

term strategy to take over markets. Thus, mafia groups have extended their presence into parts of Italy and Europe not historically affected by organized crime, a development that could have serious negative implications for the EU economy in the long run.

The assessment of the activities of the mafia concluded with a series of recommendations for law enforcement authorities and policymakers:

1. The identification, targeting and dismantling of the most dangerous mafia families and clans.

2. The harmonization of anti-mafia legislation in the EU, so that mafia membership is criminalized and extradition requests made easier.

3. A regional/continental intelligence focus by Member States in implementing their national intelligence cycles in order to avoid important information gaps on organized-crime-affecting-the-EU-generally.

Europol also set up an operational project, Analysis Project ITOC, dedicated to tackling Italian organized crime groups. The project is fully supported by Italian law enforcement and judicial authorities, which have contributed their in-depth experience in the field. Many other Member States, non-EU countries and organizations such as Euro just are also involved in the project.

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#### **COMBATING ORGANIZED CRIME**

Organized crime is considered to be a changing and flexible phenomenon. Many of the benefits of globalization such as easier and faster communication, movement of finances and international travel, have also

created opportunities for transnational organized criminal groups to flourish, diversify and expand their activities.

Traditional, territorial-based criminal groups have evolved or have been partially replaced by smaller and more flexible networks with branches across several jurisdictions. In the course of an investigation, victims, suspects, organized criminal groups and proceeds of crime may be located in many States. Moreover, organized crime affects all States, whether as countries of supply, transit or demand. As such, modern organized crime constitutes a global challenge that must be met with a concerted, global response.

Organized crime was characterized by United Nations General Assembly in 1994, as: "group organization to commit crime; hierarchical links or personal relationships which permit leaders to control the group: violence, intimidation and corruption used to earn profits or control territories or markets; laundering of illicit proceeds both in furtherance of criminal activity and to infiltrate the legitimate economy; the potential for expansion into any new activities and beyond national borders; and cooperation with other organized transnational criminal groups".

Transnational organized criminal groups seek to exploit legitimate activities for criminal purposes. The ways in which they are reaping profit are becoming more creative. As organized crime groups join ever more complex networks spanning the globe, the crimes become increasingly transnational and the types of crime they are able to commit become diversified. New threats to global security are emerging, meaning that people can fall victim to organized crime in an increasing number of ways, in an increasing number of places.

The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime identified cybercrime, identity-related crimes, trafficking in cultural property, environmental crime, piracy, organ trafficking, and fraudulent medicine as new and emerging crimes of concern. The emergence of these new crime types gives rise to the need for law enforcement response to adapt its efforts and capacities accordingly.

Cybercrime is an evolving form of transnational crime. The complex nature of the crime as one that takes place in the border-less realm of cyberspace is compounded by the increasing involvement of organized crime groups. Perpetrators of cybercrime and their victims can be located in different regions, and its effects can ripple through societies around the world, highlighting the need to mount an urgent, dynamic and international response.

Identity-related crime generates significant profits for criminals each year, with far-reaching impact not only on economies and online commerce,

but also on individuals who fall victim to it. Where identity-related information is obtained by criminals, it can be abused to launder money, to commit fraud and to enable illicit activities for organized crime purposes, including acts of corruption, human trafficking, migrant smuggling and even terrorism. Millions of dollars can be stolen using false identification either in highly sophisticated single events, or through millions of smaller incidents. In the hands of unscrupulous criminals, these criminal profits can be used to commit further crimes.

Trafficking in cultural goods can take different forms, ranging from theft from cultural heritage institutions or private collections, through looting of archaeological sites to the displacement of artifacts due to war.

But the result is always the impoverishment of the countries of origin of these treasures, and irreparable damage to the common cultural heritage of humankind. This trade is also often linked to organized crime, money laundering and terrorism. The illicit trade in cultural goods is international in nature and requires an international response. International cooperation is therefore the most efficient means of protecting the world's cultural property.

Wildlife and forest crime comprises a myriad of diverse and sometimes overlapping offences from illegal logging and hunting, processing, exporting and importing, trafficking, supplying, to receiving, possessing and consuming wild fauna and flora.

It also covers associated offences, such as document fraud (including fraudulent marking and stamping), money laundering, tax evasion and corruption. To combat wildlife and forest crime effectively, it is important to identify and define all possible offences and to enforce appropriate penalties for the complete array of offences.

The transplantation of healthy organs into persons, whose own organs have failed, improves and saves thousands of lives every year. But demand for organs has outstripped supply, creating an underground market for illicitly obtained organs. Desperate situations of both recipients and donors create an avenue ready for exploitation by international organ trafficking syndicates.

Traffickers exploit the desperation of donors to improve the economic situation of themselves and their families, and they exploit the desperation of recipients who may have few other options to improve or prolong their lives. Like other victims of trafficking in persons, those who fall prey to traffickers for the purpose of organ removal may be vulnerable by virtue of poverty, for instance.

One factor that is distinct in this form of trafficking in persons is the profile of culprits; while some may live solely from criminal trafficking activities, others may be doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers and health care

professionals who are involved in legitimate activities when they are not participating in trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal. The Trafficking in Persons Protocol supplementing the Transnational Organized Crime Convention includes trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal. [8]

To conclude, the tentacles of organized crime have huge reach, as demonstrated above, and may adversely impact the health of many millions of people around the globe. Through fear induced by brutality and corruption, the perpetrators enjoy not only a high level of impunity but also extraordinary invisibility.

We hope that, by bringing together a wide range of evidence from disparate areas of research, we have begun to make the case for a joined-up, evidence-based approach to addressing the global health consequences of organized crime.

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## **TRADITIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME IN THE MODERN WORLD**

The economic situation in Ukraine in recent years is a cause for concern, which is determined by the negative indicators of the state, dynamics and geography of criminal organizations, which nowadays are one of the destabilizing factors in the political, social, economic and legal spheres, creating a real threat to the national security and demographic development of the state.

As we know criminal organizations refer to centralized enterprises established in order to engage in illegal activities, most commonly for the purpose of generating substantial profit for the criminals involved. Some criminal organizations, such as terrorist organizations, are politically motivated. Mafias are criminal organizations whose primary motivation is profit. Gangs sometimes become "disciplined" enough to be considered "organized." Organized crime, however defined, is characterized by a few basic qualities including durability over time, diversified interests, hierarchical structure, capital accumulation, reinvestment, access to political protection, and the use of violence to protect interests.

Organized crime takes advantage of social conditions or laws, such as Prohibition against alcohol, illegal gambling, prostitution, or drugs, to find a substantial market in which to operate, satisfying those desires of members of society for things deemed unacceptable. Equally, they use the cooperation of law enforcement or the judicial system in turning a blind eye to their activities in exchange for financial or other reward.

Organized crime, therefore, succeeds based on the corruption and weaknesses of those who are not considered criminals. Elimination of organized crime can only be accomplished when the society as a whole rejects their activities.

The law of Ukraine on the organizational and legal basis for combating organized crime defines organized crime as "a set of crimes committed in connection with the creation and activities of organized criminal groups".