

## **INVITATION to the Roundtable: Capitalising on Croatia's FATF grey listing: the role of civil society actors and investigative journalists**

The [Centre for Finance and Security \(CFS\)](#) at the Royal United Services Institute, in partnership with the Croatian Platform for International Citizen Solidarity (CROSOL), are pleased to invite you to take part in an in-person roundtable discussion "Capitalising on Croatia's FATF grey listing: the role of civil society actors and investigative journalists". The roundtable discussion will take place at the **Doubletree by Hilton Zagreb** on **13 June 2024** from **13:00-17:00**.

In June 2023, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the international watchdog on anti-money laundering and counterterrorism financing (AML/CTF), added Croatia to the list of countries under increased scrutiny. While recognising the Croatia's high-level political commitments to strengthen the effectiveness of its AML/CTF regime, the FATF stressed that work still needed to be done to address key compliance deficiencies. These included detection and prosecution of different types of money laundering (ML), including ML involving foreign predicate offences and the misuse of legal persons, investigation of terrorism financing in line with the country's risk profile, and identification of NPOs vulnerable to terrorist financing abuse, among others.

By highlighting the increased risk of money laundering and terror financing, grey listing can have political and economic consequences, including increased scrutiny in international transactions, potential difficulties in establishing relations with global banks and attracting investment, and more difficult relationships with international counterparts.

While the grey listing of Croatia has far-reaching repercussions for the country's banking system and economy, it also presents a unique opportunity for civil society actors dedicated to financial transparency and combatting illicit financial flow. To support this work, the CFS at RUSI is convening 2 engagements bringing together Croatia's leading anti-corruption CSOs and investigative journalists to discuss how they can leverage FATF processes in their work, to strengthen transparency and accountability and actively contribute to the efforts to get Croatia out of grey-listing. Tea-coffee break will be provided. You can find the agenda of the roundtable below.

It would be our greatest honour if you were to accept our invitation to join this roundtable discussion. Please **RSVP** by **10 June 2024** by email to [crosol@crosol.hr](mailto:crosol@crosol.hr) to confirm your attendance.

Yours Sincerely,

## Agenda

*13:00-13:30* Registration and coffee/snacks

### *13:30-15:00* **Session 1: Understanding FATF evaluation processes and the consequences of grey listing**

The session will provide a brief overview to the work of the Financial Action Taskforce (FATF) and its processes and their importance in the context of fighting corruption and promoting financial integrity. This session will also unpack the recent [Mutual Evaluation Report \(MER\)](#) for Croatia, the reasons for the country's grey listing and its meaning for civil society. It will review key weaknesses identified in the report, including gaps related to the country's assessment of ML/TF risks associated with the misuse of legal persons and legal arrangements, the use of cash in the real estate sector, the investigation of TF in line with the country's risk, as well as the application of measures to secure foreign proceeds subject to confiscation.

The discussion will explore the Croatia's MER and how the identified weaknesses in the report align with the existing workstreams of the participants. It will mention the amended Recommendations 4 and 38 of FATF and their meaning for the civil society, and place particular emphasis on recovering the proceeds of crime, beneficial ownership transparency, and potential overlaps between the FATF's Action Plan for Croatia to be removed from the grey list and the EU's recovery and resilience plan for the country.

*15:00- 15:15* Coffee break

### *15:15-16:45* **Session 2: Role for Civil Society and Investigative Journalists: Taking action about greylisting**

This session will explore how civil society and investigative journalists can coordinate to find entry points for taking an active role in getting Croatia out of the FATF greylisting. The session will focus on identifying the current challenges that CSOs face in the country and put forward actionable ideas to strengthen the CSO involvement and collaboration with various FATF recommendations, ultimately working towards a more robust and impactful approach in combating financial crime. At the end of the session, the participants will formulate a forward-looking plan with identified goals and the subsequent steps to be taken. Looking ahead, cross-country connections between local CSOs in Croatia and Bulgaria, the only two EU countries currently on the FATF grey list, will be cultivated.

*16:45- 17:00* Networking