



Bundeskriminalamt



## **3<sup>rd</sup> Research Conference on Organised Crime**

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**Conducting organized-crime research in Spain:**

**An appraisal of the pros and cons**

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## **Abstract**

Academic research into economic and organized crime in Spain is rather scarce. When available, most literature revolves around theoretical explanations as opposed to empirical assessments of the phenomena. This could be explained by a very restricted access to official data and crime statistics in general. Although some academics have managed to befriend gatekeepers and overcome some methodological obstacles, the number of studies significantly contrasts from what appears to be a large-scale and severe problem in the country.

Identified as one of the five organized-crime hubs in Europe by the 2009 OCTA Report, Spanish organized crime is mainly characterized by the criminal markets of cocaine, cannabis, illegal immigration, trafficking in human beings fraud and money laundering which in turn play a significant role in other criminal hubs. While it is true that Spain possesses a number of features that make it an ideal environment for activities of trans-border organized crime networks, Spanish authorities could, if willful, reduce some facilitating factors and thus, disrupt the hub. Although according to some preliminary findings, this policy would not eliminate the criminal hub altogether but displace it somewhere else carrying unknown side effects.

In any case, one of the most immediate threats posed to the Kingdom of Spain is the influence that criminal entrepreneurs are beginning to have at the local level and how that influence shapes political decisions at the national and European levels.