SIM Swapping
Europol perspective

ENISA Telecom Security Forum 13/10/2021

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European Cybercrime Centre
Europol

Europol Public Information

PART I

Who are we ?

The Hague, Netherlands

EUROPOL's mandate:

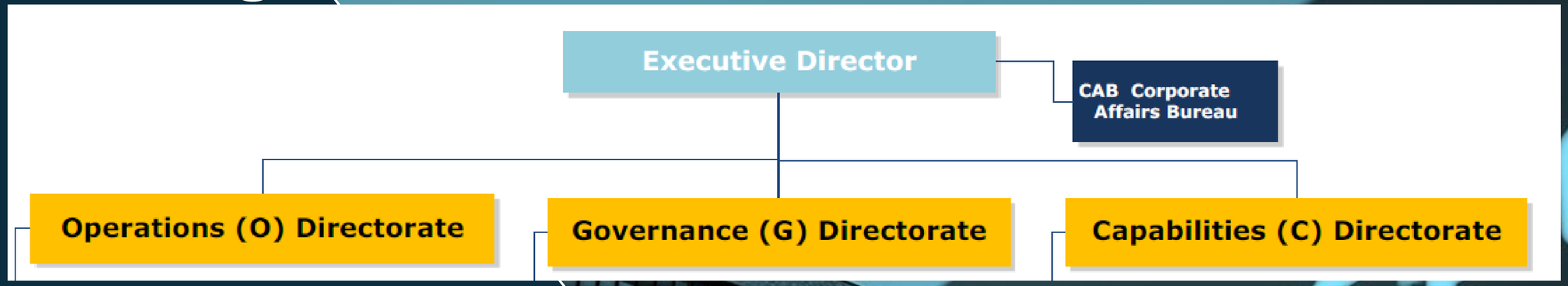
« supporting Member States action to combat and prevent serious organised crime, cybercrime and terrorism »

Who are we ?

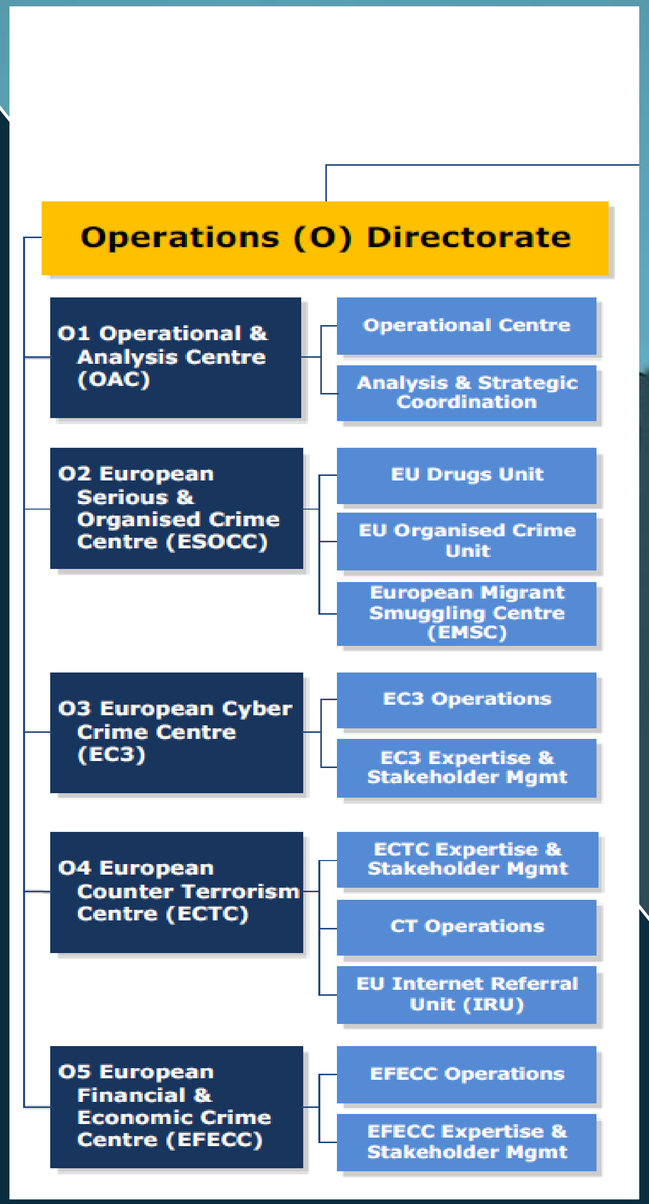
Austria	Greece	Portugal
Belgium	Hungary	Romania
Bulgaria	Ireland	Slovak Republic
Croatia	Italy	Slovenia
Cyprus	Latvia	Spain
Czech Republic	Lithuania	Sweden
Estonia	Luxembourg	
Finland	Malta	
France	The Netherlands	
Germany	Poland	

Albania	Iceland	North Macedonia
Australia	Israel	Norway
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Japan	Serbia
Brasil	Liechtenstein	Switzerland
Canada	Moldova	Turkey
Colombia	Monaco	Ukraine
Denmark	Montenegro	United Kingdom
Georgia	New Zealand	USA

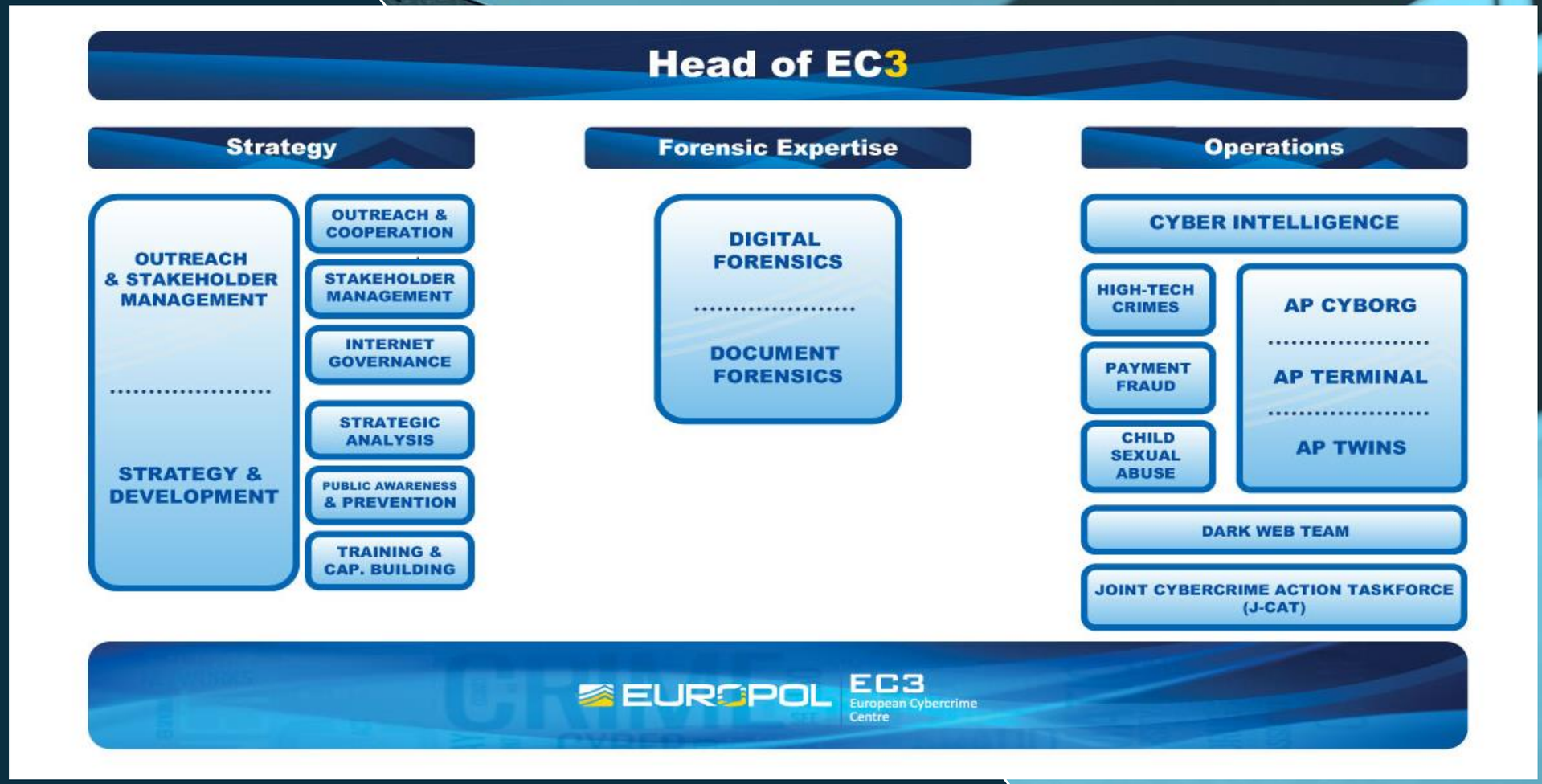
The organisation



The organisation



The organisation



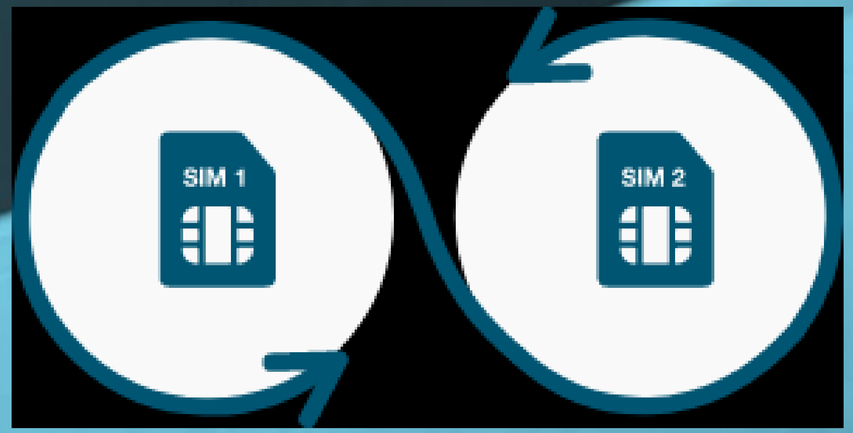

EMPACT
Fighting crime together
EUROPOL

PART II

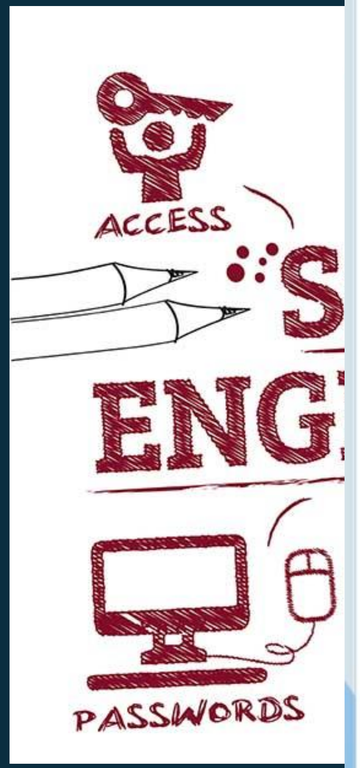
SIM-Swapping

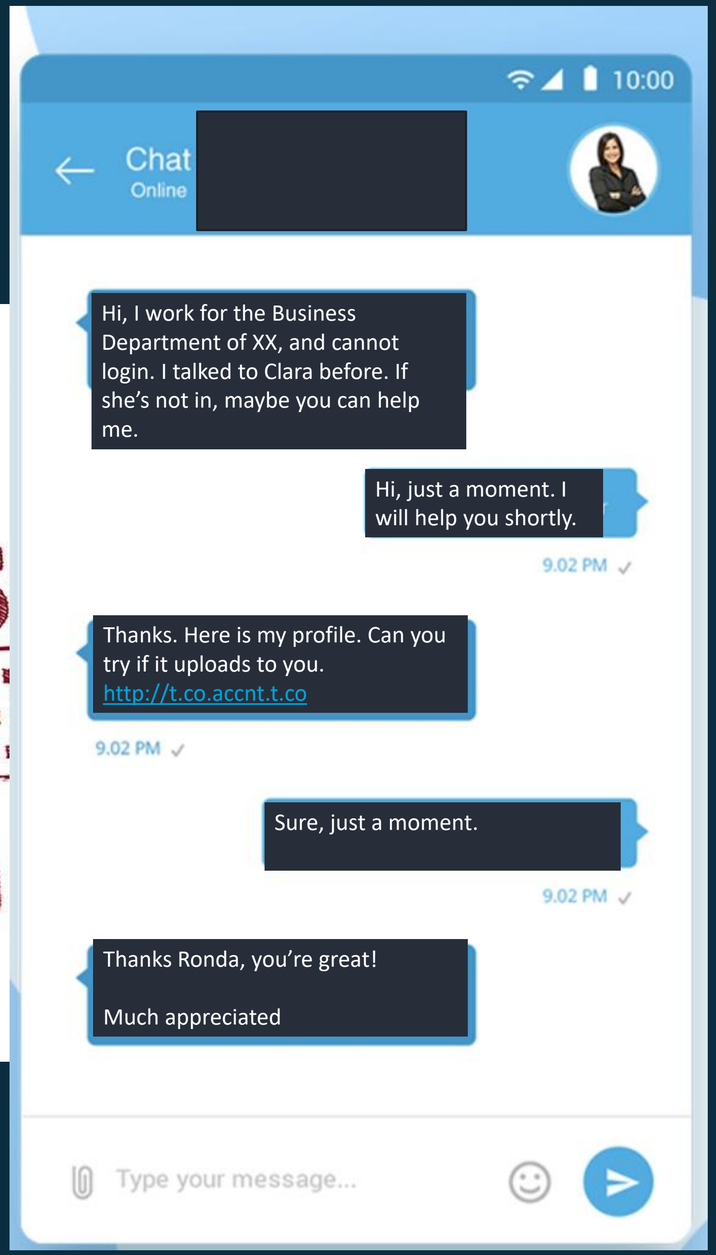
Exploit the ability to seamlessly port a phone number to a device

SIM-Swap fraud is an account take over



SIM-Swapping





SIM-Swapping

Bank accounts

Social Media

Wallets

PART III

SIM-Swapping case example

- Organized Crime Group (OCG)
  - hacking
  - blackmailing
  - Sim-Swapping
  - Account Take Over

- OCG found AUG 2020.
  - Activities known from MARCH 2020.
  - Dismantled FEB 9 2021

- Celebrity targets

- In excess of USD 100 Million losses

EUROPOL

ABOUT EUROPOL | ACTIVITIES & SERVICES | CRIME AREAS & TRENDS | PARTNERS & AGREEMENTS

HOME › NEWSROOM › TEN HACKERS ARRESTED FOR STRING OF SIM-SWAPPING ATTACKS AGAINST CELEBRITIES

TEN HACKERS ARRESTED FOR STRING OF SIM-SWAPPING ATTACKS AGAINST CELEBRITIES

10 February 2021

Press Release

Criminals stole over USD 100 million in cryptocurrencies by hijacking phone numbers

A total of 8 criminals have been arrested on 9 February as a result of an international investigation into a series of sim swapping attacks targeting high-profile victims in the United States. These arrests follow earlier ones in Malta (1) and Belgium (1) of other members belonging to the same criminal network.

The attacks orchestrated by this criminal gang targeted thousands of victims throughout 2020, including famous internet influencers, sport stars, musicians and their families. The criminals are believed to have stolen from them over USD 100 million in cryptocurrencies after illegally gaining access to their phones.

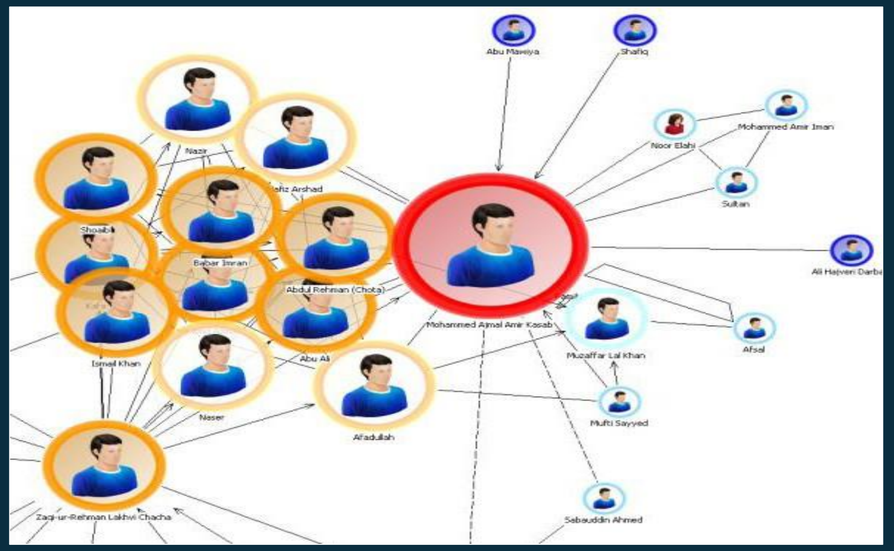
This international sweep follows a year-long investigation jointly conducted by law enforcement authorities from the United Kingdom, United States, Belgium, Malta and Canada, with international activity coordinated by Europol.

- A dozen members, online presence larger
  - Many in their teens, some in their 20’s.
  - US, UK, CA, MT, BE, also other countries

- Social engineering on Telco’s

- Choosing public figures as targets (sports stars, artists, etc).

- Blackmailed targets, SWATTING, pizza -bombing



“Z fckd up. Pizza it is then…. LOL ”

“release XX from custody, or we will publish your emails LOL”

International cooperation

1.Core members of the group were finally identified in EUROPE

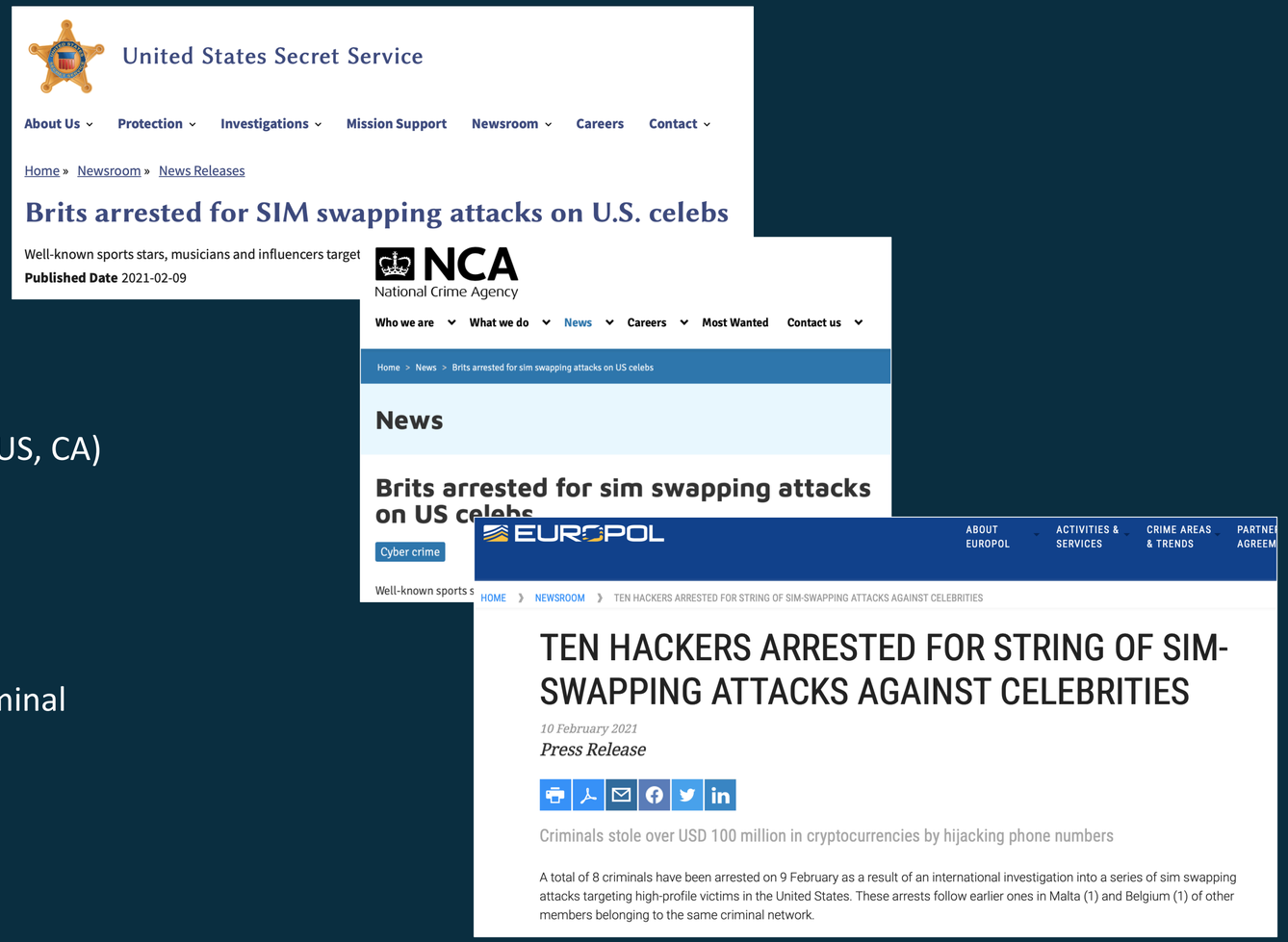
2.They were living in different jurisdictions

3.Some of them are juveniles

4.Unlikely to get extradition to the USA

Action day: 9th of February

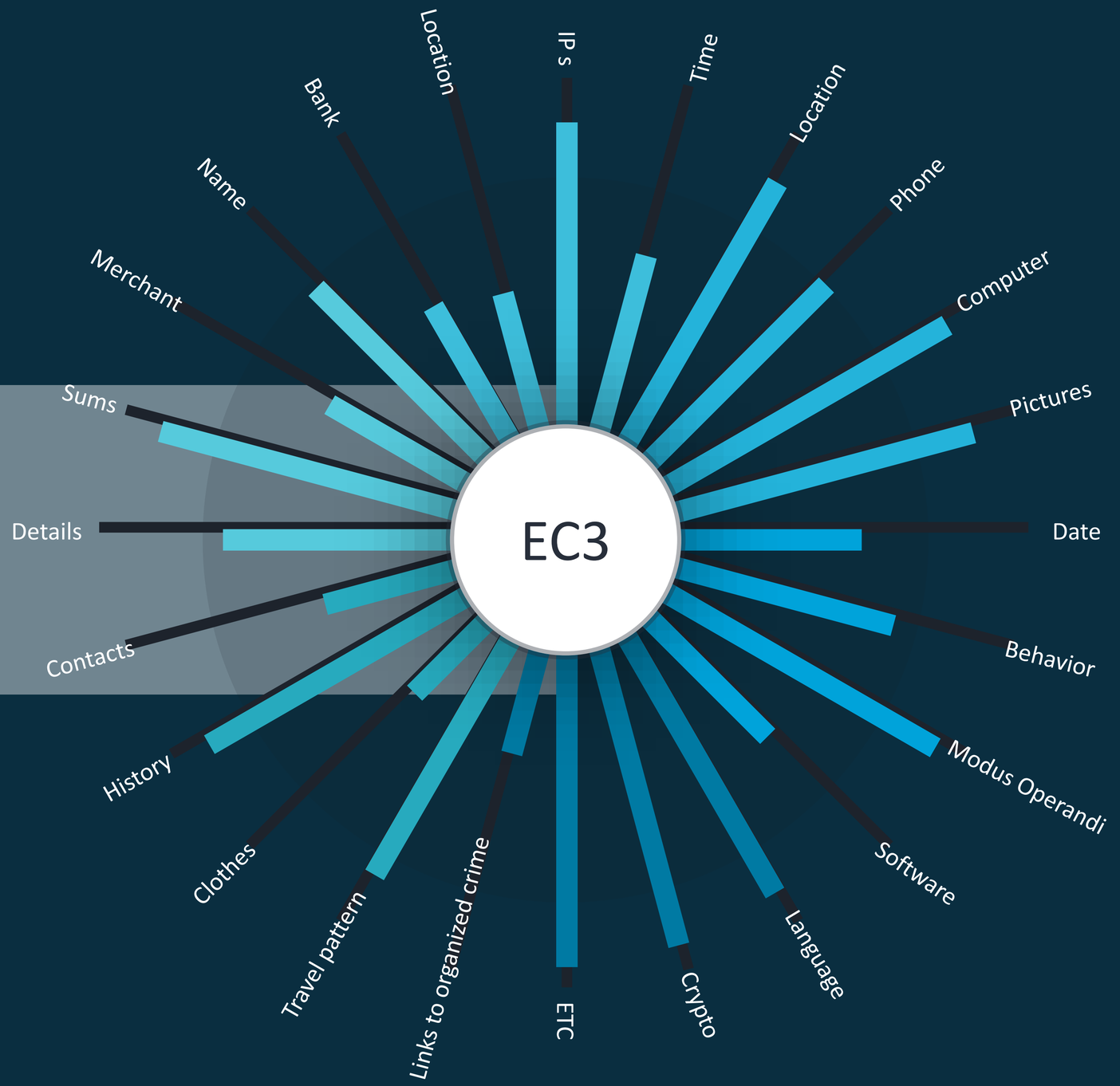
- Simultaneous house searches and 8 arrests in 4 countries (UK, US, CA)
- MT, BE arrests earlier
- Europol Virtual Command Post (VCP) Support from EC3 AP Terminal



Europol EC3 European Cybercrime Center

Europol can support you in your investigations.

Private Sector Partners



Siena

Secure Information Exchange Network Application
Classifications for information
Secure messages to other countries

Analytical support

Europol databases
Europol analytical tools

Forensic Support

Anti-Encryption tools

Europol Mobile Office

Support Law Enforcement on-site during action days
Virtual Command Post (VCP)

Funding

Travel
Special equipment

EUROPOL

Prevention and awareness

Thank you for your attention

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