

IOCTA 2023



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News

On 17 July 2023, Europol's European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) published the ninth edition of its [Internet Organised Crime Threat Assessment \(IOCTA\) 2023](#). The IOCTA is a strategic analysis report providing an assessment of the latest online threats and the impact of cybercrime within the EU from a law enforcement point of view.

The 2023 edition presents the main overall findings concerning the different typologies of cybercrime, namely cyber-attacks, online fraud schemes, and online child sexual exploitation. It is accompanied by a series of in-depth articles covering each of these crime areas. The 2023 IOCTA also looks at online criminal markets: the surface web and the Darknet. It additionally addresses the convergence of cyber and terrorism.

In 2022, Russia's invasion of Ukraine resulted in a boost in cyber-attacks worldwide. Online fraudsters also swiftly adapted to the new geopolitical situation by exploiting the crisis. Looking at the criminal profits, the report identifies money mules as key facilitators for the laundering of illicit profits generated by cybercrime. As regards the threat of online child sexual exploitation, the report registers a further increase in terms of quantity and severity. The following are the key findings of the report:

- Cybercriminal services are intertwined and their efficacy is co-dependant;
- Human oversight is the weakest link by which cybercriminals infiltrate their victims' systems;
- The central commodity of this illicit economy is stolen data;
- Cybercrime is often interlinked, presenting a concentrated set of criminal actions that often result in the same victim being targeted multiple times;
- Underground communities educate and recruit cybercriminals.

In addition to the report, a series of spotlight reports examining specific crime areas relating to cybercrime will be released by Europol in the course of 2023. Focus will be on [cyber-attacks](#), [online fraud](#), and [child sexual exploitation](#).



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