of joint activities of the CBA and KAS

This is the seventh implementation in the conducted preparatory proceedings. So far, over 200 people have been charged in the investigation. The prosecutor filed indictments against 53 suspects to the court, 42 of whom filed applications for voluntary submission to punishment. As a result of criminal activity, the State Treasury was exposed to losses of PLN 24 million, of which PLN 16 million has already been returned, and the remaining amount has been subject to the obligation to pay. The Mazovian Customs and Fiscal Office blocked the bank accounts of 18 taxpayers for an amount of over PLN 3.4 million. A total of 618 customs and fiscal inspections and tax inspections were initiated against dishonest taxpayers. More economic entities that participated in the criminal activity appear in the case. Investigators are planning further procedural implementations.

#### CBA Press Team



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