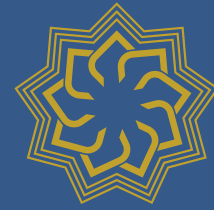


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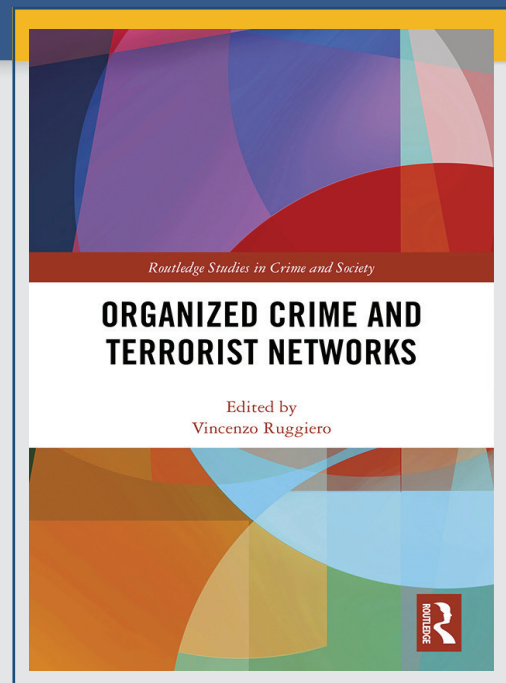
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التحالف الإسلامي العسكري لمحاربة الإرهاب
ISLAMIC MILITARY COUNTER TERRORISM COALITION



BOOK REVIEW



ORGANIZED CRIME AND TERRORIST NETWORKS

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Book Review

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Book Review

**ORGANIZED CRIME AND
TERRORIST NETWORKS**

Subject-matter experts investigate into the reasons why individuals join networks of organized crime and terrorist organizations. Many criminological, positivist, and behavioral schools address such causes in such a manner as to identify the motives of criminals involved in organized networks and better understand their criminal and terrorist tracks. Researchers and practitioners need to work in concert; propaganda and recruitment require more effective prevention to combat extremism and terrorism, while avoiding reactions that might hinder addressing such phenomena.

ORGANIZED CRIME AND TERRORIST NETWORKS, written by several contributors and edited by Vincenzo Ruggiero, to better provide a more accurate understanding of the methods of propaganda and recruitment in networks that lure ordinary and socially isolated individuals into terrorist extremists. It shows the ties of kinship and friendship as key factors contributory to the development of such networks; recruitment begins in small social cells, unknown to law enforcement agencies and difficult to detect.

Unerring Understanding

ORGANIZED CRIME AND TERRORIST NETWORKS provides an in-depth review of the studies of specialists in organized crime and terrorism, highlights the efforts of social specialists, law enforcement agencies, and other EU experts, examining the common themes of organized crime and terrorism. The contributors persistently warn about organized crime, identify the social and economic impact, legal loopholes instrumentalized by criminals, and the sophisticated methods to conceal their activities and returns from crime, while weaponizing globalization and modern information and communication technology.

Overview

Inasmuch as Europe encounters a spate of extremists and recruits groomed to launch terrorist attacks at any time, countries are always seeking to better learn about the psychological, social, and economic manifestations of violent extremism. Violent extremism and terrorist networks often rely on ideologies linked to identity, with a focus on social marginalization and institutional change; they are the main drivers of recruitment.

Consistency exists between whistle-blowers and theory and experiment in criminology and terrorism. Some cultures contribute to encouraging some types of extremist violence vis-à-vis previous research studies and the economic situation experienced by those who join terrorist and criminal networks. Interestingly, response-tailored plans of counterterrorism are substantially coherent; the proposed measures implemented throughout Europe are discussed and assessed. This reveals that researchers and practitioners work in concert.

Ample evidence reveals deeply rooted links between organized crime and terrorist activity in several EU countries. For instance, an interplay exists between criminal and terrorist milieus in prisons in Italy, the Netherlands, France, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, and Ireland. In such countries, Islamist extremists with criminal track records take advantage of skills and criminal connections to carry out terrorist operations. Certain criminal organizations do not cooperate with terrorist groups but have been involved in human trafficking or arms smuggling and other illegal trafficking operations, and unintentionally facilitated the acts of terrorist organizations.

Other field studies show that terrorist organizations have successfully purchased the services of many criminal groups to promote their political goals. Notoriously enough, terrorism fuelled by drugs in Colombia simultaneously seeks financial and political gains. Numerous assassinations and bombings are caused by terrorism. Another study of drug-triggered terrorism in Colombia in the past 30 years reveals that far-left guerrilla groups and far-right paramilitaries depend largely on drug cartels to help provide funding for political goals.

Chapter One provides an overview of the content and research relating to crime and terrorism. Chapter Two discusses the perceptions of frontline actors fighting off organized crime and terrorist networks. Chapter Three addresses networks that include traditional criminals and terrorists and the associated challenges. Chapter Four cites examples of organized crime and terrorism and tracks the social, political, and technical trajectory of developments of such entities. Chapter Five addresses cybercrime and examines the impact of information and communication technology on the activities of modern criminal organizations. Chapter Six examines non-low-technology types of terrorism, showing that advanced technologies are not a constant feature of contemporary attacks; certain actors rely on effective primitive means. Chapter Seven revisits the relationship between crime and terrorism and the two-way influence. Chapter Eight provides an understanding of such a relationship according to the dynamic modelling approach adopted by some terrorist groups. Chapter Nine examines the financing schemes of organized crime and terrorism. Chapter Ten provides strategies to combat organized crime and terrorism at the EU level. Chapter Eleven explains the impact of modern technologies on contemporary crimes and traditional patterns of cyber behaviour. The key highlights featured by the chapters include the following:

1. Overall Context

Two main points should be highlighted in crime-related studies: First, it is necessary to distinguish between occupational crime and organized crime; occupational crime is based on a horizontal structure for agents to act as equal peers, planning, executing, and sharing profits and spoils. organized crime has to do with the distinction between planning and execution and to clarify the relationship between the customer, the agent, and the recruits in the criminal operation.

The contributors rely on their first-hand experience, drawing on the experiences, limitations, and difficulties they encounter in their daily work. There is a lack of understanding of the rationale of organized crime and the associated relationship to terrorist phenomena. This lack of knowledge has been highlighted in qualitative research based on fieldwork sessions. Subject-matter experts stress the importance of cooperating with practitioners in other fields, particularly the relatively unknown disciplines of cybercrime. In addition, there is an insistence on the need to establish new international platforms for sharing information on organized crime and terrorism.

Organized crime mainly depends on drug promotion and cybercrime, which requires more prevention policies and new plans. Given the many legal loopholes, either because of the opacity of laws or the partnership with official political representatives and legitimate entrepreneurs who support or tolerate such crimes.

The interest in traditional criminal activities often results in neglecting cases of organized crime investment in formal economy or those providing services and partnerships with legitimate activists, or sometimes with state institutions. Such entities are not depicted as organized crime or terrorist organizations, but as legal partnerships linking legality and illegality.

2. Anti-Crime Measures

It seems that the objectives of combating such a type of crime are linked to the professional functions of experts; instead of paying attention to the labour market and social welfare, some countries establish special police units to enforce new drug and piracy laws. The contributors emphasize the importance of the real inclusion of youth, empowering them to express their opinions and reach independent decisions, while increasing their participation in civil society, supporting them with material resources, and training law enforcement officers and investigators on the requirements of youth.

They also emphasized that institutional responses are often driven by emergencies and determined by the search for political accommodation. Some interviewees highlighted the importance of providing appropriate protection to whistle-blowers in the fight against organized crime. While some officers in the legal domain warned of the need to pay attention to units to combat cybercrime, work with private institutions, especially commercial banks, and coordinate seriously and per-

manently between national and international laws that regulate cybersecurity.

Field studies show that most non-criminal justice professionals prefer a human and social approach to fighting organized crime. The interviewees emphasize the urgent and comprehensive preventive measures and the need for new technologies to assess the feasibility of such measures in combating crime and terrorism.

Although psychological and personal disorders have an important impact on slipping into extremism, individuals may join terrorist networks being brought up and raised in a culture that embraces extremism. There are those who join extremism in search of stability and a nurturing environment not found in their own. There is a strong association between economic, social, and cultural exclusion and the isolation and alienation of extremist youth.

It is difficult to dissociate the influence of religious beliefs and scriptures in promoting extremist ideologies and violent terrorism; there are scriptures that may be mistakenly understood as promoting violence, there are explicit scriptures that promote dialogue, peace, tolerance, and the development of good relations between peoples, races, and religions. The contributors also link the psychological factors of terrorism to injustice, collective hostility to authoritarianism and oppression. There are those who resort to violence to appeal to oppressed individuals in society; like those who seek to voice their position in various methods.

This includes vulnerability, marginalization, and dependency that Muslims suffer from all over the world, with the retentive memory of Muslims overflowing with the glories of the past, and the great past civilization, which produces a strong nostalgia for the past, as it stands out in the face of the notorious conditions of the present, and then soon slips into frustration triggered by the wide gap between expectations and achievements, with the frustration assumption in memory that applies to both models of terrorism: the irrational emotional fanatic model and the sensitive activist model lacking the capacity for human empathy.

3. Counter-Terrorism Measures

Many observers believe that direct cooperation between police and intelligence services is critically important to further facilitate surveillance and expedite arrest. This produces a greater and more meaningful impact than military action targeting terrorist leaders or terrorist infrastructure. Again, an urgent need comes into play

for adequate training of social workers to caters for youth at risk.

Research studies highlight legal documentation of the lost youth religiously, socially and culturally, confirming that new arrivals should receive appropriate support and guidance from subject-matter experts and practitioners. Just as other actors in society have an important contribution to the prevention efforts, including activists, religious preachers, victims and families, most research studies confirm that preventive measures and other policies are usually the result of general pressure of people exercised on their rulers and governments. The contributors state that most of the participants in the field study do not differentiate between professional crime and organized crime; they are also ignorant of the processes carried out by criminal organizations to influence formal economy, which are often within a legal framework.

The discussion of the causes of organized crime and prevention methods promotes many to prioritize education, sub-culture, and political and economic changes in society. Again, a significant inconsistency exists between the views of practitioners and those of criminologists about the function that should be carried out by law enforcement agency officers and about the alternative social system to combat organized crime. In the same vein, a common consensus is reached on the need to take useful social measures against crime, urgent preventive measures, while encouraging implementation at the EU level.

4. Targeting Civilians

Civilians in cities and businesses are easy targets for criminals and terrorists. For instance, in the Bastille Day Attack in Nice (2016), an attacker drove his large truck onto sidewalks crowded with civilians gathered to celebrate the festive event; the vehicle ramming claimed the lives of eighty-six people while the attacker was shot dead by the police force.

A new development has come into play; terrorists weaponized human targets in Europe, when a shooting took place at a shopping center in Munich in July 2016, just eight days following the Nice vehicle ramming attack. The criminal was a young German far-right extremist who had opened fire in a crowded Bavarian mall, killing nine people and injuring 16, then killing himself. Experts identify three overlapping factors that contributed to such attacks:

1. Criminal act is easy to carry out.

2. Claiming many lives of victims is possible.
3. Poor security presence at the crime scene.

The challenges and risks faced by governments, intelligence services, and police are different, given the ever-changing means weaponized by European terrorists, including:

- Homemade pressure cookers.
- IEDs with nails and fertilizers.
- Rented or stolen trucks and vans.
- Light weapons and knives.
- Propaganda and incitement to retaliatory actions against Western powers seen as an existential threat to Islam and Muslims.
- availability of techniques for planning and setting up terrorist attacks and implementation methods, using low-cost technologies.

5. Information and Communication Technology

Thanks to the continued development and use of cyber technologies and the internet, powerful communication means have been developed, which have made sharing information, knowledge and expertise easier and faster. Many people shifted their activities onto cyberspace. In the past decades, the internet has led to the development of new technologies that have made it possible to increase criminal activity, spread threats, and maximize violence among youth. Internet-based organized crime and cyber terrorism have become inextricably linked and have assumed greater importance vis-à-vis their traditional crime.

In the illegal framework, criminal groups instrumentalize corruption, violence, and legal and illegal trade to gain power, increase influence and financial gain. Often, such groups do not follow a specific organizational structure; they are hierarchical networks and cells that include drug smuggling, human trafficking, money laundering, arms trafficking, gambling, extortion, counterfeiting, and property smuggling. Combined together, this constitutes a major threat to national and international security, and weakens legitimate economies, with serious implications for public security, public health, democratic institutions, and economic stability.

The most common practices against cyber threats are the use of cryptography, firewalls, and trusted methods. Encryption allows messages or information to be transmitted in such a manner so that they can be accessed



only by interested parties. Permanent storage of information remains the best method that can be adopted to avoid data corruption in the event of power outage, or the failure of some devices, while firewalls and anti-virus programs still remain the best prevention method. Protection and trust-based frameworks have become advanced preventive methods to provide a scalable approach to countering criminal behavior resulting from cyberattacks and threats.

Among the many technical solutions to neutralize hackers is blackholing technology, Intrusion Detection System (IDS), routers, and firewalls. Blackholing blocks all malicious attacks to maximum, without corrupting information. Cyber IDSs can detect external attacks, although they always require manual setup by experts. Intrusion possibilities are also presented by routers, which rely on Access Control Lists (ACLs), and the routers protect against some cyber-attacks. Firewalls make an important contribution to the security solutions of any organization; they can be used as complementary better prevention methods. Countermeasures can be taken to prevent or mitigate risk and commercial fraud, by means of online trading platforms, as follows:

- ◆ User verification, which guarantees a high level of security, although it requires effort, and delays registration.
- ◆ captcha queries, which use a challenge-response test and determines whether the user is a human or a program.

- ◆ Blocking country-specific IP addresses and disabling access to several popular platforms.

The common and specific methods of combating fraud with advance fees are many, including:

- ◆ Scambaiting: ensnaring internet predators, wasting their time, exploiting their resources and raising awareness of online fraud. The lures seek to convince the fraudsters that they are perfect innocent victims and that they are a profitable target. They often use a false identity.
- ◆ Phishing Spam: it is a tool to combat virus programs by detecting malware software programs embedded in email messages, and spam assassin, which uses a set of rules to determine the source of the message.
- ◆ Verification of Email Content: a set of rules or clues are followed to determine the degree to which certain keywords or phrases are likely to be present. Segmentation-based learning techniques are often applied for a higher accuracy of email classification to be either a trusted email or not?
- ◆ Reputation-based curricula maintain lists of pre-rated users and rank them either good and bad, or by level of trust through relationship links.
- ◆ Resource-based methods discourage fraudsters by wasting their time and resources, and increasing their costs in terms of network bandwidth, or



latency. For example, Hash Cash requests senders to solve an encryption puzzle before sending an email to a recipient.

Covert Action and Terrorism

Clandestine channels are communication resources used to transfer information illegally, disrupt security policy, and exploit the communication methods available to avoid malicious messages.

- Timing Covert Channel uses a clock or other time scale to indicate the value sent over the channel. The sender uses communication resources corresponding to the message bits to allow the receiver to correct the message. This can include changing the packet transmission rate or changing the message sizes according to the message to be delivered.
- The covert storage channel is used more commonly than the timing covert channels because it is easier to use.

6. Low Technology Attacks

Since 2004, Europe has witnessed 15 major terrorist incidents; four by Al-Qaeda, six by ISIS, three by local separatist movements, and two by the nationalist far-right. The main terrorist attacks since 2004 were all explosions: Madrid Train Bombing (2004), London Metro Station Bombing (2005), Minsk Metro Station

Bombing (2011), which claimed the lives of 15 people and more than 200 injuries. From December 1988 to February 2001, all major attacks occurred in Europe, which claimed the lives of many victims: in 2014 (226), in 2015 (193), in 2016 (142), and in 2017 (205).

There has been a shift in the traditional model of carrying out terrorist attacks; terrorists have become dependent on low-cost methods and technology; they use knives in mass stabbings and chemicals in bomb-making, such as raw materials used in illicit manufacture of narcotics and explosives. They rely on homemade models of explosive canisters containing gasoline, propane, and ammonium nitrate as chemical fertilizers that can be easily purchased. This prompted intelligence agents to closely monitor online communications to detect terrorists who spread information about bomb-making or watching extremist clips, such as the ones published by Al-Qaeda and ISIS.

Countermeasures by governments, international intelligence and law enforcement agencies have reduced opportunities for terrorists to plan and set up attacks, using explosive devices. Improvements made to airport scanners have well enhanced searching and detecting such explosive devices.

From Traditional to Complex

Highly organized professional crime has controlled the resources and energies in many illegal markets. With

this in mind, the organizations operating globally have to adopt a special policy and action plan to help them integrate into the open community environment. With their activities in legal and illegal activities, their newly transformed status forces them to build up alliances with official bodies across the countries in which they actively operate. In a nutshell, organized crime develops associated activities according to the economic interests overlapping with the political parties of the countries concerned.

At this stage, organizations develop network features; traditional criminal groups and organized terrorist groups may follow this process. The existing difference is that organized crime networks are allied with groups and individuals involved in the same criminal approach, whether direct or indirect. Although each has a distinct and different cultural and ethnic situation, they set common goals in the medium or long term.

Actors in traditional criminal networks are often socially ambiguous; their criminal activity and profession overlap with other legal and official activity. Such networks create gray areas in which legal, semi-legal, and illegal economies seem to overlap. In contrast, terrorist networks require a high degree of homogeneity among participants who contribute whatever donations and service support they can. When traditional criminal networks refer to some type of collective behavior, they show signs of collective identity, social movement, and the idea of social change incorporated into a specific end, or an imagined end for the individuals involved in such groups.

7. Crime and Terrorism

The relationship between crime and terrorism is manifested in various forms revealed by traditional criminology. The relationship between some types of political violence and traditional criminality is further explained. Chaos between political and criminal elements may lead to serious offenses against the state, such as high treason and political crimes. Since such crimes are socially and politically destructive infractions, they are the only crime for which death penalty is meted out as it jeopardizes public security.

Sociologists cite clear examples of politics and organized crime operate in tandem to form alliances that achieve common goals, such as the acquisition of money, power and political influence. Studies indicate the link between crime and terrorism in some types of political violence for individuals and violent criminality, with-

out the motive being purely political. Criminal operation may link criminal act to sets of moral values that may characterize subcultures, being political or criminal.

The key definitions of organized crime in criminal literature can be differently categorized; definitions of organized crime often are about professionalism. Members of organized crime acquire functional skills and techniques, being fully dedicated to crime; some depend on purely quantitative aspects concerned with the number of individuals involved in crime, confirming that this determines the organizational and professional degree of such groups. Of note, organized crime differs from ordinary crime; the illegal activity of the former is larger and more complex, and the death or imprisonment of leaders of organized groups does not hold back their criminal activities.

Criminologists spell out that organized crime operates on the basis of resilient and diverse groups. This structure faces special necessities due to illegal cases. Such groups exercise their coercive power against affiliated members, while maintaining secrecy. Therefore, the balance between publicity and secrecy is important. It can only be acquired by a complex structure, relying on specific types of control over conflict, and external and social legitimacy to seize opportunities at the favorable time and place.

8. Crime and Terrorism Yoked Together

Much attention has been paid to organized crime and terrorism working in tandem due to the increased internal armed conflicts and global dynamic changes, which have decreased direct conflicts and conventional wars. Armed conflicts affect many countries and change the course of dynamics. For instance, with increased insurgencies, volunteers from different countries are recruited to join local warring groups, and warlords are promoted in situations of protracted conflict to become negotiators with international organizations and bodies, especially those organized criminals who challenge states.

Again, an overlap exists between the objectives of organized crime and terrorist groups. The political, economic, and social status of the states in which such groups operate depends on the relatively stable contexts, and state authorities monopolize the right to use violence; the state-driven intervention is very different from the behavior that occurs in unregulated violent contexts.

In territories characterized by social, political, and eco-

nomic stability, the use of force is dominated by institutions and the rule of law. The relationships between organized crime and terrorism are subject to a series of constraints. In such countries, organized criminals use violence as a complementary tool to increase their business opportunities within the system, while terrorists, through violence, seek to destroy and destabilize the system. The relationships between organized crime and terrorism are conditional on the firmness and control of the state, and the vigilance of civil society.

9. Finance and National Security

Terrorist financing takes different organizational forms, drawing on networks and cells of foreign fighters or other actors, each of which threatens a different threat, has different goals and objectives, and different financial needs and resources. Beyond a shadow of doubt, major groups and organizations need much money: Hezbollah's annual terrorist budget is estimated at about \$100 million; it may reach \$400 million, as estimated by observers. While the annual budget of Al-Qaeda (at peak) is estimated between \$16 million and \$30 million.

If the attacks launched by lone terrorists with knives or vehicles need small dollars, the cost of major attacks that require detailed planning and extensive coordination among several parties may a fortune; the cost is commensurate with the size and type of terrorist activity.

Akin to traditional organized crime, all terrorist actors (groups, cells, foreign fighters, or lone wolves) can obtain funds by illegal means. Again, transnational terrorism uses businesses and legal companies to collect, and funnel transfer funds to conceal the effects of transactions under a legal umbrella.

In small cells or single activists, common legal methods include using salaries, wages, small bank loans, or even borrowing money from relatives and close friends. This was also one of the methods preferred and used by foreign fighters who traveled to Syria to join ISIS.

To evade and sidestep legal consequences, terrorism develops itself in such a manner as to facilitate financing procedures, planning, and carrying out attacks. Cost reduction and indoctrination or ideological inculcation work in tandem and in unison, which both encourage traditional crime to save up money. These aspects are not new; they were characterized by most of the previous terrorist activities in Europe, and many European terrorists evinced robust engagement across criminal groups over the years before their involvement in terrorism. Prisons promoted extremism

and recruitment and caused new terrorist networks to snowball into reality. This shows the strong influence that detention institutions and prisons can have on radicalization.

Since the mid-1990s, reliance on petty crime to fund European combat cells has been the second most widely used method. Financing 28% of terrorist acts committed between 1994-2013 included illegal activities, such as drug smuggling, illegal car trafficking, arms smuggling, and sale of forged documents. Many members of terrorist groups were implicated in domestic criminal operations, which they relied on to finance their attacks. The Madrid attacks became an unprecedented pattern of the relationship between crime and terrorism. The attackers participated in various crimes and obtained the required resources by criminal proceeds, including drug smuggling to buy explosives. Similar methods were used later in the Netherlands (2004), Stockholm (2010), and Toulouse (2012).

10. Transnational Crime and Terrorism

Organized crime and terrorism glaringly cause notorious effects; they disrupt the conditions of societies and destabilize security, safety and cohesion around the world. These effects have become more dangerous as terrorist groups have ballooned over the recent years into dependence on everyday criminal skills. Addressing such threats is at the top of the agendas of many governments. Such uncertainty prompts the relevant institutions to develop specific laws, while launching transnational cooperation initiatives promoted at the local and global levels.

Of note, the EU has evinced a keen interest in understanding and addressing the potential intersections between organized crime and terrorism. The EU, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe are widely involved in countering terrorism and organized crime within their powers and capabilities.

The EU considers that crime and terrorism are yoked together and work in tandem in several areas of activities. In 2012, the EU Parliament was commissioned to conduct a holistic research study about the interrelationship between crime and terrorism. This shows the keen interest of the EU to learn about such a critically vital issue. The findings reveal that solid and long-term cooperation exists between criminals and terrorists on European soil. The study also indicates various organizational links between organized crime groups and

terrorist groups. With these results coming into play, the EU has taken an official position on the issue.

The EU adopts new and useful methods to better understand the interrelationship between organized crime and terrorism in a more profound and accurate manner and share knowledge between practitioners and experts. However, such methods are not fully adopted; some issues affect cross-border police action as well as poor cooperation and coordination. As such, the EU member states do need to share information with the EU agencies, but such cooperation is not always achieved in a timely, professional, meaningful and methodological manner.

11. Technology, Crime & Terrorism

Individuals and criminal groups are empowered by modern technology to acquire new skills and use them regardless of the rationale for crime or social deprivation, or the symbolic interactions between individuals and groups. It is a new manifestation of interaction and coordination among criminals; it seems to eliminate minor differences. Technical skills are used for criminal purposes by many individuals and entities; such crimes do not require any direct contact with the victims, such as the drone operators, who communicate via the internet using their computer screens, ignoring the actual impact they inflict on their victims.

Identity Crimes

In digitalization, the crime of personal identity theft has become a notorious cybercrime: an average of nine million theft incidents annually! The competent authorities, governments and private institutions do their best to control such a persistently stubborn crime, given the direct detrimental impact on individuals, businesses and economies, threatening safety and security in society. Such a crime causes infamously substantial damage. What is stolen is often not recovered; criminals still trade and use stolen identities in black markets and

on the Dark Web. Technological advances are triggers sparking such labyrinths.

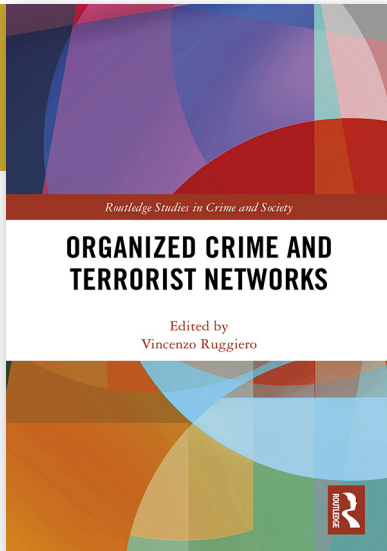
There are two main components of identity crime: identity theft and fraud. Despite the many attempts to develop efficient solutions, this problem is still rampant and rife; it is difficult to solve. It also caused more uneasiness and loss among citizens and businesspeople. Corporate identity may also be stolen to obtain data or other goods and services. For instance, mass marketing fraud falls into this category, when fraudsters instrumentalize this method to pretend to be banks or official institutions through emails or contact people to obtain their personal data.

Identity crimes challenge traditional criminal patterns; they create new illegal opportunities for everyone. This type of crime seems to give equal opportunities to different actors. Identity crimes are among the most recent and fastest growing types of crimes in the world. Several organizations and companies publish data on material losses due to identity theft and tampering with the services of banks and financial service providers.

Everyone is a possible target for identity criminals; unsurprisingly, identity criminals would even exploit their data if they could! They equally attack governments and private companies, of all categories and sizes. In some cases, the impact on victims is severe.

Although strict laws, repressive penalties, and regulatory pressure made and exercised by states have a tangible impact in clamping down on such crimes, it remains a serious challenge to what a given government is aware of and prioritization of such an issue. Many governments acknowledge that identity theft is a grave threat; addressing such a phenomenon is a number-one priority, but they have so far failed to address it properly given the poor efforts made. This warrants the establishment of a national body at the EU level to combat identity crimes, compel governments to demonstrate commitment to a long-term plan, and provide the necessary material and technical resources.





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