

PRESS RELEASE

EBF presents recommendations on fighting dirty money in EU

- **EBF Blueprint published: 'Lifting the Spell of Dirty Money'**
- **Banks recommend: HARMONISE, COOPERATE, EMPOWER, BE SMARTER**
- **EU/EEA entities need reinforcing, better cross-border coordination**

BRUSSELS, 10 March 2020 – As the European Commission is preparing its next steps towards creating a solid EU framework for fighting money launderers, the European Banking Federation today presented its blueprint with recommendations for an effective EU's Anti-Money Laundering policy, known as AML.

The report identifies four priorities that need to be addressed. In concrete terms, the EBF suggests to:

- **HARMONISE** the EU AML framework and strengthen its risk-based nature;
- **EMPOWER** EU/EEA-wide supervision and law enforcement by strengthening the institutional architecture;
- Enable all parties to effectively **COOPERATE** and share information;
- **BE SMARTER** by leveraging new tools and technologies that can enhance the due diligence process.

Based on these four priorities, the EBF has formulated 20 concrete policy recommendations that are elaborated in the 40-page EBF blueprint 'Lifting the Curse of Dirty Money'. [Click here](#) to access the blueprint.

Says Wim Mijs, Chief Executive Officer of the European Banking Federation:

"Combatting financial crime essentially is a real fight against real criminals that make people suffer and undermine our society. We need a European framework that prevents this and that stops crime, instead of continuing the current tick-the-box exercise."

"Banks really are part of the solution. We need effective cooperation between all actors in the financial ecosystem, both public and private. This means exchanging more information, also across borders, and harmonising the approach at the European level. We also need to be smarter and use new technologies."

Banks, as financial gatekeepers, are spending billions of euros on compliance, on monitoring transactions and on generating millions of suspicious activity reports. Despite this, criminals know how to exploit the regulatory fragmentation in Europe, letting them still move undetected vast amounts of dirty money across borders.

European Banking Federation aisbl

Brussels / Avenue des Arts 56, 1000 Brussels, Belgium / +32 2 508 3711 / info@ebf.eu
Frankfurt / Weißfrauenstraße 12-16, 60311 Frankfurt, Germany
EU Transparency Register / ID number: 4722660838-23

The EBF and its members propose collective action to be taken by private sector, governments and law enforcement. To be specific, the four priority areas defined in the EBF blueprint consist of the following recommendations:

1. HARMONISE

The current AML framework largely consists of Directives that are interpreted differently across EU Members States. Harmonising the existing policies by putting forward directly applicable legislation will improve AML compliance and will leave less room for asymmetries at national level. Uniform EU/EEA-wide rules will also provide an opportunity to standardise know-your-customer (KYC) obligations and adhere to global approaches.

2. EMPOWER

Dozens of national and regional supervisors are imposing regulatory requirements to financial institutions, sometimes overlapping. By empowering the European Banking Authority as rule-setter, AML rules could be implemented in a harmonised way. Supervisors, law enforcement and Financial Intelligence Units need to coordinate their work closer and cross-borders, as well as have access to enough resources to facilitate their efforts.

3. COOPERATE

Reporting of suspicious activities/transactions and KYC requirements are creating vast amounts of data. Only by detecting and sharing the appropriate information within banks, between regulators and bank-to-bank will help to quickly detect and mitigate the risks of financial crime. Moreover, with full respect to privacy laws, public-private information sharing channels should be further promoted.

4. BE SMARTER

Growing sophistication of criminal behaviour and the interconnectedness of the financial ecosystem require rapid reactions. New technologies such as artificial intelligence can strengthen and automate several compliance tasks, both by private and public sector entities. Advanced analytics and robotics can particularly improve beneficial ownership transparency and KYC procedures.

Media contact:

Nahuel Mercedes, Communications Officer
n.mercedes@ebf.eu or +32 2 508 3748

Raymond Frenken, Director of Communications
r.frenken@ebf.eu or +32 2 508 3732

About the EBF:

The European Banking Federation is the voice of the European banking sector, bringing together national banking associations from across Europe. The EBF is committed to a thriving European economy that is underpinned by a stable, secure and inclusive financial ecosystem, and to a flourishing society where financing is available to fund the dreams of citizens, businesses and innovators everywhere. Website: www.ebf.eu