



Department of Justice

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Romanian National Man Sentenced to 140 Months for Money Laundering Conspiracy

LEXINGTON, Ky.— A Romanian National, Adrian Mitan, 36, was sentenced to 140 months in federal prison on Friday, by U.S. District Judge Robert Wier, after pleading guilty for his role in three separate schemes charged across three separate indictments: a money laundering conspiracy arising from online auction fraud scheme (commonly referred to as eBay fraud), a credit card phishing and brute-force attack scheme, and a vishing scheme, all designed to steal money from Americans.

According to his plea agreement, Mitan worked in conjunction with others to post advertisements for goods to sales websites like Craigslist. Once they convinced U.S. based victims to pay for the item, they laundered the money through a sophisticated operation that included the Eastern District of Kentucky.

Mitan also agreed that he was involved in a credit card fraud scheme that involved phishing for credit card information from victims and then brute force attacking point of sale systems to obtain all necessary data to create new cloned credit or debit cards. He further admitted to then using those cloned cards to withdraw substantial sums from ATMs. A network of U.S.-based coconspirators would convert this money to bitcoin and send the proceeds over seas to the Defendant. According to his Plea Agreement, the Defendant possessed roughly 16,000 unique credit or debit card codes.

Finally, the Defendant conceded that he participated in a vishing scheme, obtaining debit or credit card codes by hacking into small businesses' Voice over Internet Protocol systems and then deploying a script to contact financial institution customers to defraud them in providing their personal debit and credit card codes. Mitan admitted that he and his coconspirators obtained codes for roughly 2,130 access devices, targeting more than ten financial institutions' customers.

Mitan pleaded guilty in January 2020.

Under federal law, Mitan must serve 85 percent of his prison sentence.



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Carlton S. Shier, IV, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Assistant Director Michael D'Ambrosio, U.S. Secret Service, Office of Investigations; Colonel Phillip Burnett, Commissioner, Kentucky State Police; Chief Lawrence Weathers, Lexington Police Department; Jonathan Larsen of the IRS-Criminal Investigations (IRS-CI) New York Field Office; and Special Agent in Charge Kenneth Cleevely, U.S. Postal Service – Office of Inspector General (USPS-OIG); announced the sentence.

The investigation was conducted by the U.S. Secret Service, Kentucky State Police, Lexington Police Department, IRS Criminal Investigation, and U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and supported by the Justice Department's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) and the International Organized Crime Intelligence and Operations Center (IOC-2). Assistance was provided by the Romanian National Police (Service for Combating Cybercrime) and the Romanian Directorate for Investigating Organized Crime and Terrorism (Agency for Prosecuting Organized Crime). The Criminal Division's Money Laundering and Asset Recovery Section provided significant support and the Criminal Division's Office of International Affairs provided significant support in securing and coordinating the arrests and extraditions from Romania of more than a dozen defendants.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kathryn M. Anderson and Kenneth R. Taylor of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Kentucky and Senior Trial Attorney Timothy C. Flowers and Senior Counsel Frank H. Lin of the Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section.

Individuals believing they may be victims of the advanced fee and online auction fraud or brute-force attack schemes described herein are encouraged to visit the following website to obtain more information: <https://justice.gov/usao-edky/information-victims-large-cases>. Tips to avoid becoming a victim of online auction fraud can be found here on the U.S. Secret Service's website.

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