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**BENCE MÉSZÁROS**



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# Financial Monitoring in the field of Counter-Terrorism Financing at the European Level

Nataliya Vnukova<sup>1</sup>

The report considers the main directions of development of financial monitoring in Ukraine and Hungary. FATF International Standard 6 strengthens the application of financial sanctions related to terrorist financing. Examples of financial investigations aimed at combating terrorist financing are given. An experiment was conducted to determine the interest in the topic of terrorism as one of the modern AML trends using the Google Trends search tool. Regions in Ukraine and Hungary with the largest number of requests are identified. Measurement data indicates that additional research is needed and it is possible to develop some kind of cross-border programs aimed at enhancing security.

**Keywords:** terrorism, financial monitoring, cross-border relations, Google Trends search engine.

## I. Introduction

Russia's open aggression on the territory of Ukraine in February 2022 is considered by experts as an act of terrorism. International standards and international cooperation in the field of preventing and countering the legalization (laundering) of proceeds from crime, the financing of terrorism and the financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction<sup>2</sup> are the basic basis for the fight against terrorism, because the FATF (Financial Action Task Force) has received a mandate to counter the financing of terrorism. His public statement on Ukraine in March 2022 testifies to Russia's violation of these international standards<sup>3</sup>. A letter from the FATF was received to the State Financial Monitoring Service of Ukraine on considering the issue of adding Russia to the sanctions list<sup>4</sup>. Both Ukraine and Hungary comply with these international standards and are members of the Egmont Group.

## II. Main Body

In 2019, a new anti-legalization law was adopted in Ukraine, which strengthened the implementation of the provisions of these international standards<sup>5</sup>. Magyar Nemzeti Bank (MNB) draws the attention of financial service providers to the fact that the legal environment

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<sup>2</sup> The FATF, 'The FATF Recommendations – International Standards on Combating Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism & Proliferation', February 16, 2012, as amended March 2022. Online: <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/publications/fatfrecommendations/documents/fatf-recommendations.html>.

<sup>3</sup> FATF, 'Public Statement on the Situation in Ukraine'. Online: <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/publications/fatfgeneral/documents/ukraine-2022.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Tania Matiash, *FATF has removed Russia from influencing decision -making and considering it to "black list"*, 2022. Online: [https://lb.ua/world/2022/05/29/518316\\_fatf\\_usunula\\_rosiyu\\_vid\\_vplivu.html](https://lb.ua/world/2022/05/29/518316_fatf_usunula_rosiyu_vid_vplivu.html) [in Ukrainian].

<sup>5</sup> Zakon.rada.gov.ua, 'Law of Ukraine on Prevention and Counteraction to Legalisation (Laundering) of Criminal Proceeds, Terrorist Financing and Financing of Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction'. *The Official Bulletin of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (BVR)*, No. 25 (2020), Article 171. Online: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/en/361-20#Text> [in Ukrainian].

regarding combating money laundering and terrorist financing, which was adopted in 2017 in Hungary, has changed after January 10, 2020 and October 01, 2020, respectively<sup>6</sup>. The change in the FATF takes place in the period from 1989, when this organization was formed, in 1990 the first 40 Recommendations were developed, in 2001 there was an expansion of the mandate to combat the financing of terrorism, in 2008 to combat the financing of weapons of mass destruction, and in 2012 approved international financial monitoring standards, which are constantly being amended. In Ukraine, during this period, an anti-legalization legislative framework was formed from the primary legislative regulation of the normative documents of the Council of Europe to the adoption of a special law in 2019, the third for the period of formation of the financial monitoring system. Considering that the volumes of “washed” financial income are threatening for global GDP, this requires the formation of additional struggle tools, including tools for preventing terrorism financing. A 2020 investigation of 2,100 Financial Crime Enforcement Network (FinCEN) documents obtained by BuzzFeed reporters found that global banks have made \$2 trillion worth of suspicious transactions over 20 years. Major Western banks, including JPMorgan and Deutsche Bank, helped criminal networks around the world, including those from the former Soviet Union, transfer and hide money<sup>7</sup>.

After the adoption in 2019 in Ukraine of a new law "On the prevention and counteraction to the legalization (laundering) of proceeds from crime, the financing of terrorism and the financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction", it has improved its international position in the field of combating the laundering of proceeds from crime and the financing of terrorism. On August 28, 2020, the Committee of Experts of the Council of Europe for the Evaluation of Measures to Combat Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (MONEYVAL) published the approved 2nd report on the progress of Ukraine within the 5th round of evaluations in the field of preventing and combating the legalization (laundering) of proceeds from crime. way and financing of terrorism, which noted the improvement of the criminal law relating to crimes of financing terrorism, as well as the tightening of sanctions against financial institutions and other entities for non-compliance with the legislation on combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism<sup>8</sup>.

FATF Standard 6 strengthens the application of financial sanctions related to the financing of terrorism, these are new requirements that have been actively developed recently. The results of the FATF plenary meeting, October 19–21, 2021, are related to the consideration of Strategic Initiatives, including the security of cross-border payments<sup>9</sup>. Improving cross-border payments is a key priority for the G20, which has supported the FATF to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. Faster, cheaper, more transparent and inclusive cross-border payment services that are secure can boost economic growth, international trade, global development, financial inclusion and the prevention of terrorist financing.

To determine the interest in the topic of terrorism as one of the modern trends in ensuring security and preventing the receipt of criminal proceeds, the Google Trends search tool was

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<sup>6</sup> Net.jogtar.hu, ‘Törvény a pénzmosás és a terrorizmus finanszírozása megelőzéséről és megakadályozásáról’, 2017, évi LIII. Online: <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=a1700053.tv>.

<sup>7</sup> Radiosvoboda, ‘World Banks made suspicious transactions for \$ 2 trillion in 20 years – investigation’, September 20, 2020. Online: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-rozsliduvannya-icij/30848811.html> [in Ukrainian].

<sup>8</sup> Censor.net, ‘Ukraine has increased counteraction to laundering and terrorism financing - the Council of Europe report’. Online: <https://censor.net/ua/n3216703> [in Ukrainian].

<sup>9</sup> FATF, ‘Outcomes FATF Plenary’, October 19-21, 2021. Online: <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/publications/fatfgeneral/documents/outcomes-fatfplenary-october-2021.html>.

used<sup>10</sup>. This service allows you to determine the interests of target groups<sup>11</sup>, for example, those who want to counter the financing of terrorism, track trends, and also find out the number of requests to Google from different countries and regions for certain periods<sup>12</sup>, in particular, in this study, this is “terrorism » in Ukrainian and Hungarian. The level of search queries was determined in the categories "Ukraine" and "Hungary" in the time period for the last year on the date of the query (May 30, 2022). The popularity of queries was evaluated in relation to the total number of queries in Google, in particular, with the definition of the region in the allotted time.

### III. Results and discussion

It has been established that in the trend component, the interest in the topic of terrorism is directly opposite. At the beginning of May 2022, it fell to a minimum in Hungary, and rose to a maximum in Ukraine. In the territorial context in Hungary, the Győr-Ménfőcsanak-Sopron region came first, and in Ukraine, the Transcarpathian region.

### IV. Conclusions

The study on the development of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism indicates the relevance of this topic for both countries and the exchange of experience in the implementation of international FATF standards. Measurement data in the Google Trends search engine indicates that additional research is needed and it is possible to develop some kind of cross-border programs aimed at strengthening their security.

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<sup>10</sup> Oleksandr Kliuiev, Nataliya Vnukova, Sergiy Hlibko, Natalia Brynza and Daria Davydenko, ‘Estimation of the Level of Interest and Modeling of the Topic of Innovation Through Search in Google’, in *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Computational Linguistics and Intelligent Systems*, 23-24 April (2020), 523–535. Online: <http://www.repository.hneu.edu.ua/jspui/handle/123456789/23306>.

<sup>11</sup> Olya Frolova, *Google Trends – Guide How to Use*, July 22, 2020. Online: <https://www.unisender.com/ru/blog/sovety/google-trends/> [in Russian].

<sup>12</sup> FATF, ‘The FATF Recommendations’, 2012. <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/media/fatf/documents/recommendations/pdfs/fatf%20recommendations%202012.pdf>

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