

Valid from 1 May 2021

# Guideline on dealing with risk-increasing factors relating to money laundering

## I Preamble

### Objective of this Guideline

The objective of this Guideline is to establish a uniform industry standard that goes beyond the legal provisions and defines possible indicia of money laundering, predicate offences of money laundering, organised crime, or financing of terrorism in order to mitigate the risks to banks posed by the individual factors. The Guideline serves to further specify the criteria and concepts applicable to business relationships and transactions with increased risks and defines uniform measures for dealing with and monitoring these risk-increasing factors. If such indicia are identified, risk-based clarifications must be carried out as part of the applicable due diligence obligations.

The member banks of the Liechtenstein Bankers Association have undertaken to implement the requirements set out in this Guideline as a minimum standard. Each member institution is free to define further institution-specific measures that go beyond this Guideline. Foreign group companies may not be used to circumvent these rules. This Guideline is without prejudice to the requirements under due diligence law as well as the requirements of the FMA, in particular those set out in FMA Guideline 2013/1 and FMA Guideline 2018/7.

## II Scope of application

### 1 Scope of application of the Guideline

This Guideline applies when entering into new business relationships and sets out risk-based measures applicable to existing business relationships. The time periods for application set out in the individual sections apply to the respective measures.

### 2 Requirements for member banks

The member banks must take into account the definitions and measures set out under Point III in addition to the legal and supervisory requirements, both in the context of their risk classification of business relationships (Article 9a SPG) and their institution-specific risk-based monitoring (Articles 9 and 11 SPG).

### III Industry standard

#### 1 Complex structures

##### 1.1 In general

To further specify the existing due diligence and regulatory provisions relating to complex structures, this Guideline serves to define a common understanding for dealing with such complex structures. As part of risk-appropriate monitoring of business relationships, the following indicia for classifying complex structures must be taken into account to the extent possible using IT-based systems as referred to in Article 9b SPG.

##### 1.2 Indicia of complex structures

Indicia are available to assess whether a structure is complex. An overall assessment using all available indicia is always required. In addition to the factors enumerated in FMA Guideline 2013/1, the following indicia in particular must be taken into account as increasing or reducing risk in the assessment of each case:

- Type of structure
  - Number of business relationships with the same beneficial owner (BO) in the role of effective contributor, beneficiary, holder of shares of 25% or more, or person exercising control (Article 3(1) of the Due Diligence Ordinance (SPV))
  - Number of legal entities with horizontal or vertical participations
- Geographical factors
  - Number of involved jurisdictions of the legal entities and their geographical risk
  - Domicile/registered office/branch establishment of the BO in a country with potentially lower risk as set out in Annex 1 Section A(c) SPG or with higher geographical risk as set out in Annex 2 Section A(c) SPG
- Classification of business relationship
  - Operating company
  - Domiciliary company including holding<sup>1</sup>
  - Availability of and access to information relevant to due diligence about the structure from official registers or publicly authenticated documents
- Product- and sales-specific factors
  - Area of business (industry)/economic purpose and reasonableness of the structure

<sup>1</sup> Domiciliary company in the sense of a non-operating company

- Other factors (where available)
  - Bearer shares
  - Number and volume of payment flows between legal entities
  - Differing balance sheet dates for the participating legal entities
  - Frequency of restructurings

The scope of the individual indicia to be included in the assessment (number/volume) must be determined on an institution-specific basis.

## 2 Transitory transactions

### 2.1 In general

According to Annex 3 SPV, transitory accounts and transitory transactions are indicators of money laundering, organised crime, and financing of terrorism. Transitory transactions and accounts are defined as "transactions, in which assets are withdrawn shortly after being deposited with the person subject to due diligence (transitory accounts and transactions" and "withdrawal of assets, shortly after they have been credit to the account (transitory account)" (see Annex 3 Section II(1) SPV).

### 2.2 Indicia of transitory transactions

Uniformly defined indicia are to be used with system support to identify transitory transactions and defined as a minimum standard. When identifying transitory transactions/accounts that do not correspond to the usual transaction behaviour for specific customer groups (e.g. operating companies, salary accounts), the following indicia must be taken into account in particular:

- Time period of inflows/outflows  
To monitor transitory transactions/accounts, those transactions must in all cases be taken into account for which a period of 30 days or less has elapsed between the inflow at the person subject to due diligence and the outflow to another account at the person subject to due diligence or another bank or the withdrawal of the assets, on a rolling basis.
- Measures  
Each bank must define risk-appropriate measures (e.g. thresholds) for the review of transitory transactions/accounts based on its business model and, where appropriate, depending on the classification of the customer.
- Inflow/outflow ratio  
Transitory transactions/accounts are in general characterised by the fact that the incoming payments during the defined period largely coincide with the outgoing payments (e.g. between 90% and 110% within 30 days). The determination of the inflow/outflow ratio relevant to transaction monitoring is specific to the institution.

### 3 Complex transactions

#### 3.1 In general

Article 11(6) SPG provides that persons subject to due diligence must examine the background and purpose of all complex or unusually large transactions, all unusual transaction patterns, and transactions with no apparent economic or lawful purpose, to the extent reasonably possible. To determine whether these transactions or activities are suspicious, the persons subject to due diligence must in particular improve the scope and type of risk-based monitoring of the business relationship. In practice, the complexity of a transaction is difficult to recognise in advance or only in connection with other indicia to be further specified below.

#### 3.2 Possible indicia

Indicia that may point to a complex transaction in the context of risk-based monitoring are:

- Lack of transparency of information relevant under due diligence law
- Transitory transactions
- Unusually protracted transactions

### 4 Adverse media screening

#### 4.1 In general

As part of ongoing, risk-appropriate monitoring of business relationships, media reports about customers and persons acting on behalf of the customer or the legal entity that are relevant under due diligence law must also be taken into account.

Relevant under due diligence law are in particular media reports mentioning the customer in connection with money laundering, predicate offences of money laundering, organised crime, or financing of terrorism. Where matches arise, the source of information should also be considered in terms of credibility, quality, independence, and so on. Whenever possible, IT-based systems as referred to in Article 9b SPG should be used.

IT-based systems used for adverse media screening must go beyond PEP matching and sanctions list matching. If the systems used do not sufficiently take current media reports or open source content into account, this can be compensated for by additional internet research (e.g. World-Check basic version combined with manual internet research). Adverse media screening must take into account media content from the relevant target markets.

#### 4.2 Frequency of adverse media screening

Adverse media screening must be performed at least as follows:

- During the onboarding process

- Risk-based, as part of the regular review<sup>2</sup>
- Incident-specific review where risk-relevant indicators change<sup>3</sup>

The frequency of adverse media screening is to be further enhanced through automated IT support by the end of 2022.

If monitoring gives rise to suspicious facts, these must be clarified in accordance with Article 9(4) SPG and the appropriate measures must be taken.

## 5 Companies with bearer shares

### 5.1 In general

Transparency of bearer shares is a requirement of both the FATF and the Global Forum. For this reason, the depository principle for bearer shares has applied in Liechtenstein to companies with bearer shares since 1 March 2013. This does not apply to listed companies, undertakings for collective investment in transferable securities, investment funds, and investment companies. Comparing Liechtenstein law with that of other jurisdictions, many countries further restrict or even prohibit the issuance of bearer shares by public limited companies or comparable legal entities.<sup>4 5</sup> Moreover, some correspondent banks provide that transactions in connection with companies issuing bearer shares are not permissible or are restricted.

Legal entities with certain characteristics exhibit higher money laundering risks, especially if there are difficulties for persons subject to due diligence to obtain accurate information on beneficial ownership, as may be the case for companies with bearer shares. To reduce risks in this context, the member banks must take the measures described below – irrespective of the possibility of upcoming amendments to the Law on Persons and Companies (PGR).

### 5.2 Institution-specific measures of the member banks

#### 5.2.1 Commencement of new business relationships

##### *a) Domestic operating companies with bearer shares*

Thanks to the immobilisation rules provided for in the PGR (depository system) and the small size of the country, domestic operating companies in Liechtenstein, including those that issue bearer shares, are generally known and therefore represent a low risk. Local operating companies do not have a high degree of complexity, and no difficulties exist in principle to obtain information on beneficial ownership.

<sup>2</sup> as set out in FMA Guideline 2013/1, Point 5.3.2

<sup>3</sup> Indicators include relevant KYC changes, changes in the beneficial ownership, or repeated enquiries from correspondent banks.

<sup>4</sup> partnership limited by shares and European Company (SE)

<sup>5</sup> Switzerland: transitional period for existing bearer shares until 30 April 2021, no issuance of new bearer shares since 1 October 2019; Germany: individual securitisation prohibited and deposit of the global certificate with a common depository or a recognised central securities depository within the EEA or a third country or another foreign depository meeting the requirements of the first sentence of § 5(4) of the Safe Custody Act.

Taking up new business relationships with domestic operating companies is therefore permissible if the following steps are taken:

- Inclusion of a current extract from the Commercial Register (including listing of the depository) in the customer file
- Requesting of the share register from the depository and archiving of the share register in the disclosure file
- Reconciliation of the share register with existing disclosures
- Repetition as part of the periodic review cycle

*b) Domestic non-operating companies with bearer shares*

New business relationships with domestic non-operating companies with bearer shares may no longer be entered into upon entry into force of this Guideline.

*c) Listed legal entities in Switzerland, the EEA/EU, and third countries with due diligence and safekeeping obligations and supervisory standards in line with the requirements set out in the Anti-Money Laundering Directive*

It is permissible to take up new business relationships with listed legal entities in Switzerland, the EEA/EU, and third countries with due diligence and safekeeping obligations and supervisory standards in line with the requirements set out in the Anti-Money Laundering Directive even if they issue bearer shares, provided that proof of listing has been provided. Upon entry into force of this Guideline, the relevant documents<sup>6</sup> must be obtained and included in the due diligence file.

*d) Foreign legal entities with bearer shares, subject to c)*

Taking up new business relationships with foreign legal entities issuing bearer shares is no longer permissible upon entry into force of this Guideline.

## 5.2.2 Treatment of existing business relationships

Existing business relationships with companies with bearer shares must be updated in accordance with the following principles.

*a) Domestic operating companies*

Existing business relationships with domestic operating companies with bearer shares must be updated as follows:

- Inclusion of a current extract from the Commercial Register (including listing of the depository) in the customer file
- Requesting of the share register from the depository and archiving of the share register in the disclosure file / custody with the bank maintaining the account
- Reconciliation of the share register with existing disclosures
- Updating and repetition as part of the periodic and incident-specific review cycle

<sup>6</sup> proof of listing and equivalence of anti-money laundering obligations

*b) Domestic non-operating companies*

In the case of domestic non-operating companies issuing bearer shares, existing business relationships must be updated as follows:

- Inclusion of a current extract from the Commercial Register (including listing of the depository) in the customer file
- Requesting of the share register from the depository and archiving of the share register in the disclosure file / custody with the bank maintaining the account
- Reconciliation of the share register with existing disclosures
- Updating and repetition as part of the periodic and incident-specific review cycle

*c) Listed legal entities in Switzerland, the EEA/EU, and third countries with due diligence and safekeeping obligations and supervisory standards in line with the requirements set out in the Anti-Money Laundering Directive*

Existing business relationships with listed legal entities in Switzerland, the EEA/EU, and third countries with due diligence and safekeeping obligations and supervisory standards in line with the requirements set out in the Anti-Money Laundering Directive which issue bearer shares must be updated as follows:

- Requesting of proof of listing and equivalent anti-money laundering obligations upon entry into force of this Guideline, but at the latest within the following 12 months.

*d) Foreign legal entities with bearer shares, subject to c)*

Business relationships with all other foreign legal entities with bearer shares must be updated as follows:

- Requesting of written certification that the bearer shares are held in custody by a party entitled under the law of the country of domicile and documentation thereof in the disclosure file / custody with the bank maintaining the account.
- Written certification by an external depository that it holds the bearer shares; names of the individuals for whom these bearer shares are held and certification that the depository will not release these bearer shares without written notification to the bank and that it will inform the bank if the bearer shares are registered.
- Bearer shares must be considered a risk-increasing factor for the risk classification of customers. Existing business relationships of public limited companies with bearer shares (or comparable legal forms) are therefore subject to enhanced monitoring.
- If the depository principle is not provided for by law in a given country, the bank must, in accordance with the individual risk assessment of the business relationship, request third-party evidence ensuring a standard comparable to the depository principle.

- Updating and repetition as part of the periodic and incident-specific review cycle

If updating of the existing business relationships in accordance with the above principles is not possible, they shall be dissolved, if possible no later than 6 months after determination that they cannot be updated.

## 6 Service companies

### 6.1 In general

Business relationships of service companies are used in part for the fiduciary receipt and forwarding of third-party assets, with the aim of fulfilling certain discretionary requirements of the transaction parties.

This gives rise to an inherent risk of money laundering, given that the inflows and outflows are not very transparent, and the transactions and actual counterparties (payee/payer) are not visible to the other banks involved in the transaction. When using service companies for the settlement of transactions for a third party (fiduciary receipt and forwarding of third-party assets), the third parties must be identified as an additional beneficial owner using the applicable form<sup>7</sup> (Article 2(1)(e) SPG).

### 6.2 Measures

In the context of this Guideline, the following principles aim to ensure uniformity in the treatment of service companies:

- Taking up new business relationships for service companies is prohibited.
- Existing business relationships must be classified as high risk in the risk categorisation and must be wound down within 9 months of entry into force of this Guideline.
- Exceptions:
  - Fiduciary accounts of lawyers, law firms, and legal agents serving the purposes set out in Article 22b(4) SPV,<sup>8</sup> and
  - Fiduciary accounts of lawyers and notaries authorised in Liechtenstein and abroad, provided that such accounts are permissible under the law of the home country and the purpose of the settlement of the fiduciary transaction is to secure the assets for the duration of the settlement of an underlying transaction, and such settlement is customary and necessary due to the nature of the transaction (e.g. real estate transaction)<sup>9</sup>

## 7 Products and services

### 7.1 In general

Certain service offerings or products may involve increased risks of money laundering, especially if the transparency or the possibility of identifying the

<sup>7</sup> FMA Communication 2015/7

<sup>8</sup> Simplified due diligence may be applied in these cases.

<sup>9</sup> Simplified due diligence may not be applied in these cases.



person(s) ultimately involved or the beneficial owner(s) is limited. Uniform criteria are therefore established to mitigate the inherent risks of certain products and services and to ensure a uniform approach by the banks.

## 7.2 Measures regarding individual products and services

### 7.2.1 Treatment of credit cards for discretionary legal entities

In principle, arranging new credit cards for business relationships with discretionary legal entities is no longer permissible, and existing customers must be updated on a case-by-case basis according to their risk. Exceptions are permissible only if it is proven without a doubt that payments by credit card are related to expenses or expenditures that are attributable to the legal entity and do not constitute distributions.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, arranging new prepaid credit cards for business relationships with discretionary legal entities is prohibited, and existing customers must be updated on a case-by-case basis according to their risk. Prepaid credit cards may be replaced by "normal" credit cards only in cases where it is proven without a doubt that payments by credit card are related to expenses or expenditures that are attributable to the legal entity and do not constitute distributions.

### 7.2.2 Treatment of safe deposit boxes

Safe deposit boxes may be offered only in connection with an existing business or account relationship with the bank. They are accordingly always tied to an account. Consequently, the beneficial owner(s) of the business or account relationship must always be identified as the beneficial owner(s) of the safe deposit box, and consistent fulfilment of the know-your-customer obligations must be ensured. Any deviating identification of the beneficial owner for the safe deposit box is not permitted.

The following must be complied with:

- Changes to safe deposit boxes (opening/closing) from 1 October 2021 must be notified to the account register of the Office of Justice.
- Any safe deposit boxes without existing business or account relationships must be closed by 1 October 2021 at the latest (entry into effect of the account register), or an associated account relationship must be opened.

This is without prejudice to the requirements of due diligence law and the requirements of the Tax Compliance Guideline of the Liechtenstein Bankers Association.

### 7.2.3 Accounts in the name of a core account number or customer number

For these accounts, the designation or the name of the business relationship is generally a number and not the name of a natural or legal person. However, the

<sup>10</sup> e.g. employees of a public-benefit discretionary legal entity for the payment of running costs (demonstration of reasonableness e.g. through an employment contract)

name of the account holder is documented internally in the IT systems used by the bank. The due diligence, reporting, and information obligations are fully met. All payer and payee data must also be provided for transactions or custody account transfers.

Where such accounts are held in the name of a core account number or customer number, the following principles must be complied with:

- The reasons for the increased need for discretion must be documented sufficiently in the due diligence file. The only permissible reason is the protection of essential interests of the customer, provided an overriding interest of the customer compared to "normal" account maintenance is recognised (e.g. danger of extortion or kidnapping, threat to life and limb, etc.).
- Maintenance of the account in the name of a core account number or customer number requires approval by a member of the senior management in each case.

In all cases, business relationships as referred to in Article 13(4) SPG<sup>11</sup> are prohibited.

Existing customers must be updated as part of the periodic and incident-specific review cycle.

#### 7.2.4 Physical deposit/delivery of securities or physical purchase/sale of precious metals

If securities are physically deposited or delivered into the custody account or precious metals are physically bought or sold, it is often not possible to trace the origin of the assets (lack of paper trail). This type of securities or precious metals transaction therefore involves increased risks of money laundering and tax evasion. The physical deposit/delivery of securities or the physical purchase/sale of precious metals is permissible only if the same due diligence obligations are complied with as for cash transactions.<sup>12</sup> In principle, electronic transfers of securities or precious metals are to be recommended to the account holder, and this must be documented accordingly in the due diligence file.

The requirements of due diligence law and the requirements of the Tax Compliance Guideline of the Liechtenstein Bankers Association must be complied with in all cases.

#### 7.2.5 Correspondence retained at the bank

If the customer does not wish to receive any postal correspondence from the bank or year-end statements of accounts/custody accounts (correspondence retained

<sup>11</sup> "They may not keep anonymous accounts, savings books, or custody accounts or accounts, savings books, or custody accounts in fictitious names."

<sup>12</sup> Guideline on the due diligence obligations of banks with regard to their customer's tax compliance, Point 8.

at the bank), this may be an indicator of money laundering or tax evasion (see Annex 2 SPG: Products or transactions that favour anonymity; Annex 3 Section V SPV – Indicators of tax offences: A contracting party requests "retained correspondence" as the sole shipping instruction without a plausible reason). Correspondence retained at the bank is permissible only in exceptional cases and only if the customer can be reached by other means for important correspondence from the bank (e.g. e-post). The customer must also be able to provide plausible reasons, and these must be documented in the due diligence file.

This does not affect cases in which the customer does not expressly request correspondence to be retained at the bank, but rather chooses electronic delivery of correspondence via e-banking (e-post) as the standard method of delivery.

This is without prejudice to the requirements under due diligence law, in particular the obligation to carry out further clarifications in the case of correspondence retained at the bank and possible consideration of the specific delivery instruction when performing the customer's risk classification.

Existing customers must be updated as part of the periodic and incident-specific review cycle.

#### 7.2.6 Insurance policies with individual account management

In the case of life insurance policies with separate account/custody account management, the insurance company must confirm the following in writing on a confirmation form up to an amount of one million CHF or the equivalent in other currency:

- Neither the domicile of the effective premium payer/policyholder nor the country of origin of the assets are or have a nexus to a List A country or to countries on the following international sanctions and embargo lists: consolidated sanctions list of the United Nations Security Council (UN), OFAC, OFSI, the EU, and sanctions lists maintained by other G7 member countries (see Point 6 Correspondent Banks Guideline)
- The effective premium payer/policyholder is not a PEP
- Only listed deposits or assessable deposits (where not listed) are booked in the policy custody account
- No active influence on the investment strategy of the effective premium payer/ policyholder, with the exception of investment models recognised under tax law

From an amount of CHF one million or the equivalent in other currency or if one or more of the above criteria are not met, the effective premium payer/policyholder must be disclosed and the origin of the assets declared.

Existing customers must be updated in the following order:

- Where the effective premium payer/policyholder has a nexus to a List A country or the following international sanctions and embargo lists:

consolidated sanctions list of the United Nations Security Council (UN), OFAC, OFSI, the EU, and sanctions lists maintained by other G7 member countries,

- where the effective premium payer/policyholder is a PEP, or
- where a complex structure exists,

the disclosure of the effective premium payer/policyholder and the declaration of assets must be made within one year of 1 October 2021.

All other life insurance policies with separate account/custody account management must be updated within three years of 1 October 2021.

## 8 Effectiveness of transaction monitoring tools

Effectiveness is of the utmost importance in the context of transaction monitoring. This involves in particular the definition of the monitoring concept and the technical implementation thereof. To ensure this effectiveness, regular reviews must be carried out with regard to the design of the monitoring concept (such as limits, algorithm, and fuzzy logic) as well as of the technical implementation. The member banks must observe the following as a minimum standard:

- Each member institution must establish internal guidelines on the effectiveness of transaction monitoring and the review thereof.
- The technical rules governing transaction monitoring must be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with risk and refined as necessary to ensure that they remain current and effective in identifying high-risk transactions and behaviour.
- Before adjusting the monitoring logic or recalibrating, the member banks must ensure the functioning of new rules through testing.
- All test results and subsequent adjustments must be documented in a traceable manner. The periodicity of the system audits must be determined on an institution-specific basis.

## 9 Sanctions screening for securities

The locally applicable sanctions and embargos at the registered office of the company/group company in question as well as the following international sanctions provisions, including the relevant published sanctions and embargo lists, must be complied with:

- Consolidated sanctions list of the Security Council of the United Nations (UN)
- United States Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)
- Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation HMT (OFSI)
- Consolidated sanctions list of the European Union (EU)

In addition to monitoring the customer base and payment transactions, sanctions affecting the capital market must in all cases also be complied with.

It must be ensured that the sanctions provisions referred to above and prohibitions with regard to securities, money market instruments, and investment services are observed and that the list of covered capital market instruments is updated regularly. This means, for example, that capital market restrictions must be complied with and that the associated transactions must be monitored.

## IV Implementation

The LBA carries out specific clarifications for the purpose of implementing this Guideline. The LBA reports these clarifications to the Board of the LBA and has the following exhaustive powers and responsibilities in this regard:

- After entry into force of this Guideline, the LBA requests the member banks to notify whether the principles set out in this Guideline have been implemented or integrated in their internal instructions.
- Compliance with this Guideline is audited on a regular basis by the internal audit department of each member bank. The member banks are required to disclose to the LBA any violations discovered in the course of that audit, together with the measures defined to restore a state of affairs in compliance with the Guideline.
- The LBA is available to member banks on a non-committal basis with regard to questions concerning implementation of this Guideline as well as the enactment of internal instructions/regulations.

## V Entry into force

This Guideline enters into force for all member banks on 1 May 2021 and must be implemented by 30 June 2021, subject to the specific provisions governing application set out in the individual measures under Point III. By 31 January 2022, the Guideline must be implemented *mutatis mutandis* by the member banks in all foreign group companies held by them.

This Guideline was supplemented on 25 August 2021 by Point 7.2.6, which enters into force on 1 September 2021 for the member banks and the foreign group companies held by them and must be implemented by 1 October 2021.

Vaduz, 25 August 2021