

How trafficking in cultural property
is linked to *other criminal
activities?*



Trafficking in cultural property has offered organised crime yet another means of laundering their money and financing their illicit activities (trafficking in drugs, arms, human beings, etc.).

It provides organised criminal groups, terrorists and other violent non-State actors with an income that can be used to support their recruitment efforts and strengthen their operational capability.



CORRUPTION OF TRUSTED PROFESSIONALS

Professionals in trusted positions, such as museum curators and art dealers, may be corrupted to facilitate the illegal trade of cultural property. They exploit their access and professional capacity to bypass safeguards, enabling the seamless movement of stolen or illicit artifacts.

CORRUPTION OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Public officials responsible for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage can be bribed. This corruption allows criminals to traffic cultural assets without facing legal obstacles, compromising the integrity of cultural preservation efforts.





TAX OFFENSES

Criminals evade taxes by misdeclaring the value and origin of cultural property. This deceitful practice helps them hide the illicit nature of their transactions, avoid financial scrutiny, and retain more profit from their illegal activities.

MONEY LAUNDERING

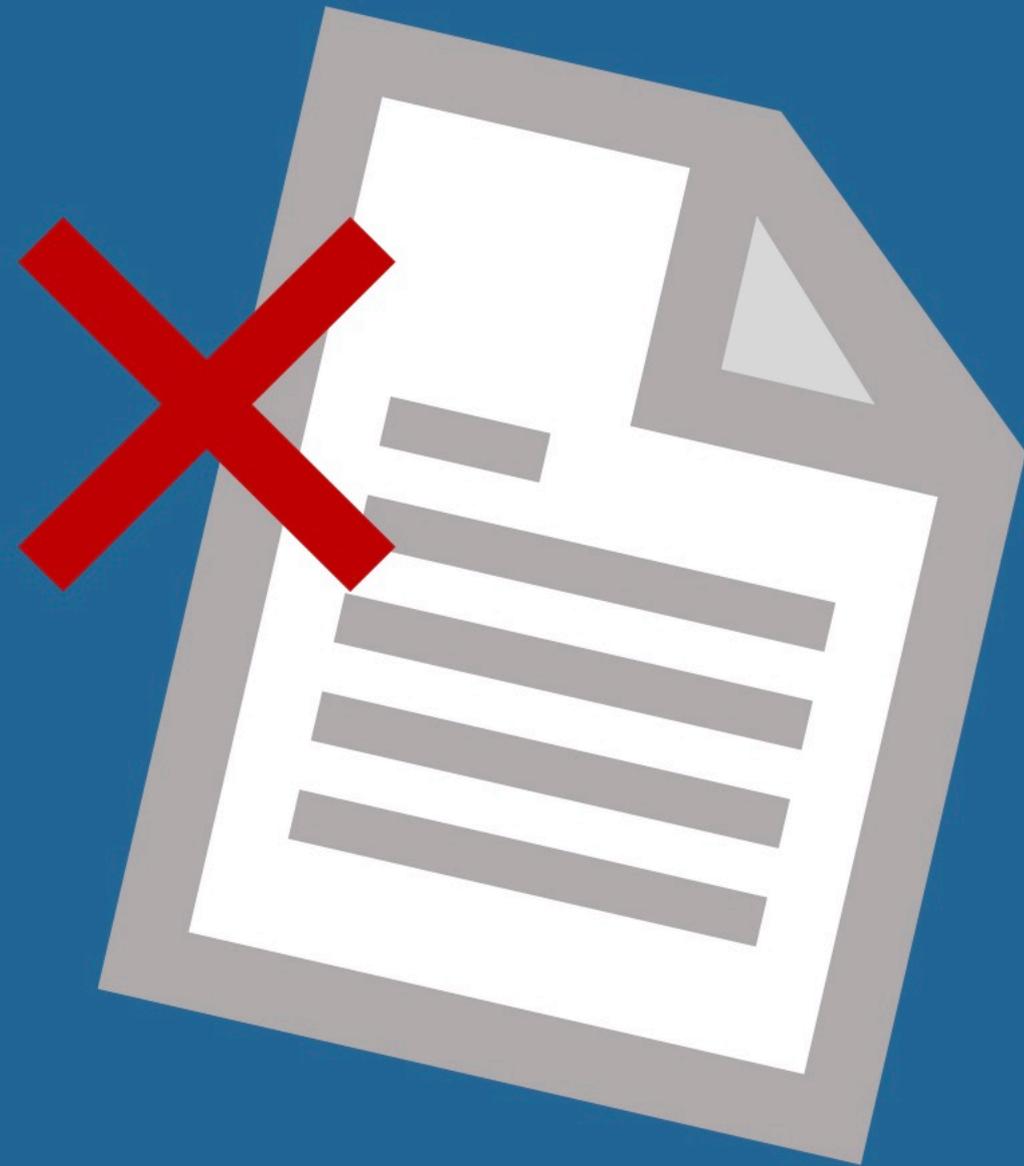
The sale of cultural property is a common method for laundering money. Criminals convert illicit funds into legitimate assets through the complex financial transactions involved in the art and antiques market, obscuring the true source of the money.



FALSIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS

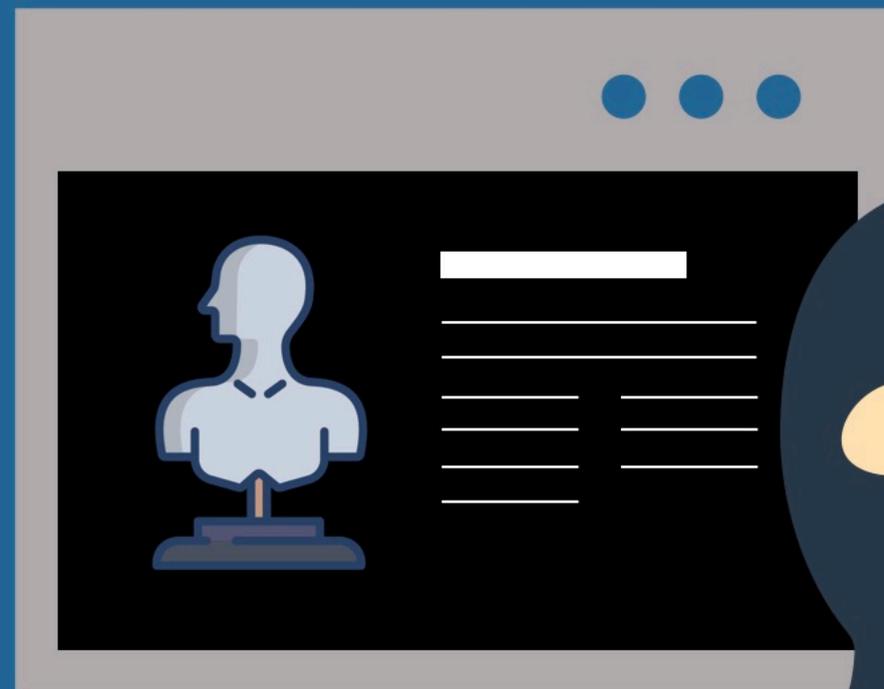
Criminals forge documents to deceive customs agents and officials, making illegally obtained cultural property appear legally acquired.

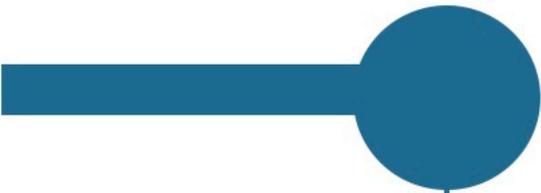
This practice facilitates the cross-border movement of stolen artifacts, further entrenching the black market in cultural property.



ONLINE BLACK MARKET

Technological advancements have shifted the black market online. Illegal excavations and the sale of cultural property now occur on online platforms, social media, and the Deep Web, creating a marketplace that is difficult to regulate and control.





In a globalized world, cultural heritage crimes are multiplying. A growing variety of actors and criminal actions are involved, while society often remains unaware of the criminal nature of these activities. Greater awareness and education are crucial to combat this issue.

Current legal instruments are insufficient to address the complexity of cultural property crimes. Cultural heritage remains vulnerable to exploitation due to legal loopholes. Stronger laws and comprehensive actions are essential to protect our cultural heritage.