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Ex-Wirecard Exec Still in Moscow After Year On the Run – Reports

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Jan Marsalek fled the European Union after Wirecard admitted to "elaborate and sophisticated fraud."
EPA / TASS

The disgraced former executive of the collapsed German payments firm Wirecard is still believed to be in Moscow after a year on the run, German media reported Monday.

Ex-chief operating officer Jan Marsalek, 41, fled the European Union after Wirecard admitted to "elaborate and sophisticated fraud" and was reported to be under the protection of Russian military intelligence near Moscow last summer.

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The Die Welt daily reported Monday that German Federal Intelligence Service (BND) chief Bruno Kahl testified to lawmakers last month that Marsalek is "suspected near Moscow."

Die Welt reported that BND had "credible information" in 2020 that Marsalek was at a

“training center” in the Moscow suburb of Balashikha, the site of the Federal Security Service (FSB) Special Operations Center.

Then-FSB chief and current Russian President Vladimir Putin founded the Special Operations Center in 1998 as a domestic and international counterterrorism outfit.

Germany’s governing coalition reportedly said in an unpublished report that Marsalek “gained contacts with Russian intelligence services” through the Austrian-Russian Friendship Society networking group, “which also benefited him during his escape and his immersion.”

German lawmakers are investigating the political and regulatory failings that allowed the Wirecard cheating to go unnoticed for years, while critics say that early warning signs were ignored.

Once a rising star in the booming fintech sector, Wirecard filed for bankruptcy last year after admitting that 1.9 billion euros ($2.3 billion) was missing from its accounts.

The Kremlin, which previously said it was unaware of Marsalek’s whereabouts, has not yet commented on the latest reports.

AFP contributed reporting.

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