

**IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON THE COOPERATION RELATED
TO THE INVESTIGATION OF TRANSNATIONAL CRIMES**

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Abstract. Globalization as a modern process is accelerating in the whole world, and this process contributes to both -progress and various negative phenomena in society. One of these negative phenomena is transnational criminality, which is increasingly impacting also Latvia. For that reason, this problem is investigated in this paper, in order to understand how the Latvian state may take advantage of the potential of globalization to reduce the consequences of this globalization, which become apparent in the form of transnational criminality. This paper analyses a number of concepts related to the research area, such as „globalization”, „transnational crime/ criminality” and others. The discussion about the impact of globalization on immigration and how it affects the transnational criminality is also one of the issues of his paper. The purpose of this paper is also to investigate the impact of globalization on drug-related crimes, as well as the issues of prevention of these crimes in relation to the Republic of Latvia under the influence of modern globalization. The paper explores the potential for international cooperation in the fight against transnational criminality, as well as deals with ways of further improvement of this transnational cooperation to make it more effective in reducing of transnational criminality. The above mentioned paper could serve as a theoretical insight into various problems, which the law enforcement bodies have in practice, when they have to deal with different aspects of transnational criminality. This paper also explores the problems that may arise when the officers of these institutions have to cooperate internationally in detecting transnational organized crimes and, thereby, to learn from this cooperation, so that this international cooperation between the law enforcement institutions of Latvia and other countries will ensure more better results in the future.

Keywords: globalization; security measures; transnational crime/criminality; organized crime/criminality; international cooperation

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1. Introduction

Contemporary society has more options for opportunities and freedom than it had in the history before. This allows realization of progress, and globalization is the basis of this human progress. However the globalization could be important in the development of humanity; it is an eternally changing process, and these changes, although are mostly positive, can also bring some negative aspects. Globalization becomes apparent not only with its brilliance and progress, but also with its destructive nature, which includes environment pollution, stratification of society, redistribution of wealth and resources that largely fall into the hands of most wealthy people and richer countries, making the poorer part of the world even poorer. Globalization comes also with contamination and destruction of cultures, wars, as well as with transnational criminality. Transnational criminality may affect society and independent countries in many ways, but mostly it becomes apparent in smuggling, trafficking of people, weapons and drugs, in economic crimes and in such terrible crime as terrorist act. Almost every day, mass media informs of a certain new transnational crime worrying public. Sometimes,

concerns of public are well founded, sometimes not, but the fact that transnational criminality is alive and is a significant problem, remains unchanged. Latvia, as a member of the European Union and a country oriented towards the so-called “Western” policy, is a subject to the same transnational criminality problems as other democratic and developed countries of the world. However, it must be remembered that Latvia is an independent state, and it may not always blindly follow policies of other countries in the internal policy of the country, because each country has a unique history, culture and people, and this means that each country is completely different from any other in some way. Latvia must try to build criminal policy so that Latvian society and the state could take as much as possible from globalization. This would help to develop the Latvian state and to respect human rights and freedoms, and, at the same time, would not harm the security of the Latvian society and would not raise and even could reduce the level of criminality in the country. .

The aim of the paper is to study the impact of globalization on transnational criminality and to search what kind of the problems related to preventing transnational criminality are topical in Latvia. The research object is transnational criminality in Latvia. The research methods used in the paper are: historical method, systemic method, analytical method, comparative method, statistical method. The sources used in the paper are normative legislative documentation, literature and Internet resources. The paper includes references to eight normative documents in total, five of which are laws of the Republic of Latvia, one is the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, and another one is the Convention of the United Nations.

2. General characteristics of transnational criminality

It is problematically to define transnational criminality, and often the same concept of transnational criminality is used differently and with a completely other meaning. For that reason, all offences forming transnational criminality are often also called transnational crimes in the literature sources. Professor Valentina Liholaja specifies that the main threat object for transnational crimes is international law as a regulator of relations in the struggle against criminality; for that reason there are ground to talk about crimes against international law. Thus, the crimes against international law are intentionally or through carelessness committed violations of norms of international criminal law of individuals. Such a crime has a transnational element that may be manifested in the object, character or result of the unlawful misdemeanours. (Liholaja, 2003, p.49; as well see Šišulák, 2017).

Within the framework of this paper, international criminality will be more discussed within the definition of transnational crimes, based on the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the Convention) of the United Nations (the UN), where the concept of transnational organized crime appears. Article 2 of the UNO Convention refers to the term “organized crime group”, which is defined as „a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences established in accordance with this Convention, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit” (United Nations Convention, 2000, art. 2).

A similar concept called an “organized group” is also defined in Section 21 of the Criminal Law of the Republic of Latvia, which states that “an organised group is an association formed by more than two persons which has been created for the purpose of jointly committing one or several crimes and the participants of which in accordance with previous agreement have divided responsibilities. (Criminal Law, 1998, Sect. 21). Section 89¹ Paragraph One of the Criminal Law prescribes another form of participation – a criminal organization. It is a criminal organisation (association) which consists of at least five persons, for the purpose of committing especially serious crimes against humanity or peace, war crimes, of committing genocide or of committing especially serious crimes against the State. It is also an organized group with a larger number of participants with emphasis on the specific purpose of the activity – to commit the most serious crimes (Krastiņš, 2014, pp. 261-265).

The Foreword of the UNO Convention states:

If crime crosses borders, so must law enforcement. If the rule of law is undermined not only in one country, but in many, then those who defend it cannot limit themselves to purely national means. If the enemies of progress and human rights seek to exploit the openness and opportunities of globalization for their purposes, then we must exploit those very same factors to defend human rights and defeat the forces of crime, corruption and trafficking in human beings. (United Nations Convention, 2000, the Foreword). In fact, these words give a brief account of close relation of transnational crime and globalization, manifests its problematic and shows possible solutions. Therefore, when making the general characterization of transnational crime, one should also taken into account that it is not and cannot be separated from globalization, making this transnational crime characterization even more complicated and more stratified. For that reason, transnational crime will not really be described in isolation from globalization in this paper, because the term “transnational crime/ criminality” is understood also as “international”, which means “such, that applies to a number of countries, nations, is common to a number of countries, nations.

Transnational criminality today is related to many and various organized criminal groupings, which are specific in its character and sort of activity, and with different level of dangerousness. Moreover, these groupings often are ideologically completely contradictory, which can lead to the conflict between these groupings, and this, in its turn, may destroy the peace of the whole society and increase the rate of criminal offences throughout the country or region. Transnational criminality may include such criminal organizations as organized criminal syndicates, drug cartels and terrorist groupings.

An organized criminal syndicate is an association formed by a number of organized criminal groupings with the aim to monopolize the right of committing criminal offences in a certain territory or to commit a specific offence (e.g. realisation and distribution of drugs in a certain area). This determination and delimitation of territory is also very dangerous activity and causes violent crimes, promoting struggle for influence spheres in the certain areas between various organized criminal syndicates.

Often among the society members, these organized criminal syndicates are considered to be synonymous with the term “mafia”, which is not really precise from the etymological point of view. Only criminal groupings whose members are Italians or Sicilians may be considered the Mafia. The conjunctive features of group members play a very important, symbolical role for the “Mafia” and other similar organized criminal syndicates, which separate them from other people and other criminal groups. Such features are ethnicity, race, religion, traditions, clothing, tattoos, or any other particular symbols of this group or organization. That is why, for example, the grouping *Cosa Nostra* of the Sicilian Mafia consists only of men of Sicilian origin who are Catholics, and they or their relatives are not permitted to work for law enforcement bodies such as the police or courts. People of other nationalities may not be members of *Cosa Nostra*, but they may cooperate with them. Besides, these members of the group must take an oath of loyalty and commit murder in the interest of the Mafia before being initiated into the organization as a member during an official confirmation ceremony. Moreover, these members of *Cosa Nostra* must follow the certain code of honour and secrecy, or *Omerta*. Other similar global and influential organized crime syndicates are Russian organized criminality or the Russian Mafia, sometimes referred to as *Bratva* – “brotherhood”, the Japanese grouping *Yakuza*, the Chinese *Triads*, *Hells Angels* from United States (the USA). According to the data of the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the USA, there are approximately 33 150 active criminal groupings (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2014, Gangs). Under the influence of globalization, Albanian, Ukrainian and Serbian organized crime syndicates have expanded in Europe in the last 20 years.

According to the data of Europol, there are more than 5000 transnational organized crime groups in the European Union (EU), which are under police investigation. These groupings consist of citizens of 180 various countries. 60% of all the persons associated with these criminal groups are citizens of EU Member States. It means that 40% of members of organized groups, involved in criminal offences in the territory of the EU Member States, are not citizens of EU Member States. Approximately 70% of these criminal groups are operating in at least three or more EU Member States (Europol, 2017, Organised crime groups). These data prove the transnational nature of crime, and EU with its open borders, democratic attitude, as well as free

market and free movement of economic is an expressly “fertile ground” for such transnational criminality, which spreading nowadays is substantially determined by globalization, as well as development of technology and mass media.

Under the influence of globalization, these organized criminal syndicates are operating not only in the countries of their national identity. For example, Italian and Sicilian organized crime groups opened their organization branch in the USA already at the end of the 19th century, when the great migration from Italy took place, triggered by a major economic and social decline in the country. For *Cosa Nostra* and other Italian mafia groups, this was a time when new “crime markets” were opened with minimal material resources. It was the first time in the history of the world, when globalization and free migration between countries were used to create a transnational and stateless criminal organization that operates even across several continents. The two great world wars of the first half of the 20th century completely changed the world and, as a result, the lives of millions of people around the world also changed. Together with the constant migration of these people at this time, it was also for various criminal groups easier to go round, which often implemented their own order and their “laws” in various territories.

Contemporary organized criminality in Europe gained a new drive with the collapse of the Soviet Union and socialist regimes in the Eastern European countries. In the 1990s and early 21st century, millions of people emigrated from Eastern Europe to Western Europe, paving the way for Eastern European organized criminal groups to spread their activities in Western European countries, so today the largest and most dangerous organized criminal groups in Great Britain and Germany are Russian and Albanian syndicate groupings of organized crime. For example, in German imprisonment institutions, Russian is the first language of communication for more than ten percent of prisoners, and this number continues to grow, while less than five percent of German residents generally consider Russian as their first language (Report of the German Federal Police, 2018, Russian mafia spreading in Germany).

However, it is important to understand that the influx of people to a certain country means that this country will have more people and the more people here are, the quantitatively bigger becomes the number of criminals and criminal offences in the country, regardless of the people’s nationality or country of origin. That is why we should not just look at quantitative statistics but also have to understand causation and relative increase in criminal offences in comparison with the growth of population number. No doubt, immigration and open borders help organized crime syndicates to spread their activities in other countries, and to commit various crimes. However, the society, overrun by fear and insecurity, takes into consideration only the fact that immigrants break national laws and commit crimes, but not accepts the opportunity that the influx of immigrants could increase also the number of people who could also work, for example, in law enforcement institutions and reduce the number of crimes. In general, the relative number of immigrants in comparison with the number of the criminal offences in host countries depends mainly on the ability of a host country to integrate these immigrants into society and to ensure functioning of a country, as well as public security. If a country receives too many immigrants and is unable, because of economic or social reasons, to assimilate them into society, and to bring them under the national laws, then it is the country’s, not the immigrant’s fault.

In the current period, the relationship between corruption and structures of organized criminal groups, as well as their spheres of activity is becoming increasingly more visible, explicit and immediate around the world. This trend gives evidence of an increasing convergence of activities of private business, state sector and organized criminal structures. Due to globalization, organized crime is “internationally” transnational exactly because of the fact that a state itself is weak and corrupted from the inside. Therefore, it is easier for such transnational criminal groups to operate in this country; and exactly such corrupt countries are chosen as the places where organized crime syndicates carry out their own illegal business.

Organized criminal structures may use and also are using in their corruptive relations such methods as blackmailing, bribery of political parties or its illegal financing during election campaigns in order to participate later in ensuring and control of activities, being within the influence sphere of these political parties, as well as in order to get into legal business sector, etc. (for example, one Japanese air operator paid 22.8 million yen

to a company for three and half years and served as a cover-up structure for the organized crime grouping *Yakuza*. The formal reason for the payment was that the grouping provided uninterrupted and secure meetings to shareholders) (Vilks, 2000, p.154). Such advantages may also be created and consolidated through the legalization of illegally obtained financial funds, if they are not later invested into legal economics.

A huge branch of transnational criminality, worrying the public today, is terrorism, which is realized by transnational terrorist groups such as the *Islamic State* or *ISIS*. However, the aim of this paper is not intended to accurate definition of the terrorism concept. For example, according to a research of the University of Cambridge, more than 100 concepts of the words “terrorism” and “terrorist” are defined in literature (Greene, 2017, II. Defining Terrorism), for that reason we will use the terrorism definition of the UN: “Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes” (United Nations Declaration, 1994, in the Preface).

Political and economic instability in the Middle East, poverty of population, civil wars, available military equipment, religious disagreements, and hatred to the cultures of the United States and European countries – these factors have created a fertile ground for the growth and expansion of influence of the *Islamic State*. That is why, since 2014, the *Islamic State* has carried out so many military operations and terror acts not only in Syria, overtaken by the civil war, as well as in the politically unstable Iraq, but also in other countries in the Middle East, and even in so many European countries. That is why the *Islamic State* is considered as a global criminal, terrorist organization, because not only its activities, but also its history of origins is linked to globalization and global politics.

Exactly, the modernization of many spheres related to globalization has given significant impulsion to the rapid development of terrorism and resources at its disposal. Thirty years ago, the simultaneous communication on a global scale cost enough expensive. Today, the Internet is making communication globally accessible to anyone – it is easy to send a CV for a job application, a Christmas greeting card, or – an encoded message to one of many branches of terrorist organizations. New technologies offer opportunities both to improve and to destroy people’s safety and well-being, because all this depends on the use of these technologies and the aims of their users. However, important is the fact, that globalization makes difficult the supervision over distribution and use of these technologies. It is necessary to accentuate that it is not possible to mark out a specific arsenal of resources that would be available to transnational terrorist organizations and not available to others. It is difficult to predict how transnational terrorism will evolve in the future, when, for example, cyber terrorism will continue to develop. The spread of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons, as well as their possible passing into hands of terrorists are also extremely important threats (Ignatāne, 2005, p. 140).

Today’s technical capabilities open the way for the spread of new forms and scale of propaganda. For example, the main weapon of the *Islamic State* is the Internet and social networks. This fact raises concerns and solution of security issues in a global scale, because terrorism has now been digitized and introduced in the 21st century. The *Islamic State* particularly stands out against the background of other “conservative” terrorist organizations, offering a solution – if you are unable to fight on the battlefield, do it in the Internet. This has increased the number of supporters of the *Islamic State*, because there is a job also for those who dislike the smell of blood. Surely, the video-clips show heads cut off, but it is already “just a movie.” The *Islamic State* uses another nuance of social networks – it bridges the gap between content creators and consumers. In television, for example, the distinction is sharp and obvious, because it is clear to everyone that it is difficult to get into the field of production. Social networks, in their turn, do not have such problems. This is very beneficial for *the Islamic State*, because it helps to attract and involve large masses as well as to decentralize the campaign work. Without a single hub to be cut out, the work of restriction becomes practically impossible - when one Twitter account is closed down, another arises instead. As long as these people will believe that *the Islamic State* will prevail, they will seek to prove their usefulness (Kūlis, 2018, p. 373).

In modern global world, a crime may be ordered and own illegal business may be implemented from anywhere in the world through the Internet, even in the comfort of the own home, without meeting other figures involved in the crime. The Internet also makes much easier to operate and profit on the so-called “Black Market”. The

revenue of the Black Market in 2017, according to rough calculations of the HavocScope database, is estimated at 1.81 trillion US dollars (HavocScope, Global Black Market Information, 2017, World Black Market Value). To understand how impressive this income is, it must be said, that according to information from the World Bank's website, only two countries in the world - the USA and China – had budget revenue more than USD 1.81 trillion in 2017 (The World Bank, 2019, Public sphere) .

3. International cooperation in the detection of transnational crimes

As criminality is nowadays a transnational phenomenon, the only truly effective way to combat this transnational crime and to detect criminal offences and persons guilty thereof, is to cooperate among law enforcement bodies of various countries and to establish international cooperation. If criminal groups of different countries are able to cooperate in committing crimes, there is no justification to the fact that law enforcement institutions in various countries are unable to detect a crime and punish the guilty persons only because that they cannot understand each other and cooperate effectively in detecting crimes. Human security and struggle against criminality should be a priority over any political or ideological disagreement between countries. Such national disagreements are used by criminal groups to commit their crimes because they rely on not using all available national material, human and informative resources to detect these crimes which have cross-border nature. Today however, the situation is improving significantly, because the cross-border cooperation becomes more intensive and more and more resources are being invested to combat transnational criminality; as well as global institutions are established with the aim to restrict criminality and detect transnational crimes.

Already in the 1950s of the 20 century, countries began to unite into international communities. As a result, the need for harmonization of law had arisen, and still remains topical today, in order to deal jointly with the challenges resulted from the different legal systems and their application. At present, the criminal and criminal procedural regulation is significantly impacted by the development of the European Union Law, which is aimed at harmonization of the law and promotion of the cross-border cooperation. The creation of a special coordinating body in 1975 has been accepted as the beginning of the development of criminal policy for the future European Union. This is the so-called TREVI Group, composed of the Ministers of the Interior of the European Community, who met twice a year. The group derives its name from the French abbreviation - terrorism, radicalism, extremism and international violence.

The Maastricht Treaty strengthened the existing ties in cooperation of the police and court institutions in criminal matters. With the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, certain areas of the third pillar (Justice and Home Affairs) have moved to the competence of the Community - visa and refugee policy, the right of entry and residence for third-country nationals, as well as judicial cooperation in civil matters. Pursuant to Article 29 (2) of the Treaty on European Union, the below mentioned objects of the sphere of combating and prevention of crime remain still under the Third Pillar of the European Union:

- cooperation among the police, customs and other authorities of Member States, which may take place directly or through the European Police Office (Europol), in accordance with Articles 30 and 32 of the Treaty on European Union;
- cooperation among the justice authorities of the Member States in the field of enforcement of rulings, speeding-up of court proceedings, prevention and elimination of competence conflicts, as well as extradition of criminals;
- approximation of the criminal judicial norms of the Member States through the gradual carrying out of measures to determine the minimum features of *corpus delicti* for criminal actions in the sphere of organized crime, terrorism and illegal drug trafficking (Voins, 2015, p. 82) .

In the circumstances of liberalization of the international system, the harmonization of interests among countries plays a crucial role. It is in the interest of the countries to shape jointly the world order so that they may predict each other's behaviour, gaining stability and justice. Agreements among the countries are a form of the legal consolidation of this order. The treaties of constitutional character include the Charter of the United

Nations, which defines the fundamental principles of the global legal order, the obligations and rights of countries. In 1991, Latvia restored its national independence and joined the UN in the same year, and, in 2004, it became a member of the European Union and NATO. In 2007, Latvia joined the Schengen Agreement on the Abolition of Internal Borders between EU Member States, which made Latvia's eastern border the external border of the European Union. The responsibility for the security of this border against illegal migrants from Russia, Belarus and Asia falls upon the competence of the Latvian state. The issue of terrorism threats in Latvia and involvement of Latvia in international countermeasures against terrorism should also be evaluated from our country's membership in these organizations, clearly understanding what contributions we may give and undertake to partners in a joint fight against terrorism, and what kind of support we may expect from the partners in the crisis. The conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa, which began in 2013 and are still in force, continue to affect European and international security, including the threat of terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The European Union is also under increased pressure caused by the migration (Voins, 2015, p.13).) .

Rendering of assistance to other countries has become nowadays a natural and integral part of the foreign policy, for that reason its necessity may no longer be justified in each case.

As the recent history of the 20th century (especially during the Cold War) shows, rendering of assistance was largely motivated by the egoistic reasons of rivalry and national security. The assistance was provided to the Allies with the aim of weakening the adversaries. Significant part of the assistance during the Cold War period was guided by similar considerations, which had a rather distant relationship with the care for the developing countries and their population. Thinking in categories of national security is rooted in realistic understanding about the nature of international relations. This approach emphasizes that countries do not have obligations to other countries, and that any country may do whatever it deems necessary. The countries have obligations only towards their own people, while helping others is a self-destructive and even dangerous activity, because it strengthens competitors and shifts the country from the primary goal – achieving of security, prosperity and mightiness. If the international system is an anarchic system of mutual aid, then it rewards selfish behaviour and care for itself and not for others.

International cooperation among police structural units of various countries is less politicized and is not so subjective than military cooperation among states, because the police struggle against such subjects that violate internal laws and harm the country also from the inside; and if a criminal group has committed crimes in several countries and harmed the national internal security, all these countries have a desire to punish these perpetrators, and, thereby, international cooperation becomes more objective and result-oriented than the struggle against an external enemy. However, political problems may arise also here. For example, there is a criminal group that commits robbery and blackmailing in two various countries, the only difference is that in one country these crimes are not committed so openly because of the significant work of law enforcement bodies and of the concentration in their hand of significant material, human and information resources for detection and legal punishment of these perpetrators committing crimes. However, in other country, these illegal activities are more openly committed and the perpetrators of these crimes have less fear that they will be caught, imprisoned and legally punished because they have corrupted a part of employees and officials of state institutions (for example, police officers, judges, politicians). In such a situation, it is not possible to execute effective cooperation between countries in the sphere of the police, because one country has a true desire to legally punish perpetrators, but it is quite not possible in the other country because of the corruption. Even if only a few officials are corrupt, they may misrepresent facts and transfer confidential information from case files to the perpetrators, which makes very difficult to charge with accusation and to punish guilty persons. Corruption is an internal problem of every country, but a criminal grouping, committing crimes in the territories of several countries, is a cross-border problem. However, as long as corruption in one country is an actual issue, unfortunately, it is much more difficult to deal with this cross-border problem that affects citizens of all involved countries. This only demonstrates clearly, how seriously the country should combat corruption, because corruption is often also related to more dangerous and serious criminal offences.

Nowadays, criminality is a transnational fact and gets over national borders, and, for that reason, organizations that combat crime often have to cooperate and to cross national borders. Interpol and Europol are the two largest, most influential and also most for Latvia binding organizations in combating of such criminality.

Interpol is a transnational organization of the criminal police consisting currently of 192 member countries. Interpol focuses in its activities mainly on the fight against and prevention of transnational crimes. Interpol's tasks include the struggle against organized crime, smuggling/ trafficking of arms and drugs, terrorism, human trafficking (including prostitution), theft of cars and art objects, economic and financial crimes – combating of money laundering, credit card forgery, international searching of law breakers and missing persons, extradition of criminals, crimes against the environment, as well other transnational criminal offences.

Latvia was a member of Interpol from 1931 to 1940, and re-joined Interpol on 4 November 1992 after regaining the independence, when the Interpol National Headquarters in the Republic of Latvia was established.

The Second Department of the International Cooperation Administration of the Main Office of the Criminal Police of the State Police of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia provides the functions of the Interpol National Central Bureaus, which main task is coordination and promotion of cooperation among the structural units of the Ministry of Interior and other law enforcement institutions with the member states of Interpol in the combat of transnational criminality. Interpol employees have the right to carry out investigative and operational activities in accordance with the law, individually or jointly with the structural units of the Ministry of the Interior, the prosecutor's office and other authorities related to the fight against criminality.

Databases of extensive and reliable information with summarized data on wanted persons, cars, stolen art objects, and other useful information are at the disposal of the department, which enable to find wanted criminals, as well as contain information on internationally important offenders. Interpol uses an up-to-date telecommunications network that provides fast and secure information exchange (State Police of the Republic of Latvia, 2019, Interpol).

Europol is an international crime-fighting organization operating mainly within the borders of Member States of the European Union, because it has a status of an institution of the European Union; however, it also cooperates with other countries that are non-EU countries, as well as with other international organizations such as Interpol. The aim of Europol is to support and strengthen cooperation among competent authorities of Member States in preventing and combating organized criminality, terrorism and other forms of serious crime, which affect two or more Member States, as well as in providing strategic analysis and threat assessment. Regulation (EU) 2016/794 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) was introduced on 1 May 2017. According to the conception of this Regulation, 'the competent authorities of the Member States' means all police authorities and other law enforcement services existing in the Member States which are responsible under national law for preventing and combating criminal offences. The competent authorities shall also comprise other public authorities existing in the Member States which are responsible under national law for preventing and combating criminal offences in respect of which Europol is competent

● Europol offers the following assistance in detecting and preventing crimes to Member States of the European Union:

- collect, store, process, analyse and exchange information, including criminal intelligence;
- provide investigative assistance in Member States, in particular, by transmitting all information useful for this purpose to the country's units, as well as and by checking the Europol's databases;
- provide intelligence data and analytical support to Member States in connection with large scale, transnational or potential dangerous events;
- prepare reports on threat assessments, strategic analyzes and general situation, including assessments of organized crime threats (OCTA);

- send proposals to the competent services of Member States with the aim to initiate, conduct or coordinate investigations in specified matters, as well as to set up joint investigation teams;
- exchange information and perform coordination operatively between Member States at any time of the day and night through the Europol's Operative Control Centre (State Police of the Republic of Latvia, in 2019, Europol).

Another organization combating transnational criminality and being important exactly for Latvia is the Special group of the Council of the Baltic Sea States for combating organized crime (Baltic Sea Task Force on Organized Crime). This organization was created in Visby, Sweden on 4 May 1996, when the Heads of Government of eleven countries agreed to set up this organization. Member states of this organization are Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, and Sweden. In 2017 and 2018, Latvia was exactly the presiding country of this organization. This organization is largely specialized in combating organized criminality in the Baltic Sea and on their seashores, but it also focuses on broader cooperation with other international organizations, such as Interpol, Europol, the European Union and the Council of Europe. Latvian Presidency in this organization ended on 30 November 2018. From 2019, Poland and Germany take over the presidency of this organization. Poland will be responsible for the organization of operational meetings, while Germany – for the strategic level of this organization.

In 2017, the European Parliament finally gave its consent to the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO). The EPPO will be responsible for investigation of crimes against the budget of the European Union (EU) and for bringing to trial perpetrators. Currently, only law enforcement authorities of Member States may investigate and call to justice for crimes against the EU budget, for example, fraud or large-scale swindling out of cross-border VAT, however, its powers ends at the national border. The foundation of the EPPO will allow the rapid exchange of information, coordination of investigations, freezing of proceeds of crime, as well as implementation of cross-border detention. The Prosecutor's Office works closely with the European Judicial Cooperation Unit (EUROJUST) and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), supplementing their work and ensuring successful recovery of funds.

Today, the threat caused by terrorism is increasing in European society; however, the extent to which the European Union intervenes or is responsible for terrorism, or its threats within the borders of its separate Member State is still far from being resolved. Despite the fact that in some cases, the European Union has led the fight against terrorism and has influenced national measures and legislation, it is important to recognize that the struggle against terrorism remains largely within the competence of each Member States, especially regarding the activities of its police and intelligence service. The European Union mainly aims to offer its additional value to the fight against terrorism, which goes beyond the efforts of Member States of the European Union. This means that more than 15 years after the 11 September terrorist attack in New York, the idea that the European Union plays an important role in the struggle against terrorism together with its Member States, is no more so disputable (Kauert, 2019. The collective securitization of Terrorism in the European Union).

The large-scale cooperation among law enforcement bodies of various countries of the world in prevention of criminal offences and punishment of the guilty parties became apparent to Latvian population in January 2019, when one of the most debated topics in the Latvian media and society was the so-called Koknese Cocaine Case, when about 2 tonnes of cocaine were found and confiscated at a farm in Koknese Municipality. This large-scale and potentially highly public-dangerous crime, if drugs had been realized, was detected and prevented due to the State Police of the Republic of Latvia in cooperation with the Drug Enforcement Administration of the USA and the Police of Ecuador. So, the cooperation between three various countries - Latvia, the USA and Ecuador – took place, which have ended very successfully and no person was harmed during the detention operation. This cooperation, exchange of information and assistance between law enforcement bodies of three countries is evidence that the best way for the countries to effectively combat transnational crime is to do it through cooperation. From this positive example, the Latvian law enforcement authorities should also learn further to detect more and more criminal offences of such large scale, and, consequently, to punish these perpetrators and reduce criminality not only in Latvia, but also in the European Union and worldwide in total. However, it is necessary to admit that even

this positive example displays some negative moments of international cooperation, because the police of Ecuador have disclosed the names of the detainees and suspects of this operation, as well as the distribution of their role in this criminal offence. Ints Ķuzis, Chief of the State Police, told the media that “Ecuadorians police are behaving very incorrectly. They had no reason to make this statement, and it was not agreed with us. Ints Ķuzis also informed mass media that the State Police has expressed its dissatisfaction with the activities of the Ecuadorian law enforcement bodies in the public sphere, informing about the case. The Chief of the State Police informed that there were several partners during this operation, one of them – Ecuador. However, the information about the detention and details of the event were not a subject for disclosure in the mass media: “It was very incorrectly from the point of view of the international police cooperation” (Ķuzis, 2019, Ecuadorians police were not allowed to make a statement about the Koknese case). Consequently, this case is a good example with positive and negative patterns for own experience and learning for Latvian law enforcement bodies in the field of international cooperation, which will help in the future to be more better prepared in disclosing such large crimes. Furthermore, it is to mention that this case is still under investigation, and international cooperation is continuing to prove guilty and punish guilty persons. Important is also the fact that “The State police announced an international manhunt of one Latvian citizen in the case of the Koknese cocaine cargo – Andrejs Grišins, Chief of Criminal Police, informed journalists on Wednesday, 13 February” (Grišins, 2019. A Latvian citizen is being searched internationally by the police in a cocaine load case). It means that international cooperation will be necessary to find this Latvian citizen suspected of this crime. Hereby, this is clear evidence that neither criminality, nor the activities of the police nowadays can have more purely national nature, affecting only one country. In opposite, such activities affect the whole region, the continent, or even have intercontinental nature as this cocaine case.

An important institution in the field of international criminal justice is the International Criminal Court (ICC) that sits in The Hague, The Netherlands and established in 2002. According to the website of this International Criminal Court, the main purpose of this Court is “to investigate and, where warranted, sue individuals charged with the gravest crimes of concern to the international community: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression.” (International Criminal Court, 2019 , How the Court Works). This Court acquired the legal force according to the treaty which entered into force on 1 July 2002, and is known as the Rome Statute. At present, 123 countries have signed the Rome Statute. The basic functions, jurisdiction and structure of this Court are defined in this treaty. The Saeima (Parliament) of the Republic of Latvia adopted the ruling on joining the Treaty on Establishing the International Criminal Court, or the “Rome Statute” on 20 June 2002; and the Rome Statute itself came into force on 1 September 2002. Definitely, it is worth to note the fact that the International Criminal Court is now represented by a judge from Latvia – Anita Ušacka, who entered into this important position on 11 March 2003 (International Criminal Court, 2019, Judicial Divisions). The fact that Latvia has its representative in such important international criminal justice institution proves more and more that Latvia is progressing forward in the field of criminal justice. And in this field, Latvia is no longer only a trainee from the democratic countries of the world, but can already advise and take decisions on important issues of international criminal justice and criminal policy.

When looking at the relevance between transnational crime and globalization, it may almost always notice that this huge transnational global criminality is a huge business in its substance. Such a huge business, for the most part, cannot be exterminated without a huge investment of money, even if there skills and a huge motivation are involved, and the endeavours will not have success without an economic basis. There are many international organizations, in the framework of which countries cooperate economically and try also to deal with the challenges of globalization, as well as also combat transnational crime to a greater or lesser extent. However, there is one organization, which is often overlooked because it is not directly involved in combating criminality and consists of only seven Member States. (The European Union is defined currently as the eighth Member State), but it puts together 58% of the world economy (more than 70%, if the European Union is included). This organization is the Group of G7. At first glance, the G7, a club of like-minded industrialized countries, seems inappropriate to address the current challenges of anti-globalization. In spite of this, it has successfully solved the pressure of populism and protectionism that is directed against globalization, focusing on concerns related to environment, immigration, transnational crime, drugs, diseases and terrorism, thus demonstrating the social and environmental benefits of globalization. Searching how the world’s oldest unofficial top-level institution continues to respond to

growing anti-globalization, populism and protectionism through its actions and responsibilities of its members, it is possible to look into and see not only some problems, but also find some ideas and solutions, how globalization can help the world to reduce transnational crime. The G7, which appears to be a rather unclear club for most people, consisting of (mostly western) richest and most developed countries of the world, that are designed to promote global neo-liberalism, is a highly controversial evaluated organization. On the one hand, the much-criticized current Western dominant policy and its legitimacy in the world's order are underscored. On the other hand, some of its characteristics actually explain the undeniable achievements of globalization by coordinating efforts in solving global challenges, both within and outside the G7, which have made it a key actor in global management (Oldani, 2019, *The G7, Anti-Globalism and the Governance of Globalization*).

Conclusions

Human immigration in today's world, especially within the European Union, where, according to the Schengen Agreement, the free movement of people is allowed, increases the number of criminal offences, possibility of the formation of criminal groups, as well as number of criminal offences of transnational nature. However, when we take into consideration not only quantitative parameters but also qualitative indicators of criminal offences (for example, the number of offences per 10000 inhabitants in the country), this qualitative indicator of criminal offences does not increase significantly on the whole, despite the fact that both, the number of immigrants and the total number of offences in the country are increasing.

The opportunities developed by globalization (free movement of people, development of the international economy, availability of modern technologies and means of communications worldwide) have promoted the base for easier implementation of terrorist acts and recruitment of people into terrorist organizations. In order to restrict such activities, countries have often limited the opportunities created by globalization (by closing their borders or strengthening their border security and checking immigrants; by following the activities of people on the web and controlling the cash flow that could provide money for such organizations). These requirements are based on security reasons, and sometimes they are justified, sometimes not. However, because of development of globalization, the number of terrorist incidents around the world is rising, so it is necessary to combat against this problem. Unfortunately, most countries have struggled against it ineffectively up to now; sometimes even more promoting the development of this problem.

In the age of growing globalization, the only truly effective way of combating transnational crime is the creation of international cooperation among law enforcement bodies of various countries for detection of these criminal offences and punishment of guilty persons. When carrying out cooperation, no any prejudice, internal political or economical interests of the countries must arise, because, nowadays, criminality and organized crime groupings are no longer fixed to a single particular geographic location. For that reason, organized crime is no more a problem of one particular country; and to reduce these crimes, the law enforcement bodies in several countries have to combat it based on international cooperation.

Since the restoration of independence, Latvia, as a democratic and law-based state, has made gradual progress related to activities of law enforcement institutions, the domestic legal system and in solving issues related to international security. This progress has proved that Latvia has a sufficiently strong, effective and judicial system to fight criminality, including transnational crime, so, Latvia has earned both, the right to receive assistance from other countries in case of transnational criminal offences and the opportunity to render assistance to law enforcement institutions of other countries in the detection of such criminal offences, as well as in detention and punishment of guilty persons.

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