

In 2020, governments scurried around like ants in a disturbed nest, wondering how best to respond to the crisis. As subsequent waves follow in 2021 and different brands of vaccines are rolled out, or not, as may be the case, a second wave of chaos ensues. Like a busy market full of pickpockets, such an environment provides rich pickings for criminal opportunists with fortunes to be made out of other people's misery.

Money Falls from the Sky

Flight restrictions, government and airline requirements for passengers to provide Covid-free health certificates have provided a windfall for crooks. Europol, the European Union's law enforcement agency, issued a warning about fake negative coronavirus certificates being sold throughout the EU region. It sees a direct link between travel restrictions and certificate scams, stating that:

"As long as travel restrictions remain in place due to the Covid-19 situation, it is highly likely that production and sales of fake test certificates will prevail."

Digital technology and affordable high-quality printing equipment have made it easy for scammers to produce convincing documents. Many countries, such as the UK, the Netherlands, France and Spain, introduced the need for passengers to present a recent polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test result paper in order to travel between most countries. The PCR test is described as the gold standard of tests, as it is the most accurate one, on account of the long nasal swab used to collect respiratory material from deep inside the nasal cavity. For those wishing to forgo the discomfort and turn a blind eye to the law, there is no shortage of people providing a speedy, test-free, negative certificate. Travelers with dodgy documents have been arrested at airports in France, the Netherlands, UK, Spain and further afield in Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Taiwan, but those caught are probably only the tip of the iceberg. Aside from the risky in-airport transactions, fake certificates complete with fake

doctors' signatures are being blatantly advertised on social media platforms such as Snapchat and WhatsApp - fast delivery and no questions asked. These can be obtained for as little as 50-60 EUR, attractively priced at around a third of the cost of the genuine article.

More than One Way to Skin a Cat

The problem is not limited to Europe, with Europol's global counterpart, Interpol, issuing similar warnings. Over in the USA, law enforcement agencies, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Inland Revenue Service (IRS), and

to scurry around to skarn around peddle bez celu, chaotycznie (lub szybko) nest wsadzic kil w mrowisko; tu: poruszyć mrowisko (dosłownie) to wonder ta wandat zastanawiać się to respond to sth ta r'spond ta 'sambing zareagować na coś, odpowiedzieć subsequent 'abszkwient następujący (po czymś), późniejszy vaccine 'weksin szczepionka to roll sth out ta r'ol 'sambing adt wprowadzić coś na rynek, wdrożyć ...as may be the case... az mei bi da kets ...może mieć w tym przypadku miejsce... to ensue ta m'sue: wywiazac się (w wyniku czegoś), nastąpić (po czymś) pickpocket 'pikpakt kieszonkowiec rich pickings for sb r'if 'pikinz f'et 'sambad takomy/hatwy kasek dla kogos opportunist 'opa'tunist oportunista; to make a fortune ta meik a 'f:ʃun: zblć fortunę misery 'mizə(r) cierpienie, nędza flight flat lot windfall 'windf:l nieoczekiwany przychwy gotówki crook krwłk oszust law enforcement agency lɔ: m'fɔ:smənt 'edʒənsi organy ścigania to issue a warning tu 'fju: a 'wɔ:niŋ wɔ:dać ostrzeżenie fake feik podrabiany, sfaższowany direct link d'rekt link bepozszrednie powiązanie

to remain in place ta r'i meɪn m 'pleɪs pozostac na miejscu due to sth dju: ta 'sambɪŋ z powodu czegoś, przez coś to prevail ta prɪ'veɪl brać górę affordable a'fɔ:dəbl przystępny, dostępny cenowo equipment 'kwɪpmənt wyposażenie, sprzęt convincing kən'vɪnsɪŋ przekonujący, brmiący prawdziwie polymerase chain reaction (PCR) 'pɒlɪmə'reɪz tʃeɪn rɪ'ækʃn 'pi: sɪ: a(r) test faŋkuchovej reakcji polimerazy (test PCR) accurate 'ækjəreɪ dokładny, precyzyjny on account of sth ɒn ə'kaʊnt əv 'sambɪŋ z powodu czegoś, przez coś nasal swab 'neɪzl swəb wymaz z nosa respiratory rə'spɪrətɒrɪ oddechowy nasal cavity 'neɪzl 'kævɪtɪ jama nosowa to forgo sth ta fɔ: 'gəʊ 'sambɪŋ zaniechać czegoś, opuścić coś discomfort dɪs'kɒmfət dyskomfort to turn a blind eye to sth tu: tɜ:n ə b'aɪnd aɪ tə 'sambɪŋ przynknąć na coś oko there is no shortage of sth ðeə(r) ɪz nəʊ 'ʃɔ:tɪdʒ əv 'sambɪŋ nie brakuje czegoś, pełno/duzo czegoś speedy 'spi:di szybki dodgy 'dɒdʒi podejrzaný, szemyrany further afield 'fɜ:ðə(r) ə'fɪld dalej, w dalszej perspektywie the tip of the iceberg the tɪp əv ðə 'aɪsbɜ:ɡ czubek góry lodowej risky 'rɪski ryzykowny fake feik podrabiany, sfaższowany blatantly 'bleɪtəntli rażąco to advertise sth tu: 'ædvə:tɪz 'sambɪŋ reklamować coś, pokazywać no questions asked nəʊ 'kwɛstʃənz 'a:skt bez zadawania (zbdnych) pytań genuine article 'dʒenjuɪn 'a:tɪkl autentyk, prawdziwa rzecz there is more than one way to skin a cat ðeə(r) ɪz mɔ: tʃən ə 'skɪn ə kæt jest wiele sposobów na zrobienie czegoś (pot.) counterpart 'kaʊntəpa:t odpowiedzialnik Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) 'fɛdərəl 'bju:ərəʊ əv m'vestɪ'geɪʃn 'fɛbɪaɪ Federalne Biuro Śledcze (FBI) Inland Revenue Service (IRS) m'ɪlənd 'revənju: 'sɜ:vɪs 'aɪ ə(r) 'es Urząd Skarbowy (US)