Sanctions have been used as a tool for political and economic leverage over the past few years. Of the major lists, the OFAC list, the OFSI list, and the EU list alone saw a total of 1,657 designations as of December 2021, with 211 in February, 517 in May, and 225 in November.

The most common program areas for designations were terrorism, human rights, and corruption. OFAC, the OFSI, and the EU lists were updated most frequently with 400, 600, and 1,000 updates respectively.

The most common regions for designations were Syria, Yemen, and Iraq. Libya and Central African Republic received one new designation each. Iran, Myanmar, China, and Russia had the most updates.

In 2022 and beyond, we expect sanctions activity to increase. Sanctions policy is becoming increasingly problematic as sanctions against foreign governments are resulting in a new wave of sanctions and sanctions evasion.