Internet-mediated organised crimes
and the online trade in counterfeit goods

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Internet crime

? 

“Organised” crime
Two possibilities:

1) organised cyber-criminals (cfr Budapest Convention)

2) organised crime groups involved in traditional activities and exploiting new criminal opportunities provided by the Internet (cfr Palermo Convention)
Has organised crime really expanded in cyberspace?
To what extent?

“A tension between logic and pragmatism” (McCusker 2006)
1\textsuperscript{st} Part
Organised crime goes online – realities and challenges
- Business-like groups (trafficking activities)
- Mafia-type groups
- Some observation on legislation and policing

2\textsuperscript{nd} Part
The online trade in counterfeit goods
(focus on counterfeit pharmaceuticals)
- Methodological challenges
- On the modus operandi and new identifiable trends

Q&A/Discussion
Business-like groups

“Transit crimes” (Kleemans 2006)

New crime opportunities online

a) Effects on the social organization of the criminal activity

b) Effects on the social organization of the criminal group

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<th>Wildlife trafficking</th>
<th>Trafficking in counterfeit pharmaceuticals</th>
<th>Sex trafficking</th>
<th>Trafficking in recreational drugs</th>
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Mafia-type groups

a) Trafficking activities
b) Gambling

Changes in their social organization (of the activities / of the group)?
Some observations on legislation and policing
New challenges for law enforcement

generational issues
interdisciplinarity
traditional focus
legal and technological limitations
Perceptions
linguistic issues
The online trade in counterfeit goods

- Internet for the distribution of counterfeit products
- Organized crime? Is “organized crime” being transformed by technological developments?
- Is this a low-tech “cybercrime”?
- Offline criminals? Online criminals? Onlife criminals?
- Is this a “real” crime?
- Is this a “glocal” crime?
- Ambiguous criminal markets
- Is this “risk-free” for offenders?
- The criminal marketplace as a “(cyber)Bazaar” (Treadwell 2011)
Methodological challenges

Looking for data

Analyzing the data

Always remember what is your research question!

Now we will look at crime opportunities provided by the Internet
Counterfeit pharmaceuticals

- A silent consumers' revolution
- Counterfeit pharmaceuticals as "spurious/falsely-labelled/falsified/counterfeit (SFFC) medicines are medicines that are deliberately and fraudulently mislabeled with respect to identity and/or source" (WHO 2012)
- 50% sold online are counterfeits
- 100,000-700,000 deaths per years (?)
- USD 75billion/year (10% global trade in medicines)
- North-South divide
- Over The Counter (OTC) & Prescription Only (POM)
- Organized crime rhetoric

- Online pharmacies (legal/fake/illegal)

- Hot products (“lifestyle drugs”/ opioid analgesics and phychotropic substances/ “natural products” or nutritional supplements etc)

- Doping products (considered as POMs)

- Specific criminal opportunities provided by the Internet
  - How this criminal opportunities facilitates the criminal activity
  - How actors exploit them/behave

- Crime script approach
The Internet as a facilitator: classifying criminal opportunities

- Communicative
- Managerial
- Organizational
- Relational
- Promotional
- Persuasive
- Informational/targeting
- Marketing & loyalization (social engineering)
On the modus operandi and new identifiable trends

- Transnationality
- Continuous transformation
- On cyber-hotspots and convergence settings
- Actors (as retailers / segmentation of the market)
- Relationship with clients
- Trust
Criminal vulnerabilities

Cyberspace changes also the dynamics of social and institutional control

- International cooperation
- Public/private partnership
- Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Program (VIPPS)
- Pfizer
- LegitScript
- Operation(s) Pangea
- Informal social control

One of these medicines is fake. Can you tell which?
Questions or comments?