

Harmonization: can we find a better way to improve international police cooperation?

Most scientific writing about international police cooperation ends with the idea that harmonization in general could or should be the best mean to achieve success. Firstly, a clear definition of success should help in understanding what everyone is talking about. It brings us to the fact that even the objectives are not the same for every actor in this blurred field. Secondly, our research shows that a complete harmonization of definitions, practices and norms is the worst thing that can happen for international police cooperation. It kills innovation, capacity of learning from others and even capacities of taking advantage of opportunities offered by the diversity of the different legal systems. Thirdly, harmonization also means more bureaucratisation, which is the worst thing that can happen to a police organization. Our research results shows that a system focused on trust building and respect of other's practice is the only sane way of fighting the so-called "international organized crime". This is only possible by emphasizing on expertise building and on working relationships that takes time to develop. Those elements are keys to obtain more in international investigations. This paper try to brings the thoughts about international police cooperation a way further, since the field is blocked with some concepts. I propose new ways of seeing the phenomenon.