**Teesside University: [The Financial Aspects of the Trade in Counterfeit Products: An Exploratory Study] (2016-17)**

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The aim of the proposed study is to investigate the financial flows resulting from and enabling the trade in counterfeit products. The aim of the study is broken down into the following objectives:

1. To identify and examine the various forms and sources of financing of, and routing of payments for counterfeit products;
2. To identify and examine the possible interconnections existing between transnational organised criminal structures involved in counterfeiting, and legitimate businesses and financial institutions;
3. To examine how ICTs and e-commerce markets offer financial opportunities for counterfeiters and to explore how these *online* processes interact withphysical flows of counterfeit goods;
4. To map the physical and financial flows relating to counterfeit products around the globe (especially UK-China);
5. To identify and examine cash flows in counterfeiting enterprises;
6. To identify and examine the processes with which (transnational) organised crime structures involved in counterfeiting, settle their payments and manage financial transactions;
7. To examine possible similarities and differences in financing practices in counterfeit markets at local, national and international levels;
8. To begin to identify how enforcement and regulatory agencies can effectively prevent and mitigate the financing of transnational organised crime (TOC) and the impact of counterfeit markets.

If you consent to participate, you will be asked to answer questions about the following:

* Business models and cash flows in counterfeiting enterprises;
* Size and source of capital needed for entering or operating in a counterfeiting business; expanding activities, closing a big deal on the black market or coping with cash flow problems;
* Known sources for acquiring financing for entering a criminal market, costs of operating in a counterfeiting business and by level of business (costs for purchasing illegal commodities/maintaining service provision, costs for specialised services such as transport, store, financial, law, protection and violence services, possible corruption fees, etc.);
* Profits and reinvestment in counterfeiting businesses;
* Legitimate businesses investing in criminal enterprises;
* Possible links of counterfeiting activities to other criminal activities.

In accordance with the Statement of Ethical Practice published by the British Society of Criminology, I would like to draw your attention to the rights you are entitled to expect during the course of this research project. The rights you are entitled to are identified below.

If you are unclear about any of these rights or feel unsure about anything else, please ask the researcher for an explanation. When you are satisfied that you have understood these rights and have decided that you would like to participate in this research project, please print your name and then sign the form below.

Participants have the right:

1. to participate voluntarily, free from any coercion,
2. to be protected from physical and/or psychological discomfort, harm, and danger
3. to have their interests, sensitivity and privacy protected\*
4. to be informed of the general nature of the research,
5. to withdraw from the study at any time, without incurring any penalty,
6. to be informed about how far they will be afforded anonymity and confidentiality,
7. to be informed at the conclusion of the study regarding how any research findings are to be disseminated.

\* **However, please note that if there is an immediate threat to human life we will disclose relevant information to the authorities.**

Paper copies of transcripts and any other data will be stored in locked filing cabinets in the PI’s office. If you wish to be informed about the results of this study you can contact Georgios A. Antonopoulos by E-mail: [g.antonopoulos@tees.ac.uk](mailto:g.antonopoulos@tees.ac.uk) .

Researcher’s declaration

I, [name of researcher], agree to abide by all of the guidelines and standards for conducting research with participants as described by the British Society of Criminology.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Participant’s Consent**

Participant (Please read and sign)

I, (name of participant) have been informed about the general nature of this study, I have read and understood the participants’ rights and agree to participate voluntarily.

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_