

## STUDII ȘI COMENTARIU

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### TACTICAL PARTICULARITIES OF INTERROGATION IN THE INVESTIGATION OF MONEY LAUNDERING OFFENSES

**Abstract:** This article explores the complexity of interrogation tactics in the investigation of the crime of money laundering, highlighting the central role of this procedural action in reconstructing sophisticated and concealed criminal mechanisms. The study analyzes the frequency and effectiveness of interrogations in criminal cases, addressing separately the interrogation of suspects/accused persons, witnesses, experts, and other participants depending on their procedural status, level of involvement, and type of information held.

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*The paper emphasizes the importance of adapting the interrogation tactic according to the nature of the subjects' social and professional relationships, their degree of cooperation, and the documentary nature of the evidentiary material. It discusses methods for fostering cooperation, managing the influence of the defense counsel, the particularities of confrontation in adversarial contexts, and the use of psychological strategies to elicit the truth. The conclusion underscores that, in the context of economic and financial crimes, interrogation is not merely a formal instrument, but a key investigative method capable of clarifying the offender's intent, the flow of illicit funds, and the connections among participants.*

**Keywords:** *interrogation tactics, forensics, money laundering, testimonial evidence, criminal investigation, confrontation, evidentiary statements.*

## PARTICULARITĂȚI TACTICE ALE INTEROGATORIULUI ÎN INVESTIGAȚIA INFRAȚIUNILOR DE SPĂLARE A BANILOR

**Abstract:** *Acest articol explorează complexitatea tacticilor de interogare în investigarea infracțiunii de spălare a banilor, evidențiind rolul central al acestei acțiuni procedurale în reconstrucția unor mecanisme penale sofisticate și ascunse. Studiul analizează frecvența și eficiența interogatoriilor în cauzele penale, abordând separat interogatoriul suspectilor/acuzaților, martorilor, experților și altor participanți, în funcție de statutul procedural, nivelul de implicare și tipul de informații deținute.*

*În lucrare se subliniază importanța adaptării tacticii de interogare în funcție de natura relațiilor sociale și profesionale ale subiecților, de gradul lor de cooperare și de natura documentară a materialului probatoriu. De asemenea, sunt metode pentru promovarea cooperării, gestionarea influenței avocatului apărării, particularitățile confruntării în contexte adversative și utilizarea strategiilor psihologice pentru obținerea adevărului. Concluzia subliniază faptul că, în contextul crimelor economice și financiare, interogatoriul nu reprezintă doar un instrument formal, ci o metodă investigativă esențială capabilă să clarifice intenția făptuitorului, fluxul de fonduri ilicite și conexiunile între participanți.*

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *tactici de interogare, criminalistică, spălare a banilor, probe testimoniale, investigație penală, confruntare, declarații probatorii.*

### INTRODUCTION

Within the framework of criminal investigation, interrogation constitutes one of the most frequent and decisive procedural actions, enabling the investigative authority to obtain verbal information of evidentiary value—indispensable for reconstructing the truth in the case. This activity becomes even more significant in the investigation of the crime of money laundering, a phenomenon characterized by a high degree of concealment, a complex operational architecture, and a constant interplay between the appearance of legality and the criminal essence of the financial operations involved.

Although documentary evidence dominates the array of probative means in such cases, interrogation remains the only method capable of capturing the subjective intent of the participants, clarifying individual roles, and outlining the relationships between actors involved in the process of legalizing illicit funds. The diversity of the categories of persons interviewed requires a continuous adjustment of interrogation tactics to reflect not only legal standards but also the behavioral and psychological realities of procedural subjects.

This paper aims to investigate the tactical particularities of interrogation in the context of money laundering cases, emphasizing the importance of rigorous planning, the

appropriate use of documentary evidence, and the strategic interaction with the interviewees as defining elements of an efficient and truth-oriented investigation.

### **APPLIED METHODS AND MATERIALS**

The scientific approach was based on a mixed methodology combining doctrinal analysis with the practical examination of judicial practice. Classical methods of legal research were applied, including comparative analysis of procedural-criminal regulations on interrogation, correlated with the systematic interpretation of relevant forensic literature. In parallel, a qualitative method was used to analyze criminal cases resolved by courts in the Republic of Moldova concerning money laundering offenses, focusing on how interrogations were conducted, the procedural status of the interviewees, the typology of their statements, and their impact on evidentiary construction.

The empirical material was supplemented by the study of statistical charts regarding the frequency of interrogation, the category of participants involved, and the impact of procedural confrontation. These data allowed for the formulation of conclusions concerning the efficiency and adaptability of interrogation tactics, as well as the identification of gaps or vulnerabilities in their application. Overall, the research is grounded in an interdisciplinary approach that integrates legal, forensic, and psychological perspectives to build a tactical model suited to the specificities of economic-financial offenses.

### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

The primary objective of this research is to identify and analyze the tactical particularities of interrogation within the investigation of money laundering offenses, with a focus on the methodological adaptation of this procedural action to the concealed, technical, and complex nature of the investigated conduct. The study seeks to highlight the essential role of statements in complementing and contextualizing documentary evidence, to define operational criteria for the selection and effective handling of subjects to be interrogated, and to propose concrete forensic strategies that may enhance the evidentiary value of the information obtained. In this sense, the research aims to provide an integrated, practice-oriented perspective designed to optimize the conduct of interrogations in economic-financial cases and to contribute to the improvement of the quality of criminal justice.

### **DISCUSSIONS AND RESULTS OBTAINED**

In accordance with the conceptual provisions of criminal procedural science and forensic theory, interrogation represents the principal procedural method for obtaining statements that reflect verbal information with evidentiary relevance in investigative activity. In our view, the issue of developing an effective algorithm for conducting interrogations—as well as the tactics for obtaining highly informative statements, overcoming tendencies to provide false declarations, eliminating psychological barriers, and reconstructing forgotten information—has been extensively addressed in specialized literature by authors in the fields of criminal procedure and forensic science. These aspects have also been analyzed in correlation with the procedural status of the interviewed person, since their legal position determines the specific tactics to

be applied—whether they are a defendant, a witness, or a victim<sup>1</sup>.

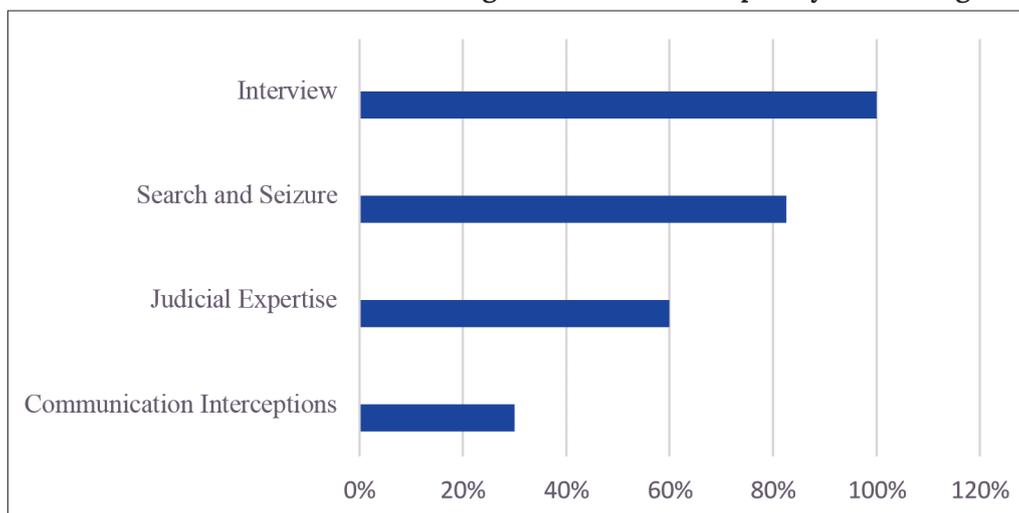
Given that verbal information holds essential evidentiary value in the investigation of most crimes, regardless of their nature or severity, interrogation stands out as one of the most frequently employed criminal procedural actions. In this regard, the offense of money laundering is no exception. Although information encoded in documents and financial-accounting records carries significant evidentiary weight, certain segments of criminal activity cannot be directly captured in the documentation seized. Instead, they are stored in the awareness of key individuals such as witnesses, victims, or—naturally—the perpetrators themselves.

Consequently, interrogation plays a vital role in supplementing and contextualizing material evidence, offering the investigative officer the opportunity to reconstruct, based on statements, the criminal mechanism, the subjective intent, and the relationships between participants—elements that are crucial for establishing the truth in money laundering cases.

In the investigation of money laundering offenses, interrogation, along with document examination, is one of the most commonly used procedural actions. Although such cases are characterized by their highly technical nature and the presence of strong documentary evidence, testimonial evidence continues to play a key role in reconstructing the factual context, determining relationships among participants, and clarifying their subjective intent. As emphasized in the legal doctrine, “testimony remains a fundamental evidentiary tool”<sup>2</sup>, despite technological advancements and the increasing predominance of electronic documents in criminal proceedings.

The analysis of judicial practice in money laundering cases has demonstrated the frequent use of interrogation in comparison to other procedural actions and special investigative measures (see Diagram no. 1).

Diagram no. 1. “The Frequency of Interrogation Usage”



<sup>1</sup> Belkin, A.R. *Interrogation of the Expert as a Procedural Action*. In: Theory and Practice of Forensic Expertise in Modern Conditions: Proceedings of the International Scientific-Practical Conference. Moscow: Prospekt Publishing House, 2007, pp. 97–99; Kononov, S.I., Motorin, A.S. *Interrogation in Criminal Procedure: Issues of the Relationship Between Procedural and Tactical Aspects*. Monograph. Rostov-on-Don: Publishing House of the Law Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2008.

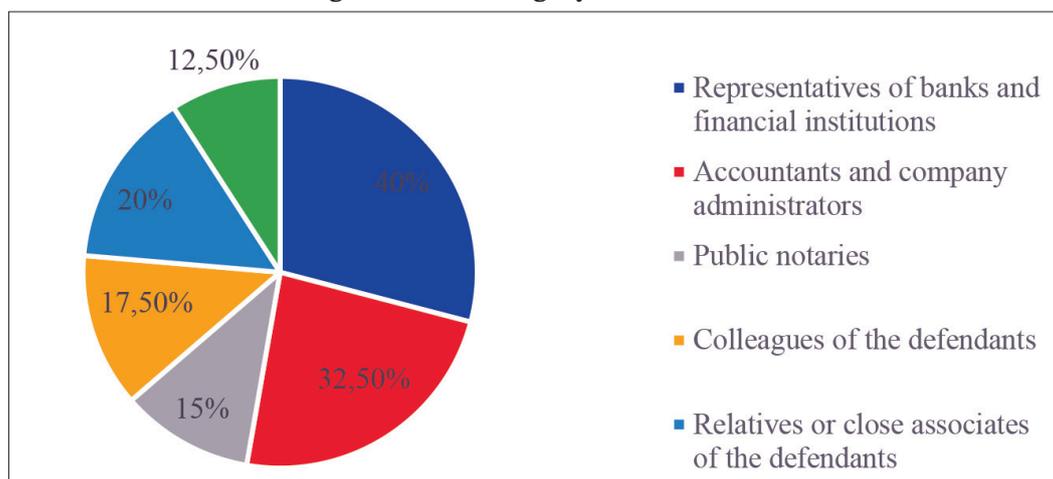
<sup>2</sup> Gherasim Dumitru, Rusu Lucia. *Forms and Techniques of Hearing in the Context of Judicial Investigation in Criminal Proceedings: Theoretical and Practical Reflections*, pp. 204 [accessed on 15.04.2025]. Available at: [https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag\\_file/204-211\\_4.pdf](https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag_file/204-211_4.pdf).

This high frequency underscores the importance of direct interaction with procedural subjects, particularly given that money laundering offenses involve complex structures, successive transactions, and concealed relationships among actors.

The analysis of the examined cases revealed several categories of interrogated persons, each providing a distinct type of information relevant to clarifying the case. In all reviewed cases, defendants were subjected to interrogation, registering a frequency of 100%, which confirms the crucial significance of this procedural action during the criminal investigation phase. The interrogation of the defendant is regarded not merely as a procedural obligation, but as a critical moment for shaping the investigative hypotheses. Even in situations where the defendants refused to provide substantive statements, simply documenting their procedural position and analyzing their nonverbal behavior served as valuable sources of information for investigators.

By contrast, various categories of witnesses were interrogated in 82.5% of the cases, a fact clearly illustrated in Diagram no. 2, which highlights the distribution of their participation in the interrogation process.

Diagram no. 2. Category and Distribution of Witnesses Interrogated



The witnesses came from various socio-professional backgrounds, reflecting the complexity of the mechanisms used to legalize illicit funds. Representatives of banks and financial institutions provided data concerning account openings, fund movements, unusual transactions, or suspicious contractual relationships. Accountants and company administrators were directly or indirectly involved in managing the economic entities used to conceal the illicit origin of assets. Notaries were summoned to clarify the circumstances under which legal documents—such as sales contracts, donations, or notarized powers of attorney—were drawn up, serving as instruments for obscuring the origin of the goods. Colleagues of the defendants contributed to identifying the behavior, responsibilities, and professional relationships of the suspects. Relatives or close associates of the defendants were questioned about the origin of acquired assets or the justification of transactions carried out in their favor, in order to rule out potential complicity or the use of their identity as a front. Technical and financial experts were called to explain the methodologies applied in scientific and technical findings, to support their conclusions, or to clarify specialized documents examined in the case.

Accordingly, interrogation proves to be an indispensable tool for reconstructing the

facts and consolidating the body of evidence, especially in cases characterized by a high degree of economic and financial sophistication, such as money laundering offenses. The presence and diversity of the categories of persons interrogated reflect the need to gather complementary information, enabling the correlation and interpretation of documentary evidence within a coherent logical and factual framework.

Although sometimes challenged by the defense on the grounds of presumed subjectivity, interrogation has played a key role in strengthening the evidentiary framework in money laundering cases, significantly contributing to reconstructing the criminal trajectory and to individualizing criminal liability. Judicial practice has demonstrated that interrogation can provide revealing elements, particularly when corroborated with other means of proof.

Thus, interrogation was primarily instrumental in confirming the existence of relationships between defendants and the economic entities involved in the process of fund legalization. In approximately 60% of the analyzed cases, witness statements revealed indirect yet significant links between the investigated individuals and commercial entities that appeared autonomous but were, in fact, controlled or influenced by the defendants.

Secondly, interrogation served as an effective tool for verifying the authenticity and legitimacy of documents presented in the criminal case. In about 45% of cases, witness statements either confirmed or raised doubts about the veracity of certain records, helping to establish their evidentiary value within the criminal investigation.

Another significant aspect was the role of interrogation in proving the subjective element of the offense. In half of the cases (50%), both the defendants' and witnesses' statements were used to demonstrate that the investigated individuals had knowledge of the illicit origin of the funds being laundered. These testimonies were relied upon by criminal investigation authorities to support the existence of either direct or conditional intent in the commission of the offense.

It is also noteworthy that in certain cases (12.5%), the courts identified contradictions in witness statements. However, rather than excluding these from the evidentiary body, the courts critically analyzed and used them to outline the factual context and to indirectly support the prosecution's version. This approach reflects the principle of free evaluation of evidence and highlights the importance of interpreting the entire body of evidence integratively, even when certain statements may initially appear inconclusive or contradictory.

Therefore, interrogation remains a crucial component in the evidentiary process of money laundering investigations—not only through its direct contribution to establishing the facts, but also through its capacity to lend coherence to other means of proof, ultimately supporting the foundation of a fair and equitable judicial outcome.

The analysis of the content of statements obtained through interrogations conducted in money laundering cases reveals a series of recurring patterns in declarative behavior—both from defendants and witnesses—with significant evidentiary relevance. In approximately half of the analyzed cases, defendants adopted a position of categorical denial regarding their involvement in the criminal activities under investigation. This attitude was frequently supported by subjective justifications, such as the formal transfer of business management to close third parties (“friends” or acquaintances), or the alleged lack of control over the bank accounts used. Such statements, although framed in a defensive tone, were often contradicted by other forms of evidence, particularly financial

and accounting documents or expert conclusions.

Conversely, statements made by professionally affiliated witnesses—especially bank officials and corporate accountants—played an essential role. In a significant number of cases, these witnesses described atypical transactions characterized by a lack of economic justification, contractual incoherence, or operational behavior inconsistent with the logic of legitimate commercial activity. These findings, expressed as professional assessments by the witnesses, were interpreted by the courts as relevant indicators of simulated conduct, typical of attempts to conceal the illicit origin of funds.

A distinct aspect was represented by the evasive statements offered by witnesses closely associated with the defendants, observed in approximately 25% of the analyzed cases. In such situations, witnesses—usually family members or individuals from the defendants' close circle—provided unclear, incomplete, or contradictory accounts, suggesting an intent to protect the persons under investigation. Even in the absence of formal charges for aiding and abetting, the courts approached such statements with caution, analyzing them within the broader context of the evidence presented.

Therefore, the content of the statements obtained during interrogations reflects not only the procedural positioning of the interviewees but also their defense strategy, level of cooperation, and intent to either obscure or clarify the facts. All of these aspects are crucial for the investigative authority's conclusions and for the court's evaluation of the evidence.

Nevertheless, the mere high frequency of interrogations does not automatically guarantee a corresponding level of evidentiary efficiency. Judicial experience and the analysis of complex money laundering cases show that, in certain situations, a large number of statements may lead to informational oversaturation, contradictions, or the dilution of evidentiary relevance. Thus, a high number of interrogated persons in a case does not necessarily correspond to a higher degree of factual clarification, especially when the statements are not corroborated by other forms of evidence or are not obtained using tactics suited to each witness's declarative profile.

Although legal scholarship<sup>3</sup> has, to some extent, addressed the procedural aspects of interrogations in such cases, we believe that the analysis of statement-gathering tactics in these files still requires further elaboration and adaptation. In particular, there is a pressing need for a nuanced approach that considers the specificity of each witness category, the nature and role of the information they may provide, and the context in which this information was acquired.

In the analyzed cases, the witnesses questioned came from heterogeneous professional backgrounds and provided information that varied both in volume and evidentiary value, necessitating a careful selection of questions and a differentiated tactical strategy. Among them were: public officials with decision-making authority—such as judges, notaries, or other representatives of public institutions—who could offer data regarding the recognition or transfer of patrimonial rights used to legalize illicitly obtained assets; employees in auxiliary or technical roles within institutional or commercial structures, whose observations might reveal peripheral yet useful aspects of the criminal mecha-

<sup>3</sup> Slavgorodskaya, O.A. Interrogation of Witnesses as a Source of Information in the Investigation of the Legalization (Laundering) of Money or Other Assets Acquired by Other Persons through Criminal Means and by the Person Himself as a Result of Committing a Crime. In: *Current Issues of Russian Law*. 2008. No. 4 (9), pp. 362–368.

nism; and representatives of the economic sector—such as real estate agents, employees of companies involved in transactions, or providers of goods and services—who could confirm the execution of operations with a simulated or economically unjustified nature.

A distinct category is represented by witnesses who, although not directly involved in the criminal activity, happened to witness key moments in the predicate offense or in the process of fund concealment. Also relevant are law enforcement officers or representatives of other public institutions who identified signs of money laundering while investigating other crimes or during the apprehension of the perpetrators. These witnesses contribute significantly to reconstructing the illicit trajectory of the funds.

This diversity of subjects involved in the interrogation process requires constant adaptation by the investigative authorities, who must display flexibility in identifying the most effective methods to foster cooperation, validate the statements obtained, and integrate them coherently into the body of evidence. In the absence of such adaptability, the interrogation risks becoming a mere procedural formality, lacking real impact on the judicial truth-finding process. Therefore, the effectiveness of interrogations in money laundering cases should not be measured quantitatively, but rather in terms of coherence, consistency, and their capacity to supplement, explain, or confirm other types of evidence within a rigorous investigation framework aimed at clarifying all constituent elements of the offense.

The subjects of interrogation in criminal cases involving money laundering can provide essential information depending on their direct perception of certain facts relevant to the case. The specific nature of their position stems both from the type of contact they had with the main actors and from the quality and source of the information they possess. Within this context, several general directions of interest emerge, useful in reconstructing the relationships and operations under investigation.

A first important aspect concerns the person's workplace, position held, and professional duties, particularly any direct or indirect connections with the facts that are the subject of the investigation. It is also essential to determine whether the witness knew the beneficiaries of the presumed criminal activity or any other persons involved, and if so, the nature of their relationship, how they met, who initiated contact, and under what circumstances the witness observed or recognized their physical or behavioral traits.

Furthermore, the interrogation aims to gather identifying information or other relevant data about persons of interest—whether from direct sources (statements, presented documents) or indirect sources (other interlocutors or personal observations). It is important to establish whether the documents presented by the involved individuals were official (e.g., identity documents, financial records, powers of attorney, or mandates of representation).

Additionally, the interrogation will examine in detail the context of the interactions: the place, time frame, duration, and nature of the contact between the witness and the persons under investigation, who initiated it, the topics discussed, and whether there were any proposals or requests that deviated from legal norms or commercial practices. In cases where the conversations involved financial resources or material assets, the estimated value, type (amounts, currency, objects), and any relevant characteristics will be documented.

Also relevant are the witness's reactions to potential proposals or pressures—whether they accepted, refused, or hesitated—and the motivations behind their decisions. The

concrete actions undertaken by each party during the discussions or negotiations will be recorded, including the outcome of the interaction (contract signing, agreement conclusion, service provision, or other types of arrangements) and whether there were any discrepancies between the verbally agreed terms and those reflected in the subsequently drafted documents.

Another important aspect concerns the process of drafting the documentation: who, where, and how the documents were prepared—whether they were drafted on the spot, brought already signed and stamped, or whether there were any objections to their content. Equally relevant is the method of payment between the parties—the timing, the amounts involved, the payment instruments used, the persons involved, and any suspicious circumstances surrounding the transaction.

It is also essential to determine whether and how the obligations assumed by the parties were fulfilled, whether any conflicts or misunderstandings arose, their causes, and how they were resolved. An evaluation must be conducted to establish whether the non-performance of obligations resulted from the decisions of either party, whether these actions generated significant damage, and to identify the nature, magnitude, and evidentiary basis of such harm.

Finally, it is important to clarify when and how the relationship between the parties ended—whether through completion of the contract, the occurrence of an external event, or the unilateral withdrawal of one party. All these elements help build a detailed picture of the social, professional, or economic interactions within which the mechanism of concealing the illicit origin of assets may be embedded, thus allowing a pertinent assessment of the witness's level of involvement or possible complicity.

A particular characteristic of witness interviews in money laundering cases lies in the participation of witnesses from public authorities empowered to make decisions with significant legal impact—decisions that directly influence the legal regime of assets subjected to the laundering process. In such cases, procedural complexity is heightened by the special status of these individuals, such as judges, who, while enjoying institutional authority and procedural immunity, may also be summoned as witnesses in criminal proceedings.

This duality creates a delicate, and at times conflicting, framework, in which criminal investigators must act with utmost caution and refined tactical professionalism. In practice, it has been observed that even when the questioning of judges is formally allowed, their testimonies are often limited to general statements marked by reservations and appeals to memory lapses due to the passage of time. Thus, key elements such as participants' courtroom behavior, the dynamics of evidence presentation, or the deliberative atmosphere often remain unclear, reducing the probative value of such testimony.

Moreover, law enforcement bodies often exhibit reluctance to apply rigorous questioning methods, possibly out of a latent concern not to affect the perceived neutrality of the court. Nevertheless, when such interviews are legally permissible, they must be conducted professionally, using carefully calibrated tactical techniques to stimulate memory recall, reconstruct relevant sequences, and clarify critical circumstances.

We therefore recommend that such questioning be preceded by rigorous thematic planning, with a clearly defined and delimited objective, based on the essential events of the case. Using topic-focused questions, rather than a general approach, may help steer the discussion toward relevant episodes and improve the quality of the information ob-

tained. Where feasible, the „evidence presentation” technique should also be employed to facilitate memory recall and encourage cooperation.

In the absence of such measures, interviews risk becoming mere procedural formalities, producing superficial and inconclusive statements whose content could otherwise be inferred from hearing transcripts or alternative sources, such as searches. This undermines the real potential of interviewing as a tool for obtaining authentic and reliable verbal information.

The issue is also relevant for other public officials vested with decision-making powers, such as notaries, lawyers, or other representatives of state institutions. Although most act in good faith, they may face difficulties in recalling the full circumstances under which they made certain decisions or drafted legal documents, thereby reducing the evidentiary value of their statements.

To overcome these limitations, law enforcement should effectively use tools offered by forensic interviewing tactics. Various psychological techniques for memory activation—such as contextual association, sensory stimulation, or sequential reconstruction—can assist in retrieving seemingly forgotten information, without compromising impartiality or introducing suggestion. It is crucial to avoid suggestive questioning or premature disclosure of information obtained from other sources, as these can distort the authenticity of responses.

In preparing for such interviews, it is advisable to thoroughly examine the documents previously seized through procedural actions (e.g., searches, document seizures), as they may offer clues about the decision-making context involving the interviewee. These materials can serve as the basis for additional clarification or elaboration questions. Where court hearings have been recorded (audio or video), relevant recordings should be retrieved and reviewed—not only to reconstruct the event chronology but also to observe participants’ behavior, a key element in correlating verbal with non-verbal data.

Thus, the effectiveness of interviewing public officials with legal responsibilities can only be ensured through a balanced tactical approach—one that combines procedural rigor with forensic flexibility, aiming to extract relevant, verifiable, and useful information for uncovering the truth in money laundering cases.

The process of laundering funds derived from illicit sources—as a natural consequence and intrinsic purpose of the predicate offense—inevitably generates a series of traces, some of which are „ideal” in nature, meaning they are not directly materialized but may be deduced through logical correlation of actions undertaken. These traces may be identified as early as the preparatory phase of the predicate offense, before its actual commission, in actions that anticipate or prepare the introduction of illegally obtained funds into the legal circuit. As mentioned earlier, there is a structural interdependence between the predicate offense and the act of money laundering, since the latter essentially functions as a method to hide the criminal origin of proceeds. The traces of this activity may also be reflected in the behavioral patterns specific to the early stages of the base offense.

To convincingly establish the circumstances surrounding the legalization of money, it is essential to analyze witness statements related to the predicate offense. Where the investigation of income-generating offenses preceded the initiation of the money laundering case and concluded with a final court judgment, the initial interview records must be appended to the new file. However, these witnesses should be re-interviewed, focusing specifically on the time and manner in which the money laundering was committed,

and on how the laundering process manifested in practice.

It is important to note that, during the criminal investigation phase of the predicate offense, the efforts of the investigative authority were naturally directed toward proving the constitutive elements of that specific offense, with evidentiary priorities focused on aspects distinct from the subsequent money laundering activity. As a result, certain circumstances relevant to the money laundering case may not have been thoroughly investigated or sufficiently documented at that stage.

In most of the analyzed cases, the victims—whether individuals or legal entities—suffered damage as a result of the commission of the predicate offense. When the criminal investigation simultaneously addresses both categories of offenses (the predicate offense and money laundering), or when it concerns a plurality of criminal acts that together reflect a structured mechanism of fund acquisition and laundering, the victim's interview should primarily focus on the circumstances in which the harm occurred. Additionally, depending on the specific case, the victim may also provide insights into the methods used by the perpetrators to conceal the origin of the funds, particularly where the victim observed suspicious elements indicative of laundering.

This interdependence between the predicate offense and the process of legitimizing illicit assets explains why relevant information for identifying money laundering methods may sometimes be found, at least partially, in statements given by witnesses or victims during the initial investigation. However, to ensure that the evidence collected is complete and aligned with the objectives of the current prosecution, it is essential to conduct follow-up interviews with a specific focus on facts and circumstances that reveal the transformation, concealment, and integration of illegally obtained assets into the legal financial system.

Continuing our analysis of the interviewing tactics used in criminal cases concerning the offense of money laundering, it is essential to examine the tactical particularities involved in interviewing the suspect or accused, given the critical role this procedural subject plays in clarifying and reconstructing the facts of the case.

This procedural action is typically conducted during the later stages<sup>4</sup> of the criminal investigation, at a point when the investigating authority already possesses a reasonable minimum of evidence supporting the concrete involvement of the interviewed person in the commission of the offense<sup>5</sup>. The initiation of this phase is therefore linked to the accumulation of a body of evidence justifying the change in the procedural status of the person, as well as to the need to advance the investigation toward identifying the motives, the criminal intent, and the connections between the participants.

This approach aligns with the modern criminalistic concept of structuring the criminal investigation into distinct functional phases, each characterized by specific tasks<sup>6</sup> and appropriate tactical methods. Although we do not intend to elaborate in detail on the theoretical framework of this periodization<sup>7</sup>—since it pertains to a separate segment

<sup>4</sup> Stancu, Emilian. *Treatise of Criminalistics*. 4th revised edition, Bucharest, 2015, p. 465; Ruiu, Marin. *Criminalistics: Elements of Criminalistic Tactics*. Bucharest: Universul Juridic, 2017, p. 130; Duvac, Constantin. *Criminalistics*. Bucharest: Hamangiu Publishing House, 2024, p. 194.

<sup>5</sup> Shurukhnov, N.G. (2014). *Investigative Actions at the Later Stage of Counterfeiting Investigations: Practical Significance and Tactical-Technological Foundations*. Russian Investigator, no. 5, pp. 13–17.

<sup>6</sup> Vozgrin, I.A. *Introduction to Criminalistics: History, Theoretical Foundations, Bibliography*. St. Petersburg, 2003, p. 274.

<sup>7</sup> Kardashevskaya, M.V. On the Issue of Periodization in Criminal Investigation. In: *Bulletin of Tula State*

of criminalistic doctrine—it is essential to emphasize that in the subsequent stage of the investigation, the focus shifts toward strengthening the evidentiary base and confronting the accused person with the investigated facts.

The Interview of the Suspect or Accused, Regardless of the Offense Category, Is One of the Most Frequently Applied Criminal Investigation Measures. In cases concerning money laundering, this procedural activity acquires an added layer of complexity, driven by the technical nature of the offense, the sequential development of criminal stages, and the concealment of relationships between subjects. For this reason, the interviewing tactic must be appropriately adapted in order to extract the most relevant and coherent information possible.

According to their procedural status, the suspect or accused has the right to make statements or to remain silent<sup>8</sup>, and this decision may not be interpreted to their disadvantage. Nevertheless, even in situations where the person refuses to cooperate, the criminal investigation body is legally obliged to conduct the interview procedure, observing all guarantees provided by the legal framework.

Criminal procedural regulations define the interview of this category of procedural subjects as a mandatory, not optional, action. This reflects the legislator's concern for safeguarding the right to defense, as well as for ensuring the legality of the criminal process. In this regard, the procedural framework provides a balance between the rights of the interviewed individual and the obligations of the investigative authority.

The tactical and methodological aspects of suspect interviews have been extensively addressed in the specialized literature<sup>9</sup>. However, the present study does not aim to revisit the general theoretical framework of this subject. Instead, it focuses on outlining practical directions of applicability that are particularly relevant in the context of money laundering investigations. Our objective is to formulate concrete recommendations aimed at optimizing this procedural action by tailoring interview tactics to the specific circumstances of each case, with the ultimate goal of obtaining statements that can effectively contribute to the establishment of the truth.

The interrogation of the suspect or accused in criminal cases concerning money laundering involves not only clarifying their individual involvement in the process of legalizing illicit funds, but also establishing the link to the predicate offense that generated such revenues. Depending on the nature of the underlying offense, the interview may require the application of distinct forensic methods tailored to each type of crime. However, since the present study does not aim to analyze the peculiarities of questioning in relation to each predicate offense, we shall focus on obtaining data relevant to establishing the constituent elements of the investigated crime.

Thus, the interrogation must aim to clarify the structure and functioning of the criminal group involved, including the classification of the type of participation (organ-

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University. *Economic and Legal Sciences*, 2013, No. 1–2, p. 24.

<sup>8</sup> Articles 103 and 104 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Moldova, adopted on March 14, 2003, published in: *Official Gazette* No. 248–251, art. 699.

<sup>9</sup> Stancu, Emilian. *Treatise of Criminalistics*. Revised Fourth Edition. Bucharest, 2015, pp. 411–488; Ruiu, Marin. *Criminalistics*. *Elements of Forensic Tactics*. Bucharest: Universul Juridic, 2017, pp. 45–214; Duvac, Constantin. *Criminalistics*. Bucharest: Hamangiu Publishing House, 2024, pp. 194–225; Cazan, Elena; Matei, Daniela; Gavriș, Radu. *The Tactics of Interviewing in Criminal Proceedings: A Guide to Best Practices*. Târgu Jiu: Măiastra, 2020; Grinenko, A.V. “Bringing to Charges, Presentation of Charges, and Interrogation of the Accused: Theoretical and Practical Issues”. In: *Criminal Procedure: Theory and Practice*, Moscow: Yurayt, 2011, pp. 480–490.

ized criminal group or criminal organization), the roles of its members, the degree of hierarchy, and the conspiratorial measures applied to protect the operation. The inquiry should determine when the interviewee joined the group, under what circumstances they were recruited, what roles they played, and the specific tasks they received from other members.

It is equally important to determine whether the idea of laundering the money originated with a particular member, whether the interviewee knows the individuals involved in committing the predicate offense, and how their interactions are maintained – particularly if these relationships are repetitive or organized. A key focus is identifying the decision-makers who implemented the laundering methods, the individuals who designed the procedures, assigned tasks among accomplices, and coordinated the execution of each criminal episode.

From a forensic-tactical perspective, it is crucial to reconstruct the entire laundering mechanism: the nature of the transactions, the order in which they occurred, the economic actors involved – be they legal entities or sole proprietorships – as well as the function of each operation in achieving the final goal of concealing the origin of the funds. In this respect, investigators must examine how entities were selected, who established contact, and how trust relationships were formed with employees of the entities involved.

Another focus of the interrogation should be the content of each transaction – the amounts involved, the essential elements, the signatures, and the responsibilities of the persons who signed the associated documents. It is necessary to establish who prepared the supporting documents, who signed them on behalf of the management (executives, chief accountants, legal advisors), and where seals and sensitive documents were stored, including those proving the identity of intermediaries or the existence of shell companies.

Moreover, the manner in which each party fulfilled its contractual obligations must be documented – whether these were fulfilled entirely, partially, or not at all, along with the reasons for any delays, refusals, or breaches. It is further necessary to determine how records of laundered amounts were kept, the profit distribution system within the group, and the share received by the interviewee – including the amount, the time it was received, and how the proceeds were used.

The interrogation should also seek to assess the total value of the funds laundered through the criminal scheme, as well as the circumstances under which the illicit operation was discontinued: who was responsible for stopping the transactions, where and under what circumstances this occurred.

Therefore, an effective interrogation of the suspect or accused in money laundering cases must go beyond a mere confrontation with the evidence. It requires the application of a sophisticated forensic methodology, aimed at reconstructing the logical and coherent sequence of the entire criminal process – from conception to implementation and conclusion.

The interrogation of suspects or accused individuals in criminal cases concerning money laundering entails a series of tactical particularities, shaped by numerous procedural and situational variables. Firstly, it is important to highlight that the interrogation may be conducted within different intermediate scenarios, each directly influencing the intervention strategies of the criminal investigation body. These scenarios include:

a) the simultaneous investigation of the money laundering offense along with the criminal proceedings concerning the predicate offense;

b) the investigation of money laundering in a separate criminal case, with the attachment of materials from the case where the predicate offense was examined;

c) the investigation in a separate case, without the predicate offense materials yet annexed to the file—a situation that may arise when the person is apprehended in a different location or at a different time than that of the commission of the initial act.

These variations result in significant differences in the approach to interrogation tactics. Thus, the interrogation may be directed toward both components of the criminal conduct—the predicate offense and the laundering process—or focused solely on the legalization activities, depending on the availability and relevance of the evidence at that stage.

Secondly, the manifestation form of the criminal activity—whether individual or organized—has a major impact on the applied tactics. As previously noted, money laundering, in most cases, exhibits the characteristics of a group offense, typically committed within organized criminal structures. This reality requires the application of specific interrogation methods, in line with the recommendations provided by specialists such as D. Ostavciuc, C. Rusnac, Iu. Odagiu, and Iu. Osipov regarding the questioning of individuals suspected of affiliation with organized criminal groups<sup>10</sup>.

A third determining factor is the procedural stance adopted by the suspect or accused in relation to the charges brought against them. Their attitude—whether it involves denial, minimization, selective cooperation, or full confession—directly affects the dynamics of the interview and compels the criminal investigation body to continuously adjust its behavioral approach to establish effective psychological contact and, if possible, encourage cooperation or a guilty plea.

In cases where materials from a previous criminal case concerning the predicate offense have been annexed to the file concerning money laundering, the criminal investigation officer benefits from a substantial body of information regarding the origin of the funds, the context of their generation, and the individuals involved in their acquisition. This facilitates the planning of interview tactics and allows for better anticipation of the suspect's reactions, as well as for more precise calibration of questions and strategic objectives.

If the suspect or accused has not been detained for money laundering but is under investigation for the predicate offense, the preparation phase of the interview must include a detailed review of the materials obtained through searches or document seizures from entities directly or indirectly linked to the individual. Additionally, attention must be paid to information obtained in response to requests submitted to public or private institutions.

When drafting the interview plan, careful selection of the evidence to be strategically presented during the discussion is essential, in accordance with procedural principles related to confidentiality and tactical balance. It is recommended that the suspect or accused not be prematurely informed about the content of the evidence held, and, where

<sup>10</sup> Osipov, Yu.Yu. Particularities of the Tactics Used in the Interrogation of Members of Organized Criminal Groups. In: *Theory and Practice of Criminalistics and Forensic Expertise: Interuniversity Collection of Scientific Articles*, Vol. 11, Saratov, 2001, pp. 100–102 et seq. Dinu Ostavciuc, Iurie Odagiu, Constantin Rusnac. *Investigation of Crimes in the Sphere of Organized Crime: Practical Guide = Cercetarea infracțiunilor din materia crimei organizate: Ghid practic*, Chișinău: S.n., 2016, p. 46. ISBN 978-9975-121-35-4.

necessary, access to certain information should be restricted to prevent them from adjusting their procedural stance or tailoring explanations to align with the available evidence.

Therefore, the effectiveness of interviewing in money laundering cases depends on thorough preparation, a clear understanding of the evidentiary and procedural context in which the action takes place, and the ability of the investigating officer to adapt tactical techniques to the specific circumstances of each case.

Although the issue of interviewing suspects or defendants has been extensively discussed in the specialized literature<sup>11</sup>, certain particularities of conducting this procedural action in adversarial conditions require further examination, especially in the context of investigating money laundering, which is marked by high complexity and an elevated degree of criminal professionalism.

The first tactical element that requires careful consideration is the timing of the interview. In situations where the suspect is apprehended unexpectedly, the psychological and emotional tension induced by such an intervention can naturally lead to a temporary reduction in their resistance to judicial authorities. Under these circumstances, the investigating body, by evaluating the external manifestations of the suspect's psychological state, must identify the most opportune moment to initiate the interview and act promptly, capitalizing on the brief window of willingness to cooperate.

However, in other scenarios, the opposite strategy may be more appropriate—namely, the so-called „psychological waiting” tactic—which involves deliberately delaying the interview to intensify the suspect's mental discomfort and to instill the belief that the investigating authority holds a robust body of evidence, while their passive or hostile stance appears increasingly vulnerable. This method relies on subtle psychological pressure, fostering confusion and reducing the suspect's ability to respond coherently<sup>12</sup>.

In money laundering cases, the core evidentiary material typically consists of documents—banking records, financial statements, contracts, and so forth. Therefore, the interview tactic must intelligently rely on these documents. A brief and strategically selected presentation of their content and significance is recommended, without granting the suspect full or premature access to the documents. Nonetheless, one must cautiously manage the risk that, once aware of the existence of such evidence, the suspect may restrict their statements to merely confirming facts already reflected in the documents, while deliberately omitting other relevant episodes or complicity with other individuals.

Given the high level of professionalism characterizing the perpetrators of such crimes, advanced forensic interviewing techniques must be employed—such as reflexive interview management<sup>13</sup>. This involves not only drawing conclusions from existing information but also anticipating the suspect's reactions and defensive strategies. By simu-

<sup>11</sup> Stancu, Emilian. *Treatise on Criminalistics*, 4th revised edition. Bucharest, 2015, pp. 465–495; Ruiu, Marin. *Criminalistics: Elements of Forensic Tactics*. Bucharest: Universul Juridic, 2017, pp. 127–223; Duvac, Constantin. *Criminalistics*. Bucharest: Hamangiu Publishing House, 2024, pp. 198–207; Cazan, Elena; Matei, Daniela; Gavriș, Radu. *Interview Tactics in the Criminal Process: A Guide to Best Practices*. Târgu Jiu: Măiastra, 2020, pp. 17–47.

<sup>12</sup> Drăgulean, Alexandru; Nestor, Sergiu. The Psychological Coordinates of the Criminal Investigation Activity During the Hearing of the Suspect, the Accused, and the Defendant. In: *Scientific Annals of the “Ștefan cel Mare” Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova: Legal Sciences*, 2015, No. XV(2), pp. 68–73.

<sup>13</sup> Osoianu, Tudor et al. *Tactics of Criminal Investigation Actions*. Chișinău, 2020, p. 191.

lating and counteracting potential adversarial behaviors, the investigative authority can adjust its tactical discourse and steer the interaction toward the desired outcome.

Within this framework, two reflexive methods have proven effective. The first involves the progressive use of documentary content: in the initial stage, only those documents that clearly contradict the suspect's claims regarding specific episodes should be introduced. Based on the reactions observed, the questioning can then be extended to other incidents for which direct evidence may not yet exist. The second method exploits the suspect's lack of knowledge about the positions adopted by their accomplices. Considering the transnational or decentralized structure of many criminal organizations, this uncertainty can be strategically leveraged to induce a state of psychological tension and ambiguity by presenting a comprehensive narrative that implies the imminent collapse of the entire criminal network.

From a forensic perspective, several tactical approaches can be employed, such as “maintaining informational ignorance,” “creating a state of logical pressure,” or “persuading the suspect of the inefficiency of their adopted position.”<sup>14</sup> These techniques do not involve any form of physical coercion or violation of fundamental rights but are instead investigative strategies based on dialogue, reasoning, and behavioral modeling.

A particularly valuable tactic at this stage is associated with the communication of reasonable suspicion. In most cases, the initial interview also constitutes the first direct interaction between the suspect and the criminal investigation authority. In this context, it is advisable that the suspicion be articulated in general terms, without fully disclosing the factual grounds. This approach creates favorable conditions for an effective interview, during which, under the impact of the applied tactics, the suspect may provide information that exceeds the known evidentiary framework, potentially revealing previously unknown episodes or identifying additional participants.

This method proves especially relevant in money laundering investigations, as even after extensive covert operations, the investigative body often possesses only fragmented, incomplete data with a limited degree of certainty.

An analysis of judicial practice supports the conclusion that, during the suspect's initial interview, the use of broadly framed questions combined with requests for specific and concrete answers constitutes an effective tactic. This approach enables the investigating officer to conceal existing informational gaps, projecting an image of detailed knowledge of the case circumstances. In doing so, a favorable psychological imbalance is created, encouraging the suspect to provide relevant details in an attempt to justify their position.

Subsequently, depending on the information obtained and the evolution of the informational-tactical context, the questions can be progressively reformulated and clarified, allowing for continuous adaptation of the interview strategy. This dynamic turns the suspect's interview into a heuristic procedure, where each new question is conditioned and guided by the responses previously received—following the methodological model whereby “subsequent inquiry is shaped by prior information obtained.”<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, in cases where the criminal investigation officer possesses a solid and detailed body of evidence, the questions posed may be formulated with a higher

<sup>14</sup> Cazan, Elena; Matei, Daniela; Gavriș, Radu. *Interview Tactics in the Criminal Process: A Guide to Best Practices*. Târgu Jiu: Măiastra, 2020, pp. 39–47.

<sup>15</sup> Osoianu, Tudor et al. *Tactics of Criminal Investigation Actions*. Chișinău, 2020, p. 177.

degree of specificity and depth, including extensive detailing. This strategy aims to convey the impression that the investigating authority has a comprehensive understanding of the facts and the criminal mechanism, which may prompt the suspect to cooperate, confirm certain information, or even provide additional details.

Another crucial aspect of the interview strategy concerns the presence of the defense counsel during the procedure. It is essential that the investigating officer pays close attention to the role and conduct of the defense attorney. From both procedural and forensic-tactical perspectives, it is unacceptable for the counsel to respond on behalf of the suspect or to interfere actively in the dialogue between the suspect and the investigative body. Statements must be made solely by the person being interviewed, consciously and independently.

The defense attorney's role at this procedural stage is limited to offering confidential legal advice prior to the interview; during the hearing itself, their interventions must remain brief and strictly advisory in nature<sup>16</sup>. Any form of substituting the direct expression of the suspect risks compromising not only the authenticity of the statements but also the effectiveness of the forensic tactics, reducing the process to a mere formality devoid of probative value.

Legal consultations offered during the interview must never turn into a “*teleprompting role*”<sup>17</sup>, where the defense counsel provides answers or formulates statements on behalf of the suspect. Any such attempts to override the suspect's procedural will must be explicitly recorded in the interview transcript, as they constitute impermissible influence on the conduct of the criminal procedure. It is imperative that the criminal investigation body document any intervention by the defense that exceeds the limits of legal consultation—including attempts to answer in place of the suspect—to preserve the procedural integrity of the act.

In the context of money laundering investigations, the spatial positioning of the defense counsel relative to the interviewee takes on special tactical importance. Therefore, we consider it both tactically and procedurally justified for the attorney to be seated outside the suspect's direct line of sight during the interview. This measure is intended to prevent any form of nonverbal communication—intentional or not—between the attorney and the interviewee, as such interactions could undermine the authenticity and spontaneity of the statements.

It is well recognized in the forensic literature that, in tense settings, suspects can be influenced through gestures, facial expressions, or other subtle signals from their counsel<sup>18</sup>. Even in the absence of an overt intent to influence, such manifestations can alter the behavior of the person being questioned and significantly diminish the probative value of the statements provided. In money laundering cases, where evasive responses and strategically crafted procedural positions are frequently encountered, eliminating any source of influence becomes imperative.

In this regard, the argument that such a measure would constitute a restriction of the right to defense is unfounded. The defense counsel is not excluded from the proce-

<sup>16</sup> Kibardin, I.P. On Certain Aspects of Defense Counsel's Opposition During Interrogation. In: *Bulletin of Udmurt University*, Issue No. 2-2/2014, pp. 226–228.

<sup>17</sup> Donskoy, D.D. *The Function of Criminal Prosecution at the Pre-Trial Stage*. Abstract of the PhD dissertation in Law. Rostov-on-Don, 2005, p. 8.

<sup>18</sup> Osoianu, Tudor, et al. *Tactics of Criminal Investigation Actions*. Chișinău: 2020, pp. 175–176.

dure; rather, they remain present and maintain full auditory access to the hearing proceedings. Consequently, their procedural rights remain intact. The actual purpose of this measure is to ensure a fair, objective, and interference-free investigative environment, thereby safeguarding both the interests of the parties and the legality of the criminal proceedings.

Moreover, positioning the defense counsel outside the direct visual field of the suspect allows the criminal investigation officer to conduct the hearing strategy without the risk of disrupting its rhythm or content. By eliminating sources of visual influence, the officer can more accurately observe the suspect's behavior, emotional and verbal reactions, and any contradictions or hesitations that may indicate undeclared or concealed aspects.

In the context of money laundering offenses, such behavioral cues may prove decisive in reconstructing the modus operandi and determining each participant's level of involvement. The proposed tactic contributes to the creation of a controlled environment, where the authenticity of statements is preserved and external influences are minimized.

Although it may be argued that this measure could generate a certain degree of psychological discomfort for the person being heard, we consider this perception to be overstated. The tension typically associated with a hearing stems primarily from the nature of the criminal process itself, rather than from the physical positioning of the attorney. Furthermore, by eliminating visual contact with the defense counsel, the psychological pressure experienced by the suspect or accused may actually be reduced, thereby facilitating freer expression and diminishing both voluntary and involuntary influences on procedural behavior.

According to criminal procedure law, *“when discrepancies exist between the statements of persons questioned in the same case, a confrontation shall be conducted between those persons, including with those whose statements are unfavorable to the suspect or the accused, if necessary, in order to establish the truth and eliminate discrepancies.”*<sup>19</sup>

From a forensic-tactical perspective, confrontation is recognized as a special method of interviewing, applicable exclusively during the subsequent phase of criminal investigation. It is ordered in situations where essential contradictions arise between the statements of individuals already questioned, regardless of their procedural status—suspect, witness, injured party, or other participant. The purpose of the confrontation is not only to confirm the existence of these inconsistencies but also to identify their causes, whether they stem from differences in perception, memory errors, an intent to conceal the truth, or even an attempt to mislead the investigative authorities.

In criminal cases concerning money laundering, confrontation appears as a subsidiary procedural action, applied selectively and only in well-justified situations. Although this type of offense typically relies on documentary, financial-accounting evidence and technical expert reports, the existence of contradictory positions between participants necessitates the application of confrontation to clarify contested aspects and verify the veracity of statements.

Judicial practice statistics confirm the limited but essential use of confrontation in such cases. Thus, from the total number of analyzed cases, confrontation was applied in only 22.5%. This low frequency reflects the specific nature of the offense but does not diminish the importance of confrontation in cases where the factual version of the parties

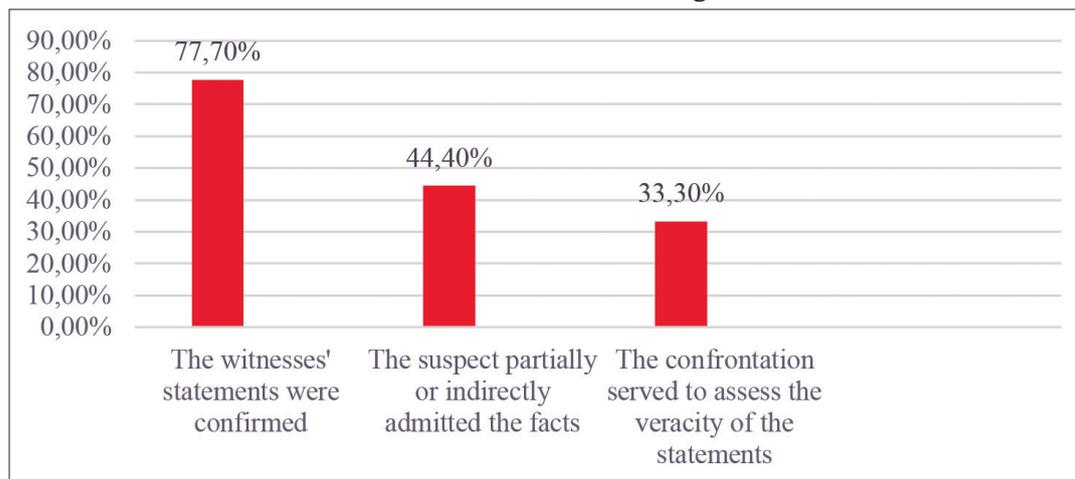
<sup>19</sup> Article 113 paragraph (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Moldova, adopted on March 14, 2003. In: Official Gazette No. 248–251, Article 699.

proved to be inconsistent. In such situations, confrontation played a probative consolidation role by encouraging direct and unmediated expression between the parties.

For instance, in cases where witnesses indicated the existence of meetings, transactions, or suspicious transfers, which the defendant denied, confrontation enabled the weighing of positions and the verification of their consistency in light of previous statements.

From a tactical standpoint, confrontation has produced the following effects in the analyzed cases, as shown in Diagram no. 3.

Diagram No. 3. Effects of Confrontation:



Courts of law have assessed this procedural measure as particularly effective in cases where discrepancies concerned:

a) the defendant's connection to certain economic entities involved in the legalization of funds;

b) his or her presence at the signing of financial transaction contracts;

c) the actual handling of illicitly obtained sums of money.

In certain instances, the confrontation was even requested by defense attorneys, particularly to challenge the testimony of cooperating or protected witnesses, highlighting the bilateral nature of the measure—applicable in the interest of both the prosecution and the defense.

Furthermore, in none of the analyzed cases was the confrontation rejected by the court as irrelevant or unnecessary. On the contrary, courts emphasized its evidentiary value when corroborated with other means of proof, underlining its subsidiary but decisive role in clarifying contentious aspects.

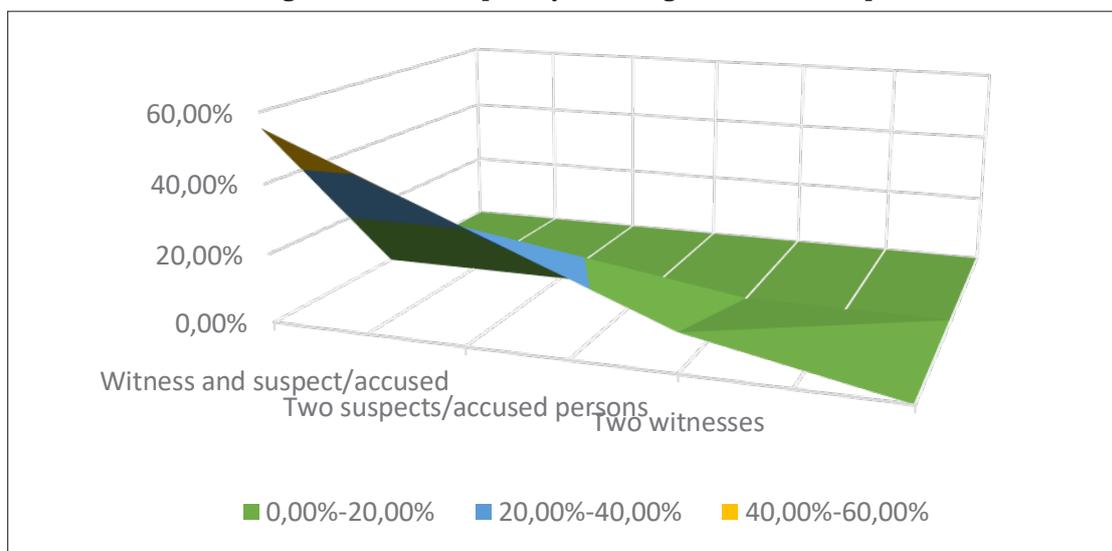
Among the most frequent categories of participants in confrontations in money laundering cases (as illustrated in Diagram No. 4) are:

a) Witness and suspect/accused – when the discrepancies relate to facts directly perceived by the witness, sometimes even in the presence of the accused;

b) Two suspects/accused persons – when diverging versions emerge regarding how the act was committed, each person's role, and the involvement of other participants;

c) Two witnesses – who, despite having attended the same events, provide differing interpretations of what occurred.

Diagram No. 4. Frequency of Categories of Participants in Confrontations:



Therefore, confrontation, although applied less frequently than other procedural actions, retains its relevance in complex cases, especially those involving organized economic and financial crime, where the establishment of the truth often depends on the direct comparison of conflicting positions and the real-time evaluation of the participants' behavioral reactions.

For the proper conduct of confrontation, specific tactical procedures from interviewing practices apply. One important condition is that confrontation should take place shortly after the discrepancies between previous statements have been identified. This is necessary to prevent the individuals from meeting and discussing their earlier statements, potentially aligning them under the influence of interested parties.

The criminal procedure law does not impose a mandatory rule dictating the strict order in which each individual must speak during a confrontation. In most cases, priority should be given to the person who, in the justified opinion of the criminal investigation officer<sup>20</sup>, provides truthful information.

However, when planning a confrontation involving, on one side, a person whose statements are considered false, and on the other side, a public institution employee (or, in some cases, an employee of a commercial or other organization) who, due to their professional and psychological qualities and level of competence, is capable of exposing the opponent in a consistent and convincing manner, a reverse order from the traditional one should be adopted. That is, the person whose declarations are questionable should speak first, followed by the one who is expected to refute them. This tactic is appropriate because it prevents a situation where the person providing dubious statements, upon hearing well-argued and truthful assertions, withdraws and refuses to continue providing testimony.

Another tactical recommendation regarding the conduct of confrontation is the active use of documents when formulating detailed, control, or verification questions. After both individuals have given their statements, the criminal investigation officer or the par-

<sup>20</sup> Osoianu, Tudor, et al. *Tactics of Criminal Investigation Actions*. Chișinău, 2020, p. 204.

ties, under the officer's supervision, have the right to ask questions<sup>21</sup>. Unfortunately, practice shows that investigators often underuse this opportunity, posing a minimal number of questions, which are frequently of a formal nature.

### CONCLUSIONS

The interview remains one of the most valuable procedural actions in the investigation of money laundering offenses, offering the possibility to reconstruct criminal relationships, subjective intent, and the sequence of concealed operations—even in cases dominated by documentary evidence.

The diversity of individuals interviewed necessitates a differentiated tactical approach, tailored to their procedural status, declarative behavior, and informational potential.

The efficiency of an interview is not determined by the number of statements obtained, but rather by their coherence, relevance, and ability to corroborate and complete other forms of evidence within a logical and persuasive probative structure.

Although used less frequently, the confrontation plays a decisive role in clarifying contradictions, especially in situations where witnesses and suspects present divergent factual accounts regarding the mechanism of fund legalization.

The role of the defense attorney during the interview must be managed with balance—respecting the right to defense while preventing indirect influence on the procedural behavior of the suspect through positioning or non-verbal communication.

The use of modern criminalistic techniques—such as “psychological waiting,” progressive handling of evidence, or the induction of informational tension—significantly contributes to obtaining relevant and truthful statements, without violating procedural rights.

To fully leverage the evidentiary potential of interviews in money laundering cases, rigorous thematic planning is required, along with continuous tactical adaptation according to the evolution of the case and an integrative approach based on the logic of modern criminal investigation.

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<sup>21</sup> Vasilev, A., Vinberg, A., et al. *Criminalistics*. Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1961, p. 345.

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