

Speaker: *Jirka Taylor*

Presentation title: Relaxing cannabis supply laws and organised crime: A review of the emerging evidence

Co-authors: *Bryce Pardo and Beau Kilmer*

Background: More jurisdictions are relaxing laws to permit the supply of cannabis for either medical or non-medical purposes. This raises questions about the effects of cannabis supply laws on organised crime and drug trafficking organisations. Methods: We conducted a literature review examining how changing cannabis policies affects cannabis prices, drug trafficking, and other drug-related crime and associated violence. Results: Out of 23 studies that met selection criteria, only two explicitly explored the link between cannabis legalisation and organised crime. One study from Italy reported evidence suggestive of declining revenues for organised crime. The other found evidence of lower levels of violence in US counties bordering Mexico following the adoption of medical cannabis laws. Other studies found evidence of increased cannabis trafficking in jurisdictions neighbouring states with relaxed cannabis supply laws though it is unclear what connection this has with organized crime. Conclusions: The evidence regarding organised crime is extremely limited. Existing literature suffers from a range of limitations, including definitional uncertainties and possible confounding factors such as changes in enforcement practices and policy implementation dates. We offer recommendations for future efforts aiming to improve the understanding of illicit drug markets following changes in supply laws.