

MONEY LAUNDERING DETECTION METHODS IN THE MODERN FIGHT AGAINST CRIME ORGANIZED AND FINANCIAL CORRUPTION

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Abstract

The detection of money laundering is an essential aspect in the modern fight against organized crime and financial corruption. Money laundering is a procedure used by criminals to disguise the legal source of ill-gotten gains and integrate them into the legal economy. In this essay, we will explore the meaning and methodology of money laundering detection. The initial purpose of the money laundering detection methodology is to identify and track suspicious financial transactions and activities of individuals and legal entities. Various techniques and tools are used for this, including financial monitoring of transactions, analysis of financial documents and investigation of ownership and assets. One of the most important aspects of the methodology for detecting money laundering is the analysis of financial transactions. Criminal investigators investigate all transactions of suspicious persons and organizations, to identify transactions that occur in the context of money laundering. Investigating ownership and assets is another critical part of the money laundering detection methodology. This includes checks on the properties and assets of suspicious individuals and organizations. Investigators look into property, patents, company ownership and other assets to prove the links between them and the origin of the money. In conclusion, the methodology for detecting money laundering is complex and very important in the fight against organized crime and financial corruption. Using the analysis of financial transactions, financial reports and documents, as well as the investigation of ownership and assets, criminals try to identify and prosecute money launderers and organizations. Using modern technology and international cooperation, the effectiveness of the methodology can be improved and more serious obstacles can be created for criminals trying to use it to hide illegal capital.

Keywords: Method, investigation, crime, criminal investigator, money laundering, false documents, transactions, modern money laundering, crime, criminality, corruption, organized crime, suspicious organizations, etc.

Forensic methods of detecting money laundering

Introduction

Criminal situations with elements of the criminal offense "Money laundering and other criminal offenses" are complex, involving several perpetrators with different status characteristics, namely officials, responsible persons, persons performing public work. interest, but there is also the involvement of legal entities, through whose accounts financial transactions are carried out for the penetration of criminally acquired money and the concealment of their criminal origin.

The Macedonian legislature, through most of the amendments of the listed crimes, incriminates most of the forms of criminal behavior which is an important prerequisite in terms of discovering, clarifying and providing evidence of individual crimes of all perpetrators involved in the criminal situation. The discovery process is related to obtaining general information that is important for conducting checks through legal sources of knowledge and raising the level of suspicion for reasons of suspicion important for taking

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specific measures and activities for criminal and financial investigations and securing evidence. Such as the criminal offense "Laundering of money and other proceeds of crime" which includes the proceeds of crime in the legal financial system. The most important thing is to clarify the connection of these crimes and to identify all the perpetrators involved in the criminal situation and their criminal roles, because the criminal offense "Laundering of money and other proceeds of crime" provides that the perpetrators can be officials in financial institutions as perpetrators who have abused them. work and enabled the placement, transfer or integration of financial resources derived from a previous criminal offense, regardless of the offense in question or providing information to clients about a financial investigation being carried out against them. In recent years, criminal situations with these crimes have become more common in criminal practice, especially in cases of organized criminal activity. In this direction, the wealth analysis was done from the practice to obtain information about the way of criminal activity and knowledge about the cleaning schemes used, the money created and used by the perpetrators. The annual reports of the State Statistics Agency have been analyzed to analyze the perpetrators denounced, accused and convicted in the period 2007-2019 and to obtain information about the quality of the procedure from the beginning of the reporting to the final decision of the court.

With the changes in international regulations, major changes have been made in the criminalization of this offense, so the requirement for criminal prosecution has been removed, greater benefits, it is not necessary to prove the existence of a previous criminal offense - criminal offense and other conduct. criminal precedent that protects the confidentiality of maintaining financial controls for suspicious transactions of legal entities and individuals.

Provides criminal liability for an official, responsible person in a bank, insurance company, gambling company, stock exchange, exchange or other financial institution, lawyer, except when acting as a lawyer, notary or other person exercising public powers. or matters of public interest that would or would permit a transaction. The object of protection is defined as: 1) monetary, financial and 2) legal conditions of obtaining and disposing of property and money in the economic flow.¹

Stages of money laundering

1. **Entry (preparation):** In the first stage, the criminal enters illegally acquired money into the financial system. This can be achieved through bank deposits, the purchase of real estate, stocks, or other assets. The money entered is usually in cash, which makes it difficult to trace.
2. **Obfuscation (mixing):** In this phase, the goal is to obscure the origin of the money and confuse the trail of suspicious transactions. A criminal may perform several transactions or preliminary transactions that will make the money difficult to trace. This involves transferring money between numerous banks and accounts, buying assets with money previously flowing through multiple accounts, etc.
3. **Integration (legitimization):** In this phase, criminals try to integrate the suspicious money into the legal financial system. This includes investing in legal businesses or buying assets such as real estate, stocks, or businesses. The goal is to create the impression that the money is legally acquired and that it is part of normal financial activity.
4. **Retention (use):** In the final stage, criminals use the laundered money for their own purposes, such as for legitimate businesses or as a means of achieving their goals. This

¹ Simonovski I, Nikoloska S (2016) Profiling of High Risk Profiles of Clients in Order to Prevent Money Laundering and Terrorism. J Forensic

may include buying luxury items, financing organized crime, or performing other activities.

To detect money laundering, criminals and financial institutions need to monitor the transactions and activities of suspicious persons and organizations through all these stages. The analysis of financial transactions, the previous history of ownership and assets, as well as tracing the origin of money, are important tools in the detection of money laundering and in the prosecution of the perpetrators.

The forensic method of detecting money laundering is a key aspect in the modern fight against organized crime and financial corruption. Money laundering is a procedure used by criminals to disguise the legal source of illegally acquired capital and integrate it into the legal economy. In this essay, we will look at the importance of forensics in the detection of money laundering and the ways in which this methodology is applied.

Initially, it should be understood that money laundering is a complex process that includes several stages. Criminals, who receive income from illegal activities such as drug trafficking, corruption, or organized crime, use various methods to hide the origin of the money. This includes transferring money between various banks and financial institutions, creating fictitious businesses and investments, and using third parties to legitimize capital.

The forensic methodology of detecting money laundering includes several aspects and techniques. Initially, criminal investigators should analyze the financial documentation of suspicious individuals and organizations. This includes reviewing bank statements, invoices, and other financial records. Particular attention should be paid to transactions that appear unusual or unclear.

Also, criminal investigators can use financial transaction analysis methods to identify money laundering. This can include analysis of transactional networks and connections between various individuals and companies.

Information from various sources such as business registration authorities, competent authorities, and prosecutors can be used to trace the origin of money.

The examination of the property and assets of suspicious persons and organizations is an important part of the forensic method of detecting money laundering. This may include searches of their property as well as investigations into their bank accounts and property.

It is also important to train police officers and criminal investigators in the field of financial criminology and forensic methodology. Training and expertise are critical to the successful investigation of money laundering and to avoid errors and omissions.

Modern technologies and software tools such as financial intelligence systems (FIS) and data analysis software can be

useful in the investigation of money laundering. These tools enable the analysis of large amounts of financial data and the identification of suspicious transactions.

In conclusion, the forensic methodology of detecting money laundering plays a key role in the fight against organized crime and financial corruption. This methodology includes analyzing financial documents, tracking transactions, and investigating property and assets. Training and the use of modern technologies are important aspects of a successful money laundering investigation. With an efficient forensic methodology, one can contribute to the creation of more serious obstacles for those who try to launder illegal capital and to ensure a legal and fair financial environment.

Money laundering techniques and trends "If you want to steal, then buy a bank"

Bertolt Brecht

According to the criminals involved in money laundering, it can be concluded that they are very intelligent people and also very dangerous. They have developed their own systems and methods with the help of which they rid their illegally acquired assets of dirt, i.e. they make them legal and at the same time put them beyond the reach of "law enforcement" services.

Otherwise, there are many techniques that are used for money laundering, which can be divided into two large groups, namely traditional and current. As the most prevalent in the traditional techniques is the use of the banking system for money laundering, which if I start writing in more detail it would turn out to be a seminar for itself. Although it belongs to the traditional techniques and for which "law enforcement" services have already made schemes for how it is used and what are the weak points, it is still the most represented, especially in the placement phase.

On the other hand, we have the current techniques used by today's "money launderers" and which are more difficult to track. We have:

- Using specialists;
- Using opportunities for electronic transfers of funds;
- Exploitation of overseas banks;
- Use of countries in transition, etc.

It is characteristic that criminals often combine these techniques and this makes the work of the services that prosecute them more difficult and the possibility of finding them decreases.

Simply put, the possibilities of money laundering are limited only by the creativity and ingenuity of the perpetrators.

Ways of proving money laundering

Proving money laundering in the legal system takes place by presenting leads and evidence that identify suspicious transactions and accuse the person or organization of money laundering. Here are some ways and evidence used in proving money laundering:

1. Financial documents and reports: Analysis of financial documents such as bank statements, invoices, trade reports and other financial records can provide evidence of suspicious transactions. These documents can be investigated to identify irregularities in the money laundering process.
2. Transaction tracking: Tracking the financial transactions of suspicious individuals and organizations can provide evidence of their activities. This includes analyzing the movements of money between various banks and financial institutions and identifying transactions that appear unusual or irregular.
3. Analysis of property and assets: Investigating the property and assets of suspicious persons and organizations can provide evidence of their links to illegal assets. This includes property searches, investigations into real estate, shares and other assets, as well as investigations into company and property registers.
4. Reports from Financial Intelligent Systems (FIS): FIS are software tools that automatically analyze financial transactions and report potentially suspicious activities. These reports can be useful in an investigation and as evidence of money laundering.
5. Witnesses and presentation of witnesses: People who are involved in money laundering or witness suspicious activities may be presented as witnesses in court proceedings. They can provide important information and evidence about the activities of a person or organization.

6. International cooperation: Because money laundering is often carried out across borders, international cooperation between various countries and financial institutions can be key to proving money laundering. Sharing information and cooperating in an investigation can help secure evidence.

If sufficient evidence and arguments are presented, the court will be able to make a decision on the guilt or innocence of the defendants for money laundering and impose appropriate-meritorious sentences in accordance with the law.

Proving money laundering through financial documents and reports

Proving money laundering through financial documents and reports plays a key role in the investigation and prosecution of this type of financial crime. This includes the analysis of bank statements, invoices, financial statements and other documents that are related to the financial transactions of the persons or organizations accused of money laundering. Here are some ways money laundering can be proven through financial documents and reports:

1. Consecutive and unusual transactions: Analysis of bank statements can reveal transactions that are consecutive and unusual. For example, if continuous transactions are observed from a person or organization, where large sums of money are laundered through multiple banks and accounts, it can be an indicator of money laundering.
2. High risk transactions: The investigation may focus on transactions that are associated with a high risk of money laundering. This includes large cash transactions, transfers of money between countries with a low money laundering risk, and transactions with values that do not match the defendants' business.
3. False or fictitious invoices: Money laundering often involves the creation of false or fictitious invoices and statements to provide a "legal" source of funds. The investigation can focus on analyzing these documents and uncovering the irregularities in them.
4. Transfer of funds between companies and accounts: Money laundering usually involves the transfer of funds between various companies and financial accounts. The investigation can analyze the transfers and trace the origin of the money, as well as the links between the companies and the persons accused of money laundering.
5. Separate and hidden accounts: Money launderers often use separate or hidden bank accounts to obfuscate transactions. The investigation can provide information about the existence and management of these accounts through bank statements and other financial documents.

To successfully prove money laundering through financial documents and reports, the investigation and trial must be conducted in accordance with laws and regulations and use financial crime experts to analyze the evidence and prepare arguments for the court.

Proving money laundering through transaction tracing

Proving money laundering through transaction tracing is one of the most powerful ways to explain money laundering activities and prove the guilt of defendants. Transaction tracing involves analyzing the financial transactions of individuals or organizations accused of money laundering in order to identify the origin of the money and explain how it was laundered and obfuscated. Here's how money laundering is proven through transaction tracing:

1. **Transaction Analysis:** Police and investigators analyze financial transactions of money laundering suspects, including bank statements, transfers, and other financial documents. This includes analysis of regular transactions, irregularities and high-risk transactions.
2. **Pattern identification:** Through transaction analysis, investigators attempt to identify patterns or schemes of activity used by money laundering defendants. This may include transferring money between numerous banks and financial institutions, transferring funds between accounts, or other unusual activities.
3. **Tracing the origin of money:** The main purpose of tracing transactions is to find out the origin of money. This involves researching recorded transactions back in time to identify how the money was obtained illegally.
4. **Transaction documents:** Financial documents and transaction reports are often used as evidence in court proceedings to prove money laundering. These documents may include copies of bank statements, transfers and invoices, and these documents are used to explain how the money was obfuscated and laundered.
5. **Examination of financial statements:** If the money laundering defendants are companies or organizations, investigators may examine financial statements and business plans to identify irregularities and inconsistencies that may indicate money laundering.

Proving money laundering through financial intelligence systems (FIS) reports

Reports from financial intelligence systems (FIS) are an important tool for proving money laundering and other types of financial crime. FIS are software tools that automatically analyze financial transactions and report potentially suspicious activity. These systems can detect patterns and anomalies in transactions that may indicate money laundering. Here's how money laundering can be proven through FIS reports:

1. **Identification of unusual patterns:** FIS can identify unusual and irregular patterns of transactions such as large and illegal transfers, frequent transfers between various banks and accounts, and other activities that are typical of money laundering.
2. **Comparison with known risks:** FIS can compare transactions with known risks and patterns of financial crime. This includes checking transactions against lists of persons or organizations associated with criminal activity.
3. **Risk assessment:** FIS can generate risk reports that assess transactions according to their money laundering potential. These reports can be used as evidence of potential suspicious activity.
4. **Alarms and notifications:** FIS can generate alarms and notifications when potential suspicious activities are detected. These alarms can be used as potential evidence in investigations and court proceedings.
5. **Investigating additional evidence:** When FIS generates notifications and alerts, investigators can investigate additional evidence to confirm suspicious activity. This evidence may include financial documents, communications, and witnesses.

FIS are used as an instrument for early detection and warning of suspicious activities and potential money laundering. Investigators and judicial authorities use these reports as

evidence in court proceedings to explain suspicious activity and prove money laundering cases.

Proving money laundering through witnesses and presentation of witnesses

Proving money laundering through witnesses and witness testimony can be an important part of the trial and investigation of this type of crime. Witnesses are persons who witness the activities related to money laundering or who have information or evidence about those activities. Here is how money laundering is proven through witnesses and the presentation of witnesses:

1. **Witnesses with first-hand information:** Witnesses who have first-hand information about money laundering activities can testify about those activities in court. This may include persons who worked in close proximity to the defendants or who witnessed the transactions.
2. **Former employees or insiders:** Persons who were part of the organizations or companies accused of money laundering can testify about the internal processes and practices used to launder money. These witnesses can explain the operations and methods of money laundering.
3. **Family and friends:** Personal relationships and close connections can be helpful in presenting witnesses. Family and friends of the accused or persons related to them can testify about the activities and methods of money laundering.
4. **Financial crime experts:** Experts in the field of financial crime and money laundering can be presented as witnesses to explain the patterns and techniques used to launder money.
5. **Witnesses to communications and written evidence:** Witnesses can testify to communications and written evidence such as emails, messages, documents and records that reveal money laundering activities.

It is important that witnesses must appear in court and give their testimony as witnesses. The court uses the testimony of witnesses to corroborate the evidence and make a decision in the court process. Investigators and prosecutors prepare witnesses and present them in court, and defense attorneys have the opportunity to question them and coerce information from them. Witnesses and the presentation of witnesses are an important part of the legal process for proving money laundering and providing additional evidence of the defendant's activities.

Proving money laundering through international cooperation

Proving money laundering through international cooperation is an important aspect in the investigation of money laundering offences. Because many money laundering cases cross borders, international cooperation helps in securing evidence and prosecuting criminals. Here is how to prove money laundering through international cooperation:

1. **Exchange of information:** Different countries and judicial authorities exchange information and evidence related to money laundering. This may include the exchange of financial documents, bank statements, transaction reports and other evidence.
2. **Cooperation of financial institutions:** Banks and financial institutions have responsibilities for reporting suspicious transactions and are required to cooperate with authorities in conducting investigations.

3. Fulfill the transfer of funds: International cooperation is used to transfer funds between countries and banks in order to trace the origin of the money, as well as trace the assets associated with money laundering.
4. International legal agreements: Many countries have legal agreements and international cooperation agreements in the fight against money laundering. These agreements allow countries to conduct investigations and share information through official channels.
5. International organizations: International organizations such as Interpol, the International Financial Group, play an important role in supporting international cooperation and conducting investigations of money laundering.

International cooperation is necessary for the successful investigation and prosecution of money laundering because this type of crime often crosses borders and involves activities in multiple countries. When different countries and organizations cooperate, the chances of proving money laundering and bringing charges increase.

Tracing transactions is a complex process and often involves cooperation between different institutions and specialists in the field of financial crime. If sufficient evidence of money laundering is presented through transaction tracing, the court can use this evidence to convict the accused in accordance with the laws and regulations.

Procedure with the confiscated assets and property from money laundering

The process of confiscating money laundering assets and property takes place as part of the legal system and specific laws and procedures in each country. This procedure is designed to confiscate and seize funds and assets associated with money laundering, in order to prevent the use of these assets to finance criminal activities and to reduce the use of the legal financial system for money laundering. Here's what the confiscation process might look like:

1. Investigation: Initially, the investigation of money laundering should be conducted by the police and other judicial authorities. This includes analyzing financial transactions, documents, witnesses and other evidence to identify and prove money laundering activities.
2. Court decision: After the investigation is completed, the court will make a decision whether there is sufficient evidence of money laundering and whether the property and assets should be confiscated. The court will investigate the case and decide based on the laws and rules of the specific country.
3. Confiscation: If the court decides to confiscate assets and property, a confiscation order is drawn up. This order is executed by the judicial authorities, who confiscate the assets based on the court decision. Depending on the laws of the country, property or assets may be temporarily or permanently confiscated.
4. Sale and use: Confiscated assets, such as real estate, assets, or other properties, may be sold at public auctions or otherwise and the proceeds of the sale are usually used for various purposes. This may include funding the fight against crime, compensation for victims of crime, or other purposes in accordance with the laws.
5. Publicity and transparency: Asset confiscation proceedings are usually conducted within the framework of laws and regulations, with an emphasis on publicity and transparency. This means that court decisions and confiscation actions are published and explained to the public.

Each country has its own laws and procedures for confiscating money laundering assets, and these procedures can vary significantly from one country to another. It is important to follow the legal procedures and conduct the procedure within the rules and principles of the legal system of each country.

How the international law tries to prevent this criminal activity called money laundering

The international community is trying to prevent this phenomenon, but it is not very successful. However, their efforts are worthy of respect. First and foremost, for prevention of the phenomenon is the criminalization of money laundering, which means making the act punishable and thus enabling the state to react without endangering any of the human rights. It originates from the fact that today's society has become too complex, in which people enjoy great rights and freedoms that are often violated, but if they are somehow violated by the state, it can turn into a worrying topic in the world media. That is why it is necessary to criminalize the act, because we know that everything that is not prohibited by law is allowed. Namely, the fight against criminality, or rather against the acquisition of funds from illegitimate activities, began a long time ago, at the dawn of the last century. Even before the establishment of the UN, which is the leading organization that advocates for the prevention of money laundering, we have numerous international conventions such as the Opium Convention of 1912 and the Convention for the Restriction of the Production and Regulation of the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs of 1931. Over time, various conventions are being held more and more, the main purpose of which is to prevent money laundering by disabling the main criminal activities such as trafficking in drugs and narcotic substances, the trade in weapons, people, etc. which are also the biggest beneficiaries of this process, through which they turn their illegally acquired money into legitimate money and use it to further develop their "business". But the most prominent of all of them are: the Basel Declaration of Principles from 1988, the Convention against Illegal Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, better known as the Vienna Convention, and the UN Convention against Transnational Crime, i.e. the Palermo Convention.

Vienna Convention

I think 1988 was a crucial year in the fight against illegal incomes and organized crime. Apart from the Basel Declaration of Principles, which I will talk about later, the Convention against Illegal Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, better known as the Vienna Convention, was also adopted in the same year.

Namely, the Vienna Convention is a significant advance in the coordinated international action plan to combat drug trafficking, which simultaneously for the first time before the eyes of the public with facts and arguments linked drug trafficking with money laundering and which also for the first time before the world posed the problem of money laundering and the proceeds of criminal activities, specifically drug trafficking.

The Vienna Convention has two important features. The first is localized in Article 3 (1) (a) of the same, and in which part the specific obligation of each member state to criminalize an extensive list of activities that have been found to help in some way in the execution of drug trafficking is highlighted.

On the other hand, the second important feature is dealt with in the Article 5 of the Convention and refers to the confiscation of proceeds that are acquired with the help of drug trafficking and are used to develop it. Namely, the measures that should be taken at the

national level and the mechanisms that should enable efficient international cooperation with this vital sphere.

A very important problem that this convention and its provisions are trying to deal with is bank secrecy, which in most cases appears as the main obstacle in the procedure of confiscation of property and property benefits, that is, illegally acquired funds. That is why paragraph 3 of Article 5 of this Convention contains a request to each member state to authorize its courts or other competent services to be able to issue an order and make available to them banking, financial or other commercial files.

In October 1993, our country ratified the Vienna Convention, and thus it became part of our legislation. In conclusion, the procedure for confiscation of property and property benefits obtained in an illegal manner is determined. Today, this also exists in our criminal code, namely that no one can keep indirect or direct property benefit obtained by a crime. So, the money, illegally acquired property, objects or other proceeds from a criminal act will be confiscated, and if confiscation is not possible, other property corresponding to their value will be confiscated from the perpetrator. In our legislation, the confiscation of property is regulated in Chapter seven of the Criminal Code, with several articles.

The Palermo Convention

The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime was approved by the UN General Assembly on November 15, 2000 in New York, while it was opened for signature on December 12 in the city of Palermo in Italy, and after being signed by thirty countries, it enters into force.

It basically refers to what we mean by an organized criminal group, and according to it, it is a group consisting of three or more people. Namely, that group should exist for a certain period of time and its purpose, that is, action, should be the commission of one or more criminal acts, whereby they realize some kind of profit.

It is characteristic that a great simplification of the definitions contained in this Convention can be observed from overcrowded terms such as: continuous and long-term criminal activity, internal discipline and structure, divided roles of group members, etc.

With respect to our problem, i.e. money laundering, it is important to point out that the Convention accepts all the previous definitions that were compiled in the previous two international documents, i.e. conventions, and also goes beyond them in the area of the breadth of the criminalization of the previous criminal acts.

Another of its characteristics is that it has one special article, that is, Article 23 of the Convention, which prescribes the criminalization of obstruction of justice. Taking into account the inefficient completion of numerous court proceedings and especially those in the sphere of money laundering and confiscation where legal entities can somehow be more easily bribed, taking into account the huge amount of money at stake, this Convention contains provisions which refer to the introduction of criminal liability of legal entities.

Basel Declaration of Principles

An important international agreement against corruption and money laundering worldwide is the Prevention of the Criminal Use of the Banking System for the Purposes of Money Laundering, which is better known under the name Basel Declaration of Principles established in 1988 in Basel, Switzerland.

Bribery and corruption are closely related to money laundering, because certain bank officials can be bribed to assist the criminal goals of various organizations whose aim is to convert illegal funds into legal ones through sham transactions. This means that money laundering

activities can corrupt parts of the financial system and undermine trust in central banks and supervisory authorities. If bank managers become corrupt with sums involved in money laundering and which can be seized, it will not be possible to establish in the operational areas what is directly related to money laundering, which creates a risk to the safety and security of the banking system.

Otherwise, the Basel Declaration is a significant step towards the prevention of the use of the banking system for money laundering purposes. The established standards are generally accepted throughout the world by a large number of banks. I will list a few of those principles:

- Identification of customers
- Harmonization of legislation
- Acceptance of high ethical standards, own laws and regulations
- Keeping files
- Employee training.

It is important to mention that the principles of the Basel Declaration apply to all proceeds of crime and not only those derived from drug trafficking.

Strasbourg Convention

Unlike other international conventions that treated crime problems from a general point of view, the Strasbourg Convention imposes itself deeply on the problem of money laundering and I can safely say that it is the first convention dedicated entirely to the prevention of money laundering more specifically. This is confirmed by its very name, i.e. Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime.

It was adopted on November 8 and is also an instrument that seeks to provide a complete system of rules that will cover all stages of the procedure, i.e. starting from the investigation of the legitimacy and up to the validity of the confiscation measure and all this in order to more effectively separate criminals from the benefits of their illegal activity. Although this Convention is modeled after the Vienna Convention and the previously obtained benefits have not been lost, it still differs from its predecessor in several elements. For example, crimes that extend money laundering beyond drug trafficking are covered, then the manner of regulating jurisdiction in those cases where we acquire a crime committed outside of the territory of a country, etc.

A key feature is that this Convention does not contain the word European in its title in order to encourage wider global cooperation in the fight against money laundering and as a result it has been ratified by 23 countries including Australia as a non-European country. Otherwise, Article 6 of the Convention places an obligation on the member states to adopt legal and other measures necessary for the introduction of incriminations in the national legislation against money laundering.

Namely, our country ratified this document on September 3, 1999 and it was published in "OG RM" 1990/58.

Other central bodies and anti-money laundering task forces

When talking about how international law tries to prevent money laundering worldwide, I mentioned that conventions, directives and documents are numerous. But there are also numerous bodies that advocate for its prevention. The UN is the main organization that tries at all costs to prevent it, and if that is not possible, to disable criminality in the world in any way. The most famous bodies in the fight against criminality in general and thus against the phenomenon of money laundering are a few, namely:

UNDCP i.e. the United Nations International Drug Control Program based in Vienna. I think it is important to point out that within this program there is a network of 21 offices all over the world, whose purpose is to transmit information about national and regional situations.

CICP or Center for International Crime Prevention

ODCCP i.e. Office for Drug Control and Criminal Prevention FATF i.e. Operational Group against the financial actions of money laundering.

I think it is important to mention the directive on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering adopted by the European Union in 1991, which unlike the conventions that have a repressive approach to the phenomenon of money laundering, it contains a preventive approach to the same. Important parts of the directive are the prohibition of money laundering (Article 2), the verification of customer identification and the keeping of files (Article 3 and Article 4), the assessment and verification of suspicious financial transactions (Article 5) and cooperation with the competent services on the plan of fight against money laundering (Article 6)

Conclusion

To be honest, money laundering was a crime in the 90s. It's a magic trick of wealth creation...a hotbed of drug dealers, fraudsters, smugglers, arms dealers, terrorists and tax evaders, ranking it as the world's third largest business. Some think that money laundering is a completely new phenomenon in our negative society and it is a brand-new discovery of the evil human mind. But it is not true. Maybe today's conditions only accelerate this process and give it huge scope, but the fact is that money laundering has existed since ancient times. Namely, criminals have always tried to hide their illegally obtained goods in order to avoid punishment or their confiscation. However, as I mentioned before that is nothing compared to what is happening nowadays and I think today's criminals make Al Capone's gang and the old mafia look like mere breadcrumbs.

During the preparation of the paper, I came across knowledge that money laundering is something that cannot be done by just one person, but requires a whole organized network of criminals and workers, mostly bank workers who carry out the illegal transactions. It is a long-term and ongoing activity that almost always crosses the national borders of a country, i.e. the country where the criminal group resides, and in most cases the criminals succeed in achieving their goal, i.e. to transform their illegal assets and make them suitable for legal use despite the enormous efforts of society to prevent them.

The methods that were used to carry out the process were interesting, which seemed to me very complex. Yet in addition to all of those numerous methods, the most used and most effective was the use of the bank and its possibilities for transforming assets. Surfing the internet I came across an interesting statement by a person named Bertolt Brecht, I quote: **„The best method of both stealing and laundering money is to own a bank. And though banks are an at-risk group in relation to their main functions of deposit taker and opening of accounts, what can be done against this crime if the bank is international and in complicity with vast numbers of its depositors. When the CIA moved money via the BCCI it called it "facilitating the national interest". When the Mafia and the Libyans do it, it is called money laundering “.**

It was somehow difficult for me to translate it into Albanian without losing its true meaning, so I left it in the original. In this world, everything is two-dimensional, double, so everything that exists has a side that opposes it. Thus, society makes great efforts to prevent this phenomenon, but despite all those international conventions, directives and agreements, it fails to completely eradicate it.

All in all, I think that in addition to other financial malpractices that the human mind can create, the phenomenon of money laundering is the real king among them.

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