EU Police Cooperation

An analysis on the extent of Spanish and Dutch police cooperation in EU organized crime prevention

Student: Erik Lindell
Självständigt arbete, 15 poäng
Statsvetenskap med inriktning säkerhet och krishantering
Påbyggnadskurs
HT 2023
Handledare: Dan Hansén
Antal ord: 10946
Abstract:

This is an analysis that aims to measure the extent of Spanish and Dutch law enforcement cooperation on issues of transnational organized crime prevention. As major transit hubs for the international narcotics market, Spain and the Netherlands are of particular interest to Europe as a whole, but also specifically Swedish policy-makers who have highlighted the narcotics trade as a key issue in domestic criminal activity. As Swedish policy-makers discuss new ways to tackle organized crime, to which international criminal mechanisms are a root cause, it is of interest to analyze the extent of international cooperative efforts that are already in place in key countries. This analysis has used the policy cycle model to construct sentence rules in accordance with the method of content analysis to provide a measurement on the extent of cooperative efforts by Spain and the Netherlands with other Eu member states and Europol. This is done by analyzing Reports by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and news-style articles posted by Europol. What has been found is that Spanish and Dutch efforts in cooperative responses are generally extensive, though the kind of participation that Spain and the Netherlands engage in differ. Spain primarily focuses on cooperation between law enforcing agencies, while the Netherlands are providers of vital intel to police operations and wide research into the issue.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Purpose, Problem and Research Question</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Delimitations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Background and Previous Research</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Background</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 The Criminal Networks of Europe</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 EU Crime Prevention</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Previous Research</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Policy Cycle Theory</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Policy Cycle Theory Explained</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Operationalization of the Policy Cycle</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Method</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Content Analysis Explained</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Operationalization of Content Analysis</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Material</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Analysis</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Spain</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 The Netherlands</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Conclusion and Discussion</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Conclusion</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Discussion</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference List</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Organized crime has become increasingly fatal in Sweden over the past 10 years. The mechanisms that produce the revenue for gangs are largely based on international criminal enterprises. Since transnational criminal activity is also on the rise, efforts of domestic crime prevention require some degree of international cooperation to combat it effectively. The EU considers transnational crime a major threat to the security of its citizens and has constructed policy on police cooperation to reflect this. But as domestic crime takes up a larger part of the agenda for Swedish policy-makers, they aim to develop new methods for crime-prevention. As international criminal networks generate large portions of the revenue for criminal gangs in Sweden, it is of interest to review the extent to which crime is seen as an international issue that requires international efforts to prevent. As major hubs for the import of illegal goods and substances, Spain and the Netherlands are particularly important to analyze in this sense.

As gun violence in Sweden becomes more prevalent the growing concern over the outfall of gang activity is warranted, since gun violence not only claims more and more lives, but younger and younger victims. Gang territories in which a gang conducts criminal activity (like selling narcotics), are a source of dispute between gangs that spur aggression and retaliation. Around a third of offenses by criminal gangs in Sweden are attributed to violence or the threat of violence. Often it serves the purpose of controlling areas of the narcotics trade, but sometimes for revenue like theft and robbery. The remaining two thirds of crime committed by organized networks are in large part dealings of the narcotics trade. There has been found to be a large number of internationally based criminal organizers with links to Sweden that establish narcotics operations abroad in major European transit countries like the Netherlands and Spain. Sharing the similarity of being European Union member states and

1 Svante Cornell, Niklas Swanström; Transnationell brottslighet - ett säkerhetshot?, Krisberedskapsmyndigheten, 2006.
2 Ibid; Pg. 1.
3 Amir Rostami; Street-gang violence in Sweden is a growing concern, Sveriges Sociologförbund, 2017, Pg. 2.
5 Ibid; Pg. 8.
6 Ibid; Pg. 5.
major transit-hubs for narcotics, it is of interest to see how the extent and strategies of their cooperation may differ.

This analysis is a qualitative study on the extent to which international, cooperative efforts are a part of organized crime prevention in Spanish and Dutch policy. The Netherlands and Spain have been chosen due to the fact that a large portion of narcotics sold in Sweden is transported through those countries. The analysis will use ideas of the policy cycle model of explaining policy construction to determine what parts of the material can help answer the research question. The material consists of policy reports on organized crime and police cooperation from Spain and the Netherlands presented by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction as well as news-format articles on events related to Spanish and Dutch policing on the narcotics trade presented by Europol on their website. The material will be analyzed with the use of content analysis to identify and measure formulations that indicate one or another answer to the research question.

1.2 Purpose, Problem and Research Question

The purpose of this paper is to provide insight into policy-making and international police cooperation between the Netherlands, Spain and other EU member states that have links to narcotics smuggling into Sweden. A large portion of offenses by organized criminal networks in Sweden are around the narcotics trade and the majority of narcotics that supply gangs with products to sell are trafficked through Spain and the Netherlands. This criminal activity stretches beyond the jurisdictions of individual agencies and states and therefore requires some degree of international police cooperation to prevent. This is why it is of interest to gain insight into the agenda-setting of crime prevention policy and international police cooperation of the Netherlands and Spain.

- To what extent do Spain and the Netherlands cooperate with Europol and other EU member states?

---

1.3 Delimitations

This study will be limited to the states Spain and the Netherlands. This choice was made based on the previous research which states that most narcotics from outside the continent that end up on the Swedish illegal marketplace come through ports in those two countries. This fact highlights the importance of action against the narcotics trade in those countries specifically. The organized criminal activities in Spain and the Netherlands affect not only Sweden but all of Europe, thus motivating the examination of crime-preventing policy in these states. This analysis is also limited in a time-frame of the past five years 2018-2023. The Country Drug Reports from the EMCDDA are from the years 2018 and 2019 while the articles stretch from 2018 to the current year in order to find sufficient relevant material.

2. Background and Previous Research

This section will present a background for the current transnational organized crime networks in Sweden, Spain, the Netherlands and Europe as a whole, which off-continent actors are involved, how drugs are trafficked and more. After this, previous research into Spanish, Dutch and European police cooperation will be presented.

2.1 Background

For this background section, there are several important pieces of information that need to be presented in order to answer the research question. (1) First and foremost, the criminal networks that operate in Europe need to be understood. The routes of the narcotics trade that lead to Sweden must be presented and the Netherlands and Spain need to be understood in that context. One sub-section of the previous research portion of the paper will deal with plotting the narcotics trade and motivating the relevance of analyzing the Netherlands and Spain in relation to Sweden. (2) Secondly, the mechanisms of EU crime-prevention need to be understood. What common guidelines for police cooperation are already in place? and How do each state that is analyzed act in relation to these common guidelines? (3) Thirdly the previous research must present the research on this subject until this point, with relevant conclusions that can be drawn from it that are of use for this analysis.

---

2.1.1 The Criminal Networks of Europe

Organized crime in Europe is varied and Europol considers it to be generally defined by the following categories: drug trafficking, human trafficking and smuggling, cybercrime, money laundering, extortion, property crimes and smuggling.\(^8\) Though organized crime can be a broad definition, being crimes that are committed in an organized manner, it is best to think of it as a business which exists to generate profits.\(^9\) Organized criminal activities in Europe construct a scattered abundance of illegal markets where the products of the above mentioned categories are sold.\(^10\) What is likely the most significant of the types of products and services documented is narcotics, though the annual consumption in Europe is difficult to measure.\(^11\)

The types of goods and services available on the illegal market varies greatly among European countries.\(^12\) Narcotics produced within Europe are often sold on local markets.\(^13\) However production in Europe is not limited to European markets, as with the large amount of synthetic drugs produced in western Europe, which are then sold globally.\(^14\) Both cocaine and opioids are consumed to a high extent in Europe, but from what is known, there is no heroin production and little to no cocaine production within Europe.\(^15\) There is however still large production of synthetic drugs on the continent and Europe is the largest producer of amphetamine, while also engaging in the production of drugs like ecstasy.\(^16\)

Despite this, the most defining feature of the drug markets in Europe is still the import of narcotics through illicit transport routes on a global level.\(^17\) There are no common international suppliers of any type of narcotic for the countries in Europe. Instead, the mechanisms of the narcotics trade are individual for each state. On top of this, the international illicit trade routes tend to change and evolve over time.\(^18\) This can be due to a number of factors but namely the rise and fall of different criminal networks, usually in response to increased policing.\(^19\) But the liberalization of the European market and the

\(^8\) Klaus von Lampe; Organized Crime in Europe: Conceptions and Realities, 2008, Pg. 4.
\(^9\) Ibid; Pg. 3.
\(^10\) Ibid; Pg. 4.
\(^11\) Ibid; Pg. 4.
\(^12\) Ibid; Pg. 4.
\(^13\) Ibid; Pg. 4.
\(^14\) Ibid; Pg. 5.
\(^15\) Ibid; Pg. 5.
\(^16\) Klaus von Lampe; Transnational Organized Crime in Europe, 2014; Pg. 4.
\(^17\) Ibid; Pg. 4.
\(^18\) Klaus von Lampe; Organized Crime in Europe: Conceptions and Realities, 2008, Pg. 5.
\(^19\) Ibid; Pg. 5.
\(^20\) Ibid; Pg. 5.
opening of its borders to other EU member states has made drug trafficking into the union a profitable venture for criminal organizations and networks from beyond its borders and across jurisdictions.\(^{21}\) The drug cartels of Colombia, mostly known for their exports in cocaine, have established trade routes leading to the western coast of Europe.\(^{22}\) Landing in countries like Spain, Colombian cocaine and heroin makes its way by land to other European states.\(^{23}\) Countries like France and Germany are major consumers, but narcotics are also moved through Denmark to the rest of Scandinavia.\(^{24}\) Other actors from outside the continent, like Chinese gangs, have operations that smuggle the primary commodity of heroin through countries like the Netherlands and Spain.\(^{25}\)

General patterns can also be identified in intra-European drug trafficking. Major exports in synthetic drugs and opioids occur between European countries with synthetics being moved east and opioids moving west.\(^{26}\) But the drug trafficking within Europe is not necessarily confined to this pattern. Synthetic party-drugs also have a large market in other western European countries, such as those shipped between Belgium and the Netherlands.\(^{27}\) Italian criminal groups are also an important actor in European organized crime. Firstly, they take part in the drug business that runs through Portugal and the Netherlands while also controlling imports through Spain.\(^{28}\) They have also been known to hide drug money in Sweden.\(^{29}\)

For the context of this analysis, we are particularly interested in international drug trafficking and its financial contributions to the operations of criminal gangs. The problem with determining the revenue product through, for example: narcotics trade, is that there is a lack of data and high risk that whatever is estimated would be inaccurate.\(^{30}\) However, in 2015 it was estimated that the total revenue produced by narcotics and other selected criminal activities like cargo theft, counterfeiting and fraud, amounted to at least 110 billion dollars a
Of these earnings, it is difficult to, in turn, determine the percentages of this total that is reinvested in criminal activities, what amount is taken as profits and how much is invested into legitimate businesses or laundered. Since there are no official records of the profits of criminal gangs, we can expect there to be a high dark number of revenue produced by illicit activities. And the relative profits of criminal activities is high compared to that of a legal business since the revenue is not taxed. Nonetheless, it should be remembered that, like any business, the continued profit of criminal activity is necessary for the operation of gangs.

2.1.2 EU Crime Prevention

The European Union has been part of the coordination of international policing efforts for over two decades. First established in 1999, Europol acts as a non-executive policing agency. This means that the organization does not have the authority to warrant and conduct investigations and make arrests, but instead serve as a hub for the gathering, analyzing and distributing of information to EU member states. Europol also helps to organize international operations between agencies and states. Europol can take part in joint investigations into criminal cases with international ties and has also established relations with inter-European international actors like Interpol and the United Nations. Cooperative efforts with actors outside the continent were increased following the 9/11 attacks on the United States and Europol now also shares information with, among others, the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) in areas of terrorism and organized crime.

Europol has had a particular focus on drug-related crime since its conception. The organization has the role of collecting and keeping databases on the production and distribution of illegal substances within its borders. It is also within Europol’s capacity to provide analytics and organizational operative support for national police forces. Europol can provide local police with information on emerging threats, the movements of illegal

---

31 Ibid; Pg. 39.
32 Ibid; Pg. 38.
33 Ibid, Pg. 38.
35 Ibid; Pg. 10.
36 Ibid; Pg. 3.
37 Ibid; Pg. 4.
38 Ibid; Pg. 4.
39 Ibid; Pg. 3.
40 Ibid; Pg. 7.
41 Ibid; Pg. 9.
substances and the construction of multinational criminal networks that have proven useful to police forces of individual countries.\textsuperscript{42}

2.2 Previous Research

This analysis will look into the police cooperation of the Netherlands and Spain, the extent to which they cooperate with Europol. The previous research that has delved into the police cooperation of Spain and the Netherlands suggests that the increased integration of police cooperation in the states and Europe as a whole has been on a steady rise for several decades. This subsection will review the previous research into Spanish, Dutch and European police cooperation until now and its implications for this analysis.

The research into European police cooperation suggests that there is a high volume of exchange of information between European states when it comes to issues of drug trafficking and other organized crime activities.\textsuperscript{43} Despite this, the argument can be made that improvements and extensions of this cooperation could be necessary to combat organized crime effectively.\textsuperscript{44} It should be noted however that many cultural, judicial and political differences exist between the European countries which can be problems that need to be overcome in order to cooperate effectively and which can lead different states to come to different conclusions as to what will be the best solution to a particular issue.\textsuperscript{45} Within the context of this analysis, Spain and the Netherlands can view both the problems of organized crime and the solutions differently. For example, there can be a convergence in problem recognition but divergence in what strategies are best applied to solve it. Researchers have found that the cultural differences between German, Belgian and Dutch police officers has caused police cooperation with the other states to be incidental rather than systematically embedded.\textsuperscript{46} This means that an individual police officer could reach out to another state's policing agencies for information or assistance when the need for it arises.\textsuperscript{47} This is also in the case where this particular police officer has an affinity for intercultural issues,

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid; Pg. 15.
\textsuperscript{43} Ludo Block; Combating Organized Crime in Europe: Practicalities of Police Cooperation, Oxford University Press, 2008, Pg. 7.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid; Pg. 8.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid; Pg. 8.
\textsuperscript{46} Joseph Soeters, Geert Hofstede, Mireille Van Twuyver; Culture’s consequences and the police: Cross-border cooperation between police forces in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, Taylor & Francis Group, 2010, Pg. 13.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid; Pg. 13.
international affairs and/or is of good will.\textsuperscript{48} It should be taken into account that these findings are specifically about bilateral instances of police cooperation between police forces. Cultural, judicial and language barriers could be a potential roadblock in police cooperation which can surface in the material. Police cooperation between states through organizations such as Europol will in turn be discussed further on in this section.

Bilateral or multilateral police cooperation is not however strictly limited to operational cooperation on cases. There is also an educational dimension to police cooperation. As far back as 1977, the success of the German GSG-9 special police task force caused over 50 states, one of which was the Netherlands, to model their own task forces on that of GSG-9.\textsuperscript{49} Instances of foreign powers training the national police forces of states in drug enforcement has also come from outside the continent. During the 1970s, the United States began training European police in new methods of undercover and surveillance operation.\textsuperscript{50} As previously mentioned, legal and cultural differences can be a roadblock in police cooperation, which was the case for many countries involved in this program who were concerned with the fact that authorities were obligated to act in the case a crime is committed with their awareness of it, and risks of causing entrapment.\textsuperscript{51} It is important to take into account how external actors can shape cooperation between European states on issues of drug enforcement. In the case that strategies of Spain and the Netherlands are increasingly adapting to for example the United States, Spanish and Dutch strategies can be expected to also become more similar and in turn heighten the ease of police cooperation.

When it comes to problem recognition on issues of drug use, the Netherlands diverge from the European norm. In 1962, the United Nations passed the ‘Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs’ which was followed by the ‘Convention on Psychotropic Substances’ in 1971 and the ‘Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs in 1972.\textsuperscript{52} The conventions served to limit member states in defining the drug problem autonomously, which in turn affected the legal framework for drug enforcement.\textsuperscript{53} Since the 1990s, the Netherlands has strived towards implementing a more non-repressive approach to drug use.\textsuperscript{54} It can be argued that the Dutch policies have

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid; Pg. 13.
\textsuperscript{49} Jörg Freidrichs; Fighting Terrorism and Drugs Europe and international police cooperation, Taylor & Francis Group, 2008, Pg. 62.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid; Pg. 135.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid; Pg. 136.
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid; Pg. 114.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid; Pg. 114.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid; Pg. 114.
shaped the overarching European debate on how to tackle drug-related issues in consumer
countries.\textsuperscript{55} This means that policymakers promote an international fight against the supply of
drugs while taking a more lenient stance toward drug-users while attempting to instead lower
the demand.\textsuperscript{56} Laws that allow the use of ‘soft drugs’ in the Netherlands have also been
argued to be potentially damaging to states with a more hardline approach to drug use.\textsuperscript{57}
Among these states are France, which have long tried to commit increased enforcement
against drug-use in the Netherlands through the EU.\textsuperscript{58} Despite this, France along with
Belgium and Germany are the states with which the Netherlands cooperate with the most on
issues of law enforcement. Besides France, others have called for increased cooperation with
another of the Netherlands' neighbors Belgium.\textsuperscript{59} Remembering these differences in the legal
framework of drug use between the Netherlands and the rest of Europe (and Spain among
them) is an important detail to remember for this analysis, since it has an inherent effect on
which activities around narcotics can and cannot have measures taken against them, thus
defining what problems do and do not require police cooperation.

Spain has previously engaged in JITs (Joint Investigation Team) with France on issues of
terrorism, but the teams are a common asset when engaging in the prevention of the narcotics
trade.\textsuperscript{60} Though the Netherlands have had difficulties in establishing JITs with other states
after long political processes, they successfully established one such team with the United
Kingdom in order to combat the narcotics trade.\textsuperscript{61} Several difficulties can stand in the way of
a JIT operation to be established and then work smoothly. Previously mentioned cultural and
language barriers make joint investigations difficult.\textsuperscript{62} As with all international cooperation,
joint operations in law enforcement can suffer from differences in strategies, techniques,
available personnel and financial resources.\textsuperscript{63} Previously mentioned legal frameworks can be
problematic, not only in the investigation stage of an operation, but in the prosecuting of
arrested individuals. When establishing the framework of a joint investigation, states must

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid; Pg. 114.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid; Pg. 114.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid; Pg. 124.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid; Pg. 128.
\textsuperscript{59} Stephan van Nimwegen; The need for the Netherlands and Belgium to further integrate police cooperation, Sage Pub., 2017, Pg. 11.
\textsuperscript{60} Ludo Block; Combating Organized Crime in Europe: Practicalities of Police Cooperation, Oxford University Press, 2008, Pg. 7.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid; Pg. 7.
\textsuperscript{62} Monika Helmberg; Eurojust and Joint Investigation Teams: How Eurojust can support JIT’s, Springer, 2007, Pg. 3.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid; Pg. 3.
select one state or more in which evidence that has been collected during the operation can be expected to be admissible for the prosecution.\textsuperscript{64} This is important, at the same time as there needs to be common guidelines for how evidence needs to be collected.\textsuperscript{65} Furthermore, as an investigation is ongoing, new factors that need to be taken into account and other states that need to be involved in the investigation will cause the need for amendments to the original framework of the JIT.\textsuperscript{66} Aside from the difficulties that can arise in the investigation and prosecution stage of an investigation, JITs are often hindered while they are being set up because of differences of opinions or the anticipation of difficulties in a joint operation.\textsuperscript{67}

There has been a general move towards increased European integration of law enforcement cooperation.\textsuperscript{68} The need for increased cooperation is largely constituted by the dismantlement of the internal borders of Europe since the 1990s of which Spain was one of the early proponents.\textsuperscript{69} Europol has played a central role in the organization of police cooperation during the time since the continent started to move into further law enforcement integration.\textsuperscript{70} Europol has previously invited Spain among other states to work on investigations into synthetic drug production networks in the Netherlands and Belgium.

From the previous research, a few recurring themes can be identified when analyzing inter-state cooperation on issues of transnational organized crime. Research on the specific police cooperation of Spain is not comprehensive. Difficulties for Spain to cooperate on issues of international crime both terrorism and trafficking are difficult to find. Instead Spain is referenced in the context of entering into agreements for police cooperation. Spain is mentioned to cooperate in both bilateral and multilateral agreements, which can be both state-to-state or through an organization such as Europol or Eurojust. The Netherlands are both references in the context of successful and failed attempts of international police cooperation on issues of transnational organized crime. The Dutch policies on drug use generally diverges from the European norm. Being that a large part of the previous research

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid; Pg. 3.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid; Pg. 4.
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid; Pg. 4.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid; Pg. 4.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid; Pg. 13.
\textsuperscript{70} Stephen Rozée, Christian Kaunert, Sarah Léonard; Is Europol a Comprehensive Policing Actor?, Taylor & Francis, 2013, Pg. 3.
claims that differences in the judicial (among other) system between states attempting police cooperation can cause issues, it is safe to assume that this may be a contributing factor to the failures of certain joint investigations that the Netherlands have taken part in. This is even though the previous research reviewed in this section does not specifically make this assumption. Among the other causes of issues that are referenced in the previous research are cultural, financial, linguistic, technical and strategic differences that exist in Europe. Cultural and judicial barriers can be the cause of different opinions in the problem recognition stage of the policy cycle, while strategic, financial, technical and linguistic differences can cause problems during the planning and execution of government programs and joint operations. The implications that the previous research has for the analysis is that these above-mentioned categories of barriers that can be problematic for international police cooperation may surface within the material. The legal frameworks of the Netherlands and Spain can also be expected to be reflected in the material, as it defines what activities surrounding narcotics is considered an offense to begin with, thus affecting what needs and need not have measures taken against them. This means that the Netherlands may abstain from entering into certain cooperative agreements that are not in their interest to pursue. Spanish authorities have been referenced in the context of entering into many agreements on international cooperation, and can be expected to maintain that image within the material.

The contribution that this analysis can make is to give insight into the police cooperation mechanisms of two transit countries for the narcotics trade and how their strategies in transnational police affairs may vary, what roles they fill in cooperative responses, what kinds of operations they take part in and the extent to which they do so. Within the field of political research, much focus is put on the domestic responses and policies of individual context. Though it can sometimes have a comparative view on more than one state, or as this section presents the EU as a whole, there is a limited focus on specifically international cooperation. Being that a heavy focus has been put on the narcotics trade when the issue of gang violence is debated in Sweden, it is reasonable to say that addressing the international mechanisms that supply gangs with drugs, and in turn the revenue that sponsors gang violence, could be useful. One important part of limiting the flow of narcotics internationally is in turn transnational police cooperation.
3. Policy Cycle Theory

The aim of this analysis is to understand the policy cycle of the Netherlands and Spain in dealing with international organized crime. Policy Cycle theory establishes a framework for understanding the policy-making process that encompasses everything from problem recognition to policy implementation. The theory splits the process into four components, of which three are relevant for this analysis. They are agenda setting, policy formulation/decision-making and implementation. Agenda setting is a tool for determining what problems are discussed within the material.\textsuperscript{71} Policy formulation describes how the identified problems are turned into policy, and implementation in turn deals with how the policy is turned into action. In the context of this analysis, we are interested in analyzing the extent to which organized crime is seen as an international problem that requires international cooperative solutions, and the extent to which those solutions are implemented. This section aims to give (1) an overview of Policy cycle theory, and (2) the way the theory will be operationalized in this analysis.

3.1 Policy Cycle Theory Explained

Agenda setting theory explains that the recognition of problems and issues in a state is a prerequisite for the construction of policy.\textsuperscript{72} The ‘agenda’ is a list of problems to which officials of a state or other actor need to find solutions. The agenda is therefore defined by what this same actor defines as issues that need to be tackled, what aspects of them that are of particular importance.\textsuperscript{73} This is what in turn shapes the actions that a state or other actor takes in solving particular problems and what policy is constructed. Within the context of this analysis, the ways in which individual states view organized crime and the stance they take in organized crime prevention is of interest. The place that international organized crime takes on the Spanish and Dutch agenda of crime prevention defines their responses and actions within the world of police cooperation, which in turn is what this analysis shall look at. Is the prevention of international trafficking/distribution of drugs important for Spanish and Dutch law enforcement? How does this affect their policy? -and international cooperation? (More on the operationalization of agenda-setting in section 3.2.)

\textsuperscript{71} Werner Jann, Kai Wegrich; Theories of the Policy Cycle, CRC Press, 2007, Pg. 3.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid; Pg. 3.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid; Pg. 4.
The crucial aspect of the agenda-setting part of policy cycle theory is the way a recognized issue in society is put on the agenda for policy-makers to deal with.\textsuperscript{74} The problem recognition is a collection of opinions, perceptions, ideas and attitudes toward a certain issue that is held by a community.\textsuperscript{75} The requirements put on the problem to be relevant for analysis within the context of the theory is that it cannot be privately resolved through independent action by individuals or non-state/non-IGO actors (Intergovernmental Organization).\textsuperscript{76} Therefore it requires some governmental action in order to be dealt with effectively, thus warranting the construction of policy to deal with that problem. The perceptions and opinions that shape the agenda in a democratic state have been generally considered to be a result of public social interaction or media, but it is also importantly framed by elected officials.\textsuperscript{77} This means that policy-makers are (in large part) responsible for both problem recognition and in turn how policy is shaped to solve a problem, which brings us to the following step in the policy cycle.

Policy formulation is the stage in the policy cycle process that takes the problems that have been identified in the agenda setting stage and turns them into clear defined objectives and government programs.\textsuperscript{78} This means that whatever policy or strategy that is used should complete that objective or solve the problem that has been defined. Policy formulation and decision-making are generally considered to be different stages of the policy formulation cycle, however within the context of this analysis, the difference is irrelevant.\textsuperscript{79} Within both stages, the goal is to establish a plan of action that aims to solve a problem. The policy formulation stage is also importantly the stage in which policy-makers strive to resolve conflicts of interest between actors both private and public in order to act in unison towards common goals.\textsuperscript{80} This point is relevant within the context of this analysis since the analysis looks at inter-state cooperation. Thus the processes of establishing common interests and goals in the fight against organized crime. The policy formulation stage organizes and coordinates efforts across different parts of society in which a problem can be dealt with.\textsuperscript{81}

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid; Pg. 4.
\textsuperscript{75} Michael Howlett, Allan McConnell, Anthony Perl; Moving Policy Theory Forward: Connecting Multiple Stream, and Advocacy Coalition Frameworks to Policy Cycle Models of Analysis, Public Administration Australia, 2016, Pg. 4.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid; Pg. 4.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid; Pg. 12.
\textsuperscript{78} Werner Jann, Kai Wegrich; Theories of the Policy Cycle, CRC Press, 2007, Pg. 6.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid; Pg. 6.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid; Pg. 7
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid; Pg. 7.
This is a major role of Europol in the formulation stage of the policy cycle, since it organizes efforts across states.\textsuperscript{82} The important part of the policy formulation stage is the roles of actors, to whom the problem is a common interest that is best solved with collective efforts.\textsuperscript{83} When conducting a study that uses the policy cycle of describing policy-making, the initial stage of the analysis is identifying the actors that may act in coalition to pursue common goals.\textsuperscript{84} In this analysis, the actors whose interests are in focus are the member states of the EU who either do or do not act in unison with Europol and other EU member states.

The implementation stage of the policy cycle is the part in which the agreed-upon policies and strategies of the formulation stage are converted into government programs that are then set into action.\textsuperscript{85} It is the executive stage of the policy cycle that aims to solve the problem in accordance with the set policy-direction.\textsuperscript{86} Policy implementation should specify the details of the government program, what actors are involved i.e agencies, organizations and in this case states as well as how the charter should be interpreted by these actors and in a legal context.\textsuperscript{87} Policy implementation also requires necessary allocation of resources in order to execute the program.\textsuperscript{88} Lastly, at the implementation stage, policy makers need to explain how the program's policies and strategies should be applied to specific cases.\textsuperscript{89} What is relevant for this analysis, is whether or not Spain and the Netherlands comply with the set programs by the European Union and the extent to which they cooperate on issues of organized crime. Since the units of analysis are states themselves, more free reign is given to the actors to set their own agenda, and follow their own programs.

### 3.2 Operationalization of the Policy Cycle

So far, some aspects of how the policy cycle model relates to the analysis has been explained. This section will go more in-depth into how the theory will be used in the analysis and how it will help shape the study.

\textsuperscript{82} Stephen Rozée, Christian Kaunert, Sarah Léonard; Is Europol a Comprehensive Policing Actor?, Taylor & Francis, 2013, Pg. 3.
\textsuperscript{83} Michael Howlett, Allan McConnell, Anthony Perl; Moving Policy Theory Forward: Connecting Multiple Stream, and Advocacy Coalition Frameworks to Policy Cycle Models of Analysis, Public Administration Australia, 2016, Pg. 10.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid; Pg. 10.
\textsuperscript{85} Werner Jann, Kai Wegrich; Theories of the Policy Cycle, CRC Press, 2007, Pg. 9.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid; Pg. 9.
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid; Pg. 9.
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid; Pg. 9.
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid; Pg. 9.
This study asks the extent to which Spain and the Netherlands cooperate with Europol on issues of transnational organized crime and the narcotics trade. This means that the analysis is interested in reviewing the policy and actions of these two states, i.e do they choose cooperation or not. This means that the attitude of Spain and the Netherlands towards organized crime as an issue, how it is best solved and the extent to which the strategies are applied is of interest. The policy cycle model, and the specific parts of it that have been chosen to be relevant for this study are agenda-setting, policy formulation and implementation. Specifically within the context of this analysis, as it deals with international police cooperation, the study will analyze policy on joint EU crime prevention through Europol. The material, consisting of primarily reports and policy documents, will be analyzed with these stages of the policy cycle in mind. Explaining the agenda-setting, policy formulation and implementation aspects of the material on whether organized crime is seen as an international issue that in turn requires international cooperation to deal with, will help answer the research question of ‘To what extent do Spain and the Netherlands cooperate with Europol and other EU member states on issues of organized crime prevention?’.

Looking into what parts of the policy cycle and the instances in which the Netherlands and Spain take part in them will in turn give an answer to the extent in which they take part in police cooperation on issues of transnational organized crime.

In short, the three parts of the policy cycle that have been selected for use in this study will define the method and what messages are relevant to measure in order to answer the research question. The policy cycle provides a rationalist and structured view on how policy is constructed and implemented. But nonetheless states can come to very different conclusions about what the problems are and how they are best solved, though their situations can be similar. This is why it is of interest to look into Spain and the Netherlands respectively.

4. Method

This study will analyze reports from the European Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction to answer the research question. While the texts are sought to be understood with a qualitative research method, the need for delving into hidden meanings and perceptions within the material. To answer the research question, the study must use a method that accurately identifies and measures indicators of one or another answer to the research question, i.e To what extent do Spain and the Netherlands cooperate with Europol? High, low or somewhere
between? With the use of content analysis and the constructions of so-called ‘sentence rules’,
different indicators of one or another answer to the research question can be identified and
measured. This section of the paper will (1) provide an overview of content analysis as a
method and (2) describe how the method will be used in this analysis.

4.1 Content Analysis Explained

Content analysis is a qualitative research method that allows the researcher to interpret, code
and then measure certain messages in a textual material.90 Content analysis allows the
researcher to process large amounts of data while being able to draw conclusions from it
effectively.91 While the method has been mostly used for media material, it can be effectively
used on other kinds of material and data as well.92 It can be used to identify patterns, themes,
ideas and relationships between variables in a textual source. This analysis is not interested in
reading between the lines or trying to extract hidden messages or ideas within the material,
but instead measures what is presented at face-value. The coding scheme that content analysis
uses to measure certain messages within a material can be constructed either inductively or
deductively. The researcher can for example do an initial reading of the material to identify
themes or messages so that they can then construct the coding scheme around those themes
and messages to measure their presence within the material.93 Or the researcher can use a
theory or model to create the coding scheme and then measure the extent to which it aligns or
not.94 This study will keep the policy cycle model in mind when constructing the coding
scheme and then measure the messages that indicate either a high or low degree of
cooperation with Europol and other EU member states.

The coding scheme consists of ‘sentence rules’ which are categories that sentences in the
material are sorted into and measured. The sentence rules can be sentences that contain a
certain word, sentences that imply a certain meaning or sentences that mention a particular
subject or ascribe values and perspectives onto an issue.95 As previously mentioned, this
method is most commonly applied on a media material. When doing so, sentence rules can be
constructed to measure the existence of certain frames i.e what issues the material chooses to

90 Steven E. Stemler; Content Analysis, John Wiley & Sons, 2015, Pg. 2.
91 B Devi Prasad; Content Analysis A method in Social Science Research, 2008, Pg. 1.
92 Ibid; Pg. 6.
93 Steven E. Stemler; Content Analysis, John Wiley & Sons, 2015, Pg. 3.
94 Ibid; Pg. 3.
95 Steve Stemler; An Overview of Content Analysis, 2001, Pg. 1.
highlight. The media material could for example choose to represent only one side of a conflict. If the researcher would, for example, want to analyze reports on the Ukraine-Russia conflict, a sentence rule could look something along these lines: ‘Sentences or sentence groups that lift the views of Ukrainian nationalists.’ and ‘Sentences or sentence groups that lift the view of Russian separatists.’ By reading the material and measuring these two categories of messages, the researcher can gain insight into what frames/perspectives/messages the producer of that material wants to relay. In the context of this analysis, the international police cooperation of the Netherlands and Spain, on issues of transnational organized crime, is of interest. Sentence rules that indicate either one or another answer to the research question will be measured. So this analysis may measure the instances that a sentence or sentence group mentions failed attempts of cooperation or ones that were successful. How the method will be constructed and applied in this analysis will be explained in the following subsection of this method section of the paper.

4.2 Operationalization of Content Analysis

The theory of the policy cycle will be used to construct sentence rules aimed at measuring the different possible answers to the research question i.e To what extent do Spain and the Netherlands cooperate with Europol and other EU member states on issues of organized crime prevention, high or low or middling? Sentence rules will be constructed in order to measure sentences or sentence groups that indicate a high, low or middling amount of cooperation between Spain and the Netherlands with Europol. This section on the operationalization of the method and how the theory will be used in doing so, will present the constructed sentence rules with motivations and explanations.

When answering this research question, it is important that all stages of the policy cycle are kept in mind. Policy implementation is the key component since that stage shows the cases in which cooperation has been successful, i.e the extent to which states cooperate on issues of transnational organized crime. However, this needs to be contrasted with instances in which there have been attempts to cooperate and develop international programs on crime prevention which have not come past the policy formulation and/or agenda-setting stage. Measuring sentences or sentence groups that mention implemented and non-implemented policy and then comparing these will determine whether cooperation is generally achieved or not. Though it is also important to note that simply because one category may be statistically
larger than the other, it does not mean that cooperation should necessarily be considered extensive or not. This is why sentences and sentence rules that measure formulations that highlight general perceptions of cooperation working well or not on issues of transnational organized crime prevention will be constructed. The sentence rules that measure high extent of cooperation are:

- Sentences or sentence groups that mention successful implementation of cooperative policy on issues of transnational organized crime prevention.
- Sentences or sentence groups that reflect cooperation on issues of transnational organized crime to be generally extensive.

Sentence rules that measure low extent of cooperation:

- Sentences or sentence groups that mention policy initiatives on issues of transnational organized crime prevention that have been hindered or otherwise scrapped.
- Sentences or sentence groups that reflect cooperation on issues of transnational organized crime to be generally limited.

An overview of the contents and the sentence rules measurements will be presented in the analysis section of the paper. With the information that the analysis can provide, the two states and their cooperative responses to transnational organized crime around the narcotics trade can be understood and in turn compared. Being that the states share the similarity of being major transit-hubs for the narcotics trade, the differences in extent to which they cooperate and in turn what ways they do so could be of interest for informing future policy decisions in international police cooperation. Spain and the Netherlands have been specifically chosen due to their relevance to organized crime and the supply of drugs in Sweden.⑨⁶

5. Material

In this section, the material that will be analyzed to answer the research question will be presented along with the motivation for its selection. To answer the research question, reports on the activity of the narcotics trade and measures taken against them need to be analyzed. For this, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Abuse’s (EMCDDA) country drug reports from Spain and the Netherlands of the years 2018 and 2019 have been chosen. The reports provide an overarching view of the drug supply, use and public health problems

as well as policy responses of each country during that year. The choice in selecting the years 2018 and 2019 stem from the simple reason that they are close in time to when this analysis is made, and are the most recent reports that were readily available. Due to the mentioned breadth of the matters that the reports provide, the research question can be adequately answered. The paper provides insight into each state's three stages of the policy cycle that will be used in this analysis. The agenda-setting and problem recognition is reflected in the drug supply and public health problems aspects of the reports, while policy formulation and implementation is reflected in the policy responses that are presented in the material. Despite the comprehensive nature of these reports, additional material has been selected to complement the primary material. These consist of several news-articles posted by Europol on their website that report on action taken against organized crime and the narcotics trade in the Netherlands and Spain with international implications. In order to find sufficient material, articles have been selected beyond the scope of the EMCDDA reports and will also be collected from years after 2019, but no earlier than 2018. Six articles found with the search words ‘Spain’ and ‘Netherlands’ have been found regarding action taken against or in other ways related to the drug trade and each state being analyzed. The articles have been selected prior to a deeper reading of the material in order to avoid selection biases. The Europol news articles present information on operations carried out by Europol in or with member states, explaining the background of the operation, what parties were involved, the targets that were pursued and the results.

The reports from Spain and the Netherlands deal with many aspects, not just around the drug trade and associated domestic crime, but with drug use and addiction as well, what kinds of drugs are generally used and so on. Though the entire material will be examined for this analysis, large parts of it can be expected to not deal with the matters that are relevant for this analysis, namely problem recognition, policy responses and overarching strategies. Problem recognition is one aspect which is relevant in this analysis which despite this is likely to be reflected in all parts of the material. Presenting statistics and overviews of drug abuse and associated domestic crime is part of the motivation for remedying the international mechanisms that cause them. Furthermore, refraining from omitting certain parts of the material helps avoid biases and selective reading. The EMCDDA reports are a good fit for avoiding biases in the sense that it is an external, evaluating organization that presents a perspective on the national drug situation of individual countries and Europe as a whole independently of the state which is reviewed. It should be kept in mind that some statements
within the material that are referenced are the views or perspectives of the countries that are reviewed. Despite this however, these statements should count no less in the sentence rules measurements or the general overview of the material since these statements were still selected by the EMCDDA as important for the representation of the countries’ national drug situations.

Regarding the complementing material, the news articles provide a more in-depth view of specific instances of cooperation and action taken against organized crime or drug trade. The news articles report on important events in the world of transnational crime prevention in Europe, major drug busts and arrests. This way, the big-picture perspective of the primary material is deepened. The selection of the news-articles is also limited to the years 2018 and 2019 in order to ensure that the same situational circumstances apply to both materials. Though the same method and sentence rules will be applied to the articles as with the EMCDDA reports, the measurements will be presented separately. Both these perspectives can then be interpreted as part of larger conclusions that may answer the research question.

Biases can be expected within the articles of the news reports from Europol on their website. It should be noted that Europol reports on operations that have taken place and were generally successful. However, simply measuring the rate of successful operation in cooperative measures in which Spain and the Netherlands have taken part in is not the focus of this analysis. The news reports from Europol can instead complement the EMCDDA reports by giving insight into the ways in which Spain and the Netherlands have taken part in international police cooperation with Europol and other member states, how large their part was in the operation's success and what role they served.

6. Analysis

In this analysis section of the paper, it will be explained how the method has been applied to the material in order to answer the research question. The process will be presented with an explanation of the materials contents that are of interest to the study. The analysis will be divided into the Spanish and Dutch materials separately so that the conclusions that are made about each state can be easily tracked through the analysis section. Each state’s section will begin with an overview of the material and its contents along with statements that are of
importance to the analysis and which have counted to the sentence rules measurements. These overviews are then followed by the sentence rules measurements presented in tables and a quick summary on the points that can be made. Following the analysis, in section 7. Conclusion and Discussion, the results of the study will be presented with answers to the research question as well as a discussion on its implications.

6.1 Spain

The 2018 and 2019 EMCDDA Spain Drug Reports generally report on the same subjects and vary very little. Therefore it is consequentially indifferent whether the findings of the two reports are presented separately or not. This is why the general findings of both reports and the measured sentence rules will be presented together. Beginning with an overview of the contents of the reports, the findings of the sentence rule measurements will follow.

The reports highlight a few key aspects on issues of cooperation. The most prevalent is instances in which Spain shares information and statistics among European countries, with statements like the following: “Four Spanish cities (Barcelona, Castellón, Santiago and Valencia) participate in the Europe-wide annual wastewater campaigns undertaken by the Sewage Analysis Core Group Europe (SCORE). This study provides data on drug use at a municipal level, based on the levels of illicit drugs and their metabolites found in wastewater.”97 This includes but is not limited to participation in continental-wide studies into drug-use.98 Spain is also mentioned to be in line with European standards on the monitoring of drug activities in the state which is indicated by the following statement: “Like other European countries, Spain evaluates its drug policy and strategy using ongoing indicator monitoring and specific research projects.”99 There is also a focus on information being shared on the drug-market in Spain, which is highlighted due to the fact that a large amount of drugs supplied to the rest of Europe is shipped through Spain.100 It is emphasized that the issue of limiting drug supply is seen as an important problem to address for Spanish law enforcement on a domestic level, but which also creates the need for extensive police cooperation with other states, which is reflected with the following statement: “actions to discover and dismantle international criminal networks involved in the trafficking of drugs

98 Ibid; Pg. 6.
99 Ibid; Pg. 2.
100 Ibid; Pg. 21.
are priorities for the Spanish law enforcement agencies and are carried out through intensifying control in the southern coastal areas and ports for packages of drugs; investigating, discovering and confiscating the proceeds of drug trafficking and money laundering; preventing the distribution of illicit drugs within the country; and fostering international cooperation." While prevention of drug-use takes a large part of the Spanish agenda on drug-related issues, much focus is put on stopping drug-trafficking both within the country and on the continent. The 2019 report also mentions the importance of preventing drug-use, which diverges from what can be gathered from the previous research and background on the Dutch policies, being that it has comparatively liberal laws on drug-use.

The difficulties with international implications that were mentioned were limited to the fact that a large amount of drugs still do make it to other states from Spain. No point is made however as to whether or not this is due to failed attempts of cooperation or not, and is too vague to be determined to be a specific account of failure or if it is simply due to the amount of criminal activity being immense.

The reports by Europol on action taken in cooperation with Spain and Spanish cooperation with other member states are many. Furthermore, within the articles, many examples of bilateral and multilateral cooperative police responses and operations are presented with Spain often being highlighted as a key player, supported by statements such as: “Balkan cartel sinks as Spain seizes 2.7 tonnes of cocaine on board large vessel”. There are several examples of Spanish authorities taking part in arrests in other states, particularly around the narcotics trade and specifically cocaine and cannabis. States with which Spain has cooperated that are presented in the articles are Italy, Poland, France, Serbia, Belgium among others. At the end of each article, a complete list of all states that were involved is presented, which include many other EU member states as well as extra-European states. As is to be expected, all articles highlight Europols involvement in each operation that is reported on, most often providing the exchange of information and technical support to the law enforcement agencies of individual states and the cooperative response as a whole, which is

---

101 Ibid; Pg. 21.
102 EMCDDA; Spain Drug Report 2019, 2019, Pg. 2.
103 Ibid; Pg. 16.
105 Europol; Balkan cartel sinks as Spain seizes 2.7 tonnes of Cocaine on board large vessel, 2023.
106 Europol; 78 involved in large-scale cannabis trafficking arrested in Spain and Italy, 2023.
represented by statements such as: “With the support of Europol, the Spanish Guardia Civil, in coordination with the Belgian Federal Police, and the Belgian and Spanish judicial authorities, have arrested a Belgian fugitive described as “very dangerous” in Torrevieja, south-east Spain.”.107

When taking both the reports from the EMCDDA and the news articles by Europol into account, several points that help answer the research question stand out. Spanish police cooperation can be generally seen as extensive due to its success-rate (which is reflected in the sentence rules below) and also the breadth of roles and types of cooperation that Spain takes part in. This includes the sharing of information, participation in joint police operations, establishing extra-European cooperative engagements, being a key player in operations and explicitly stating that international narcotics trade is an important issue for the state, which in turn creates the need for international cooperation. These points along with the sentence rules measurements will count into the result and the answer to the research question. Here follows the sentence rules measurements.

Tabel 1. Sentence rules that measure sentences on extent of cooperation, Spain:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence rules:</th>
<th>EMCDDA Reports</th>
<th>Europol Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentences or sentence groups that mention successful implementation of cooperative policy on issues of transnational organized crime prevention.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences or sentence groups that reflect cooperation on issues of transnational organized crime to be generally extensive.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences or sentence groups that mention policy initiatives on issues of</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

107 Europol; Europol helps detain dangerous Belgian fugitive in Spain, 2018.
As can be derived from the sentence rule measurements, there are no sentences in the EMCDDA Spain Drug Reports of 2018 and 2019 that indicate difficulties in conducting unsuccessful or insufficient cooperation on issues of drug-related transnational organized crime. One could interpret the mentioned difficulties that persist in limiting the trafficking of drugs from Spain to other European states as a failure of cooperative efforts, but within the context of this analysis and the applied method, the statements themselves are insufficient to make this conclusion. Furthermore, no examples of Spanish efforts in cooperative measures that have not been taken against transnational organized crime and narcotics trade can be found. Nor does the material have examples of operations in other states that are connected to criminal activity that stretches to Spain in which Spanish authorities did not participate. There is however a high extent of examples of Spanish authorities carrying out successful and comprehensive cooperative operations with other EU member states and Europol.

6.2 The Netherlands

Now the analysis will continue into the Netherlands reports. For presentational consistencies, the 2018 and 2019 Netherlands Drug Reports will be presented together. Same as with the Spanish reports, the contents of the 2018 and 2019 copies are much the same. The same goes for the sentence rules measurements. Beginning with an overview of the contents of the material, the findings of the sentence rule measurements will follow.

The EMCDDA reports on the Netherlands highlight a few key factors. There are multiple instances where cooperation on specifically the monitoring of and research on drug-use is mentioned, which is in line with European standards. This is supported by statements such as: “Like other European countries, the Netherlands regularly monitors and evaluates its drug
policy and specific issues using routine indicator monitoring and specific research projects." Most notably is the fact that the Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development coordinates the European Research Area Network on Illicit Drugs, represented in the material by the following statement: “The Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development coordinates the European Research Area Network on Illicit Drugs (ERANID).“

Large focus is also put on the prevention of drug-use among minors and students. To combat this, the Netherlands have implemented a Swedish program to reduce drug-abuse, which has been deemed successful. When specifically looking into police cooperation, the Netherlands is reported to have deep and extensive cooperative engagements with all of its neighboring states which is reflected with the following statement: “To address international drug-related crime, the Netherlands has developed close cooperation or joint actions with all neighbouring countries.” though this is not developed with further details in the report. In accordance with what is found in the previous research, the Netherlands is also reported to have diverging laws on what is considered illegal drug-use. This in turn affects the kinds of law enforcement-responses that are taken against drug-use in the country. These domestic preventative measures therefore diverge from the European norm.

As for the Europol news reports on the Netherlands, the articles present several instances of bilateral and multilateral cooperative operation against transnational organized crime and narcotics trade. Among the states with which the Netherlands cooperate the most are its direct neighbors like Germany and Belgium. Among the other EU member states that the Netherlands are reported to cooperate with are Italy and Spain. There are however reported complications with police cooperation in which the Netherlands have been a key player. One example that was found in the sample was a failed operation to stop a large number of migrants as well as drugs (among other illegal goods) being smuggled across the English channel, wish is supported by the following statement: “The criminal network changed tactics regularly to avoid detection, also using larger boats and the cover of the night to

---

109 Ibid; Pg. 13.
110 Ibid; Pg. 18.
111 Ibid; Pg. 3.
112 Europol; Strike against an Albanian drug trafficking network in Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, 2023.
113 Ibid.
smuggle as many migrants as possible across, with no concern for their safety. Leads suggest that at times up to 15 boats were launched almost simultaneously, with half successfully making it across to the UK. \(^{114}\)

A few key aspects of importance to the answering of the research question can be identified. First and foremost is the emphasis on sharing of information that Dutch authorities practice when engaging in law enforcement projects in cooperation with other states. As a state through which a large amount of narcotics is shipped, the Netherlands can and does provide important intel to other states that help their efforts in preventing drug trafficking. Secondly, the Netherlands is highlighted as an organizing actor in the research into European drug markets. Overall the research conducted in the Netherlands on illicit substances and its trade is reflected to be highly extensive. When it comes to the participation in police operations however, the Netherlands are reported to have more limited roles. This is in reference to police cooperation operations that could lead to seizures of illegal substances and arrests. Despite this, the police cooperation that the Netherlands takes part in is reported to be extensive, with bilateral and multilateral initiatives with all its neighbors. Following this the sentence rules measurements are presented.

Table 2. Sentence rules that measure sentences on extent of cooperation, the Netherlands:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence rules:</th>
<th>EMCDDA Reports</th>
<th>Europol Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentences or sentence groups that mention successful implementation of cooperative policy on issues of transnational organized crime prevention.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences or sentence groups that reflect cooperation on issues of transnational organized crime to be generally extensive.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{114}\) Europol; 39 arrests in cross-border operation against migrant smuggling in small boats across English Channel, 2022.
What can be gathered from the sentence rule measurements is that some mention of extensive and successful cooperative action can be seen in the material. There is no mention of failed attempts at cooperation but the cooperation between the Netherlands and the rest of the EU member states is limited in the context of common drug-use policy. As can be derived from the sentence rules measurements, there are examples of police cooperation in which the Netherlands has participated that was reported to have failed or in which the Netherlands part in it was limited, though this number is only two total instances. The articles instead present an overwhelmingly high number of operations in which the Netherlands has participated that lead to great success or in which the Netherlands participation was extensive.

### 7. Conclusion and Discussion

In this section the results of the analysis are presented, a summary of how the conclusions were made along with a discussion on the analysis’ implications. The results will be divided into conclusions about Spain then the Netherlands and finally a comparison between the two.

#### 7.1 Conclusion

The results of the analysis of the EMCDDA Country Drug Reports of Spain from the years 2018 and 2019 and the news articles by Europol are the following:
Spain is reflected to participate in police cooperation to a high extent within both materials. Special emphasis is put on the participation in police operations such as drug seizures and the arrests of members of transnational organized crime groups. Within both materials, but most prominently the articles by Europol, Spain is reflected to take a vital role in a multitude of successful operations. The EMCDDA reports state that the prevention of narcotics making it onto the continent in the first place, and prevention of narcotics moving through Spain to the rest of Europe is high on the agenda for Spanish policy-makers and law enforcement agencies. Spain is reported to cooperate with many states, not necessarily bound by geographical closeness. There are examples of both extra-continental and intra-continental cooperative responses to international organized crime, while also maintaining close operative cooperation with Europol.

The results of the analysis of the EMCDDA Country Drug Reports of the Netherlands from the years 2018 and 2019 and the news articles by Europol are the following:

The Netherlands is reflected to enter into many cooperative responses to international organized crime. Especially significant is the bilateral and multilateral relations to its neighboring states Germany, Belgium and France. The features of Dutch police cooperation is specifically emphasized to be around organizational roles and the spread of information. The organizational efforts are through its research on not only European drug markets but into drug-use. As a state which has legalized substances otherwise illegal in other European states, some cooperative efforts lack. Its roles in operations are generally not reflected to be around the arrests of members of international criminal organizations, but instead as a provider of intel on their operations. Despite the fact that one police operation is reflected to have failed, it was not due to a lack of cooperative efforts from the Netherlands, thus it is not an indicator that corporations are not extensive. If the response had failed at the agenda-setting or policy formulation stage, it could have been proof of a lack of cooperative efforts.

Comparison:

Both countries are reflected to cooperate extensively over-all, but a few key differences can be noted. The extent to which Spain and the Netherlands participate in cooperative responses to international organized crime varies in the kinds of roles that a state can have in an
international police operation. Specifically the arresting law-enforcement agencies of Spain are reported in both sources to be in the forefront of the European fight against international organized crime. Though this aspect is highlighted in the material on Spain, the state is also reflected to participate in research and the spread of information on organized crime. This is a factor which both states have in common. On this note however, the Netherlands are reflected to be a leading actor, which Spain is not. Within Spain, there is a higher acknowledgement that a large amount of narcotics move through the country into the rest of Europe, which in turn requires domestic and international responses. This idea is missing in the Dutch material, despite the fact that they have this situational aspect in common.

Both states participate in international police cooperation, however how they do so differs. Different roles in police cooperation can be argued to be more or less important, though this is not the focus of this analysis. It is however specifically concerned with the cooperation between law-enforcement agencies, in which Spain is reflected to participate much more extensively.

7.2 Discussion

Being that this analysis has found that the degrees and ways in which states with relatively similar conditions when it comes to international drug trafficking may vary, it is safe to say that the experiences of individual countries may be shared in a way that could effectively strengthen the overall European policing on issues of organized crime. Luckily, the sharing of information with and training of foreign police forces is present in the material (though the latter is mostly present in the previous research). This analysis has highlighted the fact that there are aspects of police cooperation in individual states that may be improved or extended with the help and example of other member states in the European Union. The organizational systems that are needed for such a cross-pollination are already in place, specifically within Europol, but also other European organizations like Eurojust which have been presented in the previous research.

115 Jörg Freidrichs; Fighting Terrorism and Drugs Europe and international police cooperation, Taylor & Francis Group, 2008, Pg. 135.
116 Monika Helmberg; Eurojust and Joint Investigation Teams: How Eurojust can support JIT’s, Springer, 2007, Pg. 3.
The research into this subject may be developed greatly. One could do this by applying the same method to a wider perspective, including the full context of European drug trafficking, including that of eastern and southern Europe. The analysis could of course also be applied to a wider material in order to further increase accuracy and identify other aspects of police cooperation that may vary, which could be found in other materials. Since other organizations of crime prevention are highlighted in the previous research, following studies could include these as objects of analysis along with other European states.

In an analysis like this, the method could be developed to specifically measure individual aspects of organized crime prevention instead of measuring the general extent of police cooperation. If more material on organized crime prevention in Europe was analyzed qualitatively, additional categories of the aspects of police cooperation may be revealed which can then be measured quantitatively. This analysis provides an example of one way in which this first stage can be shaped. The research into specifically the drug trade and the organized crime itself is extensive, though there is much work to be done when analyzing the responses that states apply to combat it. These policies and strategies may be developed with this insight.

Furthermore, the policy cycle model, which has been generally applied to individual states and the policy process, could also be applied more extensively to multiple state actors. This is particularly relevant in the policy formulation stage when conflicts of interest and allocation of resources may prevent the construction of inter-governmental programs into issues of cooperation.\footnote{Werner Jann, Kai Wegrich; Theories of the Policy Cycle, CRC Press, 2007, Pg. 7.} In this case, the organizing actor in policy formulation may be an IGO (inter-governmental organization) like the European Union.
Reference List


Europol. (2023) 78 Involved in Large-Scale Cannabis Trafficking Arrested in Spain and Italy. Available at:


http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483349091.n5.