



## Introduction

This year some changes take place in the CIROC organization. After eight years at the VU University in Amsterdam we are moving to our new home: Willem Pompe Institute at the University of Utrecht. From now on the traditional and very popular in the Netherlands seminars on organized crime, which the CIROC organizes four times per year, and which include lectures of the prominent Dutch and foreign scholars, will take place in the student city of Utrecht. The VU University will remain a member of the CIROC.

This Newsletter appears as usual before the ESC congress in Slovenia. It includes several contributions of Dutch and non-Dutch researchers on organized crime issues.

My own contribution to this issue includes the short version of Falcone lecture, which I hold on 29 June at the Summer School on Organized Crime in Sicily. It focuses on two 'hot' issues in criminology of organized crime: the nexus business/politics/organized crime and the role of women in criminal organizations. Also methodological problems of discrepancy between secondary and primary sources for research are discussed here.

Georgios Antonopoulos, Mark Simpson and Georgios Papanicolaou from the University of Teesside present the situation on ecstasy industry and ecstasy trafficking in Greece.

Richard Staring discusses three new Dutch studies on the link between real estate branch, legal professions and organized crime.

Hans Nelen reviews the new publication on underground banking in the Netherlands, which includes eight different contributions based on the most recent research on this subject. And last, but not least, new Dutch publications on various aspects of organized crime in the Netherlands are presented.

Dina Siegel (CIROC/UU)

## Analysis

### Organized Crime in EU: business, politics and gender <sup>1</sup>

Dina Siegel (UU)

#### Introduction

Looking back at the rich history of research on organized crime, one thing stands out: in the 20th century, organized crime was – and it remains until now – one of the principal and most intriguing subjects in the social study of crime and criminality. From John Landesco and Donald Cressey to the young criminologists of the 21st century, organized crime remains a hotly debated issue in the academic arena. Despite an abundance of knowledge on a wide range of organized crime activities, markets and organizations, there is still no clear consensus on central notions and theories in this context. Organized crime remains a troubled concept. While Alan Block and William Chambliss focused on organized crime as illegal or criminal activities, other writers, such as James Jacobs and Peter Reuter, approached organized crime as a group of people or an organization. And of course, there is always the 'mafia' as a special form of organized crime, not only because of its cultural-historical connotations of mystique and secret rituals, but also because of an ongoing debate among scholars on the entrepreneurial character of the traditional mafia.

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I would like to focus on organized crime in Europe as it is in 2009: in the enlarged European Union of 27 countries. Of course, there are significant differences between the various legal and administrative European systems, as well as between the cultural perceptions and the historical background of organized crime in the individual European countries. I will deal here with two specific issues: The nexus between organized crime/politics/business in Europe and The role of gender in organized crime. Also some methodological questions will be discussed here, namely the discrepancy between criminological and non-criminological data.

#### *The nexus between organized crime/business/politics in Europe*

Many scholars have pointed out that there is a strong symbiotic relationship between organized crime and the legitimate environment in which it flourishes. The metaphor of a clean, innocent society that is under threat from the evil of organized crime is definitely out of date. Certain professionals, such as lawyers, accountants, public notaries, real estate agents, banks and other financial institutions all run the risk of coming into contact with organized crime. Some of them may be unaware of the purpose of these contacts, for example money laundering, in which case the relationship between organized crime and the professional can be viewed as parasitic (Van de Bunt, 1996). Other legal professionals engage in a fully conscious and deliberate effort to assist or even work exclusively for criminals. Typical examples are the so-called 'mafia-bankers' or 'criminal lawyers'. There is evidence of either parasitic or symbiotic relationships between the underworld and the upperworld in every European country, in some countries more than in others.

The nexus between organized crime and politics is another phenomenon I need to mention here. Compared to the more recent developments in organized crime, this nexus has a long history. More than a century ago, Lombroso wrote about the political role played by mafia groupings in Italy. He warned that these groups often disguise themselves as political organizations in order to cover up their true criminal nature (in Fijnaut, 2009). This political-criminal nexus is still very topical in Italy today

<sup>1</sup> This is a short version of the Falcone lecture held at the Summer School on Organized Crime in Catania, Italy, on 29 June 2009.

(Paoli, 2009), but also in many other European countries from Belgium (around the Agusta-helicopters affair) (Cools, 2009) to Bulgaria, where criminal structures are controlled by security officers (Gounev en Bezlov, 2009). In some countries, government officials provide protection to crime groups.

The most under-researched issue is the nexus between business and organized crime. The relevant question here is what happens with criminals who invest their profits in legitimate businesses. How easy is it for them to be considered legitimate businessmen? What is the role of government and the judicial institutions in this type of legitimization?

Misha Glenny concluded in his now almost classic book 'McMafia' that in the new Millennium the whole world, including the 'incompetent European Union', has opened its doors to new transnational organized crime in the shape of an 'upperunderworld' (Glenny, 2008).

#### *The role of gender in organized crime*

The traditional role of women in criminal organizations, be it the Italian Mafia (where a woman's role was usually limited to pasta, children, funerals and weddings) or the Russian Mafia (where women mostly figure as the crime boss's mistress in a heavy fur-coat with a diamond ring on every finger as proof of the man's wealth and power) appears to be passé at the beginning of the 21st century.

Traditionally, women were neither directly involved in the violent operations of criminal groups, nor did they occupy important positions in the criminal hierarchy. The territory of the wives and sisters of the Italian mafiosi was their home, and their function was to raise children and teach them the values and codes of the family. Marriages between different Mafia families were aimed at creating a 'profitable alliance with another Mafia family; a showcase for displaying her husband's wealth, status and power; a valuable piece of property; a loyal helpmate; a good cook; a showy and ego-boosting mistress' (Gage, 1971:95).

One of the few roles for women inside Russian crime organizations, other than being a loyal partner, was in mediating between rival criminal families or clans. The so-called 'sisters' in Russian criminal groups were often approached to negotiate with rivals (Siegel, 2005). But there were also women who in the course of history managed to reach top positions and some even became the leader of a large criminal organization. One such historical figure is the famous Russian Son'ka Zolotaya Ruchka (Sonka, the Golden Arm), who operated with her gang in the 1920s all over Russia. Her beauty, 'seduction skills' and organizational talents made her one of the most admired women in the Russian underworld.

However, there are differences between these femmes fatales and women who become involved in criminal organizations as assistants to their criminal partners or as a result of the imprisonment of their husbands. The visible importance of women in criminal activities in our times can be linked to the increase in drugs trafficking in Europe, South America and Asia since the 1980s. Usually, women are used as couriers or "mules", but some of them reach higher positions within the criminal networks. One of the many examples of a successful female crime entrepreneur is the Dutch go-between Bella Bettien (Bovenkerk, 1995).

The 'quiet gender revolution' inside the Italian Mafia has led to a growing number of women at top position within some Italian crime groups. The question remains whether their power is not still based on their being married to, or being the sister or daughter of, an imprisoned crime boss. In other words: are they only filling a 'power vacuum', or are they really competing with the men at the top? Ironically, the success of law enforcement in combating organized crime has obviously caused changes inside the criminal organizations, to the extent that nowadays wives, daughters, sisters and grandmothers are running the mob.

The recent developments in the criminal world appear to be similar to developments in the legitimate business world, where female managers are starting to occupy more and more significant roles. Jamieson distinguishes between what she calls the "enterprise syndicate" and the "power syndicate." According to Jamieson, women in Italian organized crime are

connected to the enterprise syndicate where they are fully involved in the enterprise of crime — keeping the books, taking care of the organization and ordering violent executions. They are themselves, however, not involved in the actual wielding of violence (Jamieson, 2000). In other words, women prefer money laundering to racketeering and violent crimes are being replaced by financial crimes.

But not always. In 2008, I was involved in a research project on female women traffickers in the Netherlands. Our analysis of 89 court files justified the conclusion that women can play an important role as offenders in criminal networks specializing in human trafficking. There is a range of possible roles women can play within the framework of these activities. The female offenders mainly worked in the context of larger transnational criminal organizations, but we also found instances of female traffickers operating on an individual basis. The position of women in these organizations varied from one case to another.

Most of the female offenders carried out specific practical tasks, such as guarding other girls or collecting the money earned. Often they were prostitutes themselves and the line between "offenders" and "victims" of human trafficking seemed very diffuse. Some ex-prostitutes had been able to escape their position of victim by cooperating with their pimps in women trafficking activities. In other cases, the women had a relatively equal position and the tasks and the profits were divided equally between the perpetrators. But we also found female offenders who had succeeded in gaining total control over large international trafficking networks. We labelled these women "madams". Most of them were of African (specifically Nigerian) origin and they operated in the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy. The fact that these African madams appear to hold key positions was perhaps the most remarkable finding of our research. These women had left their male competitors far behind. Contrary to women inside the Italian mafia who took the place of their imprisoned husbands or sons, these Nigerian madams took the initiative in planning, making contacts and performing vital tasks in the trafficking operation themselves (Siegel, 2007).

This phenomenon of female women traffickers can be explained by the socio-economic developments in the position of women in their native country on the one hand, and by the possibility of making quick money in the Netherlands on the other. Their financial profit is based on the exploitation of other women, who, just like the madams, come to work in Europe as prostitutes, driven by economic necessity.

#### *The discrepancy between criminological and non-criminological data and conclusions*

In recent years, a number of criminologists have presented us with a somewhat optimistic picture of the fight against organized crime. The evident increase in the numbers of pentiti in Italy, various public anti-mafia campaigns, as well as the alleged success of preventive, so-called administrative approaches such as the ones enforced in the Netherlands, are all supposed to make us believe that organized crime in Europe is now faced with successful resistance and is currently in the process of losing its power.

According to Paoli, "Cosa Nostra has seen all of its high-ranking members of the 1980s and 1990s arrested, has been excluded from most international trafficking and has lost political power nationally" (Paoli, 2008:27). Likewise, many of the 'Ndrangheta families "have been decimated by arrests, convictions and asset confiscations" (ibid). According to La Spina, "direct [anti-mafia] policies are now much more effectively implemented than they were in the past, especially with regard to the Sicilian mafia" (La Spina, 2008:205). In the Netherlands, an administrative approach to organized crime was developed, based on the example of the New York administration of mayor Guiliani. It includes various instruments, ranging from testing the integrity of civil servants and the screening of companies, to the refusal or withdrawal of permits and licenses from businesses under suspicion of being connected to organized crime (Nelen, 2008). It looks as if the mafia and other criminal groups have been dealt a serious blow by law enforcement agencies in a number of European countries.

On the other hand, there is a considerable amount of data from non-criminological sources, including numerous books and articles produced by lawyers, public prosecutors and, especially, investigative journalists on organized crime all over Europe. The picture that emerges from these sources differs significantly from the criminological studies mentioned above. Roberto Saviano, Gianni Palagonia, Andreas Ulrich, Raffaele Cantone – judges, public prosecutors, pentiti who have discovered their literary talents, investigative journalists and historians have all written about the Camorra of Naples and the 'Ndrangheta. They describe in great detail all the horrors, the violence, the enormous power, the survival skills and the manipulative tactics of the mafia organizations in Italy. The picture they paint is far from optimistic.

How to explain such a discrepancy? One possible explanation is that many criminological studies are based on secondary sources, such as government and police reports, or on literature produced by other criminologists, which is in turn based on the same sources. It is remarkable how often the same quotes and numbers appear in books and articles on organized crime. Paradoxically, personal data or other primary sources such as journalistic reports are often considered to be of less value, mainly because of methodological difficulties such as triangulation or other forms of 'data control'. Who are we supposed to believe? The voluminous reports by the ministries of justice and Interpol, or the judges, prosecutors, pentiti and other so-called 'unreliable' witnesses of violence and murder from inside the criminal gangs? There is no magic formula to study organized crime. Criminologists have to contend with an abundance of practical obstacles as well as theoretical and conceptual problems.

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#### Ecstasy Trafficking in Greece

Georgios A. Antonopoulos, Mark Simpson & Georgios Papanicolaou  
(University of Teesside)

Concern about ecstasy production, distribution and use in Greece rose in the mid-1990s, when ecstasy initially appeared in the country. Although there have been no studies focusing *exclusively* on ecstasy use in Greece, there has been a number of studies conducted in the country attempting to identify the prevalence of drug use in general, including the use of ecstasy. There is a low annual prevalence of ecstasy use in Greece. The percentage of the population aged 15-64 is the lowest among countries of western and central Europe, and one of the lowest in Europe not exceeding 0.2% (see UNODC, 2008). Although ecstasy consumption in Greece is generally very low, the equivalent use among clubbers increases considerably. For instance, lifetime consumption of ecstasy among clubbers in Athens reached 25% in 2006 (Kaitanidi, 2007). There are no accounts about the *quantities* of ecstasy consumed, and the only reference to the actual number of ecstasy tablets consumed at a specific point in time is this by Avramidis (2001, citing a media source), a Professor at the Medical School of the University of Athens, suggesting that 6,000 ecstasy tablets were consumed during the weekends in the late-1990s in Athens and Thessaloniki only. It is not certain however, how this estimation was made.

From 1996 to 2007, 609,188 ecstasy were seized by the Greek authorities with 2005 being the year with the largest number of seized tablets (150,788) (SODN-EMP, 2007). In addition, 23, 51 and 243 grams of ecstasy were seized in 2005, 2006 and 2007, respectively. Significant increases appear from 2000 onwards however, fluctuations in the numbers of ecstasy tablets seized by the authorities within the 1996-2007 period, do not allow us to identify a trend other than an overall upward trend in the 2000s. These figures possess several limitations with the most important one being that they refer to quantities of ecstasy that the Greek authorities come across.

Our research has shown that two different, parallel 'schemes' of trafficking ecstasy are present in Greece:

- Trafficking in continental Greece, which has Greek youth as its primary customers and takes place primarily in clubs and privately organised parties.
- Trafficking in popular holiday resorts in various Greek islands, such as Crete, Kos, Zante, Corfu, etc., with Western Europeans and specifically British and Dutch youth as the main customers. Trafficking takes place in (nocturnal economy) establishments that have been set primarily to accommodate the needs of these tourists. The second ecstasy trafficking scheme is basically the 'importation' of the Dutch and/or British markets to the Greek territory.

There is a distinction that can be made in relation to ecstasy traffickers along drug *versatility-specialisation*. There are a number of individuals who are involved in the trafficking of ecstasy as part of a multi-drug enterprise. Evidence suggests, for instance, that some ecstasy traffickers in Greece also trade in amphetamines, LSD, poppers, speed, ketamine, cannabis and there have been instances in which ECSTASY traffickers also trade in hard drugs such as cocaine and heroin. There are others, primarily those who are involved in legal businesses in which ecstasy can be easily distributed, focusing exclusively on ecstasy.

The Netherlands is the country of origin for the vast majority of (seized) ecstasy tablets. For instance, in 2006 the percentage of ecstasy from the Netherlands reached 84.929% (100,760 tablets) (SODN-EMP, 2007). Figures need to be carefully considered primarily because there is a significant proportion of seized ecstasy tablets whose origin is 'unknown'. Ecstasy tablets are simply sent to Greece in discreet packs and are often concealed in other commodities. For example, in one of the cases we came across, the police arrested an importer who was receiving ecstasy (and other drugs) in a parcel containing sex toys. The available limited data on the seized ecstasy tablets suggests that sending ecstasy in small

shipments seems to be the most common way of delivering merchandise to the country. The merchandise can also be transported in luggage by air, by car via Italy and from there by boat to the ports of Iguoumenitsa and Patras. A number of ecstasy tablets are imported to Greece from Bulgaria and Romania. The merchandise is kept in houses and shops or other legal businesses that serve as warehouses. There are some indications that Greece is also an ecstasy producing country. In 2000, for instance, a synthetic drugs factory was found by the Greek police in the town of Corinth, and in 2005 during a police operation in a suburb of Athens, an underground synthetic drugs (ecstasy and Ice) laboratory was found and dismantled. There seem to be significant fluctuations in ecstasy tablets price even when consecutive years are examined. Irrespectively of the price fluctuations however, ecstasy tablets are relatively expensive in Greece compared to other European countries. The distribution and use of ecstasy is concentrated in large conurbations and specifically Athens and Thessaloniki, although high distribution and use can be observed in other localities and in specific events such as during the carnival period in Patras. Occasionally, ecstasy tablets are used as currency in the business. For example, in May 2006, the police and the Bureau for Special Inspections (*Yp.E.E*) arrested three individuals with 100,000 ecstasy tablets from the Netherlands. These individuals were planning to exchange the ecstasy tablets with 1,000 kilos of ephedrine, which was to be transported to Australia for the production of other synthetic drugs.

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#### Dutch Real Estate: serious crimes and respectable professions

*Richard Staring (EUR/CIROC)*

During late 2008, three new studies were published on the links between (organized) crime and the real estate sector in the Netherlands. The first of these is a publication of the Dutch parliamentary working group Joldersma (October 2008); the second is a report by the WODC researchers Van Gestel et al. (2008) on illegal and criminal activities in the real estate sector based on an analysis of several police investigations; and the third is a study by CIROC member Nelen et al. (2008) on the specific vulnerabilities facing the department of housing and construction with regard to the selling and buying of real estate in the private market.

#### Commission Joldersma

The research into the links between the underworld and the upperworld was carried out by a parliamentary working group, the so-called Commission Joldersma, named after its chairwoman. Its findings were published in October 2008 and in this 35-page report the working group tried to provide an answer to the central question as to 'where organized crime is most seriously embedded within mainstream society and which actual mechanisms of this embeddedness can be discerned'. The report of the Commission Joldersma is based on an extensive study of the literature and on interviews with 26 experts, among which representatives of the Dutch police, spokesmen of different sectors (lawyers, notaries public, financial advisors, real estate agents, and bankers), investigative journalists and social scientists.

#### Collusion: three themes

The Commission focused on three recurrent themes with respect to the collusion of mainstream society with serious or organized crime. Firstly, the involvement of persons belonging to specific professions such as the legal profession and notaries public; secondly, money laundering; and thirdly, fraud in the real estate sector. According to the commission, the real estate sector is the location par excellence where the 'underworld' meets the 'upperworld'. It is also this sector where representatives of different professions connect both worlds. The real estate sector is perceived as a closed, nontransparent market that functions as a market for the 'underworld' where money can be invested as well as laundered. In addition, real estate is used by people to exploit property for the use of safe houses, human trafficking or weed plantations. The interviewees also point to the real estate sector as the location where the links between the underworld and the 'upper world' become visible. The Commission briefly describes bankers, notaries public, real estate agents, appraisers, and lawyers with respect to their vulnerability to possible fraud in the real estate sector. The Commission concludes that self regulation is not functioning properly and too much is covered up or veiled. The research shows that professional ethics, internal supervision and disciplinary rules are not sufficient to protect against malicious professionals (e.g. lawyers and notaries) who, given their specific privileges such as professional secrecy, are extra vulnerable to criminal involvement. All sources used by the Commission Joldersma illustrate the central argument that criminals use certain professional experts for financial reasons. According to the Commission, the 'underworld' needs the 'upperworld'. Another important conclusion of the Commission Joldersma is that some representatives of certain professions are susceptible to the temptation of financial gain and therefore willing to commit crimes. According to the Commission, the lines between the 'underworld' and the 'upperworld' are becoming increasingly blurred.

#### Measures

The Commission describes several of the existing measures to combat fraud in the real estate sector, among which the obligation to report unusual financial transactions and the Law BIBOB. The Commission doubts whether these existing instruments are sufficient to deal effectively with the existing links between organized crime and the various representatives of the professions dealing with real estate. This doubt is the result of their own conclusion that the original sharp division between both worlds – the criminal world and the world of real estate – is becoming increasingly blurred. While the approach now focuses on collecting enough evidence against specific offenders, we should instead focus much more on unraveling complex criminal constructions in the real estate sector. According to the Commission, successful efforts to improve transparency in the real estate sector and to further the prevention of fraud should focus on the reinforcement of (external) supervision of the different professions, an increased input of criminal law, and more attention to financial investigations in police inquiries. In order to improve the exchange of information between different 'systems of law' (e.g. criminal law, civil law, and fiscal law), the Commission proposes the appointment of a new 'National Coordinator Embeddedness'. In addition, breaches of the pledge of secrecy and the right of non-disclosure of the legal profession and the notaries public should be discussed openly. In the short term, the commission proposes measures such as more effective protection of specific professions such as appraisers as well as improvements in the exchange of information.

#### Respectable professions

The report "*Vastgoed & fout*" (*Real estate: Wright and wrong*) describes illegal and criminal activities within the real estate sector and among the different professions involved in this sector (Van Gestel et al. 2008). The report is based on a thorough scientific analysis of twelve police investigations in the four major cities in the Netherlands. Within these twelve investigations, the researchers identified 211 suspects, among whom 24 people (labeled 'major players') occupying a leading position in the organization

## Underground banking in the Netherlands

Hans Nelen

In the summer of 2009, a new book was published on underground banking in the Netherlands. The volume is edited by Henk van de Bunt and Dina Siegel and consists of eight chapters. The authors all have different backgrounds and approach the central theme from their own discipline. The result is a fascinating kaleidoscope: the phenomenon of underground banking is analyzed from a historical, economic, criminological, sociological, anthropological, legal, and police point of view.

The first chapter is written by Dina Siegel and stresses the fact that underground banking has a long history. Primarily entrenched in the monetary facilitation of trade between distant regions, these bankers still provide a useful service especially to migrants who wish to transfer money to their country of origin. The contribution of José Aarts on the Benin community in Amsterdam and London, and the chapter of Sher Shah Nabi on hawala banking in the Afghan community underline the importance of the existence of informal financial networks outside the financial channels that are supervised and monitored by the regular authorities. The empirical researches both chapters are based upon can be characterized as successful examples of ethnographic fieldwork. The focus of both chapters is to reveal the meaning of informal value transfer systems to members of the local communities.

The chapter of criminologists Henk van de Bunt and Krista Huisman on hawala banking shows that these bankers are capable of transferring large sums of money at short notice. Furthermore, they reveal that the service provided by hawala bankers is not limited to transferring money. It appears from a number of criminal investigations that hawala bankers also play an important role as intermediate in potential financial conflicts. This finding is confirmed in the contribution of law enforcement official Wytse Boersma. He also puts emphasis on the flexibility of the informal value transfer systems.

Economist Brigitte Unger and sociologist Frans van Waarden take the 'corridor' between the Netherlands and former colony Surinam into consideration. They show that annually huge sums of money are being transferred from the Netherlands to Surinam and – to a lesser extent – vice versa. The fact that the informal sector seems to be very popular is due to a lack of trust in the formal banking sector.

The last chapter of the book is dedicated to the question how governments should respond to underground banking. Jurist Matthias Borgers presents two models in this respect. The first option is to ban all forms of informal value transfer systems by intensifying criminal investigations and prosecutions and by using a variety of administrative instruments. According to Borgers, this option not only is hardly realistic, but might be counterproductive as well. After all, both legitimate and illegitimate entrepreneurs who want to avoid intensified state control will start looking for new opportunities in the informal economy. That's why Borgers is in favour of a second model, in which the informal and formal banking systems are assimilated.

To conclude, this new book on underground banking gives a good overview of the contemporary state of affairs with regard to this intriguing phenomenon in the Netherlands. Unfortunately, the book is written in the Dutch language, but definitely deserves an English translation. Until then, foreigners might contact one of the editors or authors for more specific information on the subject.

Bunt, Henk van de, and Siegel, Dina  
*Ondergronds Bankieren in Nederland*,  
Den Haag: Boom Juridische uitgevers, 2009.

of illegal and criminal activities. In line with the Commission Joldersma, the authors of this report also focus on the links between the 'underworld' and the 'upperworld' from the perspective of specific professions. Among its main findings, the report concludes that almost all 24 main suspects operate from a legal, lawful position. They hold a job in the real estate sector, mostly as agents and middle-men or as advisors in the financial administrative sector. All of them are employed in respectable upper-class professions. Due to their specific position in their profession, they have the opportunity to learn about illegal constructions and techniques in order to gain (large) profits. Their illegal or criminal activities are not of an incidental nature but rather structurally and systematically applied.

*The department of housing and construction: information and integrity*

In the third report mentioned above, Nelen et al (2008) focus on a specific government institution, i.e. the department of housing and construction, which manages the real estate that belongs to the Dutch state. Their job is to pay special attention to the risks of integrity in selling and buying property for the Netherlands. In the context of organized crime, the element of price manipulation is worth mentioning. As there are no fixed prices for real estate, manipulation can play a decisive role in influencing price developments. One of the methods used is the so-called A-B-C-construction, whereby a deed of conveyance for real estate is executed a number of times within a short period of time by one or more notaries. When the sale from party A to party B, and from B to C, is accompanied by an inexplicable increase (or decrease) in value, the transaction is likely to attract attention. As Nelen (2008) mentioned before, ABC-constructions are also used for money laundering purposes. The authors also focus on the importance of information about the real estate sector. Governmental representatives have to be aware of their vital position regarding relevant information and the larger interests involved. This means that they should be alert to efforts from outsiders and/or other actors in the market to obtain information by any means open to them.

*Recent measures*

Recently, Joldersma, as chairwoman of the Commission Joldersma, reflected on the measures taken after the publication of the commission's report in her contribution to the Dutch version of the CIROC Newsletter (2009). First of all, she noted that new academic research has been initiated with the purpose of identifying the barriers in the information exchange between all actors involved in combating fraud and serious criminal activities in the real estate sector. A second recommendation by the Commission was to organize a hearing on the privileges of specific professional sectors. Suggestions for more external supervision of certain professions by the Commission were not adopted the Dutch government. Instead, more attention to self regulation within these sectors will be encouraged and, finally, the Law BIBOB will also be applied to the real estate sector.

Gestel, B. van (2008). with R.F. Kouwenberg, M.A. Verhoeven, M.W. Verkuylen. *Vastgoed & fout. Een analyse van twaalf strafrechtelijke opsporingsonderzoeken naar illegale en criminele praktijken in de woningsector*.

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## Recent Publications

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**CIROC**  
Willem Pompe Instituut, Utrecht Universiteit  
Janskerkhof 16, 3512 BM Utrecht  
The Netherlands

Email: [ciroc@uu.nl](mailto:ciroc@uu.nl)

Tel. +31 30 2537125  
Fax. +31 30 2537028

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