Presentation title:

Brexit and the opportunities for organised crime: Results from a systematic review

Speaker: Jakub Pinter (University College London, UK)

Brexit marks the first time in history that a state has withdrawn its membership from the European Union. While debates regarding the impact of Brexit on economic issues took the centre stage during the lead up to the Brexit referendum, as well as during the withdrawal process, much less attention was paid to its impact on crime. At a time when major serious crimes are increasingly transnational in scope, the UK faces limited access to the EU's security and criminal justice infrastructure. At the same time, growing asymmetries between EU and UK laws and policies may create new opportunities for crime. To identify opportunities for organised crime originating from Brexit, a holistic approach that looks at systemic changes caused by Brexit is needed. The rational choice approach serves to provide a framework for identifying opportunities for organised crime since it allows us to think about how Brexit can affect the perception of opportunities for crime by organised crime groups and thus how the activities of organised crime groups might evolve. Since Brexit may alter some of the processes required to undertake criminal activities and therefore make some crimes less/more beneficial, less/more risky and/or easier/harder to commit, the rational choice approach may help us to understand how the selection of criminal targets, offense types and offense methods might be affected by Brexit. It can also guide policy makers and law enforcement agencies in adopting measures to reduce the benefits for committing crimes and to harden criminal targets and thus increase the costs and risks of committing a crime. This paper presents the results of a systematic review of the literature, conducted through the lenses of rational choice perspective, to establish what is currently known about the variety of organised crime threats that emanated or are likely to emanate from Brexit.