

[France](#) has joined the US and [Russia](#) in seeking the extradition of a Russian held in [Greece](#) for allegedly laundering USD 4 billion using the [bitcoin](#) digital currency, a court source said today.

The French warrant says Alexander Vinnik, who headed [bitcoin](#) exchange BTC-e, had defrauded over 100 people in six French cities between 2016 and 2018.

He is sought for extortion, [money](#) laundering and crimes committed online, the court source said.

Vinnik has been held in jail since his arrest last July in the northern Greek tourist resort of Halkidiki. He denies the accusation.

He was indicted by a [US court](#) last year on 21 charges ranging from identity theft and facilitating drug trafficking to [money](#) laundering.

Greece's [Supreme Court](#) in December said Vinnik should be extradited to the US, but the final decision is up to the Greek [justice minister](#).

[Russia](#) has also filed a demand to extradite Vinnik so he can stand trial on separate fraud charges.

BTC-e, founded in 2011, became one of the world's largest and most widely used digital [currency](#) exchanges.

According to the US indictment, it was "heavily reliant on criminals".

In addition, [BTC-e](#) "was noted for its role in numerous ransomware and other cyber-criminal activity".

It allegedly received more than USD 4 billion worth of [Bitcoin](#) over the course of its operation.

Vinnik was also charged with receiving funds from the infamous hack of [Mt. Gox](#) -- an earlier digital [currency](#) exchange that eventually failed, in part due to losses attributable to hacking.

The [US Treasury Department](#) has slapped [BTC-e](#) with a USD 110 million fine for "wilfully violating" US anti-[money](#) laundering laws. Vinnik himself has been ordered to pay USD 12 million.

In Russia, Vinnik is wanted on separate fraud charges totalling 9,500 euros. He has said he would accept extradition to his home country.

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