

*The Changing Landscape of Organized Crime: Cross-National Insights.
International Scientific Conference*

AGENDA OF THE CONFERENCE

11:30 – Opening of the Conference

11:40-11:55 – Prof. Chris Eskridge, School of Criminology & Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, presentation titled *American Organized Crime*

This brief presentation will provide a synopsis of the growth and decline of traditional organized crime in the United States. It will focus upon the dozen men who from the late 1890s until the turn of the last century, served as the de facto Godfathers of the American mafioso. The lecture will explore the internal and external factors and forces that impacted and drove individuals and organizations in the respective stories of their rise and fall.

11:55-12:10 – Prof. Radovan Blažek, PhD., Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Law, Department of Criminal Law, Criminology and Criminalistics, presentation titled *New forms of organised crime in Slovakia - interconnections with politics and state*

In the latest period Slovakia has faced very specific shape of organised crime - groups of police officers connected with some politicians fought against each other in the media and also in particular criminal proceedings and before courts - one group accusing another from being an "organised criminal group". However, where is the border between real crime and political fight? Where is the truth when the "good" turns into "bad"? When those who should protect the justice are labelled as unjust? The paper analyses, that the organised forms of crime are always connected deep with politicians, police officers and state representatives who protect the members of these groups and there is impossible to fight these forms of crimes, because those who should "fight" against the crime are the same that "protect" the crime. The presentation offers the comparison with other forms of those types of politically underlined crime forms such as "mafia" in Italy.

12:10-12:25 – Dr. Algimantas Čepas, Department of Criminology, Institute of Sociology and Social Work, Faculty of Philosophy, Vilnius University, presentation titled *Organized Crime and Corruption in Lithuania: What is This All About*

This presentation traces the transformation of organized crime and corruption in Lithuania, from the violent, market-driven criminality of the early post-Soviet years to less visible networks of influence operating across illicit enterprise, public administration, and political authority. Focusing on the 2026 investigation involving Saulius Skvernelis – former Police Commissioner General, Minister of the Interior, Prime Minister, and Speaker of the Seimas – it examines how a figure associated with state order and institutional legitimacy came to

be implicated in a major corruption case. It also reflects on the reported involvement in the same case of Marijanas Taraškevičius, previously convicted for participation in a major cigarette- and drug-smuggling network. In doing so, the presentation asks whether the language inherited from the 1990s remains sufficient, or whether present-day Lithuania should instead be understood in terms of the blurred boundary between underworld actors and political power.

12:25-12:40 – Prof. Katarzyna Laskowska, Department of Criminal Law and Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Białystok, presentation titled *The Specificity of Organized Crime in the Countries of Central Asia*

The presentation will outline the factors determining the development of organized crime in the countries of Central Asia, including geographical and geopolitical location, post-Soviet history, social structure (clans and family ties), systemic transformation, as well as the level of state control and the political situation. The stages in the evolution of this phenomenon in the region will be discussed. The presentation will address the characteristics, structure, and manifestations of the activities of organized criminal groups in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. It will be shown that, on the one hand, this phenomenon is directed against the state, while on the other hand, it closely cooperates with state structures, deriving significant benefits from such cooperation.

12:40-12:55 – Prof. Wojciech Filipkowski, Department of Criminal Law and Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Białystok, presentation titled *Organized Crime Through the Lenses of Network Criminology: Online Networks and Law Enforcement Strategies*

The paper shows how network criminology conceptualises online organised crime as dynamic networks of relations between offenders, platforms and clients rather than stable hierarchies. It discusses key structural features of darknet and platformbased criminal networks and how these affect their vulnerability to intervention. The presentation also outlines how law enforcement agencies use social network analysis to map these networks, identify key actors and design disruption strategies.

12:55-13:10 – Dr. Emilia Jurgielewicz-Delegacz, Department of Criminal Law and Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Białystok, presentation titled *Criminal Networks Beyond the Cities: An Exploration of Organized Crime in Rural Environments*

This presentation examines how organized crime groups operate in rural environments, emphasizing the specific vulnerabilities of nonurban areas. The talk reviews global patterns of rural organized crime, including environmental offences, trafficking routes, and illicit rural enterprises. It also explores how rurality shapes criminal strategies and helps obscure illegal operations from public view. The presentation adopts a comparative perspective, highlighting implications for research and crime prevention in rural settings.

13:10-13:25 – Mgr Olgierd Dobrowolski, PhD Candidate at the Doctoral School of the University of Białystok, Faculty of Law, presentation titled *Organized crime in Ukraine in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war*

The presentation focuses on the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on organized crime in Ukraine, including the increase in illegal arms and drug trafficking, smuggling, human trafficking, and other activities of criminal groups and organizations. As an introduction, the development and underlying conditions of organized crime since Ukraine gained independence will be briefly outlined. Based on this, the current, ongoing, and anticipated effects of the armed conflict on the state, dynamics, and prospects of organized crime in the country will be discussed. The potential consequences of this phenomenon for the region, particularly for Poland, will also be highlighted.