

	Source	The most important events of the period [15/01/2023 - 14/02/2023]	Autor: Radu Ion, lector AS Financial Markets
1		Emerging trends and risks	
1	Australia AFP	<p>[02/February/2023] Property and cash restrained as alleged money laundering group charged</p> <p>The Australia Federal Police (AFP) has charged nine members of an international money laundering organisation and restrained more than \$150 million in Sydney property, cash and luxury items. The AFP alleges the money laundering organisation was a global operation uniquely-headquartered in Sydney, which facilitated the movement of illicit money through multiple jurisdictions by multiple means, including exploitation of daigous, casino junkets and the informal value transfer system, which generally occurs outside conventional banking systems. It will be alleged the syndicate acted as an unregulated multi-national bank, able to draw on cash reserves held in multiple countries around the world to facilitate transactions for criminal clients.</p> <p>https://www.afp.gov.au/news-media/media-releases/property-and-cash-restrained-alleged-money-laundering-group-charged</p>	
1	EUROPOL	<p>[01/February/2023] Betting syndicate members have been arrested</p> <p>A total of 23 members of an alleged betting syndicate have been arrested on suspicion of fixing football games in the Royal Spanish Football Federation, the Gibraltar National League and the Andorra League. Among those arrested are several footballers who are suspected of having used their position to steer the outcome of games in which they participated in. A total of thirty football matches are currently being investigated in this case. The profits generated are estimated at over half a million euros.</p> <p>https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/23-arrested-in-spanish-football-match-fixing-probe</p>	
1	EUROJUST	<p>[27/January/2023] New action against 'Ndrangheta in Italy and Hungary</p> <p>Eurojust, Italian and Hungarian judicial and law enforcement authorities have carried out an operation against the 'Ndrangheta criminal organization for mafia-type criminal association, international money laundering and fraudulent transfer of values. The action focused on the group's money laundering activities, which were facilitated by a number of companies that had previously been fictitiously registered in the name of third parties under Italian, Hungarian and Cypriot law.</p> <p>https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/news/new-action-against-ndrangheta-italy-and-hungary</p>	
1	Europol	<p>[16/January/2023] Counterfeit tobacco products worth EUR 17 million seized in France.</p> <p>French National Gendarmerie (Gendarmerie Nationale) raided a location in France, which was found to be an underground factory for counterfeit tobacco. During the raids, the French officers arrested nine suspects, most of them Moldovan nationals. The gendarmes discovered a quasi-industrial set-up for the production of counterfeit cigarettes in large quantities, that allowed the workers to live at the factory, completely cut off from the external world. During the raids, the officers seized more than 100 tonnes of illegal products including 55 tonnes of cigarettes in boxes (19.4 million cigarettes and 15 tonnes of cut tobacco), 50 tonnes of packaging materials such as paper, filters and labels, as well as 18 tonnes of waste from the cigarette production process. The estimated value of the seized tobacco is about EUR 17 million.</p> <p>https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/counterfeit-tobacco-products-worth-eur-17-million-seized-in-france</p>	
1	EPPO	<p>[18/January/2023] 'Dutch sandwich' tax evasion scheme</p> <p>The European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) is investigating suspicions regarding an international tax evasion mechanism, also known as 'tax inversion'. According to the investigation, an Italian company marketed its products in Italy, fraudulently claiming that the goods were destined for other EU member states and therefore exempt from VAT, abusing the fictitious foreign headquarters of the company. The investigation showed that the real headquarters of the company – i.e., the so-called 'place of effective management' – were in fact in Italy, and not in the Netherlands as declared. It is believed that the company ostensibly based in the Netherlands created a complex corporate system, by which it was controlled by a holding company registered in the Netherlands Antilles (under a preferential tax regime), and in turn by another company, also apparently based in the Netherlands – a scheme known as a 'Dutch sandwich', a form of tax evasion technique that involves using parent companies in different countries to shift profits to tax havens. The investigation established an effective turnover in Italy of approximately €50 million, and unpaid VAT of over €10 million, amount frozen on 11/January/2023.</p> <p>https://www.eppo.europa.eu/en/news/italy-eu10-million-frozen-investigation-dutch-sandwich-tax-evasion-scheme</p>	
2		Warnings and reports, thematic analyzes of national and international authorities	

2	Jersey FIU	[07/February/2023] The Jersey FIU published Money Laundering Typologies 2023. The document is a very useful and interesting collection of typologies and red flags for each, divided into the following chapters: 1/tax evasion-3 typologies 2/drug trafficking-2 typologies 3/fraud-1typology 4/internet fraud-7 typologies 5/corruption-2 typologies 6/terrorism-2 typologies7/insurance -1typology https://jersey.police.uk/media/657702/typologies-booklet-2023.pdf
2	FATF	[31/January/2023] FATF issued the Annual Report 2021-2022 The report summarizes the activity from [01/July/2021] to [30/June/2022] under the German Presidency. The main topics in the 62 pages are: 1/beneficial ownership transparency 2/RBA for real estate 3/ migrant smuggling 4/environmental crimes 5/ digital transformation for operational agencies https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf-gafi/annual-reports/Annual-Report-2021-2022.pdf.coredownload.pdf
2	IE CB	[26/January/2023] Ireland Central Bank issued (the well-known) Dear CEO letter for Payment and Electronic Money (E-Money) Firms. The letter indicates 5 key areas where deficiencies have been identified and where there are expectations from firms to address them : 1/ safeguarding 2/ governance, risk management, conduct and culture 3/ business model, strategy and financial resilience 4/operational resilience and outsourcing 5/anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism. The main vulnerabilities identified in AML/CFT area are related to: i) risk-based approach, ii) distribution channels iii) simplified due diligence. https://www.centralbank.ie/docs/default-source/regulation/industry-market-sectors/payment-institutions/dear-ceo-letter-supervisory-findings-and-expectations-for-payment-and-electronic-money-firms.pdf
2	UK FIU	[25/January/2023] UK FIU 2022 SAR Annual Report. Some important figures from the Report: -901,255 SARs received in 2022, 21% increase vs 2021. -24,032 PEP SARs received in 2022, decreased 12.6% vs 2021 -70.77% of SARs submitted by banks, 15.75% increase vs 2021. https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are/publications/631-sars-annual-report-2022/file
2	EU EP	[24/January/2023] The briefing "Anti-Money Laundering Authority (AMLA): Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing" The report was published on the European Parliament Think Tank. The document summarizes the position of the involved EU authorities & stakeholders and also the steps taken so far for the adoption of the "Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Authority for combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism". The document is prepared and addressed to Members of European Parliament and the staff of the European Parliament as background material to assist them in their parliamentary work. It is also a very useful summary for all staff interested in AML subject. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/733645/EPRS_BRI(2022)733645_EN.pdf
3		Terrorism and International Sanctions updates
3	USA	OFAC-Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List https://www.treasury.gov/ofac/downloads/sdnlist.pdf
3	EU	European Union Consolidated Financial Sanctions Lis https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fsd/fsf/public/files/pdfFullSanctionsList/content?token=n002g3ky
3	UN	United Nations Security Council Consolidated List https://scsanctions.un.org/consolidated/
3	US	[10/February/2023] OFAC - Global Magnitsky Designations The SDN list has been updated (add) with 5 individuals and 5 entities https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230210

	US	[09/February/2023] OFAC - Cyber-related Designations; Iran-related Designations The SDN list has been updated (add) with 7 individuals and 9 entities https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230209
3	US	[08/February/2023] OFAC - Transnational Criminal Organizations Designations and Designations Removals; Publication of Russia-related Frequently Asked Question The SDN list has been updated (add) with 2 individuals https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230208
3	EU	[07/February/2023] COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2023/261 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2023/253 implementing Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine Following the judgment of the General Court in Case T-714/20 (2), one private individual, the Governor of Sevastopol from 18 September 2017 to 11 July 2019, was deleted from the list of natural and legal persons, entities and bodies, set out in the Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 269/2014. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023D0261 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023R0253
3	EU	[04/February/2023] COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) 2023/250 amending Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2023/251 amending Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2023/252 amending Decision 2014/512/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine The EU has adopted price caps for Russian petroleum products ref CN code 2710 in regarding to the ban on the maritime transport of these products from Russia to third countries and the provision of related services. Petroleum products purchased at or below the price ceiling are exempt from the ban. The maximum price for premium-to-crude products is 100 USD per barrel and the maximum price for discount-to-crude is 45 USD per barrel. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023D0252 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023R0251 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023R0250
3	US	[03/February/2023] OFAC - Iran-related Designations and Designation Update; Non-Proliferation Designations; Counter Terrorism Designation Update The SDN list has been updated (add) with 7 individuals and 2 vessels https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230203
3	US	[01/February/2023] OFAC - Russia-related Designations; Counter Narcotics Designation Update The SDN list has been updated with 10individuals and 14 entities https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230201
3	US	[31/January/2023] OFAC - Burma-related Designations The SDN list has been updated with 6 individuals and 3 entities https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230131

3	EU	<p>[30/January/2023] COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2023/193 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2023/192 implementing Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine</p> <p>Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industries Corporation (HESA-drone manufacturer) has been added to Sanction List</p> <p>https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023D0193 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023R0192</p>
3	EU	<p>[30/January/2023] COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2023/190 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine</p> <p>Introduces further restrictive measures to suspend the broadcasting activities</p> <p>https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023D0190</p>
3	US	<p>[30/January/2023] OFACT - SDN -Counter Narcotics Designations</p> <p>-3 individuals have been added to SDN List (related to fentanyl traffick)</p> <p>https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230130</p>
3	EU	<p>[27/January/2023] EU prolongs economic sanctions over Russia's military aggression against Ukraine</p> <p>The Council decided to prolong by six months, until 31 July 2023, the restrictive measures targeting specific sectors of the economy of the Russian Federation. These sanctions, first introduced in 2014 in response to Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, were significantly expanded since February 2022, in light of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine. They currently consist of a broad spectrum of sectoral measures, including restrictions on trade, finance, technology and dual-use goods, industry, transport and luxury goods. They also cover: a ban on the import or transfer of seaborne crude oil and certain petroleum products from Russia to the EU, a de-SWIFTing of several Russian banks, and the suspension of the broadcasting activities and licenses of several Kremlin-backed disinformation outlets.</p> <p>https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/01/27/russia-eu-prolongs-economic-sanctions-over-russia-s-military-aggression-against-ukraine/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Russia%3a+EU+prolongs+economic+sanctions+over+Russia%u2019s+military+aggression+against+Ukraine</p>
3	UN	<p>[27/January/2023] Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Adds One Entry to Sanctions List</p> <p>The entities from the list are subject to the assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo set out in paragraph 1 of Security Council resolution 2610 (2021) and adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.</p> <p>https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15186.doc.htm</p>
3	US	<p>[26/January/2023] OFACT - SDN - Russia-related Designations and Designation Update; Central African Republic Designations; Transnational Criminal Organizations Designation; Global Magnitsky Designations; Issuance of Global Magnitsky General Licenses and Frequently Asked Questions</p> <p>-19 individuals have have been added to SDN List (including Wagner related) -35 entities have been added to SDN List (including Wagner related) - 2 vessels and 5 aircrafts have been added to SDN List</p> <p>https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230126</p>
3	US	<p>[24/January/2023] OFAC - SPECIALLY DESIGNATED NATIONALS LIST UPDATE</p> <p>The SDN list has been updated with 3 individuals and 3 entities Lebanon related</p> <p>https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230124</p>

		[24/January/2023] COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2023/159 amending Decision 2011/72/CFSP concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities in view of the situation in Tunisia
3	EU	Extending the validity of the EU sanctions regime against Tunisia through Jan 31, 2024, and amended 9 persons in the restriction list https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023D0159
3	EU	[24/January/2023] COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2023/160 amending Decision 2010/231/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Somalia Updatind the sanction regime in accordance with UN Resolution that reaffirms the arms embargo on Somalia and amends the application of derogations and exemptions concerning the delivery of arms and related materials to Somalia's security and police institutions at the national and local level. That Resolution reaffirms the prohibition on the import of charcoal from Somalia, and also confirms the restrictions on the sale, supply and transfer of improvised explosive device (IED) components to Somalia. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023D0160
3	US	[23/January/2023] OFAC - Iran-related Designations and Designation Update; Non-Proliferation Designation Update; Counter Terrorism Designation Update 10 private individuals linked to [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, Iranian Ministry Of Intelligence And Security; Bonyad Taavon Sepah] have been added to OFAC's SDN List https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230123
3	EU	[23/January/2023] COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2023/152 implementing Regulation (EU) No 359/2011 concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Iran COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION (CFSP) 2023/153 implementing Decision 2011/235/CFSP concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities in view of the situation in Iran 18 private individuals and 19 legal entities linked to [human rights violations in Iran] have been added to freezing list https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023R0152 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023D0153
3	US	[19/January/2023] OFAC- Specially Designated Nationals List Update Three records related to Lebanon have been deleted https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20230119
3	UN	[16/January/2023] Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Adds One Entry to Its Sanctions List The Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida, and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities approved the addition of a Private Individual (Pakistan related) to its ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions List of individuals and entities subject to the assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo set out in paragraph 1 of Security Council resolution 2610 (2021) and adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15177.doc.htm
4		EU ML/TF SupraNational Risk Assessment
4	EU	The last EU report of the risk of money laundering and terrorist financing affecting the internal market and relating to cross-border activities (EU SNRA) was issued on [27/October/2022] : https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022DC0554 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022SC0344
5		Information and assessments by national authorities on risks at national level
5	ROMANIA	The main findings and conclusions of the Romania ML/TF National Risk Assessment (NRA) was published on [22/November/2022] RO: http://www.onpcsb.ro/pdf/Rezumat%20NRA%20Public.pdf EN: http://www.onpcsb.ro/pdf/Summary%20of%20the%20National%20Risk%20Assessment%20Report%20on%20Money%20Laundering%20and%20Terrorism%20Financing.pdf

6		Specific guidelines, guides, instructions or warnings
6	Wolfsberg Group	<p>[10/February/2023] New version, 1.4 of the Correspondent Banking Due Diligence Questionnaire (CBDDQ)</p> <p>The CBDDQ updates include a new section on Fraud and additional questions related to Whistleblower Policy, Virtual Bank License, the approval of Sanctions Policy, and other changes designed to improve the logic, usability and flow of the questionnaire. The Declaration Statement has been updated to include a revised period for update of the Questionnaire. The FAQ and Glossary documents have also been updated to address changes in the Questionnaires</p> <p>https://www.wolfsberg-principles.com/sites/default/files/wb/CBDDQ%20v1.4_0.pdf https://www.wolfsberg-principles.com/sites/default/files/wb/CBDDQ%20Guidance%20v2.0.pdf</p>
6	Wolfsberg Group	<p>[10/February/2023] New version 1.2 of the Financial Crime Compliance Questionnaire (FCCQ)</p> <p>The changes were made to the FCCQ to ensure consistency with CBDDQ v1.4. The FAQ and Glossary documents have also been updated to address changes in the Questionnaires</p> <p>https://www.wolfsberg-principles.com/sites/default/files/wb/FCCQ%20v1.2.pdf https://www.wolfsberg-principles.com/sites/default/files/wb/CBDDQ%20and%20FCCQ%20FAQs%20v3.0.pdf</p>
6	US OFAC	<p>[04/February/2023] OFAC Guidance on Implementation of the Price Cap Policy for Crude Oil and Petroleum Products of Russian Federation Origin</p> <p>The involvement in any related services is possible if the Russian oil or Russian petroleum products are purchased at or below the relevant price cap. Financial institutions must obtain and retain signed attestations from their downstream customers or subcontractors that for the service being provided, the Russian oil or Russian petroleum products were or will be purchased at or below the relevant price cap. At 03/December/2022 EU, US, G7 and Australia, have agreed to prohibit the import of crude oil and petroleum products of Russian Federation origin, and agreed to implement a common policy in this respect "the price cap policy." The price was set at 45&100USD for low&high value products as of 05/February/2023 and 60USD for crude oil as of 05/December/2023</p> <p>https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/126/price_cap_guidance_combined_20230203.pdf https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/126/price_cap_determination_20230203.pdf</p>
6	CANADA FINTRAC	<p>[01/February/2023] Operational Alert - Laundering the proceeds of crime from ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE</p> <p>The purpose of this Operational Alert is to support reporting entities in recognizing financial transactions suspected of being related to the laundering of funds associated with the illegal wildlife trade of animals. This Operational Alert provides money laundering indicators as a result of the analysis of FINTRAC transaction reports related to illegal wildlife trade and supported by analysis of domestic and international sources. The indicators are intended to be applied in a Canadian context; however, they can be used by other jurisdictions to help them identify financial transactions and high risk factors related to illegal wildlife trade.</p> <p>https://fintrac-canafe.canada.ca/intel/operation/oai-wildlife-eng.pdf</p>
6	NL AMLCentre	<p>[22/January/2023] Money laundering vulnerabilities at PSPs</p> <p>https://www.amlc.eu/money-laundering-vulnerabilities-at-psps/</p>

		<p>[07/February/2023] European Commission updated numerous FAQs related to the Russia sanctions regime.</p> <p>The updates cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 07 February 2023: Agricultural products from Ukraine 07 February 2023: Customs related matters 07 February 2023: Humanitarian aid 07 February 2023: Circumvention and due diligence 07 February 2023: Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts 04 February 2023: Oil price cap 04 February 2023: Oil imports 01 February 2023: Medicines and medical devices 30 January 2023: Media 20 January 2023: Export-related restrictions for dual-use goods and advanced technologies 20 January 2023: Imports, purchase and transfer of listed goods <p>https://finance.ec.europa.eu/eu-and-world/sanctions-restrictive-measures/sanctions-adopted-following-russias-military-aggression-against-ukraine/frequently-asked-questions-sanctions-against-russia_en</p> <p>https://finance.ec.europa.eu/document/download/66e8fd7d-8057-4b9b-96c2-5e54bf573cd1_en?filename=faqs-sanctions-russia-consolidated_en.pdf</p>
6	EU	<p>[19/January/2023] FinCEN identifies virtual currency exchange Bitzlato as a "Primary Money Laundering Concern" in connection with Russian illicit finance.</p> <p>Bitzlato plays a critical role in laundering Convertible Virtual Currency by facilitating illicit transactions for ransomware actors operating in Russia, including Conti, a Ransomware-as-a-Service group that has links to the Government of Russia. Bitzlato Limited is a virtual asset service provider registered in Hong Kong that operates globally.</p> <p>https://www.fincen.gov/news/news-releases/fincen-identifies-virtual-currency-exchange-bitzlato-primary-money-laundering</p>
7		Warnings, fines and convictions for violating the KYC/AML/CTF/Compliance legislation
7	MALTA FIAU	<p>[02/February/2023] APS Bank plc fined €228,706</p> <p>Deficiencies were identified in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - risk assessment, both related to CRA and EWRA - CDD measures - record keeping - ongoing monitoring <p>https://fiaumalta.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Publication-Notice-01022023.pdf</p>
7	HONG KONG MA	<p>[31/January/2023] Disciplinary action against Westpac Banking Corporation</p> <p>The Monetary Authority (MA) has imposed a pecuniary penalty of HK\$4,000,000 (EUR470.727) against Westpac Banking Corporation, Hong Kong Branch (WBCHK) for contraventions of the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance (AMLO). The deficiencies identified are related to customers periodic review.</p> <p>www.hkma.gov.hk/media/eng/doc/key-information/press-release/2023/20230131e11a1.pdf</p>
7	ROMANIA NBR	<p>[30/January/2023] ING BANK N.V. AMSTERDAM - SUCURSALA BUCUREŞTI sanctioned by NBR</p> <p>The National Bank of Romania (NBR) sanctioned ING BANK N.V. AMSTERDAM - SUCURSALA BUCUREŞTI with a warning (Order of the first vice-governor of the BNR no. 195/30.12.2022) for not complying with the Romanian AML Law, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improper monitoring of the business relationship with some clients; - failure to identify and report suspicious transactions to FIU ; - deficiencies in some internal control processes related to AML monitoring alerts <p>https://www.bnro.ro/Sanc%C8%9Biuni-emise-de-BNR-pentru-nerezpectarea-legisla%C8%9Biei-incidente--20132.aspx#peloc</p>

7	UK GC	<p>[27/January/2023] The Gambling Commission (GC) announced that online operator In Touch Games, will pay £6.1m penalty after investigation revealed social responsibility and money laundering failings.</p> <p>Anti-money laundering failures included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -not adequately taking account of the risk of a customer being a beneficiary of a life insurance policy ; having links to high-risk jurisdictions; or being a politically exposed person ("PEP"), family member of a PEP or known close associates of a PEP, within its money laundering and terrorist financing risk assessment. -not having policies, procedures and controls in place to address the risk factors mentioned above -not sufficiently considering the Commission's money laundering and terrorist financing risk assessment or the Commission's guidance -not ensuring its policies, procedures and controls were implemented effectively, for example not following its own policy to request source of funds information from customers who had deposited and lost £10,000 in a 12-month period. <p>https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/news/article/gbp6-1m-fine-for-online-operator-in-touch-games</p>
7	NL DNB	<p>[27/January/2023] DNB imposes administrative fine on Coinbase Europe Limited for providing crypto services without the legally required registration</p> <p>De Nederlandsche Bank (DNB) imposed an administrative fine of €3,325,000 on Coinbase Europe Limited (Coinbase). The fine was imposed because Coinbase provided crypto services in the Netherlands in the past without registration with DNB, until 22 September 2022, which is in non-compliance with the law.</p> <p>https://www.dnb.nl/en/general-news/news-2023/dnb-imposes-administrative-fine-on-coinbase-europe-limited-for-providing-crypto-services-without-the-legally-required-registration-until-22-september-2022/</p>
7	UK FCA	<p>[26/January/2023] Five individuals face conspiracy to insider deal and money laundering charges</p> <p>The FCA alleges that Redinel Korfuzi, Oerta Korfuzi, Iva Spahiu, Rogerio de Aquino and Dema Almeziad conspired to commit offences of insider dealing between 17 December 2019 and 25 March 2021. Specifically, the FCA alleges that Mr Korfuzi used confidential inside information he accessed as an Analyst in his former role at Janus Henderson to enable timely and profitable trading in 49 companies through accounts held by his co-conspirators. In each case, the defendants used a derivative product called Contracts for Difference in relation to each of these companies, betting that the value of shares would go down after the announcements. In doing so, they were able to realise profits of approximately £1.5 million.</p> <p>https://www.fca.org.uk/news/press-releases/five-individuals-conspiracy-insider-deal-money-laundering-charges</p>
7	US DOJ	<p>[26/January/2023] Former Special Agent in Charge of the FBI New York Counterintelligence Division Charged with Violating U.S. Sanctions on Russia</p> <p>A former Special Agent in Charge of the FBI New York Counterintelligence Division (Charles F. McGonigal), and a former Soviet and Russian diplomat (Sergey Shestakov) were arrested on criminal charges related to their alleged violating and conspiring to violate the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) and conspiring to commit money laundering and money laundering. In 2021, McGonigal and Shestakov conspired to provide services to Oleg Deripaska (designated as SDN), in violation of U.S. sanctions imposed on Deripaska in 2018. Specifically, following their negotiations with an agent of Deripaska, McGonigal and Shestakov agreed to and did investigate a rival Russian oligarch in return for concealed payments from Deripaska.</p> <p>https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/former-special-agent-charge-fbi-new-york-counterintelligence-division-charged-violating-us</p>
7	US SEC	<p>[25/January/2023] SEC Charges Avraham Eisenberg with Manipulating Mango Markets' "Governance Token" to Steal \$116 Million of Crypto Assets</p> <p>The Securities and Exchange Commission charged Avraham Eisenberg with orchestrating an attack on a crypto asset trading platform, Mango Markets, by manipulating the MNGO token, a so-called governance token that was offered and sold as a security. Investigations into other securities law violations and into other entities and persons relating to the alleged misconduct are ongoing. Eisenberg, a 27 year-old U.S. citizen who was arrested and detained at MDC Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, is awaiting transport to appear before the Southern District of New York where he is facing parallel criminal and civil charges, brought by the Department of Justice and the Commodities Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), respectively. According to the SEC's complaint, beginning on October 11, 2022, Eisenberg engaged in a scheme to steal approximately \$116 million worth of crypto assets from the Mango Markets platform.</p> <p>https://www.sec.gov/litigation/litreleases/2023/lr25623.htm</p>

7	US DOJ	<p>[20/January/2023] Arrest and Criminal Charges Announced Against British and Russian Businessmen for Facilitating Sanctions Evasion of Russian Oligarch's \$90 Million Yacht</p> <p>Two businessmen, Vladislav Osipov, 51, a Russian national, and Richard Masters, 52, a United Kingdom national, are charged with facilitating a sanctions evasion and money laundering scheme in relation to the ownership and operation of the Motor Yacht (M/Y) Tango (International Maritime Organization number 1010703), a \$90 million, 255-foot luxury yacht owned by sanctioned Russian oligarch Viktor Vekselberg. Despite U.S. sanctions issued against Vekselberg in April 2018, Osipov and Masters facilitated the operation of Tango through the use of U.S. companies and the U.S. financial system, attempting to obfuscate Vekselberg's involvement in the vessel. Osipov, an employee of Vekselberg who functioned as a property manager for Tango, designed a complicated ownership structure of shell companies to hide Vekselberg's ownership of the yacht, despite that Vekselberg designed the yacht, was the sole user, and was the ultimate beneficial owner.</p> <p>https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/arrest-and-criminal-charges-announced-against-british-and-russian-businessmen-facilitating</p>
7	UK COPFS	<p>[20/January/2023] Three lawyers jailed for money laundering</p> <p>Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) : three former lawyers and two other men who masterminded a £1.48million bank and property money-laundering operation have been jailed for a total of 30 years and four months.</p> <p>https://www.copfs.gov.uk/about-copfs/news/three-lawyers-jailed-for-money-laundering/</p>
7	US DOJ	<p>[20/January/2023] North Korean National Sentenced for Money Laundering Offenses</p> <p>North Korean Businessman Accessed the U.S. Financial System and Deceived U.S. Banks to Circumvent Sanctions Against North Korea. Mun Chol Myong (Mun), 55, a national of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), was sentenced in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to time served of 45 months' imprisonment for multiple money laundering offenses. Mun laundered funds through the U.S. financial system as part of a scheme to raise capital and acquire goods for North Korea in violation of U.S. sanctions. Mun is the first ever North Korean national to be extradited to the United States and is subject to deportation following the successful completion of his sentence.</p> <p>https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/north-korean-national-sentenced-money-laundering-offenses</p>
7	US SEC	<p>[20/January/2023] Nexo Capital Inc agrees to pay \$45 Million in penalties and Cease Unregistered Offering of Crypto Asset Lending Product</p> <p>The Securities and Exchange Commission today charged Nexo Capital Inc. with failing to register the offer and sale of its retail crypto asset lending product, the Earn Interest Product (EIP). To settle the SEC's charges, Nexo agreed to pay a \$22.5 million penalty and cease its unregistered offer and sale of the EIP to U.S. investors. In parallel actions, Nexo agreed to pay an additional \$22.5 million in fines to settle similar charges by state regulatory authorities.</p> <p>https://www.sec.gov/news/press-release/2023-11</p>
7	US DOJ	<p>[18/January/2023] Founder and Majority Owner of Cryptocurrency Exchange Charged with Processing Over \$700 Million of Illicit Funds</p> <p>The founder and majority owner of a cryptocurrency exchange, Bitzlato Ltd. (Bitzlato), was arrested last night in Miami for his alleged operation of a money transmitting business that transported and transmitted illicit funds and that failed to meet U.S. regulatory safeguards, including anti-money laundering requirements. Anatoly Legkodymov, 40, a Russian national who resides in Shenzhen, People's Republic of China, is scheduled to be arraigned in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida. French authorities and the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) are taking concurrent enforcement actions. Bitzlato has marketed itself as requiring minimal identification from its users, specifying that "neither selfies nor passports [are] required." On occasions when Bitzlato did direct users to submit identifying information, it repeatedly allowed them to provide information belonging to "straw man" registrant.</p> <p>https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/founder-and-majority-owner-cryptocurrency-exchange-charged-processing-over-700-million</p>
7	UK GC	<p>[17/January/2023] The Gambling Commission (GC) announced that Vivaro Limited trading as vbet, will pay a £337,631 regulatory settlement following a series of failings in Vivaro Limited's processes aimed at preventing money laundering and safer gambling</p> <p>Vivaro accepted it breached the licence conditions for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -customers were able to deposit a significant sum of money before 'know your customer' (KYC) checks were carried out -Vivaro did not provide sufficient guidance within its policies or procedures as to how staff should verify Source Of Funds (SOF) and what supporting documents should be requested -AML trigger levels were considered too high, based on the average level of customer spend, and were therefore not appropriate to effectively manage associated ML risk -the Licensee did not sufficiently consider the risks associated with funds a customer used to gamble that had originated from crypto currency. Crypto currency is considered high risk by Commission Officials and should be subject to further investigation. <p>https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/public-register/public-statement/detail/vivaro-limited-public-statement</p>

	ROMANIA NBR	<p>[17/January/2023] Banca Romaneasca S.A. sanctioned with warning</p> <p>The National Bank of Romania (BNR) sanctioned Banca Romaneasca S.A. with a warning (Order of the first vice-governor of the BNR no. 173/15.12.2022) for not complying with the Romanian AML Law, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - failure to identify and report post & ante-factum suspicious transactions to FIU ; - deficiencies in some internal control processes <p>https://www.bnro.ro/Sanc%C8%9Biuni-emise-de-BNR-pentru-nerespectarea-legisla%C8%9Biei-incidente--20132.aspx#peloc</p>
8		<p>Threats, alerts and typologies</p> <p>[26/January/2023] Alert regarding investments in the US commercial real estate sector by sanctioned Russian elites, oligarchs, their family members, and the entities through which they act.</p> <p>The FinCEN alert highlights: 1/ 4 typologies associated with possible money laundering and sanctions evasion 2/ 8 financial red flags</p> <p>https://www.fincen.gov/sites/default/files/shared/FinCEN%20Alert%20Real%20Estate%20FINAL%20508_1-25-23%20FINAL%20FINAL.pdf</p>
9		<p>Corruption Perception Indices and Country Reports</p> <p>[31/January/2023] 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index</p> <p>The 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) was published by Transparency International. The global average remains unchanged for over a decade at just 43 out of 100. More than two-thirds of countries score below 50, while 26 countries have fallen to their lowest scores yet. 155 countries out of 180 have made no significant progress against corruption or have declined since 2012. Here is the score for some relevant countries from each risk class : Denmark 90(88in2021); Austria 75(74in2021); Lithuania 62(61in2021); Malta 51(54in2021); Romania 46(45in2021); Moldova 39(36in2021); Pakistan 27(28in2021); Somalia 12(13in2021). The average score of Western Europe&EU is 66, with max Denmark 90 and min Hungary 42.</p> <p>https://images.transparencycdn.org/images/Report_CPI2022_English.pdf</p>
10		<p>Mutual evaluation reports or lists of states or jurisdictions that have KYC/AML/CTF deficiencies</p> <p>[14/February/2023] EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes</p> <p>The EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes has been updated. The black list contains the following countries: 1/American Samoa; 2/Anguilla; 3/Bahamas; 4/British Virgin Islands(new); 5/Costa Rica(new); 6/Fiji; 7/Guam; 8/Marshall Islands(new); 9/Palau; 10/Panama; 11/Russia(new); 12/Samoa; 13/Trinidad and Tobago; 14/Turks and Caicos Islands; 15/US Virgin Islands; 16/Vanuatu. For the grey list see Annex II</p> <p>https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6375-2023-INIT/en/pdf</p>
10	FATF	<p>[31/January/2023] FATF consolidated countries assessment ratings</p> <p>This table provides an up-to-date overview of the FATF ratings that assessed countries obtained for effectiveness and technical compliance with the 40 recommendations.</p> <p>https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf/documents/4th-Round-Ratings.xlsx.coredownload.inline.xlsx</p>
10	FATF	<p>[31/January/2023] Botswana's progress in strengthening measures to tackle money laundering and terrorist financing</p> <p>Overall, Botswana has made progress in resolving the technical compliance shortcomings identified in its MER and FURs. The country has addressed the deficiencies in respect of the following Recommendations which have been re-rated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation 8 (initially rated NC) is re-rated to Partially Compliant Recommendation 25 (initially rated PC) is re-rated to Largely Compliant Recommendation 25 (initially rated PC) is re-rated to Largely Compliant <p>https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf/documents/ESAAMLG-Botswana-FUR-2022.pdf.coredownload.pdf</p>

10	FATF	<p>[31/January/2023] Mauritius' progress in strengthening measures to tackle money laundering and terrorist financing</p> <p>Overall, Mauritius has made progress in addressing deficiencies in technical compliance identified in its Mutual Evaluation. to justify re-rating of R. 15 (previously rated PC) to Largely Compliant. Recommendation 15, initially rated Partially Compliant, is re-rated to Largely Compliant</p> <p>https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf/documents/ESAAMLG-Mauritius-FUR-2022.pdf.coredownload.pdf</p>
10	FATF	<p>[30/January/2023] Tanzania's progress in strengthening measures to tackle money laundering and terrorist financing</p> <p>United Republic of Tanzania has made progress in addressing some of the technical compliance deficiencies identified in its MER. The country has addressed the deficiencies in respect of the following Recommendations which have been re-rated as follows:</p> <p>Recommendation 3 (initially rated PC) is re-rated to Largely Compliant</p> <p>Recommendation 5 (initially rated PC) is re-rated to Compliant</p> <p>https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf/documents/ESAAMLG-Tanzania-FUR-2022.pdf.coredownload.pdf</p>
10	FATF	<p>[27/January/2023] Namibia's measures to combat money laundering and terrorist financing</p> <p>https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf/documents/ESAAMLG-Mutual-Evaluation-Namibia-2022.pdf.coredownload.pdf</p>
10	FATF	<p>[27/January/2023] Kenya's measures to combat money laundering and terrorist financing</p> <p>Kenya has not carried out a risk assessment to identify and understand ML/ TF risks associated with or emerging from virtual assets (VAs)and virtual asset service providers (VASPs). VAs and VASPs are not prohibited and the country has not put in place relevantregulatory frameworks.</p> <p>https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf/documents/ESAAMLG-Mutual-Evaluation-Kenya-2022.pdf.coredownload.pdf</p>
10	FATF	<p>[27/January/2023] Suriname's measures to combat money laundering and terrorist financing</p> <p>There are deficiencies in the measures which are in place for ensuring transparency and accuracy ofbeneficial ownership information. Suriname has not conducted a risk assessment of legal persons and there are weaknesses in the mechanisms to record and obtain beneficial ownership information on legal persons and arrangements.</p> <p>https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf/documents/CFATF-Mutual-Evaluation-Suriname-2023.pdf.coredownload.pdf</p>
10	MONEYVAL	<p>[26/January/2023] Estonia - Anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures</p> <p>Fifth Round Mutual Evaluation Report encourages Estonia to further strengthen measures to combat money laundering (ML) and financing of terrorism (FT), among others by re-enforcing the capacities and performance of the private sector and improving its law enforcement efforts in this field. The report finds that further improvements are needed in enhancing the understanding of ML/TF risks, effectiveness of ML and TF investigations and prosecutions, confiscation of proceeds of crime, implementation of targeted financial sanctions on TF, application of AML/CFT preventative measures by the private sector, supervision and transparency of beneficial ownership of legal persons and legal arrangements.</p> <p>https://rm.coe.int/moneyval-2022-11-mer-estonia/1680a9dd96</p>
10	MONEYVAL	<p>[23/January/2023] Monaco - Anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures</p> <p>Monaco should step up its efforts to investigate and prosecute money laundering, to confiscate and recover proceeds of crime as well as to strengthen its supervisory system</p> <p>https://rm.coe.int/moneyval-2022-19-eng/1680a9d7d0</p>

	FATF	<p>[20/January/2023] Uganda's progress in strengthening measures to tackle money laundering and terrorist financing</p> <p>Uganda has made significant overall progress in resolving the technical compliance shortcomings identified in its MER and ratings for 2 Recommendations have been revised. The country has addressed the deficiencies in respect of the following Recommendations which have been re-rated as follows:</p> <p>Recommendation 12 (initially rated PC) is re-rated to Compliant Recommendation 22 (initially rated PC) is re-rated to Largely Compliant</p> <p>https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf/documents/ESAAMLG-Follow-Up-Report-Uganda-2022.pdf.coredownload.pdf</p>
10	FATF	<p>[20/January/2023] Ecuador's measures to combat money laundering and terrorist financing</p> <p>The Republic of Ecuador is exposed to a series of threats and vulnerabilities that determine its risk of money laundering and terrorist financing (ML/TF) and that were identified by the competent authorities in the National Risk Assessment of April 2021. Among the most significant threats detected are drug trafficking (particularly transnational), corruption, tax evasion, smuggling, and vehicle theft. The NRA also identified environmental crimes and human trafficking as emerging threats</p> <p>https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf/documents/GAFILAT-Mutual-Evaluation-Ecuador-2023.pdf.coredownload.pdf</p>
10	MONEYVAL	<p>[19/January/2023] Lithuania follow-up report : improvements in transparency of legal persons and in powers of customs authorities</p> <p>Lithuania has improved its measures to combat money laundering and terrorist financing; it has been upgraded from "partially compliant" to "largely compliant" with the FATF (Financial Action Task Force) Recommendations 24 and 32, related to transparency of legal persons and cash couriers.</p> <p>Overall, Lithuania has achieved full compliance with eight of the 40 FATF recommendations constituting the international AML/CFT standard and retains minor deficiencies in the implementation of 27 recommendations where it has been found "largely compliant". Five recommendations remain "partially compliant" and Lithuania has no "non-compliant" rating.</p> <p>https://rm.coe.int/moneyval-2022-14-fur-lt/1680a9c7f1</p>
11		<p>Relevant information from credible and reliable organizations</p>
11	OCCRP	<p>[10/Februarie/2023] This Luxembourg Businessman Got Europe's Corporate Registries Shut Down. But Whose Privacy Was He Protecting?</p> <p>OCCRP published a very interesting journalistic investigation about the person who was behind the restriction of public access to information on the beneficial owner in the European registers, following the decision of the EU Court of Justice last November. It is about Patrick Hansen, originally from Luxembourg, the CEO of a private aircraft company Luxaviation, about whom the following was discovered:: 1/is, or has been, the director or/and owner of at least 117 companies registered in Luxembourg, the British Virgin Islands, Belize, Bahamas, Cyprus and other countries around the world; 2/most of the companies (90) he directed had prominent Russian owners; 3/ his aircraft company got nearly 100 million EUR in loans from the Russian pipeline tycoons, fueling its expansion from a small European firm to a business with global reach.</p> <p>https://www.ocrrp.org/en/beneficial-ownership-data-is-critical-in-the-fight-against-corruption/this-luxembourg-businessman-got-europes-corporate-registries-shut-down-but-whose-privacy-was-he-protecting</p>
11	Transparency International	<p>[09/February/2023] Through the Keyhole - Emerging insights from the UK's register of overseas entities</p> <p>Transparency International published the report "Through the Keyhole - Emerging insights from the UK's register of overseas entities". The report analysis the information from the Register of Overseas Entities (ROE), a new database of the beneficial owners of offshore firms that hold UK property. The UK Government estimates that a total of 32,440 offshore companies hold almost 100,000 land titles across Britain. These companies were required to disclose their true owners on the ROE by January 31, 2023. The main conclusions are: 1/14,500 offshore companies listed as owning property in the land registry could not be identified on the ROE; 2/3,000 firms listed other anonymous companies (which weren't themselves on the ROE) in secrecy jurisdictions; 3/4,000 companies indicate they are held by trust arrangements (△ these opaque structures make it difficult to find out who is really behind them); 4/12% of all companies (2,358) claim to have no beneficial owners.</p> <p>https://www.transparency.org.uk/sites/default/files/pdf/publications/Through%20the%20Keyhole%20-%20Transparency%20International%20UK%20v2.pdf</p>
11	Wolfsberg Group	<p>[08/February/2023] The Wolfsberg Group and Institute of International Finance submitted comments to the EBA's public consultation on 'de-risking' announced on December 6.</p> <p>The joint comments highlight the importance of alignment with the FATF definition of 'de-risking', that financial institutions should have the ability to apply a risk based approach to NPOs in line with FATF Recommendation 8, recognition that have their own role in understanding the risks that they face and finally that commercial and risk management decisions also factor into financial institutions' decisions on providing/maintaining banking services to customers.</p> <p>https://www.wolfsberg-principles.com/sites/default/files/wb/Wolfsberg%20IIF%20Comment%20letter%20to%20EBA%20on%20derisking%20Feb%202023.pdf</p>

	Global Financial Integrity	<p>[06/February/2023] Trade-Based Money Laundering: A Global Challenge</p> <p>The report Trade-Based Money Laundering: A Global Challenge provides an in-depth analysis of the most common TBML methodologies: 1/ over- and under-invoicing of goods; 2/misrepresentation of goods being shipped; 3/multiple invoicing of goods; 4/over- and under-shipment or phantom shipments; 5/the black market peso exchange; 6/ informal value transfer systems. From 2011-2021, TBML amounted to over US\$60 billion globally, occurred in or otherwise affected over 77 jurisdictions around the globe. The jurisdictions with the most TBML cases include the United States (16%), Mexico (10%), Colombia (6%), China (6%) and Hong Kong (3%). In terms of predicate offenses, the most common are: drug trafficking (43%), tax evasion/tax fraud (18%), other fraud or scams (7%) and corruption (6%). Mis-invoicing was the most common methodology (63%) followed by informal value transfer systems (23%).</p> <p>https://gfintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/TBML-Policy-Brief-Final..pdf</p>
11	OCCRP	<p>[05/February/2023] UK to go after Offshore Firms That Failed to Declare Beneficial Owners</p> <p>Almost 40 percent of all offshore companies that own property in the United Kingdom have failed to declare their real owners and could now face hefty fines, a suspension of their ownership rights and prison. Foreign corporations were obliged to register their beneficial owners with the Register of Overseas Entities by January 31, as part of the government's anti-money laundering regulations aimed at rooting out corrupt elites. The register was established last year as part of a package of strong economic measures introduced in reaction to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Among others, it is targeting the illegal riches of the current Kremlin regime supporters. However, according to a government statement, out of 32,440 registered overseas companies, only 19,510 have met the deadline and revealed their real owners.</p> <p>https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/17296-uk-to-go-after-offshore-firms-that-failed-to-declare-beneficial-owners</p>
11	OCCRP	<p>[03/February/2023] How a Russian Influence Group Infiltrated Cypriot Party Politics</p> <p>A secretive Moscow group cultivated ties with Cypriot politicians and successfully pushed through a motion in Cyprus's parliament calling for an end to EU sanctions against Russia. Russian-Cypriot businessman Dmitry Kozlov, who developed links with top politicians and even set up a political party in Cyprus, played a key role in these machinations.</p> <p>https://www.occrp.org/en/investigations/how-a-russian-influence-group-infiltrated-cypriot-party-politics</p>
11	OCCRP	<p>[30/January/2023] Credit Suisse Banked Abramovich Fortune Held in Secret Offshore Companies</p> <p>Credit Suisse loaned hundreds of millions of dollars to Abramovich's offshore companies, which used U.S. stocks as collateral, two new leaks reveal. The secretly-owned firms loaned each other massive sums that were mysteriously returned or written off, in what experts said could be a scheme to obscure the origin of the funds. Leaked documents from Credit Suisse and the Cypriot service provider MeritServus reveal Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich held over two billion in assets or cash across Credit Suisse, UBS and Barclays. Abramovich's ownership of several offshore companies was obscured via a complex corporate structure involving an opaque trust and an intermediary company owned by MeritServus. The offshore firms owned blue-chip U.S. stocks which they used as collateral for big loans from Credit Suisse, and engaged in a pattern of mysterious loans between one another that experts said could raise red flags for potential money laundering.</p> <p>https://www.occrp.org/en/investigations/credit-suisse-banked-abramovich-fortune-held-in-secret-offshore-companies</p>
11	Global Initiative	<p>[29/January/2022] Petroleum and politics : Oil smuggling and the Iran-Saudi regional rivalry</p> <p>Global Initiative published an analysis related to oil smuggling relevant in the context of Russia sanctions. Oil has long had a major influence on organized crime dynamics in the Middle East, with Saudi Arabia and Iran playing leading roles. From sanction-evasive smuggling to the funding of criminal activities with oil proceeds, the two regional giants employ different strategies in leveraging their vast natural resources to gain the upper hand in a longstanding power struggle, consequently impacting illicit markets and flows in the tumultuous region. With Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the issue of oil and other fossil fuels has heightened the stakes in the region's geopolitical and organized crime landscape.</p> <p>https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/oil-smuggling-iran-saudi-arabia/</p>
11	OCCRP	<p>[27/January/2022] Swedbank Ex-CEO Cleared of Money-Laundering Cover-Up</p> <p>A Swedish court cleared on Wednesday Swedbank's former CEO Birgitte Bonnesen of playing down the bank's inadequate prevention of massive money-laundering through its operations in the Baltic states. In the highly unusual case, Bonnesen was charged with aggravated fraud for knowing about the problem but publicly denying it in statements in late 2018 and early 2019. In 2020, Swedbank received a record US\$400-million fine from Finansinspektionen, Sweden's financial supervisory authority, due to "major deficiencies in its work to combat money laundering in its Baltic operations." Some clients were Russian oligarchs, and some money flowing through the bank could be traced to companies tied to the infamous Magnitsky fraud in Russia. Swedbank is also being probed by U.S. and Estonian authorities over its operations in the Baltics. The bank, which has a whole new management and board, says it cooperates fully with the investigations. Bonnesen was also acquitted from two lesser charges, aggravated market manipulation and insider information.</p> <p>https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/17272-swedbank-ex-ceo-cleared-of-money-laundering-cover-up</p>

11	ICIJ	<p>[26/January/2023] Police search PwC, Boston Consulting Group offices in Angolan corruption probe against Isabel dos Santos</p> <p>Police descended upon the Lisbon offices of the global consulting firms Boston Consulting Group and PricewaterhouseCoopers, according to media reports. Police also searched the headquarters of Eurobic, a bank once partly owned by dos Santos. The searches came in response to a request from the Angolan government, according to media reports, which added that the Southern African country is seeking records related to the loss of public funds from the state-owned oil company. Dos Santos previously served as the chairperson of the oil company, Sonangol.</p> <p>https://www.icij.org/investigations/luanda-leaks/police-search-pwc-boston-consulting-group-offices-in-angolan-corruption-probe-against-isabel-dos-santos/</p>
11	OCCRP	<p>[26/January/2023] FAQ: What's a Proxy? Using Relatives, Shell Companies, and Other Stand-Ins to Hide Illicit Wealth</p> <p>An extensive study about how sanctioned oligarchs, crime bosses, and corrupt politicians, often abetted by financial industry professionals, are able to rely on friends, family, and business associates to disguise and protect their interests.</p> <p>https://www.occrp.org/en/asset-tracker/faq-whats-a-proxy-using-relatives-shell-companies-and-other-stand-ins-to-hide-illicit-wealth</p>
11	OCCRP	<p>[24/January/2023] Azerbaijani Strongman's Business Partner Builds Property Empire in Georgia</p> <p>Turkish businessman Emin Uchar has made a fortune in Nakhchivan, an autonomous Azerbaijani territory between Iran, Turkey, and Armenia. New documents and interviews provide evidence he may have acted as a proxy for the family of autocrat Vasif Talibov, who ruled Nakhchivan for 27 years before resigning on December 21.</p> <p>https://www.occrp.org/en/investigations/azerbaijani-strongmans-business-partner-builds-property-empire-in-georgia</p>
11	Schengenvisainfo	<p>[20/January/2023] Cyprus Has Revoked 222 Passports Granted Through Golden Passport Scheme So Far</p> <p>Authorities in Cyprus have so far revoked a total of 222 passports granted through the country's Citizenship by Investment Program (CIP), known as the Golden Passport scheme. In this regard, Niovi Parisinou, Deputy government spokeswoman stressed that such figures also include 63 investors as well as 159 of their relatives, also taking into account spouses, children as well as parents. The Golden Passport scheme permitted wealthy internationals to acquire citizenship in Cyprus provided they met specific conditions and made an investment of at least 2.5 million euros.</p> <p>https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/news/cyprus-has-revoked-222-passports-granted-through-golden-passport-scheme-so-far/</p>
11	NED	<p>[19/January/2023] Kleptocratic Adaptation - Anticipating the Next Stage in the Battle Against Transnational Kleptocracy</p> <p>Kleptocrats have long favored laundering their illicit resources in democratic settings where they are protected by rule of law, which has had a corrosive impact as these assets are weaponized to fund spoiler political parties, foreign influence operations, and, in the case of Ukraine, war. This weaponized corruption is one of the many tools in the autocratic playbook designed to reshape global norms away from democracy, accountability, and governance and toward an entrenched form of authoritarianism that is fueled by kleptocracy.</p> <p>www.ned.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/NED_FORUM-Kleptocratic-Adaptation.pdf</p>
11	ICIJ	<p>[18/January/2023] European Parliament Votes To Expand Proposed Rules Targeting Shell Companies After Pandora Papers Highlighted Their Role In Tax Evasion</p> <p>The European Parliament voted to widen the scope of proposed regulation designed to prevent the misuse of shell companies, and fight tax evasion and avoidance across the bloc. The parliament adopted a report by its Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs that suggested amendments to "Unshell," a proposed directive that introduces new criteria to identify entities in the European Union that are solely used to obtain tax advantages. The amended version lowers the thresholds below which companies are exempt from the reporting requirements, and further details penalties for entities that fail to comply with the new regulation, including those with zero or low income. It also clarifies that "there can be valid reasons for using companies with minimal economic substance."</p> <p>https://www.icij.org/investigations/pandora-papers/european-parliament-votes-to-expand-proposed-rules-targeting-shell-companies-after-pandora-papers-highlighted-their-role-in-tax-evasion/</p>

		[17/January/2023] Raising the stakes against the Wagner Group: From mercenaries to a designated terrorist group?
11	ICCT	<p>Several countries have expressed concerns over Russia's infamous Wagner Group, which has been repeatedly accused of human rights violations in countries where it operates, with the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), and the EU having notably issued sanctions against the group and its owner Yevgeny Prigozhin. In November 2022, the European Parliament took a step further by adopting a resolution urging the European Council to place Wagner on the terrorist list. Currently, the US is considering designating the Kremlin-backed Wagner Group.</p> <p>https://icct.nl/publication/wagner-group-mercenaries-or-terrorist-group/</p>
12		Information from statistical organizations and academia
13		Relevant information on ML/FT risks from mass - media
13	Mass-media	<p>[12/February/2023] Mexican ex-security chief on trial: multimillion bribe claims and a cat named cocaine</p> <p>Genaro García Luna, who once led Mexico's security ministry and its bloody war against powerful cartels, is standing trial accused of conspiring to traffic drugs into the US and of taking multimillion-dollar bribes from the violent Sinaloa cartel in exchange for impunity. Over nearly three weeks of proceedings, jurors have heard testimony from top cartel operators, an ex-police officer and a former state attorney general. Their accounts include a million-dollar cash drop at a Guadalajara car wash and a brazen kidnapping, and have even implicated a former Mexican president, Felipe Calderón, in the scheme granting the Sinaloa cartel protection.</p> <p>https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/feb/12/prosecution-drawing-to-close-in-us-trial-against-mexican-ex-security-chief</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[11/February/2023] British organised crime boss arrested in Thailand</p> <p>A British organised crime boss has been arrested in Thailand after being on the run for five years. Richard Wakeling, 55, from Brentwood, Essex, tried to import £8m of liquid amphetamine into the UK in April 2016. He fled in 2018 before his 12-week trial began and was convicted and sentenced to 11 years in his absence at Chelmsford crown court on 9 April of that year. On Friday, officers from the Royal Thai police arrested the fugitive at a Bangkok garage where he had been collecting his car after repairs, the NCA said.</p> <p>https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/feb/11/british-organised-boss-arrested-in-thailand</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[10/Februay/2023] UK watchdog probes Barclays over anti-money laundering systems -FT</p> <p>Britain's financial regulator is investigating Barclays PLC for suspected failings in its compliance and anti-money laundering systems, the Financial Times reported. The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) requested an independent review of Barclays' systems last year after noting the number of anti-money laundering incidents, the newspaper reported, citing people familiar with the matter. The FCA wrote to the heads of Barclays' corporate banking and UK retail and wealth divisions requesting a "skilled persons review", or Section 166, the newspaper said.</p> <p>https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/uk-regulator-probes-barclays-over-anti-money-laundering-systems-ft-2023-02-10/</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[09/February/2023] Special Investigation: How Russia And Political Insiders Cash In On Uzbekistan's Lucrative Gas Sector</p> <p>As gas outages and power shortages left Uzbekistan freezing during one of its coldest winters in decades, President Shavkat Mirziyoev in January fired senior officials and technocrats he blamed for the crisis. But an investigation by RFE/RL's Uzbek Service found that Mirziyoev's administration was warned as early as three years ago that his ambitious projects to boost gas and oil output were riddled with problems. Furthermore, reporters found that the key beneficiaries of these projects are opaque companies controlled by Uzbek and Russian political insiders, including a billionaire confidant of Russian President Vladimir Putin. RFE/RL's Uzbek Service (Radio Ozodlik) has obtained the conclusions of a secret interagency report warning that multibillion-dollar deals struck under the president's major energy initiatives risked the country's energy security.</p> <p>https://www.rferl.org/a/uzbekistan-investigation-insiders-energy-projects/32262127.html</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[09/February/2023] Russia's Largest Private Bank Launches Digital Asset Platform</p> <p>Alfa-Bank, one of the major Russian banking institutions, has established its own platform for digital financial assets. The launch became possible after Russia's monetary authority added Alfa-Bank to its register of digital asset issuers this week. The list of licensees also includes the fintech company Lighthouse, which is cooperating with VTB bank, and the tokenization service Atomyze, which is working in partnership with Rosbank. These have already issued various digital assets. Sberbank is preparing to launch a defi platform as well.</p> <p>https://news.bitcoin.com/russias-largest-private-bank-launches-digital-asset-platform/</p>

13	Mass-media	<p>[06/February/2023] Australia's biggest state unveils plan for cashless poker machines</p> <p>The leader of Australia's most populous state unveiled a plan to make all poker machines cashless within five years to fight money laundering and problem gambling, setting up a political battle ahead of a state election next month. New South Wales Premier Dominic Perrottet said his government would make every poker machine cashless by 2028 and offer interest-free loans for pubs and clubs to buy new cashless gambling machines that would only allow players to bet from a bank account.</p> <p>https://finance.yahoo.com/news/australias-biggest-state-unveils-plan-015415407.html</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[03/February/2023] Swiss prosecutors investigate 2022 Credit Suisse data leak</p> <p>Swiss prosecutors have launched criminal proceedings aimed at those responsible for the 2022 leak at Credit Suisse which exposed the details of accounts held by wealthy clients allegedly involved in a host of illegal activity. The leak, which happened last February, involved more than 18,000 Credit Suisse accounts, held over decades, and belonging to people allegedly involved in torture, drug trafficking, money laundering, and corruption. The details were handed to German outlet Sueddeutsche Zeitung, which shared them with other media groups round the world, plunging the bank into a dirty money scandal.</p> <p>https://www.finextra.com/newsarticle/41734/swiss-prosecutors-investigate-2022-credit-suisse-data-leak</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[03/February/2023] Silvergate's FTX dealings face fraud investigation</p> <p>US Justice Department fraud prosecutors are investigating crypto-focussed bank Silvergate's dealings with FTX and Alameda Research. The FTX bankruptcy has hit Silvergate hard; the bank held deposits for FTX businesses and Alameda Research. When the exchange collapsed, the bank's customers withdrew more than \$8 billion in digital asset deposits. Silvergate was forced to sell \$5.2 billion in assets at a loss to cover the cost and remain liquid - leading to a \$1 billion loss for the fourth quarter. It has also laid off 200 people - 40% of its staff</p> <p>https://www.finextra.com/newsarticle/41732/silvergates-ftx-dealing-face-fraud-investigation</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[02/February/2023] UAE Central Bank fines company \$490,000 for violating anti-money laundering law</p> <p>The UAE Central Bank has imposed a fine of Dh1.8 million (\$490,129) and stricter compliance requirements on a finance company for breaching the country's laws on anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing (AML/CFT), and the organisation of financial institutions and activities.</p> <p>https://www.thenationalnews.com/business/banking/2023/02/02/uae-central-bank-fines-company-490000-for-violating-anti-money-laundering-law/</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[01/February/2023] Iran, Russia link banking systems amid Western sanction</p> <p>Iran and Russia have connected their interbank communication and transfer systems to help boost trade and financial transactions, a senior Iranian official said on Monday, as both Tehran and Moscow are chafing under Western sanctions. While Russia's central bank declined to comment on the deal signed on Sunday, Karimi said "about 700 Russian banks and 106 non-Russian banks from 13 different countries will be connected to this system", without elaborating on the names of the foreign banks.</p> <p>https://finance.yahoo.com/news/iran-russia-banking-systems-amid-110615630.html</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[31/January/2023] 888 Holdings CEO Resigns Over Money Laundering Scandal</p> <p>British bookmaker 888 Holdings has been rocked by a money laundering scandal involving its Middle Eastern operations that have forced CEO Itai Pazner to resign, effective immediately. Pazner rose through the ranks at 888 over the course of 20 years at the company and was appointed CEO in January 2019. He soon put his imprimatur on 888 by engineering the William Hill deal and spearheading 888's expansion into the North American legal sports betting market. In a statement released by 888, the British gaming outfit revealed that it had suspended VIP customer accounts in the region after an internal probe discovered that "know your client" best practices for high net worth gamblers had been violated.</p> <p>https://www.covers.com/industry/888-holdings-ceo-resigns-amid-money-laundering-scandal-january-30-2023</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[30/January/2023] Venezuela former chief justice indicted in U.S. for money laundering</p> <p>Venezuela's former chief justice Maikel Moreno has been indicted on money laundering charges related to bribe payments he allegedly received in exchange for influencing court decisions, the U.S. Attorney's Office for Southern District of Florida said. Moreno allegedly took over \$10 million in bribes and used the funds to purchase or renovate real estate in Tuscany, Italy, and Miami, among other places. Moreno was replaced as chief justice in 2022, but retains a position as a judge on the court.</p> <p>https://www.euronews.com/2023/01/28/usa-venezuela</p>

13	Mass-media	<p>[29/January/2022] UK for sale: how the wealthy hold British property via offshore firms</p> <p>The UK government's new register of overseas entities was created to improve transparency around British property ownership and help the authorities ensure the right amount of tax is paid. The new register was launched last year. Individuals have until 31 January to declare they are the beneficial owners of overseas companies that own UK property. Holding property through offshore companies is legal. Owners of property through offshore companies may do so for many reasons, from tax benefits to privacy or liking the stability or simplicity of a certain offshore tax regime. New register shines light on how businessmen, Gulf royals and states such as China have spent billions through offshore jurisdictions. As of noon on Friday the Companies House register listed 17,754 overseas entities, with thousands more expected to register before the 31 January deadline. With 55% of all overseas owners declared to date, the register shows that the royal families of Gulf states including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar own about £1bn of UK property via tax havens such as Jersey and the BVI.</p> <p>https://www.theguardian.com/business/2023/jan/27/uk-for-sale-how-the-wealthy-hold-british-property-via-offshore-firms</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[28/January/2023] How Armenia is helping Russia evade Western sanctions</p> <p>Following the Kremlin's 24 February 2022 military campaign in Ukraine, Russia overtook Iran as the most sanctioned country in the world. Russia is seeking to bypass these sanctions with the help of its shrinking number of allies – mainly Iran and Armenia, while selling crude oil no longer imported into Europe at discounted rates to India and China. It is not surprising that Iran and pro-Russian Armenia are assisting Moscow.</p> <p>https://www.eureporter.co/world/armenia/2023/01/27/how-armenia-is-helping-russia-evade-western-sanctions/</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[27/January/2023] Paypal defrauded of €12.5 million by 54 Belgian accounts</p> <p>The accounts were linked to refund scams totalling almost €12.5 million, organised between March 2018 and June 2020. A total of 57 suspects were identified, 13 of whom have been charged by an investigating judge.</p> <p>https://www.brusselstimes.com/359222/paypal-defrauded-of-e12-5-million-by-54-belgian-accounts</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[26/January/2023] Was Volodymyr Zelensky in the Panama Papers? Offshore Companies Revealed</p> <p>Ukrainian "anti-oligarch" President Volodymyr Zelensky and his inner circle's network of offshore companies were not exposed in Panama Papers but can be found in the Pandora Papers, another tranche of files leaked by journalists that revealed the clandestine financial affairs of the elite and super rich. The huge leak of tax haven files by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) revealed the secret offshore holdings of 336 politicians from more than 90 countries, Zelensky among them. The Pandora Papers, published in October 2021, showed that Zelensky and his inner circle established a web of offshore companies in 2012. They show that the president and the partners in his television company, Kvartal 95, had offshore firms when they were making regular content for TV stations owned by Ihor Kolomoisky, an oligarch accused of multibillion-dollar fraud.</p> <p>https://www.newsweek.com/zelensky-pandora-papers-offshore-companies-finances-1776124</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[26/January/2023] Ex-FBI official arrested for alleged money laundering, violating Russia sanctions, taking money from former foreign agent</p> <p>Federal prosecutors say the former head of counterintelligence for the FBI's New York office laundered money, violated sanctions against Russia while working with a Russian oligarch and while still at the FBI took hundreds of thousands of dollars from a foreign national and former foreign intelligence official.</p> <p>https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/ex-counterintel-head-fbi-new-york-mcgonigal-arrested-rcna66995</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[25/January/2023] Telecoms company backed by Roman Abramovich sold for £1</p> <p>Truphone has been sold to a pair of European businessmen for £1, taking the small British telecoms company out of the limbo it had faced since Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich had sanctions imposed on him by the UK government last March. German businessman Hakan Koç and former telecoms executive Pyrros Koussios purchased the London-headquartered group on Tuesday following a lengthy government probe into the national security implications of the deal and after one of the company's founders sought to gazump the offer using \$250mn worth of shares in a special purpose acquisition vehicle. The two investors received national security clearance from the secretary of state for business, energy and industrial strategy last month, and a licence from the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation at the Treasury, which is responsible for overseeing frozen assets, last week.</p> <p>https://www.ft.com/content/5f198560-defa-441e-9b53-305542333bbe</p>

13	Mass-media	<p>[25/January/2023] Digital euro will be free but limited in scope, ECB says</p> <p>The digital version of the euro currency will be free to use and available to all but the European Central Bank does not want to keep any personal data on its users. The ECB is working on a digital version of its currency and is in the process of outlining the broader design, also hoping to alleviate concerns that the digital currency could disrupt the financial system and give the central bank too much data on citizens. A digital currency is a direct claim on the central bank's balance sheet, much like cash, so it is deemed safer than a deposit kept at a commercial bank. Banks have been concerned that a digital currency would make their own services redundant, so customers would abandon them and move their cash to central bank money given the added safety.</p> <p>https://www.euronews.com/2023/01/23/euro-digital</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[25/January/2023] Mexico's ex-security chief took 'millions in bribes' from cartel, US court hears</p> <p>Genaro García Luna, who ran Mexico's version of the FBI before being appointed to lead the country's security ministry – and therefore its war on drug trafficking groups – is accused of taking millions of dollars in bribes in exchange for granting protection to the violent Sinaloa cartel. According to US prosecutors, that protection allowed the cartel, headed by El Chapo, to import multi-ton shipments of drugs into the US, while also evading capture by authorities. The accusations against García Luna surfaced during El Chapo's own trial which concluded in 2019.</p> <p>https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jan/23/mexico-genaro-garcia-luna-trial-brooklyn-drug-cartel</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[25/January/2023] \$1.93b suspicious transactions in 2022</p> <p>Trinidad and Tobago Finance Minister Colm Imbert said the Financial Intelligence Unit reported a total of 958 suspicious transaction reports/suspicious activity reports (STRs/SARs) at the end of September 2022, with a total monetary value of \$1,937,211,057. The activities related to these reports were tax evasion, fraud, money laundering and drug trafficking.</p> <p>https://newsday.co.tt/2023/01/24/1-93b-suspicious-transactions-in-2022/</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[25/January/2023] New York's financial regulator takes aim at firms co-mingling crypto funds</p> <p>New York's chief financial regulator is set to release new guidance dictating that companies separate customers' crypto assets from their own, after alleged co-mingling of funds at collapsed crypto exchange FTX and its affiliated trading firm Alameda Research led to hefty losses for clients. The New York State Department of Financial Services (NYDFS), which leads one of the few state agencies with a regulatory system in place for cryptocurrency companies, will also stipulate that state-regulated companies disclose to customers how they account for clients' digital currency. The guidance is the latest in a series of crypto-related directives NYDFS has issued in the past year, which saw a market collapse that wiped about \$1.3 trillion off the value of crypto tokens in 2022. The meltdown triggered the bankruptcies of crypto firms such as FTX, Celsius Network and most recently, Genesis Global Capital, whose lending unit filed for U.S. bankruptcy protection on Thursday.</p> <p>https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/new-yorks-financial-regulator-takes-aim-firms-co-mingling-crypto-funds-2023-01-23/</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[25/January/2023] Mauritanian ex-president heads into historic trial</p> <p>Abdel Aziz, a 66-year-old former general, faces charges of having built up an illicit fortune during his 11 years at the helm. After coming to power in a coup, he stepped down in 2019 after two presidential terms in which he defused a jihadist insurgency threatening the conservative West African state.</p> <p>https://www.rfi.fr/en/people-and-entertainment/20230124-mauritanian-ex-president-heads-into-historic-trial</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[24/January/2023] Former footballer David Mendes da Silva also accused of bribery in major cocaine case</p> <p>Former professional football player David Mendes da Silva is not only suspected of smuggling cocaine, but also of bribing Schiphol employees and employees of the Hamburg Süd sea container transport company at the port of Rotterdam. The Public Prosecution Service laid out the bribery accusation against the former Oranje player for the first time during a court hearing in Rotterdam on Monday. Mendes da Silva played professionally for 17 years with teams including Ajax, AZ, and Red Bull Salzburg. He was arrested in early August on his 40th birthday as part of a narcotics investigation. He was initially suspected of importing three batches of cocaine totaling 1,584 kilograms. According to drug research center Jellinek, the cocaine carried a street value between 70 and 95 million euros.</p> <p>https://nltimes.nl/2023/01/23/former-footballer-david-mendes-da-silva-also-accused-bribery-major-cocaine-case</p>

13	Mass-media	<p>[24/January/2023] FBI blames North Korea for \$100 million crypto heist</p> <p>The FBI blamed North Korean government-linked hackers for stealing \$100 million in cryptocurrency last June from a California-based firm. The North Korean operatives this month laundered over \$60 million of the money stolen in the June hack, according to the FBI statement. The bureau said "a portion" of the \$60 million was frozen, but did not specify how much. It's one of a series of digital heists that US officials worry Pyongyang will use to fund its illicit nuclear and ballistic weapons program. North Korean hackers have stolen the equivalent of billions of dollars in recent years by raiding cryptocurrency exchanges, according to the United Nations.</p> <p>https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/24/politics/north-korea-crypto-heist/index.html</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[24/January/2023] 'Putin's Architect' refuses to return to Italy to face tax evasion trial</p> <p>Lanfranco Cirillo, the Moscow-based Italian architect who allegedly designed a sprawling, luxurious mansion for Russian president Vladimir Putin, has refused to return to Italy to face an investigation into tax violations and money laundering. Cirillo, who has been living in Russia for almost three decades, and divides his time between Moscow and Dubai, is said to have designed palatial homes for several Russian oligarchs, with the 18,000sqm project allegedly executed for the Russian president near the Black Sea town of Gelendzhik earning him the sobriquet, 'Putin's Architect'. A native of Brescia in Italy's Lombardy region, the 63-year-old architect is facing charges of financial malfeasance from Italian tax authorities, who have also issued an arrest warrant to bring him to justice. In August 2022, the Italian authorities had seized substantial assets valued at over €141 million from Cirillo's country villa in Roncadelle, near Brescia; these included valuable artworks, jewellery, cash and even a helicopter. Earlier in February, several works of art by artists such as Pablo Picasso, Lucio Fontana, Paul Cézanne, and Wassily Kandinsky were confiscated from his home for his alleged failure to pay a €50 million tax bill.</p> <p>https://www.architectureanddesign.com.au/news/putin-s-architect-refuses-to-return-to-italy</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[24/January/2023] Pilatus money laundering proceedings put off indefinitely</p> <p>The Maltese authorities are requesting assistance from their UK counterparts to track down a person who was a money laundering reporting officer at the bank's London branch.</p> <p>https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/pilatus-money-laundering-proceedings-put-off-indefinitely.1009020</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[23/January/2023] Monaco's anti-money laundering system inadequate, risks name-and-shame</p> <p>A Council of Europe report published on Monday and seen by EURACTIV highlights key vulnerabilities in Monaco's measures against money laundering and the country risks being placed under intense scrutiny by the international Financial Action Task Force (FATF) watchdog. The report insists Monaco faces significant money laundering risks, mostly due to the "internationally oriented financial activities" that are being offered – and the Principality is a "prime target" for illicit cross-border financial flows. In most cases, frauds are committed abroad, while the proceeds of the crime are laundered in Monaco, the report noted.</p> <p>https://www.euractiv.com/section/economy-jobs/news/monacos-anti-money-laundering-system-inadequate-risks-name-and-shame/</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[23/January/2023] This 'Cryptoqueen' scammed investors out of \$4 billion, the FBI says. Then she boarded a plane and disappeared</p> <p>Federal prosecutors describe OneCoin as one of the largest international fraud schemes ever perpetrated. Authorities say OneCoin was a pyramid scheme that defrauded people out of more than \$4 billion as Ruja Ignatova convinced investors in the US and around the globe to throw fistfuls of cash at her company. Ruja Ignatova, called herself the "Cryptoqueen", is now one of the FBI's 10 most-wanted fugitives, alongside accused gang leaders and murderers, and is the only woman currently on that list. Of the 529 fugitives on the FBI's list since it launched in 1950, she's one of just 11 women.</p> <p>https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/22/business/ruja-ignatova-cryptoqueen-fbi-most-wanted-cec/index.html</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[23/January/2023] Nadhim Zahawi 'agreed on penalty' to settle tax bill worth millions</p> <p>The Conservative party chair, Nadhim Zahawi, agreed to pay a penalty to HMRC as part of a seven-figure settlement over his tax affairs, the Guardian has been told. The former chancellor, who still attends the cabinet, has been subject to extensive questions in parliament and the media in recent days after it emerged he agreed to pay millions to HMRC in December after a settlement with the tax agency. Experts estimate the tax due was about £3.7m based on the capital gains tax incurred by the sale of multiple tranches of shares in YouGov worth more than £20m, which led to transfers of money to Zahawi. It is understood HMRC applied a 30% penalty to the £3.7m, bringing the total due to £4.8m. Combined with interest charges that HMRC also applies to taxes owed, this is believed to have taken the final settlement to more than £5m.</p> <p>https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jan/20/nadhim-zahawi-agreed-on-penalty-to-settle-tax-bill-worth-millions</p>

13	Mass-media	<p>[22/January/2023] Sam Bankman-Fried's two anonymous sponsors put up \$700,000 to get him out of jail</p> <p>Sam Bankman-Fried was released on bond after two anonymous individuals put up a total of \$700,000, according to court filings. Bankman-Fried, the disgraced former crypto mogul whose FTX exchange declared bankruptcy in November, has been under house arrest in his parents' \$4 million Palo Alto, Calif., home since last month. He was released from federal custody in Manhattan on a \$250 million bond after being extradited from the Bahamas to face fraud and money laundering charges in connection with the collapse of FTX. As part of the terms of his release, one of his sponsors posted \$500,000 bail while the other chipped in \$200,000, according to court papers seen by the news site Insider. The identity of the two individuals remains secret at the request of Bankman-Fried's attorneys who say that publicizing their names could pose a security risk.</p> <p>https://www.marketwatch.com/story/sam-bankman-frieds-two-anonymous-sponsors-put-up-700-000-to-get-him-out-of-jail-11674313636</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[23/January/2023] France continues to investigate Babiš</p> <p>Former Prime Minister and presidential candidate Andrej Babiš continues to be investigated by French authorities on charges of tax evasion and money laundering, according to several Czech media outlets. The National Financial Prosecutor's Office (PNF), a French agency that handles major economic and financial crimes, is looking into the circumstances under which ANO party leader and aspiring Czech president acquired a villa in the south of France through a chain of offshore companies based in Monaco and the British Virgin Islands. Babiš claims the purchase was legal and has consistently claimed that this investigation is nonsense.</p> <p>https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/france-continues-to-investigate-babis/</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[22/January/2023] Man pleads guilty to money laundering in romance fraud case</p> <p>A man involved in elaborate frauds to trick elderly women into handing over thousands of euro has pleaded guilty to a raft of charges, including money laundering. Marvis Iyeke, a Nigerian national who lives in Malta, was handed a two-year jail sentence suspended for four years and a €20,000 fine, to be paid within two years. The court also ordered him to return a combined total of €14,000 to his two victims within six months. Iyeke was one of several people arrested and charged by the police in connection with romance fraud cybercrime. Prosecutors alleged that the fraudsters would pose as made-up people online, befriend lonely and elderly women and get them to transfer thousands of euro to them over several months.</p> <p>https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/man-pleads-guilty-money-laundering-romance-fraud-case.1008675</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[22/January/2023] Why UK banks are blocking transfers to and from crypto exchanges</p> <p>Many UK high street banks are blocking payments to and from major cryptocurrency exchanges such as Binance and Coinbase. Many customers of retail banks have become frustrated as some of the banks have not only banned money transfers to exchanges, but have also blocked withdrawals from exchanges into banks. This locks user funds on exchanges such as Binance and Coinbase (COIN), leaving customers no other option but to find a bank that is still crypto-friendly if they want to convert their crypto into fiat money, and this list is getting smaller. Yahoo Finance speaks to Adrian Ip, managing director at Aquis Exchange about the underlying motivations behind this stern response from the UK banking industry. Ip says the reason why banks have taken such a cautionary approach to the burgeoning cryptocurrency sector is down to their appetite for risk.</p> <p>https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/uk-banks-crypto-exchanges-060028327.html</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[21/January/2023] Germany's Commerzbank sues EY for Wirecard losses</p> <p>The German lender Commerzbank is suing accounting firm EY over the 200 million euros (\$216.12 million) in losses that it incurred in the collapse of Wirecard. Wirecard's downfall two years ago shook the German business establishment, putting politicians who had backed it under intense scrutiny, along with regulators that took years to investigate allegations against the payments company. EY was for years the firm that audited and certified Wirecard's books even as journalists and investors raised questions about its finances. The Commerzbank spokesperson said the case had been filed in Frankfurt court in recent weeks. An EY spokesperson said "claims against EY for damages do not hold up". EY assumes that the courts will also uphold this position, the person added.</p> <p>https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/germany-commerzbank-sues-ey-wirecard-losses-2023-01-19/</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[21/January/2023] U.S. Charges Two Men With Facilitating Sanctions Evasion For Russian Oligarch's Yacht</p> <p>Two businessmen were charged on January 20 in indictments unsealed in a U.S. court with allegedly facilitating a sanctions evasion and money-laundering scheme in relation to a \$90 million yacht of Russian oligarch Viktor Vekselberg. The two businessmen -- Vladislav Osipov, 51, a Russian national, and Richard Masters, 52, a U.K. national -- were charged with conspiracy to defraud the United States and to commit offenses against the United States, the U.S. Justice Department said in a statement.</p> <p>https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-oligarch-vekselberg-sanctions-evasion-yacht/32232904.html</p>

13	Mass-media	<p>[21/January/2023] US declares Wagner Group 'transnational criminal organization,' orders fresh sanctions</p> <p>The U.S. has announced fresh sanctions against the private Russian military company the Wagner Group, as well as adding a "transnational criminal organization" designation to the group. Since its inception in 2014, the group has been considered a proxy group of the Russian state abroad, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). The group rose to prominence during the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The group currently has approximately 50,000 personnel deployed to Ukraine, including 10,000 contractors and 40,000 convicts.</p> <p>https://www.foxnews.com/world/us-declares-wagner-group-transnational-criminal-organization-orders-fresh-sanctions-nsc-spokesman</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[20/January/2023] Former EU lawmaker's tax accountant arrested in Italy over EU graft scandal</p> <p>The tax consultant of a former EU lawmaker at the centre of a cash-for-influence corruption scandal at the European Parliament has been arrested in Italy. The scandal, the biggest to rock EU politics in decades, hinges on suspicions that Qatar and Morocco bribed politicians, parliamentary assistants and NGOs to influence decisions of the EU assembly. Qatar reiterated that it had no involvement in the EU corruption scandal. Morocco complained of "judicial harassment" after the graft probe. Monica Rossana Bellini, who worked for former centre-left parliamentarian Pier Antonio Panzeri, was arrested by the Guardia di Finanza tax police in Milan, on a request from Belgium through a European warrant. She faces charges of criminal association, corruption and money laundering.</p> <p>https://www.euronews.com/2023/01/19/europe-parliament-corruption-italy</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[20/January/2023] Dubai's DFSA slams fines on firms for repeated money laundering breaches</p> <p>The Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA) has imposed fines of \$14,000 on two companies for lapses related to anti-money laundering (AML) regulations. The two unidentified businesses have been asked to pay financial penalties of \$5,600 and \$8,400, respectively, for their "repeated" failure to submit annual AML returns despite several reminders.</p> <p>https://www.zawya.com/en/legal/crime-and-security/dubais-dfsa-slams-fines-on-firms-for-repeated-money-laundering-breaches-kn9q3caj</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[20/January/2023] Binance was final destination for millions in funds from Bitzlato, exchange shut down for alleged money laundering</p> <p>Federal prosecutors unsealed an indictment against a little-known crypto exchange called Bitzlato on Wednesday, alleging that it facilitated the laundering of \$700 million in tainted crypto tied to the now-shuttered dark-web market Hydra, and millions more in ransomware proceeds. Blockchain data shows that tens of millions of dollars that passed through Bitzlato ultimately ended up in Binance deposit wallets, despite the stringent anti-money laundering standards that Binance says it has implemented. The movement of Bitzlato's funds raises questions about the efficacy of Binance's AML practices, especially given that Binance's own outside AML vendor, Chainalysis, issued a report in February 2022 estimating that 48% of Bitzlato's 2019-2021 cryptocurrency receipts were "illicit or risky."</p> <p>https://www.cnbc.com/2023/01/19/binance-was-final-destination-for-millions-in-funds-from-bitzlato.html</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[19/January/2023] Bitcoin is a 'hyped-up fraud', says JP Morgan chief</p> <p>The billionaire chairman of JP Morgan, Jamie Dimon, has called Bitcoin a "hyped-up fraud" and the financial equivalent of a "pet rock" as financial chiefs turn against digital currencies. Mr Dimon called cryptocurrencies a "waste of time" in comments at the World Economic Forum in Davos. However, he said the technology behind Bitcoin, known as a blockchain, could have uses. This kind of digital ledger is designed to be difficult to alter or hack and enables the creation of a public record of transactions. He said: "Blockchain is a ledger system that we use to move information... to move money. It's a technology we think will be deployable."</p> <p>https://www.msn.com/en-gb/money/other/bitcoin-is-a-hyped-up-fraud-says-jp-morgan-chief/ar-AA16wI9C</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[19/January/2023] Usain Bolt has \$12.7 million missing from Jamaican account, per report</p> <p>Eight-time Olympic gold medalist Usain Bolt has discovered that more than \$12.7 million is missing from his account with a private investment firm in Jamaica.</p> <p>https://www.cbssports.com/olympics/news/usain-bolt-has-12-7-million-missing-from-jamaican-account-per-report/</p>

13	Mass-media	<p>[19/January/2023] Cyprus protests portrayal as safe haven for Russian money</p> <p>Cyprus's finance minister says the country has frozen about 1.5 billion euros (\$1.6 billion) in Russian-linked deposits and assets in accordance with European Union sanctions over the war in Ukraine. Russian deposits in Cypriot banks have fallen from a stunning 40% of the total before the 2013 financial crisis — when big depositors were forced to take a cut on their money under a so-called "bail-in" deal — to 3.8%. Under EU sanctions adopted since last year's Russian invasion of Ukraine, Cypriot authorities have frozen 105 million euros in Russian-linked bank deposits, 720 million euros in funds managed by Cyprus-registered investment companies and 719 million euros in assets held by administrative services. Tougher vetting for money laundering in recent years has made it harder to open a bank account in Cyprus and resulted in the closure of 80,000 bank accounts, while thousands more have been prevented from being opened.</p> <p>https://abcnews.go.com/Business/wireStory/cyprus-protests-portrayal-safe-haven-russian-money-96537375</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[19/January/2023] Global anti-money laundering fines surge 50%</p> <p>Global fines for failing to prevent money laundering and other financial crime surged more than 50 per cent last year, fuelling warnings that such penalties are not curbing the behaviour and systems flaws that allow criminals to channel money through the global financial system. Banks and other financial institutions were fined almost \$5bn for "anti-money laundering" infractions, breaching sanctions and failings in their "know your customer" systems in 2022, bringing the total since the global financial crisis to almost \$55bn, data from compliance firm Fenergo shows.</p> <p>https://www.ft.com/content/7a4821e6-96f1-475c-ae55-6401e402061f</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[19/January/2023] Panama has canceled registry to 136 Iran-linked vessels</p> <p>Panama's vessel registry, the world's largest, has withdrawn its flag from 136 ships linked to Iran's state oil company in the last four years, the country's maritime authority said this week, pushing back against claims by an anti-nuclear group. Shipments of Iranian crude hit all-time highs in the last two months of 2022 and had a strong start this year, according to flow tracking firms. Those gains come despite U.S. sanctions on companies it accuses of helping Iran export oil, mainly to China and Venezuela.</p> <p>https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/panama-has-canceled-registry-136-iran-linked-vessels-2023-01-18/</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[18/January/2023] Hong Kong housewife allegedly ran HK\$6 billion money-laundering syndicate, arrested with 8 others in record customs bust</p> <p>A Hong Kong housewife, who allegedly ran a criminal syndicate that had used dozens of bank accounts to process US\$768.2 million in illegal funds, was among nine people arrested in the biggest money-laundering case in customs' 114-year history. The syndicate offered monetary rewards to recruit several people into setting up 11 shell companies and opening 57 business and personal accounts that were used to collect and launder dirty money. The syndicate had laundered US\$768.2 million through the bank accounts in more than 7,600 transactions between January 2020 and December 2022.</p> <p>https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/law-and-crime/article/3207159/hong-kong-housewife-allegedly-ran-hk6-billion-money-laundering-syndicate-arrested-8-others-record</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[17/January/2023] Dutch authorities arrest alleged Syrian ISIS security chief</p> <p>The Dutch national prosecutors office on Tuesday announced the arrest of a 37-year old Syrian refugee who is accused of committing war crimes as a security official for Islamic State. Prosecutors said in a statement the man sought asylum in the Netherlands in 2019. A special Dutch war crimes police team received information that the suspect, who has not been identified, had a leading role in the security service of ISIS from 2015 to 2018. He had the same role previously in the Nusra Front, formerly al Qaeda's wing in Syria, they said.</p> <p>https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/dutch-authorities-arrest-alleged-syrian-isis-security-chief/48209966</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[17/January/2023] U.S. Supreme Court hears Turkish lender Halkbank's bid to avoid charges</p> <p>The U.S. Supreme Court began hearing arguments over a bid by Turkey's state-owned lender Halkbank to avoid criminal charges in the United States for allegedly helping Iran evade American economic sanctions. Prosecutors accused Halkbank of converting oil revenue into gold and then cash to benefit Iranian interests, and documenting fake food shipments to justify transfers of oil proceeds. They also said Halkbank helped Iran secretly transfer \$20 billion of restricted funds, with at least \$1 billion laundered through the U.S. financial system.</p> <p>https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/reuters/u-s-supreme-court-hears-turkish-lender-halkbank-s-bid-to-avoid-charges/48210518</p>

13	Mass-media	<p>[16/January/2023] Romanian biker gang leader accused of drug trafficking extradited to US</p> <p>Marius Lazăr, the leader of the Romanian branch of the motorcycle gang Hell's Angels, will be extradited to the United States, where he is accused of being part of an international drug trafficking group and of negotiating the killing of two rivals. Lazăr was wanted internationally and was apprehended in Bucharest in December. The extradition request was approved this month. Back in 2020, police officers from the Anti-Drug Service of the Directorate for Combating Organized Crime, together with prosecutors from DIICOT, carried out investigations targeting members of Hell's Angels Romania. The biker gang was suspected of involvement in international drug trafficking. The investigation into the group was carried out in collaboration with the American Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the US Marshals.</p> <p>https://www.romania-insider.com/romanian-hells-angels-leader-drug-trafficking-extradited-us</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[16/January/2023] Romanian authorities seize nearly \$4 million in assets from Andrew Tate in alleged human trafficking, rape investigation</p> <p>Among the 29 seized assets are motor vehicles, luxury watches and sums of money in several different currencies, ANABI said. The seizures were carried out on orders from prosecutors of the Directorate for Investigating Organized Crime and Terrorism. The authorities allege that two of the suspects misled the victims "into believing that they intended to enter into a marriage/cohabitation relationship" while transporting victims to Romania and later sexually exploiting them with physical violence and coercion.</p> <p>https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/15/world/andrew-tate-asset-seizure-romania/index.html</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[16/January/2023] Iran and Russia want to issue new stablecoin backed by gold</p> <p>The potential stablecoin aims to enable cross-border transactions instead of fiat currencies like the U.S. dollar, the Russian ruble or the Iranian rial. According to the Russian news agency Vedomosti, Iran is working with Russia to create a "token of the Persian Gulf region" that would serve as a payment method in foreign trade. The token is projected to be issued in the form of a stablecoin backed by gold, according to Alexander Brazhnikov, executive director of the Russian Association of Crypto Industry and Blockchain. The stablecoin aims to enable cross-border transactions instead of fiat currencies like the United States dollar, the Russian ruble or the Iranian rial. The report notes that the potential cryptocurrency would operate in a special economic zone in Astrakhan, where Russia started to accept Iranian cargo shipments.</p> <p>https://cointelegraph.com/news/iran-and-russia-want-to-issue-new-stablecoin-backed-by-gold</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[16/January/2023] Italy's most-wanted mafia boss Matteo Messina Denaro arrested</p> <p>Cosa Nostra 'godfather' arrested at a private clinic in Palermo after going on run for 30 years. Matteo Messina Denaro, the last "godfather" of the Sicilian mafia and one of the world's most-wanted criminals, has been arrested in Palermo after 30 years on the run. Denaro, 60, who has been in hiding since 1993, was apprehended in a private clinic in the Sicilian city, where, according to sources, he had been periodically receiving treatment for about a year under the false name of "Andrea Bonafede".</p> <p>https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jan/16/italy-most-wanted-mafia-boss-matteo-messina-denaro-arrested</p>
13	Mass-media	<p>[15/January/2023] Governor admits trade-based money laundering</p> <p>Bangladesh Bank Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder said businesses used to launder money through over-invoicing and under-invoicing. In the cases of under-invoicing, traders collected dollars abroad using the illegal hundi system to pay their hidden amounts, which ultimately caused a cut in remittance influx to the country.</p> <p>https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/governor-admits-trade-based-money-laundering-568494</p>
14		<p>Legislative changes</p>