

# New Forms of Organized Crime in Spain and Latin America: A Comparative Analysis

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**Abstract:** This paper includes a comparative text of the new emergent manifestations of organized crime which arise in Spain and in Latin America regarding their development, modalities of operation, as well as their socio-political implications. With globalization, advancement in technology, and the neoliberal principle of the economy changing the face of the world crime dynamics, demarcations of areas between legal and illegal businesses have been blurred to a greater degree. In Latin America and Spain, there have been massive changes in the organized crime profile, with the old hierarchical and mafia-type of organization way giving way to more loosely structured nets of crime that can change at a moment in time. This transformation has allowed crime groups to enter legitimate markets and political institutions freely and with ease due to their increased cross-border activities. The occurrence of fragmentation of large cartels in Latin America has contributed to the spread of smaller and more violent groups of criminals as they enter into various illicit economies, such as drug trafficking, illegal mining, arms trafficking, and human trafficking. Such new hybrid criminal-political actors have been discovered in countries such as Mexico, Colombia and Brazil, where they take

advantage of poor governance and social inequalities. In comparison, Spain, though previously considered a transitory nation toward Latin American flows of drugs penetrating Europe, has been transformed into a business hub for international criminal organizations. The results have shown that Latin American organized crime is deeply rooted in violence and territorial control. Still, the Spanish criminal organizations focus on financial sophistication and entry into legal economies. Still, there is a wide range of social costs of organized crime in both areas, such as the decline of trust in organizations and the insecurity of a community that leads to political corruption. Finally, the research tries to emphasize the necessity of the region-specific approach based on social development, the strengthening of institutions, and international cooperation. The comparative analysis helps policymakers and scholars see the ever-changing landscape of organized crime in a new light and develop more efficient and humane strategies that would combat one of the most urgent security threats of the 21st century.

**Keywords:** Organized Crime (OC), Spain (SS), Latin America (LA).

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## I. Introduction

The word Organized Crime refers to the kind of crimes in which a group of people or criminals are mostly involved. The aspect of organized crime is increasing day by day in Spain and Latin America as well. We have to understand some important trends of new forms of Organized Crime in Spain and Latin America as well. Firstly, we will discuss Spain, and then, we will discuss Latin America. In the case of Spain, drug trafficking is one of the important trends of organized crime. The most common drug trafficking is cocaine and cannabis trafficking in these areas. Such kind of drug trafficking is possible in Spain because of the location of Spain<sup>1</sup>. This kind of location can serve as a hub for such trafficking. Cybercrime is also a new form of organized crime in Spain these days. Cybercrime is mostly related to hacking and online fraud. As we know, there is an increase in online systems in Spain, but at the same time, cybercrime is also at its peak in Spain. There are also some other important forms of Organized Crime in Spain. For instance, human trafficking is also the most common example of Organized Crime<sup>2</sup>. Human trafficking is related to sexual exploitation in Spain. In recent years, we have seen that Spain has shown consistent efforts with such kind of trafficking. Money laundering has also been an important form of organized crime in Spain for many years. In this way, most of the funds are not used for the welfare of public life there. The important reasons for organized crimes in Spain are various, for example, corruption. Not only in Spain but in Latin America also, there is a common aspect of corruption, and such aspect is wholly responsible for organized crimes in these two regions. Secondly, we can say that globalization is also a leading factor in organized crime<sup>3</sup>. There is no doubt that globalization has played an important role in bringing different nations closer. But there are also some important negative aspects related to globalization. Globalization has facilitated a network of organized crimes at the international level, so we can say that the aspect of organized crime has increased because of globalization over the whole world. The other most important reason for the increase in Organized Crime is technology. We cannot deny the importance of technology in our daily lives, but this technology has also helped criminals in various ways. For example, because of technology, communication has become easy for criminals<sup>4</sup>. Technology has also facilitated money laundering with minimal effort. Cybercrime, which is increasing

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<sup>1</sup> Manrique, L. E. G. (2006). A parallel power: Organized crime in Latin America. *Real Instituto Elcano*, 28(September), 1-8.

<sup>2</sup> Fijnaut, C., & Paoli, L. (2007). *Organised crime in Europe: Concepts, patterns and control policies in the European Union and beyond* (Vol. 4). Springer Science & Business Media.

<sup>3</sup> Schulte-Bockholt, A. (2006). *The politics of organized crime and the organized crime of politics: a study in criminal power*. Lexington Books.

<sup>4</sup> Teirilä, O. J. (2014). The challenges to cooperation posed by the nexus of terrorism and organized crime: Comparing the situations between the Andean and the Sahel regions. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 37(1), 18-40.

day by day, is also a result of the use of technology in organized crime. When we discuss organized crime in Latin America, we may come to know that narco-trafficking is also the most common organized crime in Latin America, which has become the main point of concern these days<sup>5</sup>. Along with narco-trafficking, the exhortation is also the most prominent organized crime in Latin America, where most of the gangs or criminals mostly target the business community in various ways. Violence has also been considered as most important organized crime in Latin America, which is usually less common in Spain these days. Before comparing organized crime in Spain and Latin America, it is worth noting that there are some important similarities and differences between the two regions related to organized crime. As described earlier, there are similar causes of Organized Crime in Spain and Latin America, along with shared challenges as well<sup>6</sup>. For instance, there is inadequate law enforcement in both of these regions for Organized Crime. As a result of this inadequate law enforcement, there is hype about organized crime in both of these well-known regions. But there are also some important differences in aspects of organized crime in Spain and Latin America. As we can say, Spain has a main focus on the drug markets of Europe, but in the case of Latin America, narco-trafficking is the most important and prominent issue. Recent studies have shown that one new form of Organized Crime in Spain is cybercrime<sup>7</sup>. In the case of such cybercrime, there is an aspect of online fraud, which is targeting laymen in Spain. Some important environmental crimes are considered as Organized Crime in Spain. For example, trafficking in wildlife, which is the main reason for extinction and endangerment of species, is also an important form of environmental crime. Cryptocurrency scams are also common in Spain these days, which is discussed under financial crime. Such financial crimes are also an important type of organized crime. Recent studies have shown that human trafficking has become the main issue in Spain for the past few years. There is the use of new routes along various exploitation methods, which is an important danger for humanity<sup>8</sup>. In contrast to Organized Crime in Spain, Latin America has somehow different conditions. Here, narco-trafficking is usually at its peak because of a variety of methods along with changes in substances as well. This aspect is most common in Latin America because of less border control. Because of this less border control, smuggling has become easier for criminals. Recent studies have

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<sup>5</sup> Nagle, L. E. (2002). The Challenge of Fighting Global Organized Crime in Latin America. *Fordham Int'l LJ*, 26, 1649.

<sup>6</sup> Bagley, B. (2004b). Globalization and transnational organized crime: The Russian mafia in Latin America and the Caribbean. *The Political Economy of the Drug Industry: Latin America and the International System*, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 261-296.

<sup>7</sup> Bagley, B. (2004a). Globalisation and Latin American and Caribbean organised crime. *Global crime*, 6(1), 32-53.

<sup>8</sup> Jamieson, A. (1999). Cooperation between organized crime groups around the world. *Jahrbuch für internationale Sicherheitspolitik*, 64-76. , Ripollés, J. L. D. (2024). Los colectivos identitarios y la tutela penal. *Revista electrónica de ciencia penal y criminología*, 26(1).

shown that organized crime is responsible for various negative impacts on the society of Spain and Latin America as well. For example, as we have discussed, narco-trafficking is increasing in Latin America, and it will produce more drug addicts that will surely be harmful to society. Violence is increasing all over the world because of various factors, but such organized crimes are basic reasons for violence in any country. The economic impact of such organized crime is such horrible that it cannot be explained here wholly. When there is money laundering in any country, there will be distortion in economic activity as well. As we know, corruption increases in the case of organized crime, so such an aspect of corruption will result in less trust in institutions<sup>9</sup>. This aspect will definitely cause violence in that particular society. There will be a prominent loss of revenue because of tax evasion and other such factors related to organized crime. The resources of that particular country will be allocated inefficiently, which is dangerous for the economic stability of the country. It has also been seen that the cost of things will be increased to a large extent because of security measures and other factors such as extortion<sup>10</sup>. Formerly involved in the trafficking of weapons and illegal immigration, Spanish criminal networks are currently involved in cybercrime, money laundering and global drug trafficking, taking advantage of Spanish financial and logistic resources. The study uses a comparative design to demonstrate similarities and differences between the organizations and tactical approaches of criminal enterprises in the two areas, together with their social effects. It relies upon case studies, official crime data, and academic source materials to explore how systemic conditions, which include corruption, economic inequality and state weakness, contribute to the enabling factors that lead to the development of organized crime. It also evaluates the contribution of the police and policymaking responses, the weakness of applying military tactics in Latin America and the necessity of transnational interaction and preventive policies in Spain.

### **1. Research Objective**

The main objective of this research is to comprehend various forms of Organized Crime in two important regions of the world, which are Spain and Latin America. These studies have effectively explained various disastrous impacts related to Organized Crime in any country.

## **II. Literature Review**

Researchers' studies reveal that the criminal mafia of Latin America has greatly

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<sup>9</sup> Sands, J. (2007). Organized crime and illicit activities in Spain: Causes and facilitating factors. *Mediterranean Politics*, 12(2), 211-232.

<sup>10</sup> Resa-Nestares, C. (2018). Transnational organized crime in Spain: structural factors explaining its penetration. In *Global Organized Crime and International Security* (pp. 47-62). Routledge.

affected the reputation of the governance system of the state. Criminal acts of the mafia disturb the legal and just functioning of the government. The mafia system has taken control of the waste management system in Latin America. Studies have revealed a strong connection between mafia organizations and waste industries. The strong relationship between these two groups results in corruption at the industrial level<sup>11</sup>. Studies explain that a major reason behind the disoriented living style of regional people is due to high organized crime rates<sup>12</sup>. Studies determine that in Latin America, violent actions are taken to stop anti-mining activities. The Latin American states use humiliating and threatening actions in response to anti-mining activities. However, the overall situation raises social concerns and conflicts in the region<sup>13</sup>. Studies explain that in the past, the men who killed women were given lighter punishment for the act of emotional violence. But in the year 2017, Argentina and some other countries changed their law system. The new law system they created was named femicide, which was developed for dealing with gender-based murders. The new law approved in Argentina shows a strong positive outcome and received immense appreciation from the general public<sup>14</sup>. Studies declared that unjust and stigmatized health-related services provided to Latin American migrants create distress among people. This distress, if unchecked, can turn into violent acts. To solve this problem, actions are taken by the Latin American government to provide Latin American migrants with immediate and un-stigmatized health care services<sup>15</sup>. Studies show that Latin America is famous for a large number of criminal activities. A large number of crime-related groups have entered into different work-related fields in Latin America. These criminal groups are impacting the equality and justice-based working of many industries. Corruption in the justice system has also led to an increase in inappropriate and unjust court decisions. High corruption rates have resulted in distrust of the public in these legal institutions<sup>16</sup>. Studies explain that different initiatives have been taken by Latin Americans to combat crime-related activities. Mano Dura is a policy-based initiative to stop the spread of criminal activities. Mano Dura works on a conceptual framework that aims to improve the strategies for controlling crime-related actions. This policy system controls the actions of crime gangs through

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<sup>11</sup> Adiyia, G. (2025). Infiltrated Markets: The Italian Mafia's Influence on Waste Management, Retail, and Economic Integrity for Illicit Gain.

<sup>12</sup> America, I. L. (2025). Organized Crime and Violence. *ECONOMIC REVIEW*.

<sup>13</sup> Arce, M., & Nieto-Matiz, C. (2024). Mining and violence in Latin America: The state's coercive responses to anti-mining resistance. *World Development*, 173, 106404.

<sup>14</sup> Brunke, L. I. (2024). Murder, gender and the law: from crime of passion to femicide. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 82(5), 1313-1334.

<sup>15</sup> Cabieses, B., Belo, K., Calderón, A. C., Rada, I., Rojas, K., Araoz, C., & Knipper, M. (2024). The impact of stigma and discrimination-based narratives in the health of migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean: a scoping review. *The Lancet Regional Health–Americas*, 40.

<sup>16</sup> Croci, G. (2025). Effectiveness and corruption in the criminal justice system of Latin America: An overview. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 49(1), 81-105.



military action to safeguard the rights and properties of innocent people<sup>17</sup>. Studies claim that a large number of homicide cases are observed in Latin America despite of least research regarding the homicide-related issues in LAC. Studies suggest that the rate of homicide is higher due to less trust of people in their government. The rate of homicide will decrease only when people will begin to trust their governmental activities. Taking money from other countries to control homicide can negatively impact the process of controlling the homicide rate. More money will eventually attract more people to commit crimes, and therefore, the overall crime rate will also increase<sup>18</sup>. Studies determine that controlling crime is a critical task. Some people believe that Dutch police actions to control crime gangs can indirectly target people belonging to specific ethnic groups. This situation can raise more complexity, and the actual crime investigations remain unsolved. Also, in the Netherlands, when police were finding mafia-related crime gangs, they unintentionally attacked some ethnic groups, which resulted in distress among people belonging to that specific ethnic group<sup>19</sup>. Studies reveal that the Fourth Transnational Crime Wave in Latin America has made crimes more complex and difficult to control. This new crime wave involves the partnership of crime gangs from outside the region that shifts the dynamics of the crime market, making crimes more complex and challenging to decode<sup>20</sup>. Studies explain that in Spain, police agencies track organized criminal activities using two strategies. These strategies are Criteria as well as CERES. Both of these are civil-based policies or actions to detect organized criminal activities. These two policies are effective in tackling crime-related activities at the right time<sup>21</sup>. Studies show that in different American states, the Earth jurisprudence policies are adopted. These policies aim to provide human rights without discrimination. This policy is shifting the legal frameworks from human centered approach towards an earth-centered approach. These policies maintain an ecological and social balancing system in the region<sup>22</sup>. Studies elaborate that military forces in Latin America hold great power in controlling criminal activity in the region. The involvement of military actions in the crime identification process has improved the growth rate of Latin society. Militarism and militarization, both approaches, should be given great importance in making Latin

<sup>17</sup> Cutrona, S., Dammert, L., & Rosen, J. D. (2024). Conceptualizing mano dura in Latin America. *Latin American politics and society*, 1-16.

<sup>18</sup> Escaño, G. J., & Pridemore, W. A. (2025). Region-specific structural covariates of homicide rates in Latin America: state legitimacy and remittances. *Justice Quarterly*, 42(1), 120-153.

<sup>19</sup> Eski, Y., & Sergi, A. (2024). Ethnic profiling of organised crime? A tendency of mafia-cation in the Netherlands. *Trends in Organized Crime*, 27(2), 120-139.

<sup>20</sup> Farah, D. (2024). Fourth Transnational Criminal Wave: New Extra Regional Actors and Shifting Markets Transform Latin America's Illicit Economies and Transnational Organized Crime Alliances.

<sup>21</sup> Gaona Prieto, R. (2024). Resumen de tesis. Evaluation of Carteia and CERES plans: Guardia Civils' response to organized crime.

<sup>22</sup> Hernández-Umaña, B., Esguerra Ramírez, O., & Añaños Bedriñana, K. (2024). Earth jurisprudence in South America: Trends and developments. *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development*, 8(5), 3515.

America a safe state<sup>23</sup>. Studies suggest that in Latin America, reporters work efficiently to provide people with correct information regarding any issue. Journalists make collaborative efforts with other countries to provide people with news that is accurate. These collaborative work of journalists creates harmonized environment<sup>24</sup>. Scholars claim that Latin America has gained popularity as a political state in which political parties have different conservative opinions. These conservative ideas of Latin American political parties have negatively impacted the progress and growth of the region<sup>25</sup>. Studies show that in Latin America, peripheral cities control crime rates differently. The policies of these cities to control crime vary from each other. Some cities can control crime effectively with these policies, while some face extreme hurdles in controlling even minor criminal acts. The role of governance in these cities is critical for controlling violent activities<sup>26</sup>. Studies of scholars suggest that criminal activities have increased due to the collaborative work of different terrorist gangs. The crime-terrorism nexus is the term that fully explains this collaborative effort of terrorist gangs in promoting crime rates. Although each terrorist group has its own goals, they are collaborating to obtain joint benefits. This collaboration of different terrorist groups has created unique challenges in the process of controlling terrorist activities<sup>27</sup>. Studies declare that strong self-resilience factors help youth tackle violent activities in Latin American states<sup>28</sup>. Scholars' studies determine that strengthening the social justice systems with anti-corruption policies helps in overcoming criminal and violent activities. Also, to stop armed crimes, the global criminal justice system has undergone great reforms<sup>29</sup>. Research studies explain that criminal activities that are broadly classified into two to three crime types are referred to as Hybrid Interpersonal Violence. This type of violent act includes the patterns of two or more crime types and is often regarded as a complex crime in Latin America<sup>30</sup>. Researchers predict that in Latin America, traditional values play a significant role in maintaining peace

<sup>23</sup> Hochmüller, M., Solar, C., & Pérez Ricart, C. A. (2024). Militarism and militarization in Latin America: Introduction to the special issue. *Alternatives*, 49(4), 209-216.

<sup>24</sup> Mesquita, L., de-Lima-Santos, M.-F., & Nicoletti, J. (2025). Collaborative journalism and cross-border collaborations for newsafety: Navigating security and solidarity mechanisms in cooperative practices in Latin American news media. *Journalism*, 14648849241312830.

<sup>25</sup> Moulton, A. C. (2024). Recently on the Latin American Right. *Latin American Research Review*, 59(3), 722-732.

<sup>26</sup> Pinzón, V. G. (2024). *Trajectories of Governance: Tracing the Entanglements of Order and Violence in Peripheral Cities of Latin America*. Policy Press.

<sup>27</sup> Rocha, I. M. (2024). Defining the Crime-Terrorism Nexus: The Changing Face of International Terrorism and Organized Crime. In *Organized Criminal Terrorism* (pp. 12-38). Brill Nijhoff.

<sup>28</sup> Sabina, C., Mariscal, E. S., Weber, M., Medrano, A. S., Flores, Y., Agorde, E. K., Elliot, J. M., Valencia Gonzalez, V., & Restrepo, M. T. (2025). Factors enhancing resilience among youth exposed to macro-level violence in Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 26(2), 265-282.

<sup>29</sup> Voloshanivska, T., Shchokin, R., Pavlova, O., Frantsuz, A. Y., & Dei, M. O. (2024). Reforming Global Criminal Justice: Addressing Corruption's Impact on Armed Crime. *Journal of Law and Legal Reform*, 5(3).

<sup>30</sup> Weitzman, A., Caudillo, M., & Levy, E. J. (2024). Hybrid interpersonal violence in Latin America: patterns and causes. *Annual review of criminology*, 7(1), 163-186.

in the region. The traditional security-based systems in Latin America work on traditional political and cultural values to protect the country's peace<sup>31</sup>. Studies reveal that social media plays a prominent role in setting the narrative about the peace situation in Latin America. Social media shapes people's beliefs and thereby influences people's perceptions regarding different scenarios. Maintaining peace in Latin America is possible by minimizing the spread of false news on social media and other public service platforms<sup>32</sup>. Studies reveal that the poor economic growth of Latin America is due to the traditional methods in its capitalist industry. This dependency on the traditional mode of work ethics hinders the process of development in Latin America<sup>33</sup>. Studies claim that leaders of two big countries, Latin America and the E.U., should join hands to develop joint programs for the betterment of Latin America. The social-related issues of Latin America could be solved by the implementation of Euro-socialism programs. The social problems, like corruption and crime-related causes, could also be controlled by Euro social programs<sup>34</sup>. Studies explain that women living in Spain tend to face violence in their homes. Immigrant women in Spain face more violence problems as compared to women living in Spain. Immigrant women in Spain are provided with basic safety rights so that they can ask for help if they are prone to any violent activity by their partners<sup>35</sup>. Studies declare that many violence-related activities created fear in the people of the Caribbean region. The violent acts create fear in people, making them unsafe in their region. The stability of the economy is disturbed due to violent acts in the region<sup>36</sup>. Studies explain that Latin America is an important region that allows the movement of goods from one region to another. Many goods-selling factories are built in Mexico to improve the transportation process of goods. Therefore, the supply chains across Latin America are becoming stronger and help in improving the overall economy<sup>37</sup>. Studies determine that international gangs influence decisions related to local policy establishment. The involvement of

<sup>31</sup> Arias, D. D., Hatzky, C., Mackenbach, W., Fernández, S. M., Michael, J., & Onken, H. (2024). *Peace in Latin America: Shifting Paradigms in the Studies of Culture, Society and Politics*. Taylor & Francis.

<sup>32</sup> Batz-Lineiro, A., Grueso-Hinestroza, M. P., Serrano-Cardenas, L. F., D'Croz-Baron, D. F., & Ojeda-Sanchez, C. A. (2024). Recognizing Overarching Themes and Actors in Peacebuilding: A Longitudinal Analysis of Press Content in Latin America. 2024 IEEE Colombian Conference on Applications of Computational Intelligence (ColCACI),

<sup>33</sup> Cardoso, F. H., & Faletto, E. (2024). *Dependency and development in Latin America*. Univ of California Press.

<sup>34</sup> Castiblanco, L. V. A. (2024). *The role of summits in the development of interregional cooperation programs between the European Union and Latin America: The cases of Eurosocal and Euroclima Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem*].

<sup>35</sup> Cuesta-García, A., Fernández-Lansac, V., & Crespo, M. (2024). Intimate partner violence and formal help-seeking in Spain: Comparing experiences of Spanish and immigrant women. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 50(6), 974-990.

<sup>36</sup> Dawkins-Cavazos, M. (2024). Criminal Activities as Threats to Security in the Caribbean. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Caribbean Criminology* (pp. 33-51). Springer.

<sup>37</sup> Estevadeordal, A., Kahn, T., & Werner, A. (2024). Latin America in the new geometry of global supply chains.



international communities in the policy decision-making process often leads to the development of policies that do not benefit the economic growth of Latin America<sup>38</sup>. Studies reveal that due to immigrants' entry into Latin America, many Pentecostals Christians have entered the region. Their entry into the Latin American states has changed the religious beliefs of the region. The people belonging to the immigrant Christianity community tend to preach their religion in Latin America<sup>39</sup>. Studies explain that people in Latin America are classified as a nationalist community and a populist community. The people belonging to these two different movements are divided into two groups. The people in the nationalist group show enthusiastic and positive ethnic values regarding their culture. While the people belonging to the populist movement show negative values. The populist communities, people are often regarded as elites and have their own rules and values. The difference in the viewpoint of these two communities encourages violent acts in Latin America<sup>40</sup>. Studies elaborate that in Spain, feminist activists work to protect the rights and equality granted to the LGBTQ+ community. When political leaders use their power to harm their community, feminist activists work to ensure that no harm is caused to the LGBTQ community by powerful political leaders<sup>41</sup>. Scholars reveal that UME is actively involved in tackling violence-related issues in Latin America. UME is a powerful military force that has both positive as well as negative roles in minimizing violence-based activities in the region. The working of UME in Spain is not based on traditional laws; rather, it works in a non-traditional manner to protect the rights of its people<sup>42</sup>. Studies determine that in Colombia, the hybrid government works with some violent groups of society to control the areas with high drug-selling rates. By working with violent groups, the hybrid government limits criminal activities in specific areas. Moreover, the state government sometimes works with criminal communities to hold control over a specific territory<sup>43</sup>. Scholars explain that the political system in Latin America has been revolutionized due to the indigenous movements. Support by government authorities and social movements in Latin America helps to improve the overall political system of the region. But the main problem of political

<sup>38</sup> Hathazy, P. (2024). International policy circulation and fields of public policy in the (Latin American) periphery. In *Bringing Bourdieu's Theory of Fields to Critical Policy Analysis* (pp. 262-281). Edward Elgar Publishing.

<sup>39</sup> Jiménez, A. M. (2024). Migrant Pentecostalism and the rise of Latin American street preachers in Barcelona. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 39(2), 291-308.

<sup>40</sup> Kajsiu, B. (2024). Nationalist versus Populist Constructions of "the People": Eastern Europe and Latin America in Comparative Perspective. *East European Politics and Societies*, 38(2), 486-506.

<sup>41</sup> Lombardo, E., Caravantes, P., & DÍAZ FERNÁNDEZ, S. (2025). 'Stop torpedoing women's rights!': Feminist institutional responses to anti-gender politics in Spain and Catalonia parliaments. *European Journal of Political Research*.

<sup>42</sup> Martínez, R., & Bueno, A. (2024). The militarization of emergencies: is the Spanish model an example to be followed by the multitasking armies of Latin America? *Alternatives*, 49(4), 344-358.

<sup>43</sup> Nossa, I. C., Suarez, M. A., & Pimenta, M. (2024). Hybrid governance and Violent Non-State Actors: examining the case of Brazil and Colombia. *Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Defesa*, 11(2), 301-317.

empowerment is that it disturbs the equality system of the state<sup>44</sup>. Studies explain that North American scholars studying in Latin America bring new political ideas to the region. However, most universities reject their ideology by saying it is old and traditional. Thus, researchers explain that political ideology in Latin America should be allowed more freely so that people can communicate their ideology with others<sup>45</sup>. Studies claim that mafia gangs prefer to invest their earnings in brick-related construction work rather than investing it in restaurant-based industries. Strong mafia ideology to invest in construction-related business gives them a sense of authority and control over people. However, the weak mafia community tends to invest in restaurant-based businesses. Social and political factors greatly influence the mafia's ideology to invest in different business types<sup>46</sup>. Studies explain that non-official states adopt legal policies from different states to make their governance systems work. Cuba has adopted the legal policy of the US to make its governance workable, but taking legal ideas and putting them to work in a different legal system is a complex task and faces a lot of challenges<sup>47</sup>. Scholars suggest that numerous police officials and criminals work in collaboration to identify the corruption routes in the justice system. However, this collaboration has a major drawback in it, it allows criminals to expand their control<sup>48</sup>. Studies predict that in Latin America, government policies will continue shifting due to financial problems faced by the state. The change in policies in Latin America is influenced by the political conditions of the state<sup>49</sup>. Studies explain that immigrants in Latin America faced a lot of problems during the early times. Women immigrants faced sexual harassment-related violence, and men faced physical violence. But most of the victims of violence revealed that they faced the violence in their home regions, not in Latin America<sup>50</sup>.

### III. Methods

The research paper depends upon primary data analysis and determines the

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<sup>44</sup> Otero, G., & Gürcan, E. C. (2024). *Collective Empowerment in Latin America: Indigenous Peasant Movements and Political Transformation*. Taylor & Francis.

<sup>45</sup> Ravecca, P., Rossello, D., & Seri, G. (2025). (Latin) American political theory? In-betweenness and intersecting exclusions. *Philosophy and Global Affairs*.

<sup>46</sup> Riccardi, M., & Maggioni, M. A. (2025). Bricks or cooks? Geographical and social determinants of the investment choices of mafia-type organized crime. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 25(1), 171-199.

<sup>47</sup> San Miguel, J. (2025). TRANSPLANTS FROM DIFFERENT LEGAL FAMILIES IN COMPARATIVE LAW: THE INCORPORATION OF US COMMON LAW INSTITUTIONS INTO CUBA FOR STATE-BUILDING PURPOSES (1898-1902). *Unpublished: working paper*.

<sup>48</sup> Sanchez, J., & Cruz, J. M. (2024). The dynamics of criminal cooperation between the police and gangs in Honduras. *Trends in Organized Crime*, 27(4), 475-495.

<sup>49</sup> Silva, P. (2024). From Left to Right; From Right to Left: The Continuous Political Pendulum in Latin America.

<sup>50</sup> Vargas, L. X., Sammel, M. D., Richmond, T. S., Ulrich, C. M., Giano, Z. D., Berkowitz, L., & Epperson, C. N. (2024). Traumatic experiences and place of occurrence: an analysis of sex differences among a sample of recently arrived immigrant adults from Latin America. *PLoS One*, 19(6), e0302363.

results used Smart PLS software.



Figure 1: Crime-Related Complexities and Implications in Latin America

## IV. Implications

### 1. *Crime-Related Complexities and Implications in Latin America*

In the past few years, there has been a great surge in crime-related activities in Latin America. The homicide cases have increased by twenty-nine percent in Latin America. Most of the dangerous cities and high-crime-related countries are located in Latin America, which makes this region a highly dangerous region. One of the major problems faced by the people of LAC is crime-related threats (Figure 1). The crime rate was higher in 2010 in Latin America, but after the COVID-19 pandemic, the crime rate has increased more rapidly than before. Almost one out of five people felt fear of crime and violence in the year 2021. This overall crime and violent condition in the state forced people to leave their region and migrate to another region. Many surveys conducted in Latin America in the 2020s predicted that the majority of the population faces unsafe conditions in their region, as gender-related violence is common in their region. Surveys revealed that many women in Latin America faced sexual violence-related abuse. Women in Latin American states also faced violence from their husbands, which made the overall violence condition worse in the state. The worst condition of immigrant women in Latin America has badly impacted the social working ability of women, making their participation in social work unsafe. Homicide and crime rates vary in different regions of LAC. Like in Jamaica, the murder rates are higher than in other regions of LAC. In Mexican states, the actual percentage of crime rate and the numbers of victims affected are not fully known, but surveys have revealed that many people in Mexican states feel unsafe. Different factors induce crime-related activities in

Latin America. The first factor is the domestic factor. Understanding crime-related causes requires understanding the political and cultural history of any region. Some political agendas influence all crime-related activities in any region. Sociological factors like increased unemployment in Latin American states influence people to commit crimes. Poor educational facilities, as well as poverty are also some other socio-economic factors that influence people to engage in wrong activities. The other main factor that influences people to commit unethical acts is rational factors. The rational gangs involved in criminal acts tend to control the criminal market by influencing the production of deadly drugs like cocaine in their controlled region. Different criminal gangs compete to produce dangerous drugs for drug trafficking purposes. This completion makes the overall condition of Latin America more miserable. Some criminal gangs are using legal mining areas to carry out the process of narcotics production. Using legal sites helps such gangs to perform their activities without anyone noticing that they are producing illegal drugs. Organized crime activities are performed by political groups within the society to hold control over the country. South American states' drug demand has led to high crime-related activities in the Caribbean. This demand has increased competition between local and international gangs in the drug production process. Reducing the crime and violence rate in Latin America requires a lot of effective actions. Lowering the crime rate in Latin America will help the economy to grow at an optimal rate; reducing crime rates will encourage people to invest in businesses. By supporting women and providing them safety at their workplace, the violence against women in Lac can be minimized. Making resources variable for the general public could also help in promoting equality.



*Figure 2: Crime-Associated Complexities and Implications in Spain*

## **2. *Crime-Associated Complexities and Implications in Spain***

The hub of organized crime is Spain, as it is involved in strategic crime



activities. Most crime networks originate from a source and extend to different international states. With time, the geographic dynamic of Spain has revolutionized, providing better facilities to people and encouraging the process of globalization. Several factors influence crime-related actions in Spain. Surveys have revealed that Spain is the main area from where cocaine produced in South America enters Europe (Figure 2). The high production of cocaine in South America has increased its shipment and transportation to other countries. Many criminal gangs also use the seaport of Spain to hide their illegal drugs and to transport them into other regions. The other factor that influences crime activities in Spain is money laundering. Many legal authorities in Spain have identified that Bitcoin-like currency is used by crime gangs to make their alliances stronger. Crypto currency helps crime-related communities to make their connection with international partners powerful. Criminals are buying luxurious properties and selling them at higher prices illegally to gain power and money. This situation raises concerns among law enforcement agencies, making them more vigilant to stop these illegal acts of crime. Also, in Spain, many new crime gangs have emerged in the past few years that are more powerful and strategic in their crime execution process. The Morocco gangs are experts in building connections with international criminal mafia for performing money laundering-type illegal tasks. Moreover, the strategic planning of the spin mafia allows them to target the logistic system of Spain to perform their illegal task without being notified by legal authorities. Mafia gangs are hijacking the transport communication system of Spain for illegality trading their drugs. To control all the illegal actions made by the Spanish mafia, effective law policies are implemented in Spain. Spain's legal agencies have adopted the right and appropriate strategies to control the actions of crime gangs secretly. Different drug and crime organizing units work to control the crimes and money laundering actions of crime communities. Also, in Spain, different policies authorize work with international sector agencies to take legal action against the mafia. But despite all the actions taken by the legal justice system in Spain and Latin America, the criminal acts persist. Also, the geographical nature of the spin region has made it a hub for drug transportation and delivery. Also, technical advancements in Spain have made it a little complicated for the mafia group to access the legal actions of the spin transport agencies. However, due to more advancements in mafia connections with intelligent and advanced international groups, the mafia gangs have managed to track the advanced technical system of Spain. Also, both Spain and Latin America face the same threats related to crime and violent acts in the region. Understanding the nature of these threats requires collaborative efforts between Latin America and Spain's legal frameworks and international legal authorities.



### 3. *Smart PLS Algorithm*

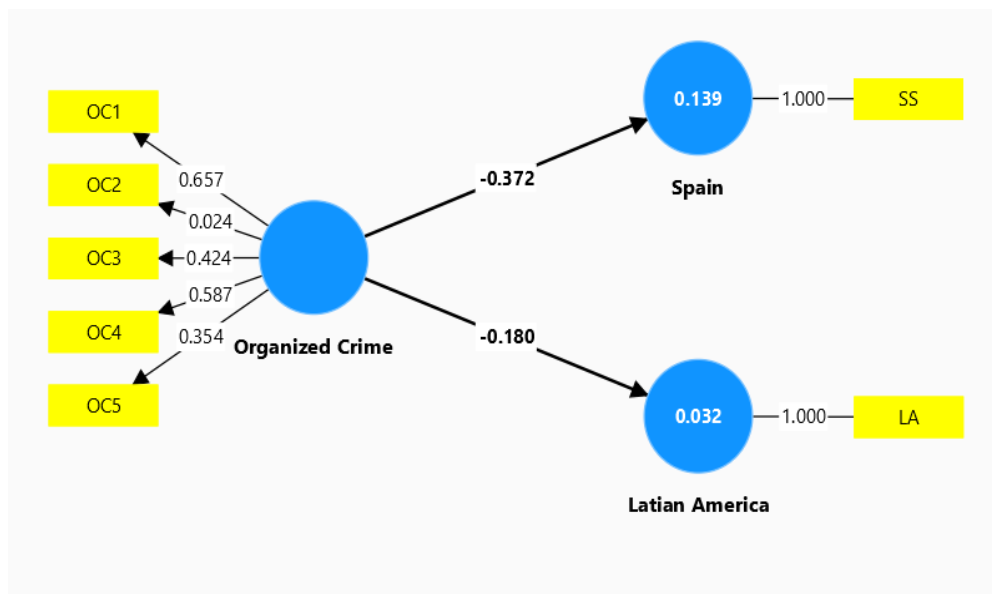


Figure 3: *Smart PLS Algorithm*

The above model shown in figure 3, called smart PLS Algorithm Model, is between Organized crime and Spain also that Latin America. The Smart PLS shows that 65%, 2%, 42%, 58%, also that 35% have positive values. The overall result shows negative but significantly related organized Crime in Spain. Its rate level is -0.372 and -0.180, respectively.

### 4. *Descriptive Statistic*

Table 1: *Result of Descriptive Statistic*

Name	No.	Mean	Median	Scale Min	Scale Max	Standard Deviation	Excess Kurtosis	Skewness	Cramér-Von Mises P Value
OC1	1	1.700	2.000	1.000	3.000	0.671	-0.746	0.451	0.000
OC2	2	1.880	2.000	1.000	3.000	0.711	-0.997	0.183	0.000
OC3	3	1.760	2.000	1.000	3.000	0.736	-1.058	0.424	0.000
OC4	4	1.660	2.000	1.000	3.000	0.620	-0.612	0.395	0.000
OC5	5	1.500	1.000	1.000	3.000	0.574	-0.523	0.653	0.000
SS	6	1.820	2.000	1.000	4.000	0.767	-0.196	0.602	0.000
LA	7	1.540	1.000	1.000	3.000	0.670	-0.343	0.880	0.000

The above result shown in table 1 demonstrates that descriptive statistics related to the New Forms of Organized Crime in Spain and Latin America. The comparative analysis between the results shown mean values, median values, and standard deviation rates; the skewness values also explain the probability rate of each variable. The OC stands for organized crime. The result shows that its mean

values are 1.700, 1.880, 1.760, 1.660, also that 1.500. All of them show the positive average values of the mean. The standard deviation rate is 67%, 71%, 73%, 62%, also that 57% deviate from mean values. The result shows that the overall probability rate is 0.000 shows 100% significant levels between them. The SS shows that 1.820 average rate the LA shows that 1.540 positive average rates between them. The overall minimum rate is 1.000, the maximum value is 3.000, also the median rate is 2.000.

## 5. *Correlation Coefficient*

*Table 2: Result of Correlation Coefficient*

	OC1	OC2	OC3	OC4	OC5	SS	LA
OC1	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OC2	0.260	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OC3	0.178	0.021	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OC4	-0.005	0.134	-0.091	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OC5	-0.078	-0.000	0.425	0.140	1.000	0.000	0.000
SS	-0.222	0.144	-0.112	-0.255	0.023	1.000	0.000
LA	-0.174	-0.074	-0.021	-0.040	-0.234	-0.044	1.000

The above result shown in table 2 demonstrates that correlation coefficient analysis according to the result, some factors show positive and some negative links between them.

## V. **Discussion**

The change in the pattern of organized crime in the 21st century has been a significant issue for law enforcement, governance and the safety of the people worldwide. This side-by-side comparison of Spain and Latin America has shown a complex and dynamic environment whereby traditional patterns of criminal organization have been dislodged or augmented by decentralized, flexible, and transnational criminal networks. This conclusion summarizes the main findings of the study and identifies their policy and governance implications as well as implications of social resilience. Another major observation that was made in this manuscript is the evident structural transformation of the organizational crime in both Latin America and Spain. Unlike previous generations in the mid-20th century that held to the hierarchical form of a command, modern criminal structures have adopted cellular-based, horizontal, or even combined structures. Such structures cannot be destroyed easily by the authorities and are more capable of rapid changes in response to new opportunities and threats. Latin America A once-monolithic drug cartel like that in Colombia and Mexico has been decentralized, resulting in

extremely disaggregated but very violent splinter groups. These groups tend to mix criminalist with community governance, political violence as well as social service delivery, especially in regions where the state is poorly established or not present at all. On the contrary, there runs a different form of sophistication in the Spanish context. The elements that make Spain a logistical hub and a financial conduit towards transnational organized crime, in part, relate to the geographical location between the three continents of Europe, Africa and Latin America and in part to the modern banking and legal systems. The Spanish mafia tends to cooperate with the Latin American drug coalitions, translating the drugs through the Iberian ports, Algeciras, Valencia, and Barcelona. They do, however, also actively participate in white-collar crime, especially money laundering, real estate fraud and cybercrime. This ends up being evidence of a general trend in the criminal environment in Spain, that is, the overlapping of the legal and illegal economies, in which the financial sector, the real estate, and lawful industries are subject to infiltration and exploitation by organized crime. Regardless of these regional differences, there are a number of converges also found in the comparative analysis. The boom in the organized crime-corruption nexus presents serious problems to both regions. In Latin America, corruption is more common and well-publicized, as seen in the murder of reporters, infiltration of local police agencies and harassment of the authorities. The form of corruption in Spain is more institutional and money-related, and it may even include political figures, business elites, and lawmen. However, whether corruption takes the shape of the emphasis on the internet or the focus on the media, the level of its impact on the loss of trust in the state institutions and the efficiency of anti-crime policies is very high in both cases. Moreover, the organized crime also has harmful social repercussions for both Spain and Latin America.

## VI. Conclusion

In Latin America, communities can be entirely overtaken by criminal organizations and displacement, extortion activities, gender violence, and an overall atmosphere of fear. This violence does not only lead to the tragic loss of life but also causes and adds to chronic instability and the decline of civil society. The effects are not so blatantly violent in Spain. Still, they are not any less harmful: they manipulate housing markets by laundering money, permitting the consumption of drugs with an expanding local market. They destroy the integrity of the community where the most serious crime still reigns supreme. Another important lesson learned from this study is that militaristic or punitive response strategies would not stop or eliminate organized crime. Years of so-called iron fist policy in Latin America, e.g. the war on drugs in Mexico or the Plan Patriota in Colombia, have turned out mostly counterproductive, e.g. only breeding more violence and

human rights violations, sometimes even empowering criminal networks by splintering them up. Although they are less militarized, the Spanish style has, in many cases, chosen a reactive law enforcement policy in preference to proactive crime prevention and structural change. Both areas involve a need to reconsider the approaches to deal with the problem of organized crime to a rather profound extent, not as a lone criminal manifestation but as a result of the overall failures in society, economy, and politics alike. In this regard, the very nature of the study lays an emphasis on the multidimensional approach toward fighting the organized crime. In Latin America, this entails investing in community building, education, economic inclusion and state building in disadvantaged regions. Instead of seeing criminal actors as mere foes of the state, governments have to deal with the origin of attraction or being obliged to live a criminal life by many people: poverty, inequality, impunity and opportunity. Spain, in turn, has to enhance regulatory control over the areas that are prone to being infiltrated by criminals, including real estate and financial services, and enhance transparency and accountability in the public administration. The other lesson here is that there is an urgent global collaboration. Many think that organized crime is no longer local but rather transnational.

Andes-made drugs go through Central America, across the Atlantic Highlands and get into Europe through Spain. The laundered money in Spain banks can be used to support crime activities in Mexico or Colombia. This means that effective solutions would need the coordination that is transnational in the force of communications between the police, judicial systems, financial regulators, and intelligence systems. That is the case with Spain, with its historical, linguistic, and cultural ties to Latin America, which is in a unique position to initiate or contribute to these partnership activities. One should also underline the role of technology. Even though (criminal) groups constantly take advantage of digital instruments to communicate, organize logistics, or conduct financial transactions, police jurisdiction is frequently victimized by technological incompetence. A newer frontier that is in need of immediate attention is cybercrime: everything between online fraud and cryptocurrency laundering. Cases of cybercrime in Spain have increased significantly in relation to organized crime. Meanwhile, Latin American cartels are starting to rely on encrypted hubs and message boards as a part of their expansion strategy. Capital investment in cyber forensic capability, digital literacy and international treaties against cybercrime is no longer an option in modern crime-fighting. Lastly, the paper presents the need for civil society involvement and public awareness. Governments cannot counter organized crime. Human rights activists and, journalists, scholars, as well as ordinary citizens, need to be enabled to make visible, challenge and destroy the social legitimacy enjoyed by some criminal players. The glorification in both Latin America and Spain of organized

crime up to the status of a normal practice has to be localized through education, media literacy and the popularization of alternative social chords. To sum it up, the organized crime in Latin America and Spain has since developed into an extremely sophisticated, dynamic and firmly rooted state of affairs. It is no longer left in the dark but is closely intertwined with legal ones, markets, and politics. This requires a different way of thinking and acting, which is no longer based on criminalization and repression, to tackle the structural and systemic factors in which crime flourishes. On the one hand, this paper has succeeded in shedding fresh light on the particularities of the nature of the issue in the two geographical areas. On the other hand, by providing comparative insights, the present paper has established the baseline of common solutions, one of the essential elements of this nature (prevention, cooperation, and justice). That is why the political will to introduce comprehensive, inclusive, development-oriented policies is the backbone of the future of public security in both areas because it has to reflect the real character of the organized crime in the 21st century.

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