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Fighting Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property – A Capacity-Development Workshop on the Role and Means of the Financial Sector

27 January 2022, 10:00-16:00 (CET) (incl. break 13:00-14:00)

[Registration link](#)

Specific Objective

Sensitize professionals of the financial sector to the linkages and risks associated with investments in the arts and antiquities and explore the sector's role in the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property at European and international levels.

Background

The workshop is part of the ongoing [EU-UNESCO](#) project “Inter-regional and crosscutting action aiming to strengthen the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property”, which aims to reduce the illicit trafficking of cultural property in the European Union and neighbouring countries by reinforcing the skills of key professionals and stimulating new synergies between source, transit and destination countries. The project is both professionally crosscutting and inter-regional in its approach with a broad geographical scope including the EU Member States, the Western Balkans as well as the South Partner countries of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI).

Context

Cultural heritage is increasingly seen as a form of financial investment and even as a special category of ethical capital. On the other hand, the sale of illicitly exported cultural property used to finance terrorist groups implies an urgent need to assess and mitigate the emerging risks that affect the global as well as the EU's internal markets. The European Security Agenda includes action to combat the financing of terrorism in a more effective manner while ensuring respect for fundamental rights, including data protection and economic autonomy.

Artefacts and antiquities are considered high value goods and are covered in the EU's supranational risk assessments. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommends that each country conduct risk assessments that take account of their capacity and experience in each sector, including high value

goods, that are subject to requirements on anti-money laundering and countering Terrorist Financing (AML/CFT).

The workshop intends to be a forum for raising awareness among professionals of the financial sector of the risks associated with investments in the antiquities sector. Next to the regulatory framework, it shall provide an overview of innovative and ethical approaches to the challenges of investments, particularly in the current European financial environment. Legal and fiscal aspects of compliance in antiquities trade, in particular as it relates to combating money laundering and terrorist financing will be addressed, and relevant good practices presented.

In addition, participants shall gain a better understanding of the role of competent authorities, such as the European Banking Authority, the Financial Action Task Force and the network of national entities responsible for action against illegal financial circuits.

Beneficiaries

Representatives of banks and investment funds, representatives of the art and antiquities market, representatives of ministries of finance, of ministries of justice, of ministries of the interior, national law enforcement authorities from European Union Member States as well as neighbouring States; journalists; researchers and university students in economics, law, cultural heritage, journalism.

Invitations via Permanent Delegations and National Commissions, as well as Focal Points (where designated)

Format

Online Workshop with a series of presentations and a round table discussion, plus chat function

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The meeting will be organized online via the ZOOM platform with interpretation into English and French.

This closed meeting shall only be accessed by pre-registered participants and observers from the UNESCO Member States and invited public and private entities.

Objectives

The objectives of the event include:

- providing guidance on ethical principles as well as legal and practical mechanisms to apply and comply with the EU Anti-Money Laundering Directive ([5th AMLD](#));
- providing an overview of the mission of relevant authorities as well as an insight into financing mechanisms of the art market, the current situation, challenges, and opportunities related to the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property;
- identifying opportunities for enhancing dialogue of UNESCO, the European Union and the private financing sector on the means to jointly counter illicit trade.

Expected Results

- National authorities of European Union Member States and neighbouring countries have enhanced knowledge of the institutional and regulatory framework of the European financial sector.
- National authorities of European Union Member States and neighbouring countries have enhanced understanding of the mechanisms in place to identify and counter money-laundering activities related to cultural property trade in the EU context.
- Representatives of banking and investment sector have enhanced sensitivity and understanding of the concerns of public authorities in States Parties to the 1970 Convention related to the monitoring of cultural property movement and financial transactions.

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