

## **CCPCJ 34 Side event**

### **“Responding to youth criminality linked to transnational organized crime in the Nordic and Baltic regions”**

**Tuesday 20th May | 11:30 – 12:30 CET, Vienna time**  
**MOE79, Vienna International Centre | Also online (MS Teams)**  
[Registration here](#)

There is a growing concern across the Nordic and Baltic regions regarding youth criminality linked to organized crime, both national and transnational. Young people are increasingly being recruited by organized crime groups, becoming involved in criminal ecosystems, particularly within transnationally organized illicit drug markets. They are recruited to work within the criminal economy and to carry out violent acts, including across borders. Criminals exploit young people in particularly vulnerable situations and recruit them forcefully through social media.

The criminal justice systems must face these challenges taking into consideration both aspects related to the developmental phase and context of the youth who are recruited as well as the modus operandi of the criminal groups recruiting them. The transnational links of these gangs and other organized criminal groups are complex and pose problems for criminal justice systems to respond effectively. This event will contribute to a better understanding of the issues through the presentations by HEUNI on preventive and responsive measures related to youth crime and GI-TOC on their recent research on the phenomenon.

#### **Speakers:**

- Anna-Liisa Uisk, Head of Development and Crime Statistics Division, Department of Criminal Policy, Estonian Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs
- Britt Østergaard Larsen, Senior Researcher at VIVE, The Danish Centre for Social Science Research.
- Brian Lee, Head of Programme, Observatory of Illicit Economies in Eurasia, Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime
- Christine Namdar, Visiting Fellow at the Graduate School of Education (HGSE) at Harvard University and a Visiting Scholar at the Education Department at the University of Helsinki.

**Moderated by** Julia Korkman, Senior Programme Officer at HEUNI, Professor of Practice with the Faculty of Law, and Adjunct Professor in Legal Psychology at Åbo Akademi.

**Organised by** HEUNI and GI-TOC.

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### **Julia Korkman**

*Senior Programme Officer at HEUNI and Professor of Practice in Legal Psychology at Åbo Akademi University.*

Her work focuses on evidence-based criminal justice, with expertise in investigative interviewing, decision-making, and memory in legal contexts. She has researched issues ranging from child victim testimonies to psychological coercion in trafficking cases.

At HEUNI, she leads projects on victims' rights, virtual justice, and improving justice systems. Julia also serves as [President of the European Association of Psychology and Law](#) and is widely recognized for her contributions to legal psychology and science communication, including her acclaimed book on memory in legal processes, [Muistin varassa / Minnets makt / Memory Dependent](#).

In her spare time, she performs as a singer, sometimes exploring crime through music.

## Speakers



### **Anna-Liisa Uisk**

*Head of Development and Crime Statistics Division, Department of Criminal Policy, Estonian Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs*

Anna-Liisa leads initiatives aimed at enhancing Estonia's criminal justice system through data-driven policy development and strategic planning. She will give a short overview of the Estonian reform of the criminal justice system.



### **Britt Østergaard Larsen**

*Senior Researcher at VIVE – The Danish Centre for Social Science Research*

Her research focuses on the effects of legal responses and social service interventions to vulnerable children and youth.

At VIVE, she leads projects evaluating different legal policy reforms and investigating trajectories of children and youth placed in locked institutions. She has contributed to a growing literature in criminology applying advanced quantitative methods to estimate causal effects and illustrated how quasi-experimental methods can enhance both the scientific and policy knowledge base. Over the past 10 years, Britt has led and participated in numerous research projects utilizing register data and applying both descriptive and causal methods to examine various types of interventions to prevent youth crime.

### WITH SUPPORT OF:



**HEUNI**

The European Institute for  
Crime Prevention and Control,  
affiliated with the United Nations



**GLOBAL  
INITIATIVE**

AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL  
ORGANIZED CRIME



**Brian Lee**

*Head of Programme, Observatory of Illicit Economies in Eurasia, Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime*

Before joining the GI-TOC, Brian worked in Eastern Europe on private sector development and issues related to governance, rule of law and security. His professional experience also includes time working in the U.S. Congress, political consultancy and advisory services, and the private sector in Europe and the Americas. He also has experience with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in Europe, Pakistan, and Southeast Asia, where he managed programmes focused on rule of law and criminal justice reform, as well as transnational security issues and international legal cooperation.



**Christine Namdar**

*Visiting scholar at the University of Helsinki, a Doctoral Researcher at Åbo Akademi University, and a researcher with the Community Lab at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.*

She studied at Lund and Stockholm University, and the University of Warwick, and has researched at Warwick Business School. Christine has conducted in-depth interviews with former gang members in Sweden and Finland, exploring pathways out of violence, marginalization, and radicalization.

Her research examines how unmet existential needs can be redirected through meaning-making. Christine’s work focuses on building capacity and harnessing youth potential — regardless of background.

The past year, she has been researching with the University of Chicago Booth School of Business in Finland exploring meaningful conversations — through reflection and constructive dialogue, especially with those outside one’s usual circles. As a continuation, she now studies how acts of kindness and service-learning foster social change and character development through grassroots-level capacity building and a whole-of-society approach.

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