# UNDERSTANDING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME:

## AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH SYNTHESIS

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# UNDERSTANDING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME: AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH SYNTHESIS REPORT

This academic research synthesis seeks to identify common research themes and areas of interest among the eleven projects funded by the Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research (PaCCS)/ ESRC/ AHRC, Transnational Organised Crime (TNOC) call[1]. The call commissioned cross-disciplinary and innovative research projects that extend societal understanding of how transnational organised crime has evolved over time and in different cultural contexts. Projects that look at why TNOC extends across borders, identify the impact it has upon populations and sustainable international development and also identify effective ways of preventing and mitigating its impact. The debate over TNOC is distinguished from previous debates over organised crime largely because it crosses national boundaries[2], but it will also be argued here that it is also evolving in scope with developments in communications and transactional technologies.

The themes explored in this synthesis research include overlapping research questions, themes, arguments and academic outputs. By drawing upon an analysis of the TNOC applications and the research integrators' interviews with principal investigators, the report explores a TNOC (Meta) narrative and proposes a thematic framework for organising and understanding TNOC academic activity. The report then proposes a means for integrating academic outputs to ensure that their reach and impact are maximised. It was revised in the light of discussions and comments following an initial presentation at the TNOC Workshop (28-29 March 2017) and subsequently the PaCCS strategic advisory group meeting on 31st May 2017. I must thank Dr Gabriela Nava, Senior Research Portfolio Manager in the Society and Global Security team at the ESRC for her detailed comments on an earlier draft, and also Dr Tristram Riley-Smith, the TNOC Research Integrator for his enthusiastic inspiration and allowing me to use the notes made from his introductory interviews with the various researchers.

Following a summary of the report, the first part of this document is a 'think piece' that identifies the evolution of organised crime into transnational organised crime groups to try to create a framework for understanding the relationship between organised crime and transnational organised crime which, could be applied to the different types of TNOC outlined later. The second part of the report overviews the eleven research projects funded under the PaCCs TNOC call and their aims and objectives. The third part identifies synergies, future connections and themes and then offers some ideas for disseminating the project findings. The appendix is a matrix outlining the eleven projects.

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[1] Further information about the PaCCS Transnational Organised Crime call can be found at http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/funding-opportunities/paccs-transnational-organised-crime-call/

[2] N.B. Although the projects do not cover acts of terror, the TNOC analysis in S. 1 does include terror networks, especially when organised crimes are a source of funding for organisations devoted to acts of terror.

# UNDERSTANDING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME:
## ACADEMIC RESEARCH SYNTHESIS REPORT SUMMARY

This report is a synthesis of the projects funded under the PaCCs (ESRC/ AHRC) Transnational Organised Crime (TNOC) call. It looks at the evolution and dynamics of Transnational Organised Crime, a term that is frequently used today but rarely conceptualised. It then explores the themes and cross-themes of the funded projects and considering future research directions. Part 1 looks at the conceptual issues relating to understanding TNOCs and Part 2, the eleven projects. Part 3 explores connections and future directions.

## 1. The Evolution of Organised Crime into Transnational Organised Crime

Organised crime has evolved into new forms of transnational organised crime (TNOC). While TNOC has existed for many years, e.g. international drug smuggling (traditional organised crime forms still exist), TNOC has further evolved in recent decades due to the new globalised criminal opportunities arising from developments in international transactions. Practices, which are facilitated by changes in global capital created by new mobile technologies, particularly the internet and social network media. TNOCs are now emerging online, so there is a need to work out when the internet is being used to assist, enable to completely control crime. So, we need to separate cyber-assisted from cyber-enabled & cyber-dependent TNOCs to better understand these change and operationalise the concepts with a view to tracking and measuring TNOCs and offenders.

TNOC groups, like traditional organised crime groups, appear to be bound by trust bonds such as family, ethnicity or business. These can be traditional hierarchical lines of authority, rooted in geographical location, ethnicity or culture. Alternatively, they can be bonds formed out the desire to make money or to exact vengeance, or to change a political landscape. In practice, combinations of these factors exist. New communications and commerce technologies facilitate these and new types of bonding (e.g. reputation) across international boundaries.

At the centre of each of these trust bonds is the expression of power which can take place overtly (coercion), covertly (manipulating the agenda) or unconsciously (via ideology). TNOC groups prefer to give an illusion of coercion to achieve compliance and express power through manipulating agendas and ideologies so that they do not bring police and state attention to their activities, although this depends upon their overall goal as some TNOC groups with political goals will want the opposite, especially in failed states, where they might actually represent the only form of law.

Transnational organised criminal activity takes place within a changing socio-political and socio-technical environment, especially with e-commerce technologies, which means that new patterns of demand and supply now make TNOC activities more attractive as a choice of crime and also as a choice of career, which incentivises the formation of online crime organisations to protect criminals.

New forms of TNOC groups online are emerging in new distributed forms that are non-hierarchical and flat in structure with members not-physically connected. There is little evidence to show that traditional Mafia groups (crime organisations that control victim markets and protect criminal activity) are moving online, other than to make their organisation run more efficiently. The evidence suggests that different groups of actors with very different profiles, motivations and personal pathways into crime are currently involved in the new forms of TNOC online; for example, hackers.

Because of the above, a flexible approach needs to be taken to understand transnational organised crime groups: a) Sustainable models of TNOC groups b) Ephemeral models of TNOC groups c) Hybrid TNOCs.

To further understand TNOC groups the different stakeholders' perspectives also need to be embraced. By adapting the UK Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) approach and language, TNOC can be explored from different perspectives: a) the TNOC offender (PREVENT) b) TNOC law enforcement (PURSUE) c) TNOC prevention (PROTECT) d) Mitigating the impact of TNOCs (PREPARE).

## 2. The Transnational Organised Crime Projects Synthesis

*The synthesis research explores the eleven projects funded by the TNOC programme* in terms of the main themes explored in the project, the key research questions, the methodological approaches taken and the

key shapers of action which enable and inhibit the cultural, social, ideological and technological aspects of the TNOCs being investigated by the projects.

*The eleven projects broadly fall into three key substantive areas* a) People movement TNOCs (Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking, People Smuggling); b) Trading and Smuggling Illicit products TNOCs (Counterfeit goods, the darkweb, drugs); c) Issues in Policing and Regulating TNOCs (Language translation, Policing in Marginalised Communities - land & sea, Corporate Finance Vehicles).

*Synergies and observations* – A number of synergies were found. Firstly, organised crime is a problem concept and a 'definitional truce' is needed. Instead of definitions, a flexible framework of understanding TNOC can be adopted that incorporates different factors. Secondly, each project also looks in some way at enablers or inhibitors for TNOC action. These are subconsciously shaped by cultural or ideological factors and can inversely influence criminals and investigators.

*Common research method synergies between the projects* – The projects tend to employ combinations of library research /literature review and are augmented by primary and secondary data collection. Some projects will result in policy & law options, whereas others are conducting evaluation research on policies.

### 3. Future Connections, Themes and Dissemination
*The three research areas outlined above can be used to develop connections and future research:* People Movement TNOCs, Illicit Product TNOCs and Key issues in Policing and Regulating TNOCs.

*Connecting TNOC structural themes* – a number of connecting structural sub-themes also suggest potential for further research. The first is to explore the ways that TNOCS are financed and indicates that both licit and illicit sources of finance or funding are used to hide trails and launder proceeds of crime. There is also some evidence that an infiltration of legitimate economies has taken place to undertake the TNOCS, which raises important questions as to whether the proceeds of TNOC are being invested in more criminal activity or in wealth creation or both. The second theme relates to the adoption of new communications technologies and raises questions over whether they simply facilitate TNOC or facilitate of TNOC organisations – are new internet mafias forming? A third theme relates to the way that language translation facilitates TNOCs. Whilst one project already looks at the law enforcement use of translators, there is also a need for research to explore how TNO criminals from different geographical regions communicate with each other and their workers. Also, how do victims communicate effectively with police, and in some complex cases, the offenders themselves? A fourth connecting theme relates to the organisational characteristics of TNOC groups. What is known about the size and shape of particular TNOC groups and networks and also their structures, business models and markets, and the types of criminal activity they support? A fifth theme is how do TNOC groups exercise and maintain their power and also control their share of the market for victims and protect the criminals under their protection from competition? A sixth theme is how do criminal justice systems adapt to new forms of transnational criminal organisation with a reasoned and proportionate response that achieves the goals of justice across different jurisdictions?

*Connecting TNOC cultural themes* – In addition to structure are also ideas for more culturally based research themes. The first is the need to increase 'cultural' understandings of different TNOCs, especially in terms of their criminal logic (e.g. motivations, enablers and inhibitors) and how they fit into local cultures, or do not; because disruption is also a TNOC tactic! What is thought to be rational logic in one culture may be irrational in another. The second theme is to understand the 'tipping point' where individual thoughts and ideas turn into criminal action with regard to being a member of a TNOC group or becoming a victim? The third theme is to understand the relationship between transnational organised crime groups and terror networks. To what extent is a crime-terror nexus permeating a range of different TNOCs, or is it simply a modern folk myth perpetuated by media sensationalism?

*Dissemination.* In addition to individual project outputs, it is proposed that TNOC conference panels be formed on the back of established conferences. A special issue of a journal be compiled (e.g. *EROC*, or *Global Crime*). An edited book could be collated around the core themes (e.g. Palgrave).

*The TNOC Programme* is a good model for research funding. It engages many academics and stakeholders, gains value added from the integrator's work, while representing good value for money.

**PART 1: THE EVOLUTION OF ORGANISED CRIME INTO TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME GROUPS**[3]

There is a general consensus amongst academic commentators that 'organised crime' is a problem concept because there is no single definition that covers all types. Transnational organised crime (TNOC) is equally problematic for the same reasons. Like organised crime, Transnational organised crime is a term that is frequently used today, but rarely conceptualised, and yet it is not only growing in scope (range of crime), but also in depth, in terms of its infiltration into the economic and social infrastructure. While the TNOC phenomenon has existed for many years, for example in the form of international drug smuggling and money laundering, it has also evolved in recent decades through an increase in globalised criminal opportunities that have arisen from developments in international transaction practices. Practices, which themselves are facilitated by changes in global capital created by new mobile communications technologies such as the internet and social network media which now assist or enable existing TNOC groups; or create entirely new TNOC groups online. So, whilst a scientific conceptualisation may not be possible, it is possible to present a framework for understanding the key dynamics to help separate out, categorise and model the different profiles presented by different types of TNOC and TNOC groups. Before exploring the themes and cross-themes of the funded projects in this TNOC call and considering future research directions, this first section explores the changing nature of the dynamics of transnational organised crime and suggests a framework for understanding contemporary changes in TNOC and even classifying the different forms of organisation. More specifically, it outlines some of the key bonding concepts that form the basis for TNOC organisation, before highlighting some of the power relationships that TNOC groups seek to express. It then identifies the changing socio-political and socio-technical environment in which TNOCs occur and which may even facilitate new types of TNOC. Finally, in order to highlight change, three 'ideal type' model structures are introduced along with a methodological approach to explore and understand TNOCs. This first section of the report is mainly a 'think piece' to assist researchers when trying to contextualise the nature of the organisation of the TNOCs covered in each of the eleven projects and also when trying to identify the motivations behind the particular crimes involved and also the criminal behaviour of the criminal actors.

**1. The changing nature of the structures of transnational organised crime (TNOC)**
When defining the nature of the structures of transnational organised crime (and terror networks) there is a need to differentiate between static models of organised crime group structures and ephemeral forms of organisation found in some newer forms of TNOC. I propose here that this should be understood at two levels, firstly, the way that TNOC structures are bonded together and secondly in terms of their sustainability or ephemerality (or aspects of both). A tertiary consideration, introduced towards the end of this section is how TNOC and each model/ ideal type is viewed epistemologically to conduct research, for example, in terms of the victims, law enforcement, offender and prevention.

**1.1 The dynamics of bonding TNOC groups together**
By differentiating between Hierarchical, Ethnic-Cultural and Entrepreneurial models of organised crime (Albanese, 2011:Ch. 5) that are found in the literature we can not only differentiate between the different ways that organised crime groups are bonded together, but also how they have developed historically. Each of the models below illustrates different types of trust factors that create the bond.

*The Hierarchical (family) Model* is mainly found in traditional 'Mafia' organised crime structures and the more traditional terrorist groups, such as the IRA (Irish Republican Army). The groups are organised according to a top-down leadership hierarchy with one person (or controlling group) on top of pyramidal structure and many 'soldiers' at the lower levels with a number of levels of authority in between. This model is more likely to be found in geographically located organised crime groups,

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although there are many examples of outreach (forming splinter groups in different countries, or entering into alliances with others).

*The Ethnic/ Cultural Model* shares a common heritage that engages in both low-level and high-level crime to the benefit the entire group. Ethnic, cultural or religion ties bind the group together and individuals mostly control their own activities to achieve a common goal which may be criminal and/ or terror oriented. They (ethnic, cultural or religious ties) create trust and bond the "organised criminals" together (Von Lampe and Ole Johansen, 2004). This trust bond helps the resulting networks of criminals to reduce uncertainty in a field and prevent law enforcement intervention. It also gives to its members a competitive advantage in business thanks to the tight social relations. Trust plays an important role in collective action (Paoli, 2002), because it creates a strong non-economic tie which allows Mafia and relevant terror groups to be better organised than any competing social group. This peculiar feature of organised crime makes collective action more difficult for other social groupings without the same ties. Importantly, groups bonded by ethnic, cultural or religious ties thrive with essential support from elites they can influence and interact with against a disorganised majority (Mosca, 1896: 97). Elites basically seek to maximise their own future share of resources by acquiring enough political power via institutions to protect their position and the organised crime group piggy back and feed off this. Directly or indirectly, this facilitates effective resource distribution through concessions of benefits or taxation. At this level, criminal organisations aspire to maintain the status quo in their own interests. They can be organised across national borders, but typically with links to the indigenous country and culture – the people they know.

*The Enterprise model* contrasts with the hierarchical and ethnic/cultural models because the organised crime groups involved operate along the lines of legitimate business enterprises, but focus upon illicit rather than legitimate markets to provide illicit goods or services. They are rarely organised in a centrally coherent way, rather they operate like conventional businesses. They also follow the principles that govern legal markets in order to maintain and extend their particular share of the illicit market, responding to the needs and demand of their consumers. The aims of the organised crime groups falling within the enterprise model are mainly to pursue profit rather than ideology. Though the profit could in some cases be subsequently used to fund ideologically driven terror campaigns, which, raises the problem of how to differentiate between transnational organised crime groups and terror networks – identified later as an area for future research enquiry. Regardless of whether the goal is organised crime or terror, illegal markets still require a high demand for protection of property rights where the State and the law cannot help. So, there might be the need for an alternative means of protection. In such cases the formation of Cartels, groups of actors who agree to control prices, efficiently exclude newcomers from the markets and insure that profits are shared. This model is more likely to be found in TNOCs as it is versatile and because crime cartels can be easily formed across borders to achieve a common illicit purpose.

The above three models are presented as 'ideal types' which isolate different trust factors and traits. In practice, TNOCs will tend to combine a variety of these characteristics according to their particular crime and organisation profile.

### 1.1.1 Power relationships and organised crime
Whilst the models mentioned above are useful for delineating particular transnational organised crime group orientations and bonds, they say little about power relationships. Organised crime groups exist primarily to exert power in order to maintain and their control over their markets of operation and those criminals they protect. They do so by offering illicit services or goods to economic and cultural elites and the rest of society to compete against each other to maintain their economic position and gradually increase their foothold in society. Basically, the elite group which can control the majority of resources will be the one that can secure political power. This is why elites are targeted by criminal groups to join and create networks that do not really distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate activities (Ruggiero, 2009). The reason for this is historical. Alosi (1983), for example, shows how Sicily has historically been owned by a few individuals, which created both a high degree of inequality and also social pressure to limit the political and economic power of small land owners. On the back

of these inequalities the Mafia evolved to pursue their own activities, whilst gaining some social acceptance amongst the lower classes.

In addition to protecting and maintaining criminal markets as alternative providers of illicit goods and services, organised crime groups also exist to protect criminals under their protection (see Schelling, 1971). In this sense, they are industries of violence (Franchetti and Sonnino, 1877) which perpetuate their existence, despite broader changes in economic markets and clients-victims. The victims are not only a source of income, but also a source of labour, for example, fighters and 'soldiers'. Gambetta considers organised crime groups more broadly as a "set of firms supplying protection in whatever context and to whichever customers they find profitable" (Gambetta, 1996:76). From an economic point of view, those 'criminal businesses' seek out a monopoly, for example, a single seller or a single buyer of a specific product. This is obtained by sharing the geographical territory where criminal members operate, or by creating queues of buyers and sellers, such is the case with taxi businesses and street food sellers (Gambetta and Reuters, 1995). This discussion of geographically based organised crime can equally be applied to TNOC across borders.

What is missing from this discussion so far, however, is consideration of how they achieve their goals. For this we need to consider the different ways that they express power. This could be as a criminal or terror network, although power is not always exploited directly (coercively) by webs of possible criminally exploitable ties (latent structures) or patterns of existing criminal cooperation (manifest structures). Within these ties or bonds are different types of power relationships. Lukes (1974; 2005), for example, conceptualised the expression of power in three different ways. The first is direct coercion, by violence and fear of violence - the conventional means by which organised crime and terror networks achieve their goals. But in practice, actual violence can sometimes frustrate the ultimate goal of the organisation by, for example, bringing unwanted attention to particularly sensitive points in an operation. Organised crime groups and many terror groups, usually want to frighten (or terrorise) their victims into compliance, so they will express power in more subtle ways. This is because, despite public and media expectations, direct violence by organised crime groups can often disrupt their own criminal business model which demands continuity to repetitively victimise by attracting adverse police or state attention. The only exception to this rule could be when the state is exceptionally weak or non-existent and it is the TNOC group which can determine and provide societal order. Lukes' second dimension of power is expressed by mobilising the agenda, for example, by corrupting members of the criminal justice system and rigging criminal justice processes so that criminals are protected from investigation or prosecution. Lukes' third dimension of power is the more subtle manipulation of ideas by changing thought structures through ideology which, amongst other things, can make unnatural idea appear natural (see Lukes, 1974/2005). In other words, victims are simply fear or express terror over what will result if they don't comply with the TNOC group's wishes. From the offender perspective, ideologies can also be linked to ideas about what is regarded as a legitimate or illegitimate activity, regardless of the law. Alternatively, in terror networks, political or religious based ideologies can be employed to shape participant's views of what is and what is not acceptable behaviour, or what goals are desirable or not. Remember that fear and terror events are not aimed at the victims, but those watching as they are in fact primarily 'theatre' (see Paganini, 2016). The way that power is expressed in organised crime groups and terror networks is a recurring part of debates over their modus operandi and demands further research.

## 1.2 Transnational organised crime groups in a changing socio-political and socio-technical environment.

It is important that the framework or models outlined here explain new or changing phenomena, especially where motivations may not be purely financial or political, religious or moral. They will also need to respond to contemporary socio-technical and socio-political changes and shifts in behavioural norms. Changes in the socio-technical environment arising from advanced social network media are creating new lateral forms of social communication via globalised networks. These lateral forms of communication are bypassing more traditional social class or culturally driven hierarchies and are rapidly changing expectations and opinions by either collecting them together or and polarising them. Changes in the socio-political environment are being catalysed socio-technical changes which are causing the decline of neo-liberal hegemony and the rejection of progressive neo-liberalism which "mixes together truncated ideals of emancipation and lethal forms of capitalism"

(Fraser, 2017). The driver here is a public anger and lust for change that is emerging within the broader populous out of the contradiction arising from the illusion of neo-liberal ideals against the hard edge of modern capitalism's reality of exclusion from wealth achievement by zero hour contracts, high housing costs, increased education costs with less certainty of benefits, minimal pension, plus austerity measures and predatory debt, and protection measures such as those once provided by Unions and ambivalent attitudes towards religious diversity. The new post-progressive-neo-liberal socio-political environment de-motivates individuals by making them feel that they should matter, but in reality are ignored and, as such, will never achieve their personal potential. It has the effect of replacing existing political norms with a 'new political normal'. In this new 'political normal' explanations based upon conventional values no longer apply, they are rejected, which raises questions about what is normal and acceptable in this modern globalised world. Hence, the surprise at the anti-Renzi reforms vote in Italy; the rise and success of disruptive politics in the USA; Brexit 2016 and the 2015 failure of poll predictors in the UK; the rise of the National Front in France, Germany and elsewhere; through to the various 'Arab spring' movements in Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere; and finally. This new 'disrupted' socio-political environment is arguably creating new behavioural norms which TNOCs and new transnational terror networks are now exploiting, such as the movement of mass populations from Africa to Europe and also extreme politics and religious attitudes.

**1.2.1 New forms of TNOC online are emerging with distributed organisational forms**
The changes outlined above in socio-political and socio-technical environments are arguably driving the development of new forms of transnational distributed crime and their organisation, in addition to existing more traditional organised crime groups (Wall, 2015). See, for example, some of the actions in recent years of 'The Impact Team' - the Ashley Madison Hackers (Alba, 2015), and Anonymous, the hacking group which defends Wikileaks (Coleman, 2015) and groups they are sympathetic with. These groups tend to exploit digital and networked technologies to connect and organise themselves and also reach out to a broader sympathetic public to spread messages that create fear and even terror. They lack the detailed division of labour that tends to be found in the more traditional crime organisations and also the forms of governance (especially hierarchical) associated with them. Importantly, the 'nexus' of transnational organised crime and terrorist networks (using everyday criminality to spread fear and terror) has become more significant and has also changed in nature (see further Hutchinson and O'Malley, 2007 and Basra et al., 2016, also see Walter Wehrmeyer's research project later in this report). Online, in a globalised cyberspace, there is typically a lack of control over competing criminals and victim markets that is normally found offline and as a consequence there is much more freedom of competition amongst criminals for victims. Anonymity and users' behaviour does not replicate that shown in real life, making possible crimes like phishing, scams or data hacking (Dhamija, Tygar and Hearst, 2006).

Online offenders are connected and organised by social network technologies, but not in the same physical and visceral way as are traditional organised and transnational organised crime groups. Today, offenders are likely to have never met and yet the payoff from their collective actions, combined with the relatively low risk of being held responsible for their actions, increases their confidence in order to commit more illegal activities in the future (Wall, 2007: 45; Wainwright, 2016). This does not, however, mean that organised crime or terrorist actions are any less carefully planned. Fellman (2015), for example, argues that they can be premeditated. In such a virtual context, there are new and additional motivations arising, which reprioritise old ones. These motivations explain why this modern context is so different from the one theorised by, say, Becker (1968). In fact, modern criminals value differently the potential gains and the fact to be discovered and judged for their actions (Cárdenas et al., 2009).

Very well-known and understood motivations, such as financial, reputational gain and revenge sit alongside other motivations such as intellectual challenge, to impress friends, or simply that criminals want to see what will happen; because they have the tools and skills to commit and perpetrate illicit activities. Sometimes criminal activities online will even evolve out of simply 'playing at crime' and mimicking computer gaming behaviour which produces faux or 'play' crime that is never intended to result in a serious crime, but does so by nature of its real world impact. This is very often the case when young gamers are 'seduced into cybercrime' and digitally drift into more serious activities, such as terror. Thus, there is an important need to create new behavioural models to

explain how young people aged in their mid-teens drift into serious and organised crime and terrorist activity without ever leaving the comfort and security of their bedrooms. In a nutshell, the seduction, or drift, model suggests that young individuals become progressively more curious and drift into criminal behaviour. More specifically, they get bored with playing computer games; they begin to play with cheats and get bored. In order to keep winning games they seek to disable their friends' computers by using information from criminal forums - a form of criminal organisation. These are as strong a driver of the organisation of crime online as are financial motivations. So, seduced by their own technological achievements and with their curiosity aroused they drift into more serious and sophisticated forms of offending, such as deploying DDoS[4] attacks to weaken a security system in order to steal data via an SQL injection[5]. Eventually, seeking more information and resources via the Deep Web, a few may find themselves becoming attracted to obtaining heavy duty hacking malware, or illegal 'criminal' information, or even connecting with terror groups themselves via terror www sites.

These individuals are regarded by the Criminal Justice System as serious organised criminals and they and friends become classed as an organised crime group (see further Wall, 2015). But, in terms of traditional criminal justice thinking these are fairly atypical offenders (see NCA, 2017; Aitken, et al., 2017). They are not psychologically prepared for the Criminal Justice System. Many will not even be prosecuted as they are either vulnerable because of their neurodiversity and age, or fears that would become 'protected' by organised criminals in prison and be called on to perform (cyber)'favours' when released (Wall, 2013; 2018). As a consequence, new forms of thinking about both criminal actions and criminal organisation are required, not just the criminal forums in which criminal ideas are circulated and 'criminal' problems solved, but also the distributed organisation of online criminal and terrorist networks. This is especially the case in the organised crime/ terror nexus where organised crime group ideas overlap with, or overflow into, the ideas supporting terrorist networks, e.g. the soft grooming of vulnerable youth, idealising 'the cause' and romantic ideal, combined with their inner anger to encourage them to tip thoughts into actions. The key questions to answer here are, firstly, where is the tipping point between discussing transnational crime or terror ideas and them being put into action. What, for example, converts a train of thoughts into a criminal or terror action? Secondly, how do criminal justice systems adapt to these new forms of transnational criminal organisation with a reasoned and proportionate response that achieves the goals of justice for all countries involved?

**1.3 Fluidity in the approach to modelling transnational organised crime groups and networks**
Whilst the traditional analysis of Hierarchical, Ethnic and Enterprise based organised crime groups is important, organised crime is with new information communications technologies, evolving into transnational organised crime and is creating an extended transnational organised crime landscape that includes new forms of criminal activities that range from people smuggling, to illicit goods and services, and also the creation of terror. So in addition to the traditional sustainable models of organised crime and terror networks, there are also various ephemeral forms of crime organisation, often online. In between the two positions of sustainability and ephemerality are also new variants which combine qualities of both to form hybrid models.

*Sustainable models of TNOC groups* share common goals and often some geographical locations, collective ideals and a perceivable structure to achieve and sustain the goal, often offsetting liabilities down their structures. This applies to both criminal and terrorist groups that are secluded in specific areas and thrive because of popular support. A constant demand for governmental goods and illicit products keeps those groups alive, for example, Scampia, Secondigliano and Zen areas in Italy or Barrio 18 and Mara Salvatrucha in some areas of Central America.

*Ephemeral models of organised crime groups and terrorist networks* are connected only by an idea or value. This could be to commit an organised crime or even a terrorist act, for example, the UK

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[4] A DDoS (Distributed denial of service) attack prevents legitimate users from gaining access to a web space by bombarding access gateways with a barrage of data.
[5] An SQL injection is a method used to follow up a DDoS attack in order to steal data from a computer by confusing it into giving access to the hackers.

enterprise model of career criminals working together on a crime and then reforming to commit another. Or the idea of the 'franchised' idea-sets as with the hacker group Anonymous, or, similarly, Lone Wolf Terrorism, although I argue later that these are actually hybrid examples. This type of model works primarily on the circulation of ideas and is heavily influenced by the internet.

*Hybrid models of TNOC groups* tend to have sustainable and ephemeral characteristics. They are organised around a central group which sustains the criminal 'mission' as articulated in a central idea and value set, but empowers individuals or groups ideologically; even funding cells to achieve the collective aims. Hybrid models can be partly distributed (in a virtual environment) and partly located geographically. Anonymous and IS (Islamic State), mentioned above, are two modern and different examples of hybrid models. Anonymous members are attracted by the central 'hacker' philosophy of Anonymous and form their own cells through chat forums and pursue activities on behalf of the Anonymous cause. In a similar way, IS members 'adopt' core ideas and ideology from a common IS sources (e.g. online materials such as www site, blogs, forums) and then construct their own plans to achieve IS's jihadist goals, and put them into practice. Sometimes this involves committing a lone act, supported by a virtual community, other times the recruit will actually join fellow members and fight alongside them in a geographical location (Syria). Although the IS example also has a more physical (kinetic) outcome, in both examples the 'hybridity' is the result of a centrally circulated set of ideas and norms in cyberspace, but with a physical outcome in specific geographical locations. In fact, the common ideas are sustained via www based communications, whilst the (largely) localised actions tend to be ephemeral.

Many contemporary TNOCS are better conceptualised as social networks rather than groups and are brought together in different ways by internet technologies (amongst other conduits). Furthermore, as networks, then social network analysis becomes all the more important as a tool to analyse their structure. So, it is therefore important to understand the understand influence of Cyberspace upon the organisation of TNOCs. But the way that internet technologies intervene can vary. On the one hand, some TNOCs are cyber-assisted in that the ICTs are used to organise them. If you take away the internet, then they still take place. Cyber-enabled TNOCs, on the other hand, are where the internet is used to expand the reach of criminals globally across networks – nationally based OC may become TNOC. Similarly, Cyber-dependent TNOCs are purely of the internet and online, such as hacking or ransomware distribution, so if the internet is (hypothetically) taken away then they would completely disappear. Whereas the cyber-assisted TNOCs are more characteristic of the sustainable model of TNOC, cyber-dependent TNOCS are more characteristic of the purely ephemeral model. The hybrid model, however, is more likely to be cyber-enabled in that it is grounded in established ideas which are maintained by the internet and social media, yet while the ideas and goals the sustainable core they are achieved by others with ephemeral connections.

### 1.4 A Methodological Perspective for TNOC Analysis

While the above 'models' guide and systematize the activity of researchers and practitioners, their analysis also needs to reflect a methodological understanding of the different perspectives involved in a TNOC. Some guidance on this can be obtained from the CONTEST (four Ps) approach found in the UK Counter Terrorism Strategy (Home Office, 2011), because, in addition to being part of the contemporary common language of transnational organised crime policies, it also provides and regularises an important methodological framework for TNOC analysis. *Prevent,* for example, focuses upon offenders in order to prevent them from becoming criminal, or from committing more serious criminal acts, or joining TNOC groups and organisations. *Pursue,* on the other hand, focuses upon law enforcement to pursue and stop TNOC offenders and groups by detecting, prosecuting and otherwise disrupting those who plan to carry out TNOC activities. *Protect*: is a strategic focus to protect key infrastructures by reducing risks and vulnerabilities in order to prevent attack by TNOC groups. *Prepare*: is a tactical focus upon prepare victims for impact and mitigate the effects of TNOC groups where they cannot be stopped. It is important to add that this link with the 4Ps should not be over thought, it really provides useful epistemological frame.

This multi-faceted approach also helps to differentiate between types of actions, for example, differentiating organised crime group activities from terrorist networks activities in terms of raising

funds to commit acts of terror that will shift public opinion and the political goals. It also helps analysts take into account the role of the individual and the role of groups in shaping the individual offenders actions and also resolving those offending actions on behalf of society. With regard to the individual, preventative measures should tailor strategic measures to counterbalance the causes that trigger the individual actor's pathway into crime. Such strategies are important because organised crime groups and terrorist networks only offend through their actors and this is the point where the model should devise different solutions for each of the goals in order to reduce risks and limit their disruptive effects. All these features push towards the design of a multi-dimensional model that takes into the account the actors and the transnational crime group in a state of constant technological change.

**1.5 Taking the TNOC research programme further**
Interpretations of organised crime groupings often tend to omit the social and cultural context in which organised crime and terrorist networks takes place as they both intersect at a certain point - TNOC groupings are still relatively under-theorized. The TNOC group literature is particularly thin on the ways that the cultural context is interpreted by the key actors involved (the main players, the supporting roles and bit part actors) and helps them interpret their roles. The literature also frequently omits cultural context and its interpretation upon the offenders and offending groups, the enforcers and also the victims. There is also relatively infrequent mention, for example, as to how cultural representations shape public opinion about organised crime groups, indeed how in fact cultural interpretations shape the organised crime and transnational organised crime actors and groups themselves[6]. For example, rather than exposing or shaming the violence of 1960s US mafia groups, Marti Scorsese's film The Godfather (based upon Mario Puzo's novel) had the effect of helping forge their identity, and even providing role models for the criminals that they could copy. More broadly, it glorified their actions, arguably, justifying some of their activities or tactics and made them seem more human: normal in an abnormal world.

In the literature there is also little discussion on how a cultural approach can be used as parts of an anti-TNOC strategy to reshape or disrupt existing public opinions of TNOCs. Sometimes TNOCs may be unintentionally presented as heroic, as freedom fighters fighting evil, or campaigns against TNOCs might make such dramatic claims that the target public may not believe them. Especially in the current climate with the current rejection of progressive neo-liberalism and the decline of neo-liberal hegemony which is causing so much disruption at present. There is a lot to learn from the socio-political construction of cultural understandings of TNOCs (culture is used here in a very broad sense) and this theme is recommended in section 3 as an area for further research. For example, why do members of organised crime groups identify with a particular grouping? To what extent do cultural norms govern their behaviour in these groupings, for example, to justify certain criminal actions and condemn others?

It is, therefore, important to analyse the organisation of TNOC, as mentioned earlier, in order to identify and understand changes in TNOC itself, but also to see if groups who are committing TNOCs are themselves changing. For example, identifying when groups, that were once ephemeral, begin to invest their proceeds of crime to develop their wealth, power and influence in order to sustain themselves and their operations. So they might consciously progress from, say, transporting people in boats, to organising people trafficking operations and protecting the individuals who they direct to traffic people in boats from other criminal groups and law enforcement. Or they may progress from selling counterfeit goods or drugs or firearms on the street themselves, to commissioning the manufacturing of counterfeits, drugs or firearms and arranging a sales distribution network. In the latter case, the internet or darkweb plays an important role in facilitating and enabling change. It may well be the case that they do not make the full transition from an ephemeral to a sustainable form, rather the internet or darkweb may enable a core of a few individuals who sustain the organisation to run a larger operation in which key functions are outsourced to other offending groups as and when the need arises. Such knowledge of change is important for academics when conceptualising the groups they are studying, but also policy makers and law enforcers because of their need to know whether a costly long operation is required, or whether a quick takedown is the answer.

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[6] N.B. Christiana Gregoriou's research for this programme does explore representations of human trafficking.

**PART 2: TRANS NATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME PROJECTS**

**2 The eleven TNOC research projects**
In the following analysis the projects are grouped together and analysed in terms of their main themes, the key research questions they pose, their methodologies and the cultural, social, ideological, technological enablers or inhibitors which are key shapers of action. This helps to identify common synergies (and differences). The projects and issues are mapped out in the Appendix and are described below along with the project leaders and their academic disciplines. The eleven projects cover three main areas of TNOC study[7] People movement TNOCs, Trading and Smuggling Illicit products TNOCs and Policing and Regulating TNOCs,

## 2.1 People movement TNOCs
**2.1.1 Negating Humanity: Modern Slavery in its Historical Context and its Implications for Policy** (Kristofer Allerfeldt - History)
*Theme:* Modern Slavery - "Modern Slavery" is not the old -fashioned "chattel" slavery exemplified in the ancient world or the New World. The UK's 2015 Modern Slavery Act includes within its remit prohibitions on organ and embryo harvesting; forced marriage and debt bondage. This legislation criminalises a range of dehumanising, degrading and cruel practices under the remit of what it terms "slavery". Others see it as a question of enforcement, intrinsically linking slavery with globalisation and insufficiently restrained capitalism. It is this breadth of conceptualisation that has been seen as its weakness and it is that which this study seeks to examine.

*Key Research Questions:* The project will establish how the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015 has been enforced - what crimes it has focused on, as well as where its emphasis is taking the debate.

*Research Methods:* The project uses a combination of library research and two workshops plus the establishment of a long-term network of journalists, leading policy makers, law enforcers and scholars who will collaborate through this project, as well as the research of the investigators.

**2.1.2 Modern Slavery: Meaning and Measurement** (Kevin Bales - Social Sciences)
*Theme:* Modern Slavery - Looks firstly at the definitional debate, at how slavery is defined by different 'user groups' with the intention of bringing usability and clarity, and perhaps conformity and agreement, to different types of legal, operational, and popular definitions. Secondly it looks at how modern slavery is measured. Survivors of slavery/trafficking will take a key role in this research.

*Key Research Questions:* The project asks how slavery is defined by different 'user groups', and how is it measured.

*Research Methods:* The project's aims are achieved by collecting first hand survivor narratives and introducing topics of definition into new interviews with survivors. It also seeks to measure modern slavery by applying Multiple Systems Estimation techniques to the hidden population of slavery and trafficking victims. The project will focus upon the regional setting of Central Florida, USA, as a case study.

**2.1.3 Representation of transnational human trafficking in present-day news media, true crime, and fiction** (Christiana Gregoriou - English)
*Theme:* Human Trafficking - Human trafficking is condemned as a modern-day form of slavery. The EU wants a more integrated and holistic approach to human trafficking. The police and government need to investigate fully and painstakingly against flexible very adaptable organised crime groups. Identifying victims of trafficking is complex, and investigations are slow, painstaking, time-consuming, and increasingly difficult, and identification contrasts with the timeframe created by the

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[7] This section paraphrases the text from the various project applications.

desires of readerships for quick news reporting and reflection of crime fiction narratives in the global marketplace. How can this be reconciled? Can there be a better understanding of the knowledge process?

*Key Research Questions:* Firstly, to what extent trafficking is over-simplified and/or sensationalised? Can, for example, the contribution to world knowledge, insight and public discourse concerning the identification, protection and support of victims be assessed from investigative reporting and literature? Secondly, how do texts incorporate existing and new knowledge, and lend visibility to the experience of exploited subjects by drawing attention to the politics of representation. Thirdly, how do the varied ideologies and politics of human trafficking contrast with wider discourses about global in/justice.

*Research Methods:* Investigate the portrayal (via narratives) of transnational human trafficking in contemporary crime fiction, the genre of true crime, and news media.

### 2.1.4 Anti-Smuggling Policies and their Intersection with Humanitarian Assistance and Social Trust (Sergio Carrera - Law)
*Theme:* Anti-Smuggling Policies– This Project aims to see if (EU) Anti-Smuggling Policies and practices - which increasingly merge policing, criminal justice and military approaches are 'fit for purpose' in countering smuggling and developing wider trust-based relations in society. It will map the field of 'anti-smuggling policy' agencies and their priorities, approaches and activities, in the production of knowledge at EU levels. The associated risks of policies that seek to tackle transnational crime upon both victims of crime and on host societies is an issue that is gaining increasing attention in scholarship. Yet, to date, the impact of anti-smuggling laws and policies on the stakeholders seeking to assist asylum seekers and migrants, including ordinary citizens, remains a hidden narrative.

*Key Research Questions:* What is the impact of transnational anti-smuggling measures on humanitarian assistance and trust-based relations in society? A key dilemma concerns the need to ensure a clear differentiation between exploitative smugglers and humanitarian actors.

*Research Methods:* It will explore the views of current EU policies and actors and the experiences, views and testimonies of civil society organisations and volunteers. It will map them on to 'anti-smuggling policy' agencies and their priorities, approaches and activities, in the production of knowledge at EU levels.

### 2.2 Trading and smuggling illicit product TNOCs
### 2.2.1 Financial Aspects of the Trade in Counterfeit Products: An Exploratory Study (Georgios Antonopoulos - Criminology)
*Theme:* Counterfeit Products - The trade in counterfeit goods is growing and has been linked to the operations of transnational organised crime. The flow of goods has been researched but not the financial mechanisms that enable them. 'Organised criminals' need significant financial resources, from credit facilities to processing international transactions to enter the market and every 'stage' of illicit supply, from production, shipping, to retail, be that small or large scale. While large sums of investment may be needed to enter a specific counterfeit market at the wholesale level, participation at the retail stage requires only modest resources; a process that has been simplified for criminal entrepreneurs as late-modern information and communication technologies (ICTs) and electronic commerce have developed over time and space. The appropriation of ecommerce could have a scaling effect allowing 'petty' traders to act globally. The development of the counterfeit trade in cyber-space is significant, yet little is known about how the financing of counterfeit goods is facilitated by digital technologies.

*Key Research Questions:* To identify the various forms and sources of financing that are being used to trade in counterfeit goods. Map the transnational physical and financial flows, focusing in particular on UK-China. Examine how the Internet and electronic commerce presents financial opportunities for counterfeiters and to explore how these online processes interact with the material trade in counterfeit

products and consider the role of licit financial and business structures in relation to the illicit trade in counterfeit products.

*Research Methods:* Draws upon cross-disciplinary research expertise in social sciences (criminology and sociology), the humanities (law and geography), and works in collaboration with practitioners from the National Trading Standards e-Crime Team (NTSeCT).

### 2.2.2 Behind the curtain: an investigation of the illicit trade in firearms and explosives on the dark net (Giacomo Persi Paoli - Defence and Security-Law)

*Theme:* Firearms and the darknet - The wave of terror attacks in the EU provides mounting evidence that the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons (including their parts, components and accessories), ammunition and explosives is a threat to security and public safety in Europe. Yet, the Schengen Agreement removed international borders between member states enabling passport-free movement, thus increasing the challenges of detecting illicit weapons and apprehending traffickers and illicit owners, especially when travelling by land. Despite the strong regulation of firearms, there are multiple avenues for entrepreneurial criminal actors to bypass controls and traffic weapons through Europe. One possible avenue is via the dark net which allows firearm parts and components to be traded online and delivered through mail order, or express delivery services. Entrepreneurial criminal networks and so-called 'lone-wolves' therefore have the opportunity to conduct illegal activities in cyberspace, enabling a different form of transnational crime already. See the Lyburd (Dark Knight) Case in Newcastle (Gayle, 2015).

*Key Research Questions:* What can the investigation of the dark-net markets reveal about the illegal arms trade in Europe? Can it provide an evidence-based assessment of the nature and scale of the online illegal supply and trade? Can potential loopholes be identified in European and National firearms laws and regulations that may be exploited by online traffickers?

*Research Methods:* Secondary data analysis and information search to create an evidence base of the role played by the dark-net in fuelling and/or facilitating firearms trade on the internet.

### 2.2.3 Breaking Bad: How transnational drug trafficking creates violent masculinities in local Caribbean communities in Port of Spain (Adam Baird - Trust Peace & Social Relation)

*Theme:* Drug trafficking - the project looks at the impact of transnational organised crime and drug-trafficking (TNOC) on poor urban communities in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, which has seen crime and violence soar since the mid-1990s as the city became transhipment point in the illegal drugs trade. Explores the 'transnational-to-community' impact of drug-trafficking and considers how TNOC contributes to a proportion of male residents becoming increasingly violent, e.g. 92% of homicide victims are men. Before high levels of drug-related TNOC emerged, the region had relatively low levels of violent crime. It has weakened law and is an area where policy and programming needs to be strengthened. Masculinities are clearly one important part of the solution and are almost completely overlooked. This research uses masculinities as an interpretive lens and draws upon scholars across the disciplines of Peace Studies, Cultural Anthropology, and International Relations.

*Key Research Questions:* How and why TNOC across Trinidad may have led to an upturn in violence in poor communities in Port-of-Spain in recent years, and how these processes may be reduced or interrupted? How TNOC interfaces with vulnerable communities; how, through whom, when, and why? Using Spoken Word methodology, art and music, the research will co-construct knowledge with local male youths around community violence to understand how local masculine identities and men's violence relate to each other (including male-on-male murder, such as gang violence, and male-on-female/child SGBV).

*Research Methods:* Explore Trinidadian 'Spoken Word' traditions and art and music, to explore how male identity, culture, community violence and TNOC intersect.

### 2.3 Issues in Policing and Regulating TNOCs

**2.3.1 Transnational Organised Crime and Translation (TOCAT): Improving police communication across languages** (Joanna Drugan - Politics Philosophy Lang & Comms Studies)
*Theme:* Police communication translation - More than 300 languages are spoken in the UK today. This increased diversity has had a major impact for the police. Officers now have to investigate and combat organised crime 'networks' whose members communicate across multiple languages. This involves significant challenges, including cost, number of languages, quality and the limited supply of qualified linguists. A working group has drafted official new UK guidelines for police to use when they work with translators. Selected police officers in the UK and Belgium will be trained to use the guidelines and the research will explore how effective the guidelines are in practice, as well identifying any other user needs.

*Key Research Questions:* How should police work with translators when victims, witnesses or suspects don't speak the same language as investigators? Are the new guidelines effective in practice and where they are not, what can be done to enhance them? Can frontline workers help us develop a better overall understanding of transnational organised crime?

*Research Methods:* Selected police officers in the UK and Belgium will be trained to use the new guidelines. Researchers will interview and 'shadow' police officers as they work to measure their effectiveness in practice and to identify other potential needs. This information will inform revisions to adapt the translation process to actual needs. The Belgian trial will test how far the approach can be 'translated' to other countries facing similar challenges because TNOC operates across national borders.

**2.3.2 UNOC: Understanding the Nexus of Organised Crime: Policing in Marginalised Communities linked with organised Crime: Best Practice Network Development** (Walter Wehrmeyer – Environmental Strategy)
*Theme:* Policing in Marginalised Communities linked with organised Crime - A lattice of social, economic and psychological factors support recruitment to both criminal and terrorist networks. A combination of broken families, social decay, bad housing, few amenities, poor education and limited job opportunities often function as fertile seedbeds for cultural narratives of violence, religion, power, and identity. Cycles of violence and retaliation can expand into feuds to control areas and revenues which develop their own self-justifying logic and sometimes grow into transnational organized crime (TOC) networks. Overlaps exist between criminal and terrorist networks; gangs serve as a 'force multiplier' for extremists, providing recruits, weapons, local knowledge and the ability to deliver violence and create chaos, while many gang members are disaffected youth with the potential to be radicalised (for example, many Daesh recruits are alienated young men from dysfunctional families already involved in gangs and attracted by a violent ideology that appears to give their life purpose and meaning). Plus, cyber-criminals now routinely trade over the dark net, so criminals and terrorists operate in the same market place. "Today's criminal networks are fluid, striking new alliances with other networks around the world and engaging in a wide range of illicit activities, including cybercrime and providing support for terrorism. (2011)" This project is cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural comparative (Jamaica and elsewhere) with strong user collaboration and engagement, and will examine the nexus of interacting problems in marginalised communities linked with TOC.

*Key Research Questions:* How has transnational crime evolved across different cultural contexts? What are the links between marginalised communities, organised crime and terrorism, nationally and internationally? What is best practice in policing with the community in preventing & mitigating the effect of organised crime?

*Research Methods:* Work with the PSNI (Police Service Northern Ireland) and the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) neighbourhood policing teams which build up trust with local communities.

**2.3.3 The Maritime Dimension of Transnational Organized Crime: Engaging Indonesian Law Enforcement Agencies and Coastal Communities in the Land-Sea Nexus** (Math Noortmann - Trust Peace & Social Relation)

*Theme:* Maritime Dimension - land-sea nexus - Indonesia's immense maritime area enables the illegal smuggling and trafficking of goods and people by sea and also allows for serious crimes such as sea robbery and piracy and illegal fishing to go unpunished. These crimes cause great economic costs ($20 billion per year), but also threaten the already vulnerable livelihoods of many coastal communities. The capacity of Indonesia's law enforcement agencies is limited and their overlapping authorities hamper effective action. Next to law enforcement agencies, the project assumes an important role for Indonesia's numerous coastal communities. Until now these communities are seriously neglected in academic and policy debates on combating transnational organized crimes at sea. Bringing coastal communities 'in' is truly new. The active participation of governmental agencies that are responsible for the enforcement of law at sea as well as coastal communities will result in a better mutual understanding and actual cooperation.

*Key Research Questions:* Who are the main TNOC actors in the maritime domain? Which particular TNOC 'crimes' are being experienced and with what effect? What law enforcement tools and recourses are being used and with what success for TNOC? What specific threats are being articulated by coastal communities? How do the communities and law enforcers appreciate each other and what do these stakeholders see as ways forward?

*Research Methods:* Conduct focus group discussions with staff members of law enforcement agencies (such as the Maritime Security Agency, the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, the National Search and Rescue Agency, the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs, the Directorate General of Immigration and the Indonesian National Police) as well as with coastal community leaders and members. The selected coastal communities, of which a number are participants in IOM/Indonesia activities, include maritime crime prone locations in North Sumatra, South Java, Flores, Sulawesi, Maluku, and East Nusa Tenggara. The focus group sessions will include the making of collages, a visual tool through which the research participants are invited to express their experiences by using photos, newspaper headings, magazine clippings and other printed materials. These collages are intended to represent the participants' unique understanding of the maritime problems and the position of the various actors involved. These images will be used first of all to establish the direction of the research as well as to elicit discussions beyond standard interview sessions and support the interpretation of the legal and policy documents.

### 2.3.4 The (Mis)Use of Corporate Vehicles by Transnational Organised Crime Groups in the Concealment, Conversion and Control of Illicit Finance (Nicholas Lord - Law)

*Theme:* The MisUse of Corporate (Finance) Vehicles in Illicit Finance trafficking - In order to conceal their illicit finance, transnational organised crime groups need to infiltrate legitimate economies and enter into some form of collusion or cooperation with external, legitimate actors such as accountants, lawyers and other professionals may be required. One specific mechanism for facilitating this is the creation and misuse of legitimate business structures, such as 'corporate finance vehicles' (shell companies). This enables 'organised crime groups' to exploit legal business structures and professional experts to maintain a façade of legitimacy, obscure criminal activities and profits, and to perpetrate lucrative and complex crimes'. Collusion with Licit corporate entities allows OCGs to conceal, convert and control illicit finance and the proceeds of criminal behaviours by offering an external appearance of legitimacy to the 'beneficial owners'. Little is known of these dynamics, especially with regard to the use of corporate finance vehicles by organised crime groups in the context of illicit finance.

*Key Research Questions:* How, why and under which conditions do transnational OCGs use corporate finance vehicles to conceal, convert and control illicit finances cross-jurisdictionally? Are there any patterns, trends and regularities in the forms that corporate finance vehicles take when used by OCGs and how does this compare across jurisdictions? Under which legal, policy and enforcement conditions are corporate finance vehicles misused by OCGs and are there symmetries or asymmetries across EU jurisdictions that create conducive circumstances for their misuse?

*Research Methods:* Script analysis of cases - develop original empirical data, conduct doctrinal research and utilise secondary data sources.

**2.4 Common issues arising from the projects**

The eleven projects are mostly interdisciplinary and fairly diverse in their methodological approach. Some focus upon issues relating to conceptualisation of their TNOC, some legal processes, others ask questions about the crime organisation and some ask about all three. What is particularly interesting, however, and refreshing about each of the projects and their approach to their subject area is that they bring a new perspective or approach to some areas of TNOC that are already fairly well researched. Most conspicuous in each project is the additionality of culturally contextual information such as history, literature, film, art, song. Such context is important, but often lacking in TNOCs studies. On the one hand some may argue that this contextual information is highly interpretive, yet even fictional narratives are always based upon an analysis of process and possibly experience, even if rudimentary because it is the way that the narrative resonates with the reader that gives it power. Such information is especially important in an information vacuum because it often informs key stakeholders and the public. It can not only help to shape their understanding of an issue, but may also even help define the roles of the various actors, such as offenders, victims, law enforcement, but also Policy makers (especially in the transfer of policy ideas on TNOC).

The methodologies to be employed in each of the projects mainly involved some form of evaluation, whether it be looking at the implementation and effectiveness of policy, comparing media and fiction representations with actual narratives of survival or practice, or exploring policies and mapping on to them views of actors and their experiences & views. The methods used to achieve the project research goals also fell into three main areas. Library based research which includes analysing existing literature, policy and historical documents. Primary empirical research will be conducted through focus groups with practitioners, interviews with practitioners/ offenders/ survivors (Survivor narratives & definitions), analysing 'Spoken Word' traditions, and art and music and also using visual methods and network analysis. Secondary empirical research will apply statistical techniques for estimating hidden population of slavery and trafficking of victims, secondary data analysis and a script analysis of past cases.

**PART 3: FUTURE CONNECTIONS, THEMES AND DISSEMINATION**

*3.1 The three research areas outlined earlier can be used to develop connections and future research:* People Movement TNOCs, Trading and Smuggling Illicit Product TNOCs and Key issues in Policing and Regulating TNOCs. The three core areas suggest three substantive research areas that have core strength for either separate research programmes, or at least encouraging the researchers in these areas to work together on a larger proposal which answers a broader set of research questions on the issue.

- *People movement related TNOCs* - This research area could cover i) Modern Slavery ii) Human Trafficking and iii) People Smuggling. Often regarded as the same, they are in fact discrete areas of research.

- *Trading and Smuggling Illicit products TNOCs* - As with people smuggling, the trading and smuggling of illicit products has both a commonality in subject area and also variation in terms of the activities involved i) Counterfeit goods, ii) the darknet, iii) drugs

- *Policing and Regulating TNOCs* – This research area breaks down into i) Language translation (for police, but also victims and offenders), ii) Policing in Marginalised Communities - land & sea) iii) Policing white collar crime - Using Corporate finance vehicles to commit crime.

In addition to the above, there are also connecting structural and cultural themes that give rise to future research enquiries.

*3.2. Connecting TNOC structural themes* – a number of connecting structural sub-themes also suggest potential for further research.

The first is to explore the ways in which TNOCS are financed and indicates that both licit and illicit sources of finance or funding were used to hide trails and launder proceeds of crime. There is also some evidence that an infiltration of legitimate economies has taken place to undertake the TNOCS, which raises important questions as to whether the proceeds of TNOC are being invested in more criminal activity or in wealth creation or both.

The second theme relates to the adoption of new communications technologies and raises questions over whether they simply facilitate TNOC or facilitate of TNOC organisations – are new internet mafias forming? Mafias being organisations that are devoted to protecting criminals under their protection and also victim markets.

A third theme relates to the ways that TNOCs (and also law enforcement) cross language barriers. Whilst one project already looks at the law enforcement use of translators, there is also a need for further research to explore how TNO criminals from different geographical regions communicate across language barriers with each other and also their workers. Also, how do victims communicate effectively with police, and in some complex cases, the offenders themselves in describing their experience of victimisation? Related to this is a further series of questions over the extent to which language translation problems can enable or inhibit TNOC. Do bilingual criminals, for example, exploit victim groups' general lack of understanding of different languages in order to achieve their aims, or is this an inhibitor, or, are some crimes types enabled by bilinguality and others inhibited.

A fourth connecting theme relates to the organisational characteristics of TNOC groups. What is known about the size and shape of particular TNOC groups and networks and also their structures, business models and markets, and the types of criminal activity they support? To what extent do they display a hierarchical structure, or are connected by ethnic/ cultural bonds, to what extent to they operate a business model?

A fifth theme is how do TNOC groups exercise and maintain their power and also sustain their position? How do they, for example, control their share of the market for victims, also how do they protect the criminals under their protection from other criminals who seek to encroach on their territory? Do they seek to influence criminal justice elites in order to pursue their goals? To what extent do they simultaneously infiltrate legitimate economies (see the first theme) and also legitimate society?

A sixth theme is how do criminal justice systems adapt to new forms of transnational criminal organisation with a reasoned and proportionate response that achieves the goals of justice across different jurisdictions? Especially, where societies hold different values in relation to the crime involved, for example human trafficking, counterfeit goods, bribery etc.

*3.3. Connecting TNOC cultural themes* – In addition to structural themes are also ideas for more culturally based research themes.

The first is the need to increase 'cultural' understandings of different TNOCs, especially in terms of their criminal logic (e.g. motivations, enablers and inhibitors) and how they fit into local cultures, or do not; because disruption is also a tactic! What is thought to be rational logic in one culture may be irrational in another. In some societies, widespread poverty or oppression might actually support what TNOC groups are doing. There is a lot to learn from cultural understandings of TNOCs (culture is used here in a very broad way). For example, why do members of organised crime groups identify with a particular grouping? To what extent do cultural norms govern their behaviour in these groupings, for example, to justify certain criminal actions and condemn others? Why do victims sometimes identify with TNOC groups?

The second theme is to understand the 'tipping point' where individual thoughts and ideas turn into criminal action with regard to being a member of a TNOC group or becoming a victim? The key question to answer here is where the tipping point actually lies between discussing transnational crime or terror ideas and them being put into action. What, for example, converts a train of thoughts into a criminal or terror action?

The third theme is to understand the relationship between transnational organised crime groups and terror networks. To what extent is a crime-terror nexus (which uses everyday criminality to spread fear and terror) permeating a range of different TNOCs, or is it simply a modern folk myth perpetuated by media sensationalism? TNOCs have evolved conceptually from more traditional forms of organised crime. TNOCs and TNOCGs are by their nature, cross border and largely rely, or indeed

are wholly dependent upon ICTs to organise them and be effective. Hence it makes sense to draw upon research into cybercrime which separates out cyber-assisted TNOCs from cyber-enabled and cyber-dependent TNOCs.

Each of the projects looks at either enablers for TNOC action or shapers of TNOC actions, some of which operate at an ideological and cultural level.

*3.4 Dissemination.* In addition to individual project outputs a number of programme dissemination plans are realistically possible and feasible without causing much additional effort by the project PIs, whilst also creating a value added by bringing each of the projects together and encouraging co-collaboration and even co-production. It is proposed that TNOC conference panels be formed on the back of established conferences, for example the European Society of Criminology, or the conference of the ECPR (European Consortium for Political Research) Standing Group on Organised Crime. A special issue of a journal could also be compiled on the back of the developed conference papers (e.g. EROC – *European Review of Organised Crime*, or *Global Crime*). An edited book be collated around the 3 core themes in the projects (e.g. Palgrave) and be populated by the updated versions of the papers in the special issue of the journal. In this way, a broader academic and also policy and practitioner audience will be reached. Such a role could be incorporated into the job description for the Project Integrator.

3.5 *The TNOC Programme* is potentially a very good model for allocating research funding. It engages many academics and stakeholders, gains value added from the integrator's work - especially if it feeds back useful information into the projects and helps shape their development and findings – and also represents very good value for money.

The TNOC programme covers some very interesting and topical issues and the early signs and enthusiasm suggest that the impacts will be significant. Its strength is that it spreads a relatively modest amount of money across a large number of academics (between 30 and 40, if not more) and involves a large number of practitioners and other stakeholders. The projects are fairly broad and diverse in terms of topic, approach and methods, yet it captures researchers from different disciplines who have a broad range of experiences, including prior research into the subject area. Not only does it provide a basis for building inter-disciplinarity, which is never an easy process, but the range and diversity of the experiences of the participants brings fairly inexperienced researchers into close proximity with more experienced researchers to advise and oversee their development during and beyond the programme. This function can be, also enhanced by the experience, skills and enthusiasm of the research integrator. The research integrator (and the research synthesis) can help integrate the individual projects develop whilst also helping the programme achieve its overall potential impact. The integrator creates 'value-added' by identifying the meta-narrative overlying the various projects, finding constructive overlaps between them and bringing them along. If successful, this programme could become a model for research councils to effectively allocate research money to emerging social problems and issues by bringing together a range of academics from different disciplines and stages of career to work together and take a more rounded approach.

**Appendix**: **The Eleven Projects Matrix**

| *People movement TNOCs* | **Main Themes and Aims** | **Research Questions** | **Methods** | **Key Shapers of action (Enablers/ Inhibitors)** | **PI, Discipline and University** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Modern Slavery | Looks at conceptualisation of Mod Slavery the UK's 2015 Modern Slavery Act | How the UK M S Act 2015 has been enforced – what crimes it has focused on, as well as where its emphasis is taking the debate. | Library research- two workshops - network of journalists, policy makers, law enforcers and scholars – investigators research. | Shapers of Behaviour - Impact of law and strategy | Kristofer Allerfeldt - History – Exeter |
| Modern Slavery | Looks at the definitional debate - how slavery is defined by different 'user groups' - how modern slavery is measured | How is slavery defined by different 'user groups' - and how is it measured | Survivor narratives - definitions interviews with survivors. - Measuring using techniques to estimate hidden pop'n of slavery and traff'g victims in Florida | Shapers – Definitions and measurement | Kevin Bales - Social Sciences- Hull |
| Human Trafficking | Explore EU's holistic HT approach versus police and government's need to investigate fully against flexible adaptable TNOCGs. Slow investigation process vs. quick media cycles | Is HT over-simplified and/or sensationalised – How do texts incorporate old and new knowledge draw att'n to the politics of representation. - How do the varied ideologies and politics of HT contrast with wider discourses of | Investigate the portrayal (via narratives) of transnational human trafficking in contemporary crime fiction, the genre of true crime, and news media. | Shapers – representations | Christiana Gregoriou - English-Leeds |

| | | global injustice. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anti-Smuggling Policies | Are (EU) Anti-Smuggling Policies and practices - which merge policing, criminal justice and military approaches 'fit for purpose' | What is the impact of transnational anti-smuggling measures on humanitarian assistance and trust-based relations in society? | Exploring EU policies and mapping on the views of actors and the experiences, views and testimonies of civil society organisations and volunteers. | Shapers – impact of policy | Sergio Carrera - Law-Rand-QMU |
| | | | | | |
| *Trading and Smuggling Illicit products TNOC* | **Main Themes and Aims** | **Research Questions** | **Methods** | **Key Shapers of action (Enablers/ Inhibitors)** | **PI, Discipline and University** |
| Counterfeit Products | Looks at the financial mechanisms that Counterfeit Goods to be made and sold. Also, looks at the impact of Cyberspace. | What are the various forms and sources of financing that are being used to trade in counterfeit goods and what impact has the internet had? | Cross-disciplinary research with social sciences, humanities and practitioners. NTSeCT | Enablers – financing | Georgios Antonopoulos-Criminology -Teeside |
| Firearms and the darknet | Explores the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons in the EU Shengen. And the impact of Cyberspace on their sale. | What can the investigation of the dark-net markets reveal about the illegal arms trade in Europe? What are the loopholes in firearms laws? | Secondary data analysis and information search to create an evidence base of dark-net in facilitating firearms trade on the internet. | Enablers – technology – deepenet | Giacomo Persi Paoli – Defence and Security-Law - |
| Drug trafficking | Studies the impact of transnational organised crime and drug- | How does TNOC increase male violence by turning benign | Analysing 'Spoken Word' traditions, and art and music, to understand | Enablers – masculinities (as shaper) | Adam Baird – Trust Peace & Social Relation - |

| Issues in Policing and Regulating TNOCs | Main Themes | Research Questions | Methods | Key Shapers of action (Enablers/ Inhibitors) | PI, Discipline and University |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | trafficking (TNOC) on poor urban communities in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad | 'corner kids' into violent gang members? Can communities work with these men to prevent violence? | how male identity, culture, community violence and TNOC intersect | | Coventry |
| | | | | | |
| Police communication translation | Police have to investigate TNOCs across multiple languages and need translators. Creates significant challenges which the Transnational Organised Crime and Translation (TOCAT) guidelines seek to address. | How can police work with translators when victims, witnesses or suspects don't speak the same language as investigators? Can the guidelines be improved? What are the experiences of frontline workers? | Test, Learn & Adapt approach to explore TOCAT guidelines. Police officers in the UK & Belgium trained to use the guidelines, then researchers interview and 'shadow' police officers to measure their effectiveness in practice, & identify other needs. | Enabler for policing – more effective guardians – translation and comms | Joanna Drugan - Translation studies |
| Policing in Marginalised Communities linked with organised Crime | Cycles of violence and retaliation can expand into feuds to control areas and revenues which develop their own self-justifying logic and sometimes grow into | How can policing in the community help reduce the impact of transnational, organised crime? How has TNOC evolved across different cultural | Examines the nexus of interacting problems in marginalised communities linked with TNOC. Creates a network that identifies and disseminates | Enabler – more effective policing of marginalised communities | Walter Wehrmeyer – Environmental Strategy – Surrey |

| | TNOC networks. | contexts? What links marginalised communities, OC and TN, nationally and internationally? Best practice? Expert Networks? | best practice in the use of 'policing with the community' to undermine TOC networks | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maritime Dimension - land-sea nexus | Indonesia's large maritime area enables serious sea crimes to go unpunished. Indonesia's law enforcement is limited so Indonesia's coastal communities can assist LE. | Can Indonesia's coastal communities be encouraged to work with law enforcement to prevent serious sea related crimes. | Focus group sessions with law enforcement and local communities. Using visual methods as a research tool. | Enabler – mobilising local communities | Math Noortmann – (Ioannis Chapsos) Trust Peace & Social Relation- Coventry |
| The Misuse of Corporate (Finance) Vehicles in Illicit Finance trafficking | TNOCS collude with legitimate business to use corporate finance vehicles to hide illicit finance. | How & why do TNOCS use CFVs to conceal, convert and control illicit finances. Are there any patterns AND which policy and enforcement conditions allow them to be misused. Are there asymmetries across the EU that create conducive circumstances for misuse? | Script analysis of cases - develop original empirical data, conduct doctrinal research and utilise secondary data sources. | Enabler – facilitator | Nicholas Lord – Criminology - Law- Manchester |
| | | | | | |

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