**Participant Information Sheet**

**Study Title**: Investment of Criminal Proceeds into the Legitimate Economy: An Analysis of Italian and Russian Organised Crime in the UK Real Estate Market.

**Researcher**: Emanuele Sclafani

**ERGO number:** **48120**

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

**What is the research about?**

I am a post-graduate researcher in the department of Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology (SSPC), University of Southampton. This post-graduate research is part my PhD programme, which will be on a comparative analysis of Russian and Italian organised crime in the UK real estate market in recent years/after Brexit. The research aims to expand our understanding about the changing landscape of operations of Italian and Russian organised crime in the UK real estate market in recent years/after Brexit. My research is partially financed by an Italian Foundation named “Fondazione Pol.i.s. - Politiche Integrate per la Sicurezza” that supports research activities on this topic from a legislative and criminological standpoint.

**Why have I been asked to participate?**

The participants of this research are individuals from different groups. They are judges, prosecutors, law-enforcement agents, lawyers, real estate communities, investigative journalists. You have been chosen because you belong to either one or more than one group described above. who have direct/indirect relation with the research topic. I think you are in a unique position where you are directly/indirectly linked to the research topic from a legislative/criminological standpoint.

 **What will happen to me if I take part?**

If you agree to take part in this research, I will ensure to book an appointment with you or through your assistant/secretary to take part in the interview with me. The interview will last not more than one hour and an half. The venue of the interview will be in your office or any space in your organisation during your working hours and on a working day. However, the venue must be quiet space in your organisation. For judges, prosecutors law-enforcement officials, lawyers, academics and investigative journalists, the interview questions will include your professional background, the degree of vulnerability of the real estate sector to organised crime in the UK, the modus operandi of Italian and Russian organised crime, the consequences of investments of criminal proceeds for both law enforcement and economic development in the UK context, on how Brexit context is influencing push/pull factors for the investments of Italian and Russian organised crime in the UK real estate sector and the impact of the Brexit context on the investments of Italian and Russian organised crime proceeds in the UK real estate market. For real estate communities, the interview questions will include your professional background, internal rules and policy applied in this legal sector. The interview will be recorded using a recording device only for the purpose of transcription and data analysis. All the information you provide will be anonymous and confidential. The interview will take place once with no follow-ups. However, I might book another time with you in case I need some supplement information, which were not captured in the initial interview. In such case, I will contact you via phone and get your consent before the re-visit.

**Are there any benefits in my taking part?**

There is no direct benefit to you, other than you can share your experiences and find this process interesting. However, your sharing of experience will be instrumental in helping us understand the comparison between investments of Russian organised crime with those of the Italian mafias in the UK real estate market in recent years/after Brexit. Your contribution will help future policymakers to

improve the effectiveness of counter-organised crime policies.

**Are there any risks involved?**

There are no risks involved. You are free to inform me at any point of time in case you feel uncomfortable or distressed during the interview. You have the complete right to refuse answering any question or suspend the interview at any point of time; you can also withdraw your interview with no penalty. I will ensure to preserve your right at all times of the interview.

**What data will be collected?**

This research project is a qualitative analysis of various types of financial and economic criminal activities such as bribery, fraud, insider trading and money laundering. The qualitative analysis will focus on the elements of business management, such as the number or type of work performed by the undertaking, the behaviour of banks and private lenders, the behaviour of suppliers or subcontractors and other useful information to understand the strategy of management by these two transnational criminal organisations*.* I will conduct semi-structured interviews with judges and prosecutors, law-enforcement officials, private sector representatives, academics, real estate agents and journalists. These interviews will be conducted in three countries (Italy, UK, Russia) over the phone or over Skype or in person. The interviews will be conducted in English or Italian and will be based on open- ended questions. The purpose of the interviews is to gather information about various aspects related to the investment of criminal organisations in the legitimate economy, including the geographic location of the investment, the type of asset, the related business sector, and the related criminal groups. Moreover the interviews will be helpful in comparing opportunities for criminal investments in countries with high mafia presence such as Italy or Russia to countries with low mafia presence or none such as the UK.

My data collection process will involve criminal convictions/offences data and I will be able to treat them according to gold standard data protection as set out in the following site: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/lawful-basis-for-processing/criminal-offence-data/>. All the data will be securely stored in password-protected files in a password-protected computer.

**Will my participation be confidential?**

Your participation will remain confidential. I will ensure that all the information you remain confidential and anonymous. All the information you provide will be securely stored in password protected files in a password-protected computer. My supervisors and I will access this information. Information that can be identifiable with your identity or identity of an organisation or any person you refer to will be made anonymous. For later research out-put like paper presentation in conferences, dissertation, journals or any other offline or online publications, pseudonyms will be used. This research is under the approval of the Ethics Committee in the University of Southampton, UK, and is in line with UK data protection laws.

**Do I have to take part?**

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

**What happens if I change my mind?**

You have the right to withdraw from the interview at point of time during the interview or during the research process with no penalty until the completion of the analysis stage (April 2020).

**What will happen to the results of the research?**

I will send you the research summary along with the findings of the research through e-mail or phone call based on your preference. In addition, the final dissertation of the research will be available in the Hartley Library at the University of Southampton. The research data will be stored for staff and postgraduate research students for minimum 10 years as per University of Southampton policy.

**Where can I get more information?**

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+44 (023) 8059 2614, a.lavorgna@soton.ac.uk

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You can also write to us at:

Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology (SSPC)

Faculty of Social and Human Sciences

University of Southampton

Southampton, SO17 1BJ

**What happens if there is a problem?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researchers who will do their best to answer your questions.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

If you have, any further questions concerning this participant information sheet or about this research, please contact

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Thank you for your time.

**Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, ‘Personal data’ means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University’s data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University’s policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason (‘lawful basis’) to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the ‘Data Controller’ for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for minimum 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

 *[NHS/ other site] will keep identifiable information about you from this study [for 10 years after the study has finished/ until 10]*

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University’s data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University’s Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).

**Thank you.**