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Adventurers and Risk-Takers:

Finnish professional criminals and their organisations in the 1990s cross-border criminality

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1. Introduction

This study concentrates on Finnish professional criminals¹ and their organisations in Finland and in cross-border crime operations. It is based on qualitative empirical material. The basic idea of this study was developed when working on the study “Crime across the Border - Finnish Professional Criminals and Estonian Crime Opportunities” (Junninen 1999). In the course of that study, it became clear that some Finnish professional criminals are working closely together and taking advantage of the national border, and have a good relationship with the Estonian underworld when committing crimes either in Finland or in Estonia. In the present study, I focus on 14 different Finnish groups active in the 1990s in smuggling (alcohol, tobacco and drugs), and/or procuring prostitutes, and/or handling stolen goods. The objective was to gather collective information about the world of the Finnish professional criminals by studying the personal characteristics of the group members, the crimes they commit, and the structures of the criminal groups.

According to Finnish police sources, Finnish professional criminals have in recent years widened their scope of activity, become more violent and started to work more closely together (Häkämies 1999). In the overviews made by the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation, when EU standards for defining organised crime groups² are applied, there were 27 organised crime groups active in Finland in 1999. The number of such groups has increased rapidly: in 1995, police identified only 10 active groups in Finland. (NBI 2000)³. In addition, the criminal justice system operators of the European Union countries have paid attention to the growing organised crime problem and its impact on the work of the judges and prosecutors in member countries. In consequence, the EU created a European justice network in Amsterdam in 1997. In the network meetings, judges and prosecutors practise co-operation of authorities for solving cases where an organised crime group is operating in several EU countries. (Vallisaari 1997.)

The global and national lack of information and studies concerning organised crime in general, and the internal and international relations of its participants made this research phenomenon more interesting and challenging. As Maltz has pointed out: “Although organised crime has been considered a major problem for the American society for half a century, it remains one elusive in nature and difficult to define” (Maltz

¹ A professional criminal is an individual who earns his living by committing crimes. Committing crimes requires professional skill(s) and competence that distinguish the person from the beginners. A professional criminal earns his living by committing crimes, has a professional attitude, and behaves accordingly (Vold 1958.) Professional criminals are that part of the prison population who seem to be orientated towards committing crimes as a way of life. Crime is an essential part of their way of life and a means of livelihood. The crimes are planned, carried out reasonably well, and the profits are relatively large (Kääriäinen 1994, 60).

² Organised criminal groups are groups that commit various types of offences, exhibit a hierarchical structure, have an internal sanction system, and continue to operate even without one or more of their key members. The aim of these groups is not only monetary gain but economic power as well. Ultimately they seek to occupy a monopoly position in a certain market in order to compete with rivalling groups or make tacit agreements with them. The instruments they use include intimidation and violence, inside as well as outside the group, and corruption. In addition, efforts are made to infiltrate into legitimate sectors of the economy with the purpose of covering up illegal activities, acquiring influence over politicians and exerting control over their decision-making. Lastly, a criminal group engaged in organised crime is always active on a long-term basis (Fijnaut et al. 1998, 11).

³ The figure for 2004 was 34 (NBI 2005).

1985). In Finland, there is only one criminological study concerning Finnish professional criminals and their organisations. This study focuses on the property crime sector in one city and is more than twenty years old (Aromaa 1983). While there are no Finnish studies concerning organised crime in the country, there are a few focusing on Italian and Russian organised crime (Ahtokivi 1994; Saari 1992; Bäckman 1996 and 1999).

The objective of this study is tripartite:

- 1) to analyse individual characteristics of the participants (age, gender, marital status, etc.) of the 14 studied Finnish groups,
- 2) to analyse the committed crimes on selected crime areas (smuggling alcohol, tobacco and drugs, procuring prostitutes, handling stolen goods), and
- 3) to analyse the structures and cross-border operations of the criminal groups active in Finland in the 1990s.

This tripartite structure attempts to clarify characteristics of Finnish professional criminals and the crimes committed, and to distinguish those crime groups whose group criminality⁴ is temporary from those whose activities are long-term, more permanent. The study examines whether the Finnish professional criminals who operate in cross-border crime form structured groups⁵ or organised crime groups. Criminals may work together because criminal operations require several participants and the market situation requires tougher measures if control is to be achieved.

Similar studies have been made in Sweden in the 1970s and in the Netherlands in the 1990s, in addition to which there is an ongoing study in Estonia. In Sweden, the committee members represented criminal police, local police, tax authorities and criminologists. Their task was to consider and analyse the degree of organisation of Swedish criminals, and to assess the congruence between them and the criteria presented in social science and legal literature on organised crime (Rikspolisstyrelsen 1977). In the Netherlands, criminologists used police data sources to study how well Dutch professional criminal groups correspond to organised crime definitions (Bruinsma et al. 1999). Markina's study tries to define the formation of the Estonian organised crime after the country's independence in 1991 (Markina 1998).

⁴ Group criminality means that a group of criminals who are professionally engaged commit certain punishable offences in a certain period of time. The group has an internal division of labour although it is not necessarily hierarchically structured. It has no internal sanctioning system, and its continued existence depends on one or more key members. Its aim is monetary gain and it can achieve this without having to compete with other groups, let alone pursue economic dominance. In addition, the group has following features: in principle, it only commits one type of offence, the revenues are solely used to finance luxurious life style and new similar offences, and it makes every effort to commit its crimes as professionally as possible (Fijnaut et al. 1998, 11).

⁵ Structured group is a group that is not randomly formed for the immediate commission of an offence and that does not need to have formally defined roles for its members, continuity of the membership or a developed structure (United Nations 2001).

Since time and study resources were limited, terrorism⁶ and motorcycle gangs were excluded from this study even if they were active in the studied crime areas. Terrorism was excluded because its main goals are idealistic, promoting an alternative way of living or a different kind of political system, not personal gain to earn money by committing crimes as a member of a group. The motorcycle gangs were excluded because the general discussion in criminological circles considers them rather as an alternative way of life – not as a type of organised crime. However, Finnish police regard motorcycle gangs as organised crime groups that operate behind the facade of motorcycle interest.

⁶ Terrorism is organised criminal activities with a political or ideological motivation involving acts of discriminate and indiscriminate violence for the purpose of affecting social or political change (Schelling 1971, 69-82).

2. Definitions of professional criminals and organised crime

The definition of a professional criminal is ambivalent. At least three different dimensions of interest are relevant to the present study:

- 1) how do the occupational characteristics of professional criminals diverge from those who work in “legitimate” professions,
- 2) how do professional criminals diverge from habitual offenders, and
- 3) how does legal and criminological literature define the concept of a professional criminal.

The comparison of legal and illegal professional identities is an interesting one. The distinction of taste is a classic sociological dilemma: how do the different social classes behave and use different kinds of indirect aspects to justify their social status⁷. Bourdieu used the concept of distinction to describe the differences of French social classes (Bourdieu 1979). Bourdieu's ideas have been applied extensively, the most interesting study for my purposes being the work of Riitta Kumpulainen, studying Finnish judges and their methods to distinguish themselves from each other and other professions (Kumpulainen 1995). The comparison of self-identity and taste between Finnish judges and the persons I interviewed illustrates the differences and similarities of these two distinctive societal groups. This analysis is reported in chapter 4.11.

The comparison between habitual offenders⁸ and professional criminals is also interesting. According to Kivivuori (1992), habitual offenders commit crimes:

- 1) as a revenge to society, they want to make someone suffer because they are unemployed or in tax debts etc., and blame society for the misery,
- 2) because relatives or ex-partners have abandoned them,
- 3) on the spur of the moment or when intoxicated (most of the crimes of habitual offenders fall into this category),
- 4) for no rational reason, rebellion, impulsive reaction against authorities, etc

The persons I interviewed frowned upon such unprofessional behaviour. In criminal groups it is not only strongly disfavoured, but also harshly punished. One of the worst mistakes a professional criminal can make is to work under the influence of intoxicating substances. Kivivuori describes alcohol as being of central importance in the criminality of habitual offenders. They are said to spend all or most of the proceeds of their crimes to luxurious life and alcohol as soon as possible. This kind of “push the boat out” lifestyle was also present in my interviews, but because the incoming sums of money

⁷ Status means that professional criminals, as other professionals, seek to attain a certain standing and reputation among their peers. Status is based on technical skills, financial situation, social contacts, influence and habits that crystallise as professional pride. (Aromaa 1983, 54.)

⁸ A habitual offender is an offender who does not succeed in the criminal's profession, nor is able to otherwise meet the living standards of the professionals. He gets caught time after time, but still wants to work and live like a criminal even if other criminals cannot trust him with any demanding tasks. Between prison sentences he is thus compelled to work in a legal occupation. Because the only merit of the habitual offender is that he has been caught several times, he has no actual status among the professional criminals (Vold 1958, 1998.)

were so much bigger, my informants were able to spend part of the money on luxurious life and save the rest or use it to finance new crimes. The main differences between habitual and professional offenders are reported in chapter 6.4 below.

The different criminological and legal definitions of a professional criminal are products of the 20th century. The tradition of studying professional criminals in criminology can be traced back to the first half of the 20th century when Edwin Sutherland made his classic study “The Professional Thief”. In this study, he analysed and described ethnographically the life and daily routines of professional thieves in the United States. About the same time in Europe, Jean Genet wrote his autobiographical “Journal du Voleur”, dealing with his life as a professional thief. (Sutherland 1972; Genet 1998.) Traditionally, professional criminals are considered as thieves and burglars who are proud of their way of life and have chosen to commit crimes as their profession. They are working on their own or in small disorganised, opportunity-based groups of changing membership. The evaluation of thieves and supporting professions, such as receivers of stolen goods, showed that they defined their world as well-structured, and that their self-identity was strong and closely related to fellow criminals (Aromaa 1983).

The next passage presents four different definitions of the concept of a professional criminal (criminological, Finnish legal, my informants, and empirical studies). Then, passage 2.2 compares the three different definitions of organised crime (criminological, United Nations and European Union) that are important for my study.

2.1 Criminological definitions of professional criminal

In criminological literature, a person who commits crimes for personal economic gain, whose major source of income is crime, and who spends the majority of his or her working time for illegal purposes is defined as a professional criminal (Professional Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice 1966). Professional criminals are described as a relatively rational and competent group of persons who are involved in crime because it is a profitable business. The professional criminal's energy and skills are channelled solely into committing profitable crimes and avoiding their legal consequences. Crime methods range from simple to serious, all the way to the actual corruption of the criminal justice system (ibid.). It is important to notice that non-professional criminals can commit similar crimes with similar methods as professional criminals. The distinction between professionalism and non-professionalism lies, therefore, in person's other activities. Only if most or all of a person's income is earned through illegal activities, he or she can be defined as a professional criminal.

Professional criminals can participate in groups (structured or non-structured) to carry out their activities, and thereby be connected to organised crime. Although these groups may to a certain extent resemble legitimate business corporations, doing business is not their primary objective. Instead, they aim to maximise their personal income by theft or theft-related conduct. Little is known about the nature and extent of the relationship between professional criminals and organised crime. However, it is believed that a variety of working arrangements exist between the two, and that these arrangements are of substantial significance to both parties. For example, professional criminals can be hired on an occasional or temporary basis to provide services for organised crime groups. (Ibid.)

2.1.1 Finnish legal definition of professional criminal

A professional criminal is a person who makes his or her living by committing crimes. The “time frame” of committing crimes has to be sufficiently long: in a theoretical assessment, the span cannot be so short that the criminal activity could be interpreted as being occasional or temporary. Conceptually, it is not necessary to commit more than one crime: the objective alone, the plan to commit crimes is enough to classify the offender as a professional criminal. (Kekomäki 1933.) It is worth noting that the definition of a professional criminal based on the Finnish criminal law is over 100 years old (1889), and therefore may not necessarily meet all the modern forms of relevant human behaviour.

2.1.2 Occupation of a professional criminal as defined by the informants

The persons interviewed for this study had a relatively clear opinion concerning the central characteristics of a professional criminal. A summary of their own definition of a professional criminal is the following:

- 1) Several crime areas. Professional criminals operate in many crime areas. A single professional criminal may be specialised in a single crime sector and knows everything about it;
- 2) Money orientation. The person’s only motive is money and his main source of income is crime; he is not committing crimes for excitement or fun;
- 3) Goal orientation. When an offender commits crimes, his only concern is committing them as well as possible, regardless of the consequences to others. Crimes can cause fear, terror or distress but this is of no relevance;
- 4) Committing crimes is serious work. The profession of a professional criminal is comparable to the profession of a company manager in that it involves a lot of pressure (to make money and not get caught), work is always priority number one, at any cost (family, friends, leisure time etc.);
- 5) Professionalism. The person plans his actions and co-operates with others to achieve goals. He does not want to act unprofessionally;
- 6) Only profitable crimes are committed. A single crime series can be worth millions;
- 7) Dignity, good behaviour, credible appearance and self-confidence. Professional criminal behaves in a way that makes fellow criminals respect his skills and income, and normal people his luxurious lifestyle;
- 8) A free man. In general, professional criminal spends more time outside than inside prison. In the best case, police are not even after him because he is unknown;
- 9) Legalising the profits. Professional criminal knows how to launder the proceeds of crime so that a) authorities do not even become interested in him – they do not realise that he has earned his money by committing crime(s); b) if the authorities become interested in his source of income, money is invested in a way that they cannot confiscate or even find it;
- 10) Normal family. Family life of a professional criminal is “normal”, at the very least serving as a façade of happiness and normality. Wife's income serves to explain the standard of living;
- 11) Established. Professional criminal has to be known in the criminal fraternity as a person who has all (or at least most of) the attributes mentioned above.

In conclusion, my informants considered themselves to be part of organised crime because their crimes require co-operation. Yet in the same breath they denied the said linkage by claiming that they were “free” - individualistic operators who commit crimes in various groups on the basis of their own choice. Since I interviewed only men who spoke about themselves, this definition of a professional criminal concerns men only.

2.1.3 Empirical studies on professional criminals in Finland, Great Britain and USA

There are only a few empirical studies made on professional criminals. It is amazing how similar the findings of these are, even though the three studies – British, American and the present – reflect different social conditions and different decades. On occasion it feels that the place and time of study are irrelevant, as if you are reading and analysing just one study. From the research point of view it is interesting how such similar findings are possible. In the following table, the studies on professional crime, conducted in three different countries at different times are analysed in more detail.

As shown below, main points of the research findings are congruent: ages when criminals start and end their careers, low level of education, lack of participation on relatives' part even though they are aware of the origin of the money and goods.

Getting caught and the consequent prison sentences are few and occasional. Prison both benefits the professionals (can create contacts, learn new crimes and new ways of committing them) and harms them (losing freedom and the opportunity to commit crimes). When not in prison, they spend their time enjoying the benefits of their crimes, and committing and planning old and new crimes. As criminal's career evolves, his group of friends changes; eventually, there are usually no other friends left except for those who commit crimes themselves. Most of the men are or have been married, and some of them have children. The criminal career has started mostly because of the money and partly because of the excitement of committing crimes. Career has been varyingly successful depending on intelligence and luck, and there is no intention to bring it to an end although the likelihood of getting old or dying violently is becoming greater day by day.

The crimes committed have been tailored for maximum financial gain. They are planned and committed with care, and there is no violence involved except for tactical intimidation purposes or to secure the successful completion of the crime. The profits are used to finance new crimes, support family, or invested in legal businesses and conspicuous consumption. The structure of professional criminal groups varies from tight, hierarchical, long-term marketing chains and networks to flexible and short-lived groups that commit single crimes. Even though the time the group spends on single crimes can be short, the same persons might commit several crimes one after another, making the group's crime career last for years or decades. Usually a group is formed by a few regular members of the same age and ethnic background. In some crimes, it is possible to use temporary “aids”, basically anyone who can do the required work. The groups do not really have any regional or product monopolies; the crimes are committed when the opportunity presents itself. The most important rules regulating the group's activities are trustworthiness and zero tolerance for informing. The relationships within the groups and with other groups are based on business. Trust and co-operation exist as long as things work out in a way that satisfies both or all parties.

Table 1. Comparison of the personal features of professional criminals in different countries. The studies referred to are mine 2001, Hobbs 1995 and Sutherland 1937. The variables are explained and introduced in Appendix 1.

Variable	Country		
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS	Finland 2001	Great Britain 1995	USA 1937
Age (20-40 years)	X	X	X
Education (low)	X	X	X
Social status (low)	X	X	X
Start of criminal career			
Juvenile delinquent	P	P	O
As an adult	P	P	X
Parents/Siblings			
No serious criminal career	P	P	P
Some crimes	P	P	P
Prison (few times/sentences)	X	X	X
Respected criminals	X	X	X
Own family			
Wife	P	P	P
Children	P	P	P
Friends are other criminals	X	X	X
Use of money			
Living	P	P	P
Saving	P	P	P
Future			
Why quit	P	P	P
Start legal business	P	P	P
CRIMES			
Goal orientation	X	X	X
Professionalism	X	X	X
Profitable crimes	X	X	X
Several crime areas	X	X	X
Violence (if needed)	X	X	X
Own crimes	P	P	P
GROUPS			
Structure (network)	X	X	X
Few participants	X	X	X
Gender (male)	X	X	X
Ethnicity (same)	X	X	X
Short-lived	X	X	X
Monopoly (no)	X	X	X
Rules (common)	X	X	X
Relations between other groups (good)	X	X	X
Relations between members (good)	X	X	X
Help to imprisoned members	X	--	X
Contacts with foreigners	P	P	O

X= fulfil the criteria completely, P= fulfil the criteria partly, o = do not fulfil the criteria, and -- = no information.

One common element present in these three studies is that criminals live a hard and fast life, drinking, not sleeping, and doing other things harmful to one's health. It seems that they want to use the opportunities to commit crimes and enjoy life while it is still possible. You never know when you are going to get caught, lose your freedom and the possibility to commit crimes. Also, the competition between criminals is hard, and there are new and eager young men waiting in line to take your place in the limited market. The biggest difference between the studies is that while Sutherland concentrates only on thefts, Hobbs' and my studies cover professional crime more widely. Another big

difference is that the professional crime that Hobbs studied is evidently smaller-scale and more regionally limited, focusing more on the local market, than the crimes committed by the criminals studied by Sutherland and myself. In the latter studies, the criminals aim to work on a national level and in big cities, are harder to trace and have more opportunities to commit crimes. Compared to the study by Hobbs, Sutherland's and my findings can be better generalised to a national level. The biggest similarity between the informants from different countries is that they are driven by economic rationality and personal pleasure, and thus behave in a very selfish fashion.

2.1.4 Conclusions on the definitions of professional criminal

There is a conflict between the legal, criminological and empirical research definitions of a professional criminal. Authorities and the criminal law find that a person who commits just a single crime may be classified as a professional criminal, provided that he has planned to continue with criminal actions. According to empirical research, the persons I interviewed, and criminological literature, a person who commits one crime is just a beginner and by no means a professional criminal. They claim that the requirement of continuous criminality should be taken into account. In their view, a professional criminal is a person who makes his living mainly by committing series of lucrative crimes against property, thus securing his family's livelihood. Criminal activity is fairly rational, persistent and financially profitable, and a single criminal act is by no means enough.

The persons I interviewed thought that both the authoritative and criminologist definitions of professional criminals are inadequate as they can be applied to habitual offenders, too. The criminals' own definition comprises three main dimensions: 1) demanding, profitable crimes, 2) committing crimes is exercising a profession, and 3) right and smart attitude, i.e. planning and inventing new forms of crimes, and good manners. The authoritative and criminologist perspectives may be biased because they are used in legal work and reflect the formal control system. In legal work, the criminal act is traditionally in the centre, and the reasons that influenced or instigated the person's act(s) are only a secondary aspect.

The essential difference between criminological literature, empirical study and the interviewees' own assessment is that the two last-mentioned sources represent significantly more optimistic views on the diversity of the criminal activity. The exaggeration of the glamorous lifestyle of professional criminals in empirical studies could be due to the fact that the informants and participants have been selected according to their criminal records. Empirical studies suggest that criminals are satisfied with their life and their choice of profession, and have no need to change their behaviour or stop committing crimes. The criminal justice system, on the other hand, attempts to minimise the attractions of the life of professional criminals by creating good control networks and severe sanctions.

The criminals' own definition of professionalism resembles the stereotype of a "super-criminal" who is able to do anything. But when compared with the literature on the crimes and lives of habitual offenders, the difference in attitudes and behaviour between habitual offenders and my informants becomes more understandable. Habitual offenders commit crimes occasionally and with a varying volume, and their occupational objective is to get money for food, alcohol and drugs. Their reasons are thus totally different compared to those of professional criminals. The main differences

between the two types of offenders are the goals of the crimes, the occupational attitude and the criminal mind. These differences became evident when I compared Kivivuori's study on habitual offenders and the three studies on professional criminals (mine, Hobbs' and Sutherland's) discussed above.

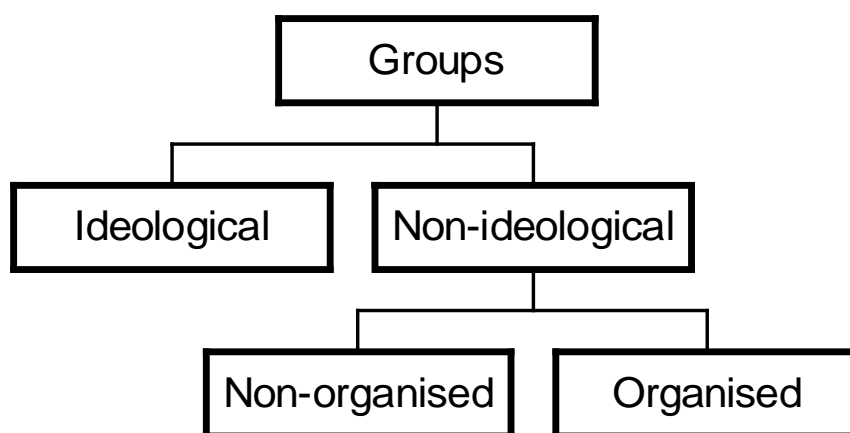
A professional criminal can work on his own or participate in group actions. The main differences between group criminality and organised crime are analysed in the next chapter. My informants thought it was really important that they are proud of being professional criminals who plan their crimes, and emphasized the fact that they are totally different from habitual offenders who commit stupid unplanned crimes on the spur of the moment. This distinction between higher and lower level of professionalism is similar to any other profession and occupational identity. To illustrate this point, a comparison of the taste and habitus of my interviewees and Riitta Kumpulainen's findings on Finnish judges is made in chapter 4.12. The different definitions of organised crime (legal, criminological and empirical) and the empirical data of the present study are dealt in more detail in chapters 4, 5, and 6.

2.2 Definitions of organised crime

Defining the concept of organised crime and its methods of committing crimes has been a source of controversy in legal and criminological debate throughout the 20th century. The need for definitions remains perpetual; authorities regard them as essential tools of control in their fight against organised crime. The four following descriptions of organised crime have been selected because I wanted to analyse the different aspects of organised crime – not only regurgitate the official jargon of the authorities. In the following, I analyse the main differences between the sociological, criminological and legal definitions of the concept of organised crime, and compare them to those given by my informants.

In Figure 2, the division of group activities is presented. The activity I am interested in is the organised group action.

Figure 2. Different types of group actions



A dictionary of sociology defines organised crime as follows: “All profitable crime is socially organised, but this term is usually reserved for situations where a large number of people in a hierarchical structure are engaged in an on-going pattern of criminal

activities. The most common activities are extortion and the provision of illegal goods and services, such as drink, drugs, gambling, money lending and prostitution⁹. All of these involve continuous relations with the victims or the clients, who have contact with the lower echelons of the organisation. To be successful, therefore, organised crime involves some degree of corruption or intimidation of the police or other agents of law enforcement. It is often thought synonymous with a secret society, such as Tongs of the Chinese Diaspora, the Camorra¹⁰ of nineteenth-century Naples, the Mafia¹¹/Cosa Nostra in Sicily, and La Cosa Nostra in the United States. It seems more likely that if such societies exist at all, they do not actually run criminal activities, but are rather acting as fraternal organisations for some of the racketeers. The myth of the secret society helps criminals by intimidating victims and helps the authorities because it justifies police ineffectiveness. It is often fuelled by racism; though criminal activities themselves are usually ethnically mixed. Organised crime is associated with violence and threats in the course of extortion, but also in the maintenance of control over subordinates, struggles for power within groups, and struggles for monopoly control between groups". (Marshall 1994.)

2.2.1 Criminological definitions

The following "criminological" definition is compiled from several sources. It is a mixture of ideas of different authors. Organised crime is a non-ideological criminal enterprise structure involving a number of persons in close interaction. Group structures have been organised on a hierarchical basis, with at least three levels/ranks, for the purpose of securing profit and power by engaging in illegal and legal activities. The different types of organised crime structures can be classified as hierarchical or network structures, which perform either transnational or international actions - or both. Positions in the hierarchy and positions involving functional specialisation may be assigned based on kinship or friendship, or rationally according to skills. The positions are not dependent on the individuals occupying them at any particular time - the group has continuity. The members who strive to keep the enterprise integral and active in pursuit of its goals assume permanency. It eschews competition and strives for monopoly on an industry or territorial basis. There is willingness to use violence and/or bribery to achieve ends or to maintain discipline. Membership is restricted, although non-members may be involved on a contingency basis. There are accurate rules, oral or written, which are enforced by sanctions that include murder. (Abadinsky 1990, 5.)

There are distinct requirements which need to be met before a group can be defined as belonging to organised crime: First of all, an organised crime group is indifferent to any other ambitions besides money and power to its members. This prerequisite for a non-ideological character excludes terrorist groups and motorcycle gangs from the

⁹ Prostitution means the provision of sexual favours for financial reward. It has nearly always involved the prostitution of women to men, though male prostitution, especially to male clients, is not uncommon. (Marshall 1994, 424.)

¹⁰ Camorra is a tax in the Naples area you have to pay to those (organised crime groups) who protect you against violence (Saari 1992, 62).

¹¹ The origin of the word Mafia is said to be Sicilian dialect where the word mafiusu (Mafioso) means arrogant, but also bold, brave, courageous, no-nonsense and handsome. It was used in public for the first time probably when the play "I mafiusi della Vicaria" was performed in 1863, describing the life of a group of prisoners in Palermo prison. In the play mafiusi were represented as common camorristi. (Gambetta 1993, 259-260.)

organised crime dimension. Non-ideological means that an organised crime group does not have political goals, nor is motivated by ideological concerns; its goals are money and power. While political involvement may be a part of the group's activities, its purpose is to gain protection or immunity for the illegal activities. (Rikspolisstyrelsen 1977; Maltz 1985; Abadinsky 1990; Kenney and Finckenauer 1995.)

Secondly, an organised crime group is structured in a hierarchical manner. This means that the group has a vertical power structure with three or more permanent ranks, each with authority over the level beneath it. The authority is inherent in the position and does not depend on who happens to be occupying it at any given time. (ibid.)

Thirdly, the membership of an organised crime group has to be limited and exclusive (bonding). This means that the group has significant requirements concerning persons qualified to become members. The selection of the members can be based on ethnic background, kinship, criminal record, or other similar considerations. Those who meet basic qualifications for membership usually require a sponsor, typically a ranking member, and must prove their worthiness by their behaviour - for example, willingness to commit criminal acts, obey rules, follow orders, and keep secrets. Before a candidate can become a member, he must complete a period of apprenticeship, ranging from several months to several years. In some cases he is required to commit a murder. In Sicilian Mafia and New York La Cosa Nostra families, only men can be members of the group. (Ibid.) Gender is not an issue in the Naples Camorra groups where a woman has even been known to lead a group. (Stille 1996, 324; Saari 2000.) The requirements for member behaviour are probably the strictest in the Sicilian Mafia families, where a man of honour has to conduct himself in a certain manner to keep up his appearance and gain the group's respect (Ahtokivi 1994; Stille 1996).

Fourthly, an organised crime group has to be active over time (stability and continuity), there has to be perpetuity and continuance. Perpetuity means that the group constitutes an ongoing criminal conspiracy designed to persist through time and members. Although group membership is lifelong, old members die and new are accepted. The members assume permanence, and this provides a significant inducement for qualified persons to become members, thus perpetuating the group's existence. The perpetuity also means that group remains viable even if somebody gets caught or dies, or markets and criminal enterprises change, and that it continues to bring economical wealth for its participants. (Rikspolisstyrelsen 1977; Maltz 1985; Abadinsky 1994; Kenney and Finckenauer 1995.)

Fifthly, the group has to use or be ready to use illegal violence and bribery (corruption) to achieve its criminal goals. This means that in an organised crime group, violence is a readily available and accepted resource, and bribes to corrupt authorities are at hand. Access to private violence is an important element that allows the group to remain viable and to carry out its goals. When necessary, the group will resort to bribery in order to protect its operations or members by corrupting authorities. The use of violence or bribery is not restricted by ethical considerations, but is controlled only by practical limitations. (ibid.)

Sixthly, organised crime groups have certain functional positions and a division of labour. This means that members are selected on the basis of their capability to help the group to commit crimes and run legal enterprises more effectively. The position of the group's enforcer is crucial because he selects the right persons to commit a certain action in a rational manner. The enforcer may use members or non-members to accomplish the assignment, like in the USA, where Murder Inc has been used to commit murders for decades. (Teresa & Renner 1973.) Any member of the group can be

assigned less difficult tasks, like the use of violence. The enforcer does not act independently but receives assignments, directly or indirectly, from the head of the group. If the group is sophisticated, it may also have the positions of a fixer and a money mover. The fixer excels in developing contacts with criminal justice and/or political officials and, when appropriate, uses corruption. The money mover is an expert at “laundering” illicitly obtained money, disguising its origin through a string of transactions, and investing it in legitimate enterprises. (Rikspolisstyrelsen 1977; Maltz 1985; Abadinsky 1994; Kenney and Finckenauer 1995.)

Seventhly, an organised crime group does not like competition. Instead, it tries to attain and secure a monopolistic position in its business sectors or areas. “Monopolistic” means that a group can control a certain metropolitan area and all of its business, or just a certain business in a certain area. Business can be legitimate or illegitimate - or both. A monopoly restrains free trade and competition, and that naturally increases profits. The hegemony is achieved and maintained by the combination of violence and corruption targeted against other enterprises and the law enforcement officials. (Ibid.)

Eighthly, organised crime aspires to act in multiple enterprises both in legal and illegal business sectors. Illegal business is a rational choice to produce services and products that are needed. Operating in the legal sector is done for two reasons: 1) legal enterprises are used for laundering the profits that are earned through illegal businesses, 2) operating in the legal sector is profitable because competitors can be pushed out of the market by using dishonest competition (tax evasion, black labour, bribery, etc.) or actual violence against them. (Ibid.)

Ninthly, organised crime groups have rules and regulations to secure and specify their internal relations. Rules and regulations are backed by sanctions that define the authority in the group and set the norms¹² concerning the acceptable behaviour (Ibid.) The sanctions are: 1) banning, where a person is expelled from the organisation for unlimited time. The ban can only end if the banned person is asked to do a favour to the group and in that way reclaim membership, 2) death penalty, which is decided by the Commission¹³ that gives to the group a permission or order to kill its member. The permission system is a kind of due process to the members, where their mistakes are dealt with fairly. Such a system is needed because in the early days, when a permission was not required, the killing of the soldiers was in the hands of their own bosses, who could use murder for personal reasons. (Stille 1995.)

2.2.2 Legal Definitions

The most global and generally known legal definition of organised crime is the United Nations definition that has been revised several times. The most recent version was formulated in the Palermo convention in the year 2000. The European Union definition of organised crime was created to help authorities of member countries to classify their criminality and report on it to the Union. Although these two definitions are slightly

¹² In sociology, a norm is a shared behaviour that connotes what is culturally desirable and appropriate. Norms are similar to rules or regulations in being prescriptive, although they lack the normative status of rules (Marshall 1994, 359).

¹³ The Commission is the Cosa Nostra’s decision-making organ. Every Palermese/Sicilian organised crime family has a representative in the organ. The Commission solves all arguments between the families, gives permissions to murders and handles all matters that are necessary to business (Ahtokivi 1994, 56-58).

dissimilar and emphasise different aspects, they share many common features. As a member of both organisations, Finland has influenced and accepted the definitions; however, Finnish criminal law does not yet contain a written definition of organised crime.

2.2.2.1 United Nations definition

The United Nations has dealt with the issue of organised crime in several conferences and working groups. The biggest problem has been to find a commonly accepted compromise with which this difficult phenomenon can be defined in different cultural and economic settings all around the world. Even though the definition has been revised over time, the core of it has remained relatively unchanged. According to various United Nations working papers and the Palermo convention, organised crime has the following characteristics:

- 1) A group organisation to commit crimes, three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes¹⁴ or offences.
- 2) Hierarchical links or personal relations which enable leaders to control the group, earn profits and/or to control internal or foreign territories or markets, using violence, intimidation or corruption.
- 3) The laundering of illicit proceeds to further criminal activity and to infiltrate the legitimate economy.
- 4) A potential for expansion into any new activity beyond national borders.
- 5) Co-operation with other organised transnational criminal groups.

(Adamoli, et al., 1998; UN doc. E/CN.15/1996/2; United Nations Draft Framework Convention against Organised Crime 1997; United Nations Convention against transnational organised crime 2000.)

On the basis of several working papers and two years of formal preparation, the Palermo convention against transnational organised crime¹⁵ listed the crimes considered as activities of transnational organised crime:

- 1) Illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances.
- 2) Trafficking in persons and the exploitation of prostitution.
- 3) Counterfeiting currency and money laundering.
- 4) Illicit trafficking or theft of cultural objects or motor vehicles.
- 5) The theft or trafficking in nuclear material, arms, and explosive materials, and misuse to harm the public.
- 6) The corruption of public officials (The United Nations Convention of 12 December 2000; United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention 2000; Vlassis 2001.)

¹⁴ Serious crime means conduct constituting an offence punishable by a maximum deprivation of liberty of at least four years or a more serious penalty (United Nations 2001.). In Finland, the maximum penalty for procuring is three years of imprisonment, and for handling stolen goods four years of imprisonment. (Suomen Laki 2002.)

¹⁵ Transnational Organised Crime means that an organised crime group operates or is active in two or more countries; commits crimes in series that can be traced to the group's country of origin (Williams 1997, 63.)

On the basis of these conclusions, the United Nations member countries are expected to review their criminal laws in order to support the fight against national and transnational organised crime. In Finland, the Palermo convention was used as a background paper when the Finnish government gave its proposal to change the Penal Code. However, it was clearly stated that the decision of the Council of the European Union to criminalise the membership in a criminal group was the main rationale behind the proposed amendment (EYVL N:o L 351, 29.12.1998). The main point in the United Nations definition is that organised crime is profitable and uses both legal and illegal means to achieve its goals (Koskinen 2001).

2.2.2.2 European Union definition

The European Union definition of organised crime was created in the mid-1990s when the Union's third pillar was accepted in the Maastricht treaty, and crime prevention became one of the main issues in the Community area (Fijnaut 2001). The general guidelines against Transnational Organised Crime were approved in the summer of 1997 in the Amsterdam Treaty that became effective on 1 December 1999 (Euroopan yhteisöjen komissio 2000; Fijnaut 2001). The European Union definition of organised crime is the following:

- 1) Collaboration of two or more people.
- 2) Each with their own appointed tasks.
- 3) For a prolonged or indefinite period of time.
- 4) Using some form of discipline and control.
- 5) Suspected of the commission of serious criminal offences.
- 6) Operating on an international level.
- 7) Using violence or other means suitable for intimidation.
- 8) Using commercial or business-like structures.
- 9) Engaged in money laundering.
- 10) Exerting influence on politics, the media, public administration, judicial authorities, or the economy.
- 11) Determined by the pursuit of profit and/or power.

In order to be classified as an organised crime group, at least six of the above-mentioned characteristics must be present, four of them being numbers 1, 3, 5 and 11. (European Union 1997 & 1999.)

The list of characteristics helps the member states to prepare their annual national status reports on organised crime. However, since the given criteria are very problematic to define, these country reports are not strictly comparable. The country reports of 1997 that I have seen base on national interpretations, are uneven in quality, and show that interpretative freedom has been widely used.

2.2.2.3 Finnish authorities on organised crime

The Finnish law provides no specific legal definition of the concept or term “organised crime”. The European Union and United Nations definitions are often used as points of reference. The Finnish criminal law (article 6.2) only contains sanctions in event of an organised crime act, where the membership in an organised crime group serves as an aggravating circumstance. The membership itself is not punishable¹⁶, but when used as an aggravating circumstance, it can increase the prison sentence by up to one year. According to Finnish criminal law, it is not necessary for a person to commit the crime himself; aiding, advising or assisting in other ways in the commission of the crime(s) is also punishable (Hallituksen esitys 183/1999).

The organisation of the group and a division of labour has to exist before a crime is planned and committed. If not, the act is considered as a crime series committed by a group. The difficulty of proving joint planning as opposed to offenders participating in the crime series unsystematically – on an opportunity basis – has resulted in a situation where Finnish courts only seldom use the membership of an organised crime group as an aggravating circumstance. The number of such cases and police estimates of organised crime groups in the 1990s are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The number of cases in Finnish courts of first instance where the Finnish Penal Code article 6.2 has been applied as an aggravating circumstance in 1992-1999.

Year	Number of all crimes	Number of all criminal sentences	6:2§1/2 applied as an aggravating circumstance	Number of OC groups in police statistics
1992	151.005	76.713	3	?
1993	161.472	67.231	3	?
1994	146.074	62.647	-	?
1995	140.161	62.882	2	10
1996	132.655	60.216	10	13
1997	129.568	59.231	-	15
1998	113.156	59.699	1	22
1999	118.359	60.579	7	27
Total No.	1.092 450	509.198	26	87*

(Statistics Finland 2001; NBI of Finland 1999.) (? = No information available)

* The total number may include same groups several times because they are counted separately each year

¹⁶ Law amendment in 2003 made the membership in an organised criminal group punishable as an independent offence.

As far as organised crime groups are concerned, statistically, the difference between police estimates and pronounced sentences is significant. Why? The following explanations might be offered: 1) Confusion in definitions: police are too eager to define all group criminality as organised crime, while the courts are more specific and accurate. Police competence to investigate such criminality could perhaps also be questioned – why are they not able to present evidence that is acceptable in court?; 2) Lack of resources; police intelligence is able to identify more organised crime groups than investigators are able to investigate – in this case, the groups are never subjected to penal liability, or the delay is enormous; 3) Difficulties in applying the law. This means that although police identify a number of organised crime groups in Finland, this does not have direct consequences: anybody can be a member of any group, membership as such is not punishable. Therefore the number of organised crime group members and group-related criminal activities are two different things.

The problems the justice authorities (police, prosecutors and judges) face seem to be the lack of common definitions of organised crime and of basic knowledge concerning the different forms of criminality. These problems accumulate in their work as the investigating and prosecuting authorities are maybe too eager to “believe the worst” of crime group activities, and judges, on the other hand, are unwilling to pass a sentence on the basis of indirect evidence only. The situation is nevertheless improving as more written information is becoming available about organised crime activities, group structures and the motives of the participants.

2.2.2.4 Informant definitions of organised crime

My informants defined organised crime as follows: 1) International. The group has to have international contacts to criminals of several countries, and the group commits crimes across national borders; 2) A union of men, with a division of labour, and one man in the lead; 3) The group has common goals and rules, and shares the profits; 4) The group operates in all profitable areas of crime, and if someone wants to order anything illegal, the group should be able to deliver it (of course the price can be very high); 5) My informants did not regard themselves as members of an organised crime group because the crimes of their groups were too random and concentrated on only a few crime areas; 6) External violence is used when committing crimes, and internal violence for keeping members loyal to the group; 7) The organisation must commit enough crimes so that the members of the group can live on the income they receive from the organisation; if the members have own projects, they pay a provision to the organisation. The following interview quote provides a good illustration of what my informants thought about organised crime.

“...There should be something international. We do have our international contacts, but I have never considered myself to be that even though you might think otherwise. To be international means that you have to cross borders and have links between different countries... that makes it international organised crime. But organised crime, it doesn't really have to be more than just some gang. That's all it takes to be called organised crime in Finland. That you have a leader and you dance to his tune and there are maybe ten, twenty men hanging around, well there might even be four hundred men and I don't even know all of them. It's only organised in a way that is required to distribute the goods. I suppose it's something like that. I have never thought about what it is. I'm not interested in going back to that. I would be an

organised criminal. I haven't considered myself to be really criminal in that way at all..." IQ.

During the interviews, I noted that those persons who I met in prison and who were still waiting for trial were more cautious to define their own actions and the group to which they belonged as an organised crime group than those who were interviewed outside prison. Maybe they feared that my tapes would be used against them in court if they admitted their membership in an organised crime group.

2.3 Conclusions on the definitions of organised crime

In conclusion, it can be stated that the concept of organised crime is ambivalent, and several different kinds of definitions exist. All the different organised crime groups are unique, and both their forms and the crimes they commit vary significantly around the globe. Therefore, a single, concise definition of organised crime has to be very general in nature. Those familiar with the subject and operating in the field have acquiesced to draw very general guidelines, because for them and their work, the definitions are nonetheless important tools. The essential characteristic of the term "organised crime" is that it denotes a process or method of committing crimes, not a distinct type of crime, nor a distinct type of criminal (Beare 1996).

The most global definition of organised crime is the United Nations definition that is broad enough to cover the different forms of organised crime around the world. This breadth creates both opportunities and problems for national authorities. The main advantage of the UN work is that with this definition, some kind of global and common understanding of the concept of organised crime has been achieved. The other advantage is continuity: the core of the definition has remained the same despite some later revisions. A unified definition helps the authorities of different countries to deal with present crime and to prepare for future ones. Especially the poorer countries benefit from this global definition since they do not have the resources to deliberate the issue.

Yet the same globality is the principal problem with the UN definition: national differences are not taken into account. Resources the poor countries have to control crime are already limited, and the new international obligations to intervene in cultivation of drugs, human trafficking etc. can thus seem like an unreasonable strain. The biggest disadvantage of this definition is that it has been designed to help and support the needs of western industrial societies, and to minimise their costs in preventing felonies such as drug crimes and illegal immigration. For these reasons, the UN definition of organised crime is primarily a trend-setting guideline for member countries.

In practice, the less global European Union definition of the concept of organised crime is more specific and practically advantageous to EU member countries. The biggest and most visible advantage of this definition has been that on a European level, it has been possible to agree on a fairly specific and detailed definition of the problem of organised crime. A precise definition helps the countries to unify legislations and government action to a joint European level. With the help of unified legislations and government action the countries can deal with organised crime on a national and Union level.

However, the practical application of the EU definition has proven problematic, and the member countries seem to be enforcing it heterogeneously: Italian authorities, for example, use the definition comprehensively in their work. The number of organised crime groups has not increased dramatically during the time the definition has been applied (Perugini 2001). In Finland, the application has been more problematic and less unequivocal. In 2001, the National Bureau of Investigation estimated that during the six years of EU membership, the number of Finnish organised crime groups had nearly tripled. (NBI 2001). The unofficial police reports used in the law drafting process showed a similar trend; since 2000, the number of groups had more than doubled (23 groups in 2000, approx. 60 groups in 2001) (Ryymin 2001). In contrast, the number of sentences in Finnish courts where the criminal code 6.2 was used as an aggravating circumstance continued to remain very low with just a few verdicts per year.

An example on how authorities may over-estimate the danger of organised crime comes from the Netherlands, where criminologists studied 189 groups classified as organised crime groups by the Dutch justice authorities. The researchers used two different kinds of definitions (group criminality and organised crime group) to assess crimes that were committed by groups. Before the groups were defined and counted as belonging to organised crime, they had to fulfil the following five criteria: 1) hierarchic structure, 2) use of sanctions, 3) investment of criminal proceeds in legitimate activities, 4) intimidation of government officials or personnel of legitimate companies, and 5) perpetration of various offences. Only three of the investigated 189 groups met all five criteria of organised crime. Four criteria were met by seventeen groups, three criteria by eighteen groups, two by fifty-four and one by sixty-one groups. Thirty-six groups did not meet any of them (Fijnaut et al. 1998, 12).

The advantage of the criminological definitions of organised crime is that they are based on empirical research material. The research has looked at, among other things, the interpersonal relationships in the groups, how the profits of crime are divided, the continuity of the action and other person-related issues. The researchers have illuminated the methods and internal relationships of the groups, making it possible to develop a fairly accurate definition of organised crime. The biggest problem with the criminological literature definitions is that most of the published studies have been conducted in western industrial countries and are very Anglo-Saxon. Findings based on, say, Italian or American research tradition cannot easily be generalised to a global level because the differences between the western industrial world and other countries are far too great. On the other hand, it is good to know that also in Eastern Europe organised crime has been studied, but unfortunately this literature is not widely known due to language problems.

The United Nations and European Union definitions of organised crime are intended to provide guidance to national authorities when developing national law-making processes. The nature of the decisions of the international institutions is advisory, indicating how the internal laws and regulations of the member states should be developed. These legal definitions of organised crime may be criticised; authority's objective is to control, not to understand, the phenomenon of organised crime. The European Council has pointed out in its strategy that "we have to know the enemy", thus underlining the importance of a common definition. The lack of empirically studied information and the states' economic interests have in part contributed to the situation where the common acceptance of organised crime definitions has remained imperfect for so long. (Strategy of 27 March; Koskinen 2001, 15-16.) Criminological definitions can be used as a basic source of all definitions. The basic studies available have

attempted to understand, define and describe the relevant forms of group structures, human relations, and committed crimes. On the basis of that knowledge, law drafting can be carried out without over-estimation and delusions of the danger of organised crime.

On the other hand, those criticising the different definitions and attempts to understand forms of organised crime always remember to point out that the whole field of study is far too orientated to serve authority interests (stiff punishments, increasing law enforcement resources). Police are mainly interested in creating practical tools which facilitate their work while investigating single crimes. The critics claim that criminologists have forgotten their basic task, that instead of researching group participation, group formation, and their influences on society, they concentrate too much on serving police interests. However, it is worth remembering that most of the money with which crime groups are studied comes from justice authorities, and this must affect research frames. The lack of academic studies in the field has resulted in a situation where authorities attempt to get support for their work, and all they find are the criminological studies from the 1930s regarding American social structures or the history of other societies (cf. e.g. Abadinsky 1990; Arlacchi 1986; Cressey 1969) outdated a long time ago. Under these circumstances, I want in my own study to approach Finnish crime groups and participants in a “different” manner, from the inside.

3. Method and data collection of the study

When selecting the method of the present study, I carefully considered what method would be the best for getting reliable information on my questions: how, why and on which crime areas have Finnish professional criminals been organised in the 1990s, and what are the participants like. Given the limited time and money resources, qualitative thematic interviews with the professional criminals themselves seemed to offer several significant advantages: Firstly, attitudes, values¹⁷, family relations etc. should not be measured without understanding their context. Secondly, thematic interviews are a good and comprehensive way to produce in-depth information about the group's organisation level and the professionalism of the participants. Thirdly, the nature of the thematic interviewing method makes it possible to change and adjust the research frame also when the fieldwork is already underway, if for instance the collected information generates unexpected or new ideas, creating the need to change the framework of interview questions. If possible, I interviewed my informants three times because 1) I wanted to make sure that all interesting clues were discussed even if they went unnoticed during the first interviewing sessions (for this reason, I made a preliminary analysis of all interviews after the first interview session), 2) I wanted to apply Matti Kortteinen's idea that the information becomes "deeper" once you interview the same person several times; first interview often remains on a superficial level that can be transcended upon repeated confrontations (Kortteinen 1982).

My aim was to profile informants so that the selected groups would represent the selected crime areas temporally and geographically. The number of required interviews was concluded from several sources estimating the number of professional criminals in Finland. The different estimates available indicated that the number of active professionals in Finland was approximately 100. Various arguments supported this figure: 1) in the 1990s, the number of convicted prisoners in Finland was slightly below 3000 persons per year (Aho 2002), and if only one per cent (as motorcycle gangs claim) or under 5 per cent (as my informants estimated) of them were actual professional criminals, their total number would be 30 – 150 persons. The Finnish police estimated that in the 1990s, there were about 20 active organised crime groups in Finland, the number of participants varying from 3 to over ten. This would equal to 60 – 200 professional criminals. (NBI 2001).

I interviewed 15 persons and one group of 6 persons. The 21 interviewees represented 14 different groups active in the 1990s. The selection of the interviewees was made in three stages explained more closely in chapter 3.1.1 below. Since the basic objective of my study was to examine the characteristics of Finnish professional criminals, not their exact numbers, the number of interviewed persons and studied groups should be considered as representative for conclusions concerning Finnish professional criminals of the 1990s. It is obvious that the actual number of Finnish professional criminals is unknown. Some of them may never get caught, and although there are hints about background offenders, no substantive evidence has been found.

¹⁷ In attitude research, values are ideas held by people about ethical behaviour, what is right or wrong, desirable or despicable. Regarding values as a type of social data, distinctions are often drawn between values, which are strong, semi-permanent, underlying and sometimes inexplicit dispositions. Societies require some degree of homogeneity and consistency in the values held by people, providing a common fund of shared values, which shape social and political consensus (Marshall 1994, 552).

The collected material must be analysed critically from several perspectives: 1) did the interviewees try to give an overly professional and rational picture of their actions, 2) did some of the interviewed persons try to please me and tell stories they expected I would like to hear, and 3) is it possible that the interviewees did not tell the whole truth or concealed something, suspecting that taped interviews could cause them harm.

However, the reliability of my research is improved by 1) the pre-analysis of the interview sessions after every single interview, and writing down questions to be asked next time, 2) the final analysis of the research material, and inclusion of only those facts which could be authenticated from several interviews or other sources (justice documents, newspapers and magazines). In addition, during the years I have conducted thematic interviews with different authorities, normal people and now criminals, I have always tried to regard the interviewees as individuals and informants, which is quite different from, say, police interrogation where the respondent is in the role of a suspect or witness.

In Chapter 6, where the interviewed groups are defined, I use the European Union and United Nations definitions of organised crime, or the Dutch researchers' definition of group criminality and organised crime¹⁸ available in the 1990s. These different definitions of organised crime present 15 characteristics a criminal group has to fulfil before it may be classified as an organised crime group - otherwise its activities are regarded as group criminality. In the rest of the study, inductive logic is used; hypotheses of the study are derived from the measuring instruments employed in the empirical study.

In this study, I have used three different theoretical perspectives: sociological, anthropological, and economic. Sociological theories of group formation examine the social aspects of the phenomenon, anthropological theories view groups as ethnic entities, and economic theories interpret them as products of market forces. Because none of these theoretical perspectives alone can fully explain the formation of organised criminal groups in modern society, I am applying inductive logic, where empirical data are used to formulate the theories, not to test specific existing theories and hypotheses.

The relation of methodology and theories follows the established distinction between the three levels of extrapolation: 1) descriptive, 2) empirical, and 3) theoretical. The descriptive level means that events are described in that order and form in which they exist in empirical data. The empirical level means that the researcher also tries to explain and analyse the existing information. The theoretical level means that hypotheses are constructed from the empirical data, and raised from empirical level to theoretical one. (Grönfors 1982, 30-34.)

The problems of this methodology relate mainly to constructing hypotheses and linking theoretical literature to empirical research findings. Another problem is the abundance of empirical data that in part is too rich, in part irrelevant.

¹⁸ Variable means in the social sciences attributes which are fixed for each person or other social entity, but which are observed to be at different levels, amounts, or strengths across samples and other aggregate groups. Variables measure a social construct in a way which renders it amenable to numerical analysis. (Marshall 1994, 554.)

3.1 Data collection procedures

The data required for identifying suitable informants were collected from both public (TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, books and justice documents) and non-public sources (police, customs, border guards and tax authority data files). In the beginning of the study, my access to Finnish authority files was limited. The actual empirical research data were collected from 21 non-structured thematic interviews. The objective of such a small sample was to collect individual depictions of the everyday life of Finnish professional criminals. Statistical methods were disregarded because I am more interested in the actual life of the informants, not in numbers and statistical generalisations. I also believe that group participants, daily routines, group formation etc. cannot be operationalised and presented in a quantitative manner. Because of the qualitative nature of the study, the sample can be relative small. Special attention was paid to the selection of the informants who were to have first-hand knowledge and personal experience about the subject. The sampling process was not random; instead, the aim was to identify about 20 offenders from selected crime areas.

The data collection procedure consisted of three phases:

- 1) selecting the target or top interviews,
- 2) conducting the actual interviews and,
- 3) analysing the empirical material.

3.1.1 Selecting interviewees

Profiling is a deeply controversial issue. Profilers, even those from the same country, may have fundamental disagreements about the best way to exploit knowledge. At the heart of most profiling is the belief that characteristics of an offender can be deduced by a carefully considered examination of the characteristics of the offence. Profiling has been most often employed in the investigation of serious person crimes such as rape and murder, covering different criminal profiling, psychological profiling, crime scene profiling, profile analysis, behavioural, criminal personality profiling, statistical profiling and investigative psychology. The profiling methods vary, but the goal remains the same: to profile persons, even if the successfulness of such activity is difficult to estimate. While police focus on forensic evidence, a profiler concentrates on behavioural clues. The approach is scientific with an underlying objective to understand criminality in general. There is no commonly accepted definition of profiling, and the area subsumed under the profiling umbrella is diverse and complex. (Ainsworth 2001.) The following table provides an overview of the interviewed persons by age and offence type. The interviewees were asked to name offences in which they had participated, either in Finland or abroad, in the course of the 1990s.

Table 4. The interviewed persons by age, and the two offence types mentioned first when asked in which offences they have participated, either in Finland or abroad, in the course of the 1990s.

Interviewees	Age Group	Primary criminal activity	Secondary criminal activity	Number of interviews
1	20-29	Debt recovery	Narcotics	3
2	20-29	Debt recovery	Narcotics	1
3	20-29	Debt recovery	Narcotics	1
4	30-39	Narcotics	-	1
5	30-39	Narcotics	Stolen goods	2
6	30-39	Narcotics	Procuring	3
7	30-39	Debt recovery	Narcotics	3
8	30-39	Narcotics	Money laundering	2
9	30-39	Money laundering	-	1
10	30-39	Debt recovery	Narcotics	1
11	40-49	Narcotics	Money laundering	3
12	40-49	Narcotics	Stolen goods	2
13	40-49	Alcohol/cigarettes	Narcotics	2
14	40-49	Procuring	Stolen goods	1
15	40-49	Debt recovery	Narcotics	3
16	40-49	Narcotics	Money laundering	3
17	40-49	Stolen goods	Money laundering	2
18	40-49	Procuring	-	1
19	50-59	Stolen goods	Money laundering	3
20	60-69	Alcohol/cigarettes	Firearms	3
21	60-69	Alcohol	Narcotics	2
Total: 21	Average age: 40-49	1. Narcotics (7), 2. Debt recovery (6), 3. Alcohol (3)	1. Narcotics (8), 2. Money laundering (5) 3. Stolen goods (3)	Median: 2

*more detailed information on interviewed persons cannot be given due to security reasons.

The goal of profiling was not to profile offenders, but rather to select the best persons to be interviewed. "Best" means persons who:

- 1) were most active in committing selected crimes in the 1990s,
- 2) represented equally all selected crime areas,
- 3) represented equally the different Finnish professional criminal groups active in the studied crime areas.
- 4) a larger number of acceptable persons were selected in order to have a reserve of informants in case somebody would eventually become unavailable (refusal, death or other reason).

The profilers of single crimes look at the characteristics of the offender. I did the same, but considered the characteristics of the offender in the course of his criminal career. The selection of interviewees was based on various public sources and authority information, and it was done in four stages. During 2000-2001, I collected material from newspaper articles and journals published in the 1990s covering the selected crime areas. This selection gave me 70 pages of names, places and crimes committed by Finnish groups. Next I contacted specialists (persons with different kinds of expert knowledge about the subject). These specialists brought forward names of persons who were believed to have an active or dominating role in their group. This second selection left me with approximately 50 names. The third selection stage relied on court

documents regarding all the crimes these 50 persons had committed. This made it possible to rank the fifty persons and decide upon the order of interviews. In addition, I now had a potential reserve in case somebody would not be willing to participate. In my study, the profiling was used in a slightly exceptional way. Holmes and Holmes suggest that profiling has three major goals. These include attempts to provide the criminal justice system with information on a social and psychological assessment of the offender, a psychological evaluation of possessions found with suspected offenders, and consultation with law enforcement officials on the strategies, which might best be employed when interviewing suspects. (Holmes & Holmes 1996, 156.) The purpose of this selection process was to identify the right persons to interview, not to make them responsible for their actions.

The 21 interviewed persons were selected for equal representation of four different criminal backgrounds. The types of crimes that Finns typically commit across borders (from abroad to Finland) include:

- 1) different kinds of smuggling (spirits, tobacco and drugs),
- 2) delivering prostitutes and organising their work (procuring) in the country.

From Finland to foreign countries, Finnish criminals primarily

- 3) handle stolen goods.

The criminally received money has to be

- 4) laundered into legal money before it can be used in normal transactions without risk. Money laundering takes place in different kinds of business transactions in Finland and abroad. (cf. e.g. Junninen 1999.)

The persons selected to be interviewed were still committing or had recently committed these types of crimes. The interviewees composed a group of experts able to answer my questions. The cognoscenti's information naturally covered persons, education, social skills, citizenship etc. (Linkala 1971, 38). The differences between the informants' information were not on my interest list, instead, I wanted to create some kind of general picture of the world of Finnish professional criminals, group structures, and internal and external relations.

3.1.2 Interviews

The research material consists of 15 persons and one group of 6 persons all of whom participated in my thematic interviews. The total number of conducted interviews was 33, and the volume of taped discussions approximately 50 hours. Other, "unrecorded" time spent with the interviewees was approximately the same. The fieldwork was conducted in three and a half months in the summer and autumn 2001. Some of the interviewees were active in more than one of the discussed subject areas. Seven informants were interviewed only once, six were interviewed twice, and eight three times. Reasons for the varying number of interviews were diverse: one of the interviewees disappeared after the first interview, two of them told all their information during the first session, and three could not be reached for a second time. Two of the profiled persons in my reserve (on a shortlist of 50) were killed in the course of the three and a half months of fieldwork. All interviewees were male. Ten of them were serving prison sentences in Finland. Eleven were free and living mainly in Finland, staying part of the year abroad, in for example Estonia and Spain.

Each interview session took approximately two to three hours (of which 1-1½ hours was recorded on tape). During the first session, I asked all informants the same questions. At the second and third interview sessions, I asked what had come to my mind after analysing the first and second interviews. Thus, the information varies from one interviewed person to another. In this way, it was possible to win the informant's confidence, get through the "wall of silence" (Kortteinen 1982.), and get good and realistic information about the subject. This kind of research method gave me the opportunity and freedom to collect the necessary data. Similar method has been used in many qualitative studies. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 1980; Kortteinen 1982; Alasuutari 1994; Hirsjärvi & Remes & Sajavaara 1997.) Some Finnish studies made by interviewing prisoners show that some prisoners participate quite readily in research interviews (Aromaa, Kotamäki & Takala 1993; Kinnunen 1996).

The following themes were discussed in the beginning of all first interviews: group structure, crimes, personal feelings, external threats to the groups, the group's relationship to other Finnish groups, the group's international relationships, and personal details. Naturally, the information obtained from the interviews varied a lot, but it is the interviewer's job to make sure that all discussion topics are covered. In the thematic interview, the informant is the main character and the one who wants to tell the interviewer what he knows. When using thematic interviews, the planning of the question themes is one of the most important matters. The interviewer does not have exactly formulated questions, but rather a list of themes to be discussed. The themes are operationalised in the actual interview. On the basis of the discussion themes, the interview can be as in-depth as the research interests require, and the informant is willing to talk. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 1980, 55-56.)

The research material represents ethnographic descriptions of Finnish professional criminals and their groups active in cross-border crime (alcohol, drugs and tobacco smuggling, trafficking in stolen goods or procuring foreign prostitutes) in the 1990s. In my opinion, the research material is representative of such crime activities. The outcome of the study has not been affected by the limited number of interviewees, or by the scarcity of financial resources and time.

3.1.3 Analysis of the data

The analysis of the research material includes about 50 hours of recorded interviews. The tapes were transcribed to approximately 600 A4 pages. The material was divided between the planned question categories. In the analysis of the research material, I used the ATLAS computer program developed for text analysis.

The qualitative analysis consists of two phases: 1) simplifying the observations and 2) solving the mystery. Such a distinction is strictly analytical, because in practice the two phases always intertwine. When simplifying the observations, the data are examined only from the theoretical-methodological point of view. In the phase of "solving the mystery", the analysis is concerned with the essence of the research material. In this second phase, the emerging clues and available hints are connected, and used to construct an interpretation of the meaning of the studied phenomenon. (Alasuutari 1994.)

One of the essential features of qualitative material is that it can be studied from various points of view. Furthermore, qualitative material is by nature rich, multi-level and complex. The basis of qualitative research is the attempt to describe the “real life” effects as comprehensively as possible. In qualitative research, we are interested in discovering the regularities of the research subject. (Alasuutari 1994; Hirsjärvi & Remes & Sajavaara 1997.) For qualitative analysis, researchers should explain in detail any coding or construction procedures that were used. For qualitative analysis, researchers select quotes and indirectly convey the field experiences to the reader. In some cases the data might be presented throughout the report because qualitative studies are often organised around conceptual themes, ethnographic narratives, and observations. (Lofland 1976.)

The analysis of data was done as carefully as possible, and the findings written as critically as the academic codes require. It is worth noting that the findings were not questioned because the informants are criminals and on that argument more unreliable, seeking personal advantage and fame, but rather because critical approach is part of scientific method. As one of the basic Finnish textbooks on qualitative research points out “the more clues can be found to back up the solution, the more likely it is that the conclusion is correct”. It is equally important to notice that social science can never reach the absolute truth. (Alasuutari 1994.)

3.2 Limited scope of the methods

This chapter considers the functionality and validity of the methods chosen. First of all, in my opinion, the research could not have been conducted by any other methods. Qualitative theme interviews and text analysis were the right methods to produce and handle qualitative material. This does not mean that the study could not have been conducted better, but this was not entirely up to the researcher. The first selection of the interviewees would have been better if official records had been available as originally planned. This would also have enabled the inclusion of criminals who have not been caught. Unfortunately, the official records were not used in the research because the access was denied by the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation (Central Criminal Police), and the nearly two-year negotiations and attempts to reach a compromise were inconclusive. On the other hand, without official records there was no formal supervision, either, and this increased the trust of the informants in the study. On many occasions during the interviews, the question was raised as to with what information and with whose help the interviewees were identified. It was especially common among the informants who were free and not in prison to downplay their doings and call themselves “small time” criminals when I initially contacted them, and even during the interview situation.

Secondly, Kortteinen’s method could have been followed more closely. This means that all the persons selected should have been interviewed three times, as Kortteinen recommends. Kortteinen’s method was not followed consistently, because with some informants, all the necessary information was gathered during the first interview, and in my opinion there was no need for a second or third session. Such individual differences in the level of information are one of the basic elements of empirical study. Some of the interviewees were more willing to talk and trust the interviewer off-hand than others. In the interview situation, such willingness was evident if 1) the interviewee wanted to meet again for a new interview and 2) I felt that another interview was necessary.

Especially those working at a “lower level” were interviewed only once; their knowledge of planning and executing a crime were limited, and their lives discussed enough on the first time. On the other hand, it should be noted that some interviewees could be met only once, or could not be reached even though I wanted to have further discussions.

Thirdly, the combining of empirical data and theoretical literature could have been more harmonious. Here, the greatest difficulty was that theoretical discussion concerning professional and organised crime is, even globally, very poor. Being aware of this shortcoming, I opted for inductive logic which helped the theories to rise out of empiria, instead of testing any specific theory. From the start, the methods were there to make the collection of the data as successful as possible, and not to prove some theoretical model. The flexibility of the methods was a great asset during the often surprising process of collecting data on Finnish professional crime.

As far as the methods of the research are concerned, it can be said that text analysis and theme interviews proved useful for producing qualitative data. Text analysis was used in the beginning of the research to find from large quantities of text personal information and suitable crimes linked to the informant, and in the end it helped to verify the collected interview information. Text analysis in preliminary research was a useful and precise tool for examining vast quantities of text. Even though I was looking for congruent information, a critical approach was used. Text analysis can be applied to texts that have been gathered in different ways. In this study, text analysis was used as a semiotic tool to produce data, not to analyse the speech of the respondents. In semiotic text analysis, the focus is on the language. Language does not refer transparently to a reality independent from it, language is considered to be something that outlines, classifies and converts social reality and individual experience. A single phenomenon - for example crime - can be described, identified, recognised, framed or named in a number of different ways. (Jokinen & Juhila & Suoninen 1993.)

I aimed to improve the reliability of the text analysis by questioning the credibility and the level of unambiguousness of the texts. When making the analysis, I was very aware of the fact that newspaper articles tend to be coloured by journalistic interpretation, exaggeration and self promotion. On the other hand, there were no better public sources available for identifying the persons to be interviewed, and I still do not know any, even though these present sources suffer from bias. In addition to the people I interviewed, there must have been a number of unknown criminals, who have avoided getting caught and consequently not ended up in the papers. Fortunately, these unknown criminals were not relevant to the research, and the data could be produced with the known ones. It is possible that all interview, newspaper etc. information was misleading, but to what degree, that is impossible to say. Bearing that in mind, stories of the interviewees were subjected to critical examination (see chapters 4, 5 and 6 below for discussion on interview quotations). When quoting the speech of my interviewees, I often wondered, for example, to what degree they attempted to present themselves in a better light, or what parts of the speech were subjective remembrances and explanations of how things could have been. One has to remember that in social studies – even if accurate analysis, combination of several sources, and careful writing are applied – it is not always possible to reach objective historiography. Furthermore, it is good to acknowledge the fact that criminals must have secrets or they would not be “good” criminals successful in their trade. Only “incompetent” criminals reveal everything and harm themselves in the process.

Theme interviews were conducted on individual persons and one group of six. Individual interviews have already been thoroughly discussed, but a few words on the function of group interviews are in order. In a group interview situation, the participants can control each other's information and refresh each other's memories (Grönfors 1982, 109.) The aim of the group interview is to start a discussion and make it easier. The interviewer makes sure that everybody has a chance to participate in the discussion. Interview technique applies well to the study of meaning structures of miniature cultures. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 60-64.) The six person group interview that took place as a result of many lucky coincidences was useful; also, during the interview situation, it was possible to observe the interactions and the hierarchy within the group. According to textbooks, the downside of group interviews is the power hierarchy which has a bearing on who speaks what and when. This is especially problematic when one or two people dominate the group (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000) – which was indeed the case with the group I interviewed. That is why it was better to conduct most interviews as individual theme interviews where also the pressure of group conformity could be candidly dealt with. I was told that such pressure can come from the group or from the underworld. Based on individual interviews it is hard to say how strict group discipline really is, and what type of sanctions can be imposed. The subject is dealt in more detail in chapter 6.4.

When analysing the research material, I aimed to put together a coherent and descriptive story of what the life of the criminals I interviewed is like on average. The way the researcher presents a question has a significant bearing on the outcome: it determines on what level and in relation to what the construction of the subject's status is to be analysed, and how detailed the said analysis will be. Even with the same empirical material, the analysis produces different results depending on the subject of the research, and whether the forming of subject status is studied by using individuals, groups, cities, countryside, leisure, work etc. as analysis units. (Jokinen & Juhila & Suoninen 1993.) Here, the representativity of the research material was improved by 1) my previous study (Finnish professional crime in Estonia according to Finnish official records), 2) broad literature survey on earlier research, 3) careful selection of interviewees, and 4) accuracy of the analysis and validation of the interview information from different public sources.

4. Participants of Finnish professional criminal groups - Adventurers and Risk-Takers

In the next three chapters, I describe and analyse thoughts and opinions of Finnish professional criminals as they were presented to me in my interviews with them. I discussed with the informants aspects of their own criminal careers, the crimes they have committed, and their membership in a professional criminal group. The presentation of the empirical interviews is constructed to form a logically progressing story. I will begin by dealing with the feelings and reasons behind the decision to join a criminal group (Chapter 4). Chapter 5 describes the crimes the interviewees have committed, and in Chapter 6, I analyse the groups in terms of their formation, structure, and degree of organisation. All the interview material presented in the text has been anonymised with utmost care; I do not wish to complicate the lives of my informants by disclosing too many authentic details.

In the present Chapter 4, I analyse the personal characteristics of the informants, the mutual relationships between the persons participating in the groups, and the relationships of the informants to their families, relatives, friends, and other criminals. When reading the following three chapters, it is important to remember that the interview quotations presented and the analysis based on them give a kind of “average description” of the subject. The objective of the analysis has been to get a full, individualised overview of the persons committing crimes, to describe the internal social relationships and tensions within the groups, and to analyse the group rules and norms regulating the behaviour of the members participating in them. My study and analysis have been greatly influenced by those works on qualitative research that attempt to understand the offender primarily as a human being, and secondarily as an offender (cf. e.g. Sutherland 1972; Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972; Falcone 1995).

4.1 Age, education, and social status

The age of my informants usually ranged between 25 and 45 years, only a few persons involved in the trafficking of spirits were considerably older. The high average age of the informants can, at least partly, be explained by the fact that the learning of criminal skills, the creation of suitable and reliable contacts, and the accumulation of starting capital required in the smuggling business takes time. There are many examples in the literature about the hegemony of middle-aged men at the top of the criminal world in different countries: the leader of the successful Medellín cocaine cartel, Pablo Escobar, died at the age of 44. The Kray twins were leading figures in the London underworld when over thirty years of age. Thomas Buchetta was a “Don” of two continents before the age of 40, etc. (Strong 1996; Fry 1999; Falcone 1995.) When the middle-aged men may already be enjoying the fruits of their criminal career, younger men are still committing crimes to accumulate money and to gain respect in the criminal world. In the United States, for example, a typical person arrested for drug law violations, as reported in the UCR, is a white male under thirty years of age, though minorities are disproportionately represented among these offenders (Federal Bureau of Investigation 1986).

Yet the age distribution of professional criminals could also be explained by the hardships of criminal life. Elements that are prevalent in the criminal way of life - alcohol and drugs, irregular working hours, and the permanent risk of physical violence and death - wear the men out before their time. Often, an accidental death or a premeditated murder committed by accomplices takes middle-aged men to their graves before the onset of old age. The following interview quotation provides a good illustration of what my informants thought about their homogeneous age structure and their life expectation.

"...In this kind of life, you know, the longer you stay in these circles the more likely it is that you don't make it. It's obvious that if you survive to see fifty, that's quite skilfully done in these circumstances..." IQ.

The education of my informants varied from primary school to university studies. The majority of them had only completed the obligatory primary and secondary school, but some had studied or were presently studying at college or university level. According to Aarne Kinnunen's study, convicted Finnish drug offenders have a lower educational level than those convicted of other offences or the general population aged fifteen and above. It is very rare for a drug offender to have a college level education. (Kinnunen 2002.)

The language skills of the informants were limited to basic or slightly more advanced English. A few also spoke elementary Spanish, Estonian, Russian, Vietnamese, or Swedish. The interviewees commented that better education or language skills would do no harm, but that they managed to take care of matters in Finland also with this competence. They even coped abroad as the persons participating in the deals knew what particular criminal business was going on and under negotiation, as illustrated by the following interview citation:

"...With English you can manage well enough, and then there's always this gesture language, so you'll always manage in the world. Even if you don't understand a word of what the others are saying, you'll manage all right. What is necessary you can always make clear with dictionaries and things. You'll just have to improvise and things work out..." IQ.

The persons I interviewed came from working-class homes and belonged to the lower middle class. The working-class background had had a permanent influence on their lives, because they were able to raise their social status only in terms of economic standing. Because they were not interested in further training, the level of education remained low, and the social skills learned in childhood were limited. A significant difference to some internationally known organised criminal groups is that the persons I interviewed wanted their children to get a good education and not to follow in their fathers' footsteps. The situation seems to be totally dissimilar in Italy or the USA, where family honour requires that father's profession is passed down to the next generation. By their education and social status, the Finns I interviewed were somewhere between the members of Sicilian and New York criminal organisations. The children of the New York Cosa Nostra families live and grow up in a middle-class atmosphere, and attempt to become integrated in society by means of education and social progress. They are not very keen or economically forced to follow their ancestors on the criminal path. The situation is different in Sicily, where La Cosa Nostra families continue to be relatively normal families, and even though the children may go to school, they are still eager to enter the profession of their father. In addition, there are reportedly also many Sicilians who cannot afford to go to school, and they may easily be lured to join criminal families

with money and social success. (Arlacchi 1986; Stille 1996.) Studies of criminal careers conducted in the United States have shown that the higher the level of skill and earnings connected with a job, the fewer offences are committed, and in particular violent offences are rare (Petersilia 1980).

4.2 Criminal career

The onset of the criminal careers of the interviewed persons may be roughly divided into two groups: 1) a career as a juvenile delinquent, professional criminality is a natural continuation, 2) persons who become professional criminals “by chance”. The Finnish researchers Aromaa and Järvinen have divided the development of a criminal career into three different phases:

- 1) life proceeds along the usual paths, and the individual has contact only with the periphery of the criminal milieu,
- 2) during the mid-career the individual lives an active criminal life in the underworld, and there are few contacts with the legitimate society, and
- 3) the career proceeds towards the status of professional offenders, where the individual enjoys power and respect in the underworld (Aromaa & Järvinen 1989).

Those of my informants who had become professional criminals after being juvenile delinquents had started with kiosk and school burglaries and joyriding offences (car thefts) already before the age of criminal responsibility (in Finland, 15 years). Professionalism was a natural continuation and development of their criminal career as they gradually started to accept commissions for increasingly demanding and complex, economically more profitable offences. The homes of these persons had been conflict-ridden, and the excessive alcohol use of the parents had made everyday life restless. In particular, the father's violent eruptions against the mother and the children had forced the children to spend time in the streets. Rather than seeking help, they had opted for a physical response:

“...when I was 13 I would have killed my old man, but my Mom interfered. I moved out. I'm glad I could eventually settle things with my old man before he died as victim of a violent crime...”IQ.

The fathers of at least three informants had either committed suicide or died as victims of homicide. The career of a juvenile delinquent had resulted in conflicts with the authorities already at an early stage, and the perception of, in particular, police and the criminal justice system as enemies was internalised early on. The authorities had not provided help to the children victimised by their violent parents, but were keen on condemning their petty thefts, assaults and car thefts.

Approximately one out of three informants had been in normal, gainful employment before the onset of the criminal career. They had developed into professional criminals through contacts made in prison or after being released from prison as society rejected them. The criminal career had usually begun as a consequence of economic problems, problems in the partner relationship, or of boredom with the life of a normal working man. Economic hardship was alleviated by economic crimes, partner problems were dealt with by resorting to violence, and the want of adventure and excitement was fed by committing crimes. According to the informants, it was common that the attempts to change one's life by resorting to crime had unfavourable consequences and resulted in a

prison sentence. In prison, these well-behaved and often very regretful random offenders were lured by means of money and protection to participate in groups engaged in smuggling and drug dealing. The recruitment process had naturally been preceded by a careful monitoring and background research by professional criminals. The interviewees who had drifted into professional crime “by chance” came from “normal” families where education was valued, the children had hobbies, and the parents did not abandon them although they had ended up in prison.

All the persons I interviewed shared one common characteristic: when younger, they had actively participated in sports. They were extremely competitive, wanting to win and be the best. Competitiveness came up in many interviews, and the higher the place in group hierarchy, the more dominating it was. The urge for excitement, adventure, and for testing one's limits was the second quite common characteristic among the informants, regardless of their background. Excitement was sought, for instance, from gambling or from becoming a mercenary. Many informants had at some stage of their lives had gambling as their main occupation, or had spent large amounts of money in gambling, often derived from other crimes. As one informant described:

“...Me, I used to gamble for many years as my main occupation, that's all I did. I played just about any game there is, where you can play cards for money... I know some others around here too who have gambled for a living...”IQ.

This urge to compete, to be the best, the search for excitement, and the wish to test one's limits had connived in criminal behaviour. Offending was seen as a form of competing with society and with other criminals. The more profitable an offence one was able to commit, the more publicity value it had among other criminals and the media, and the more importance and fame he gained. The men tried to face up to the challenges presented to them, and to gain more honour by attempting to commit increasingly more demanding, more dangerous, and more profitable crimes. The mental landscape is well illustrated in the following quotation:

“...I guess boundaries collapse. You do some forbidden things, and you get used to it and all that, then you don't think so much about it. The threshold changes, sort of... I guess the first killing is the worst one, then the more you do it the less it bothers your conscience...”IQ.

The informants who had been juvenile delinquents had already made a name for themselves through the crimes they had committed when young, and the final acceptance to the ranks of professional criminals occurred over time after repeated prison terms and increasing economic prosperity. Whether the criminal career had started at an early age and developed through trial and error, or later through socialisation in prison, all informants shared one common feature: perseverance and persistence combined with experience and intelligence had made them skilful and esteemed in their profession - irrespective of their educational background. Their perseverance and ability to carry out projects without consideration of means or price was repeatedly mentioned in the interviews, and regarded as one of the most important aspects of honour. For them, the career of a professional criminal was a conscious choice, and they did not see any reason to change their choices. On the contrary, their only regret was that they had failed and been caught. In this respect, they did not fit, for instance, Petersilia's description of the development of criminal careers in the USA. Studies carried out in the United States have shown that it is not common for people to develop into professional offenders; even those with an extensive criminal career

generally do not pay any particular attention to the planning of their offences or to specialising in some forms of crime. (Petersilia 1980.)

For some informants, the onset of the criminal career may have occurred more or less as a result of chance. However, to continue along the same lines after the first prison term is a tempting alternative, especially financially. The debts created during the earlier business activities are a trap from which it is not possible to escape by legal means. The continuation of a criminal career becomes psychologically easy because society labels the person as a criminal - it is difficult to find employment, many friends abandon you, relatives keep their distance, and on top of it all, also the partner relationship often breaks down. A comment often repeated in the interviews was that remorse and depression about the offence do not pay the bills or end social disapproval (cf. e.g. Kääriäinen 1994). As the new acquaintances made in prison provide both acceptance and large amounts of money to improve the economic situation, decision is easy to make. This process has been aptly grasped by Becker (1963): The evolution of the identity of an individual career and the evolution of a deviant career can be processed as a series of choices. A deviant career proceeds as a series of choices that are predicated on earlier choices, and the person thus diverges from a conventional life. On the other hand, persons who have been labelled withdraw into their own subcultures where they can feel accepted and protected against the outside world.

Albeit that the criminal understands that he is making independent choices, his decisions are nevertheless influenced by extraneous factors, too. Kääriäinen says that the criminal is pushed and pulled by both conventional society and the underworld (cf. e.g. Kääriäinen 1994, 259). In the cross-pressure of the two worlds, the individual constructs his own private life and his criminal career. According to Aromaa and Järvinen, an individual's criminal career may be categorised into three different types and three different levels of involvement (cf. e.g. Aromaa & Järvinen 1989, 3); criminal career is in a state of permanent change, and its characteristics are determined by the crimes committed, the person's individual criminal competence (skills, intelligence and courage), and by the criminal colleagues he knows and has access to. These characteristics determine whether the person gains, maintains or loses his positions in the underworld. (ibid.).

4.3 Parents and siblings

The parents of all informants had been or continued to be in working class occupations, and most of them had no serious criminal history. Those parents or relatives who did have a criminal record and had been in prison made an exception to the rule. It was also highly unusual that children, siblings, parents or other relatives participated in criminal activities. Six of my informants had committed some major offences together with their brother or father (smuggling, bank robberies, counterfeiting money), or used them as fronts that own companies which can be utilised for money laundering.

An interesting detail in such cases was that if such a father-son or brother-brother - combination was caught, often only one of them was convicted after taking the whole responsibility for the crime. Perhaps another version of this was the showy "break-up" in the middle of the trial, by which the companions wanted to make it clear that their bond was irrevocably broken. It is difficult to say whether such a break-up was real or not, and why the other partner was willing to sacrifice himself. Did he do it because it was probable that he would better endure prison, or because he was not as vital for the

operation as the other party? Or perhaps he could take care of his part of the criminal activity also when in prison. Had the break-up been genuine or a planned scheme to mislead the authorities and prevent the confiscation of the proceeds of crime? Or was the objective to get a shorter prison term for the person who was more important for the operations outside? From prison, one can manage drug deals, but is not able to travel abroad to take care of business and investments. The interviews did not provide clear answers to these questions. However, if such “controlled” allocation of responsibilities actually takes place in Finland, the situation would bear some resemblance to the operation of the American Lupollo family that has always had two business branches, legal and illegal one, run by different family members (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972). Also, taking the responsibility for another person's crimes and the theatrical break-up may both serve the objective of lowering the sentence; Finnish law allows the defendant to refuse to answer, or even to lie if he feels that the question puts him in jeopardy. One informant describes the situation as follows:

“...if you confess that you have committed a crime, the judge will have to sentence you for that crime. But even if you are caught red-handed and you just deny everything, you always have a chance of getting out of it somehow with smaller damages. In a way, if you raise your hand and confess the crime, you don't, in principle, even need a lawyer... even if say ten people have told that you have done it, if you keep your mouth shut and don't do anything and wait for the trial to begin so that you get access to the papers, what they have on you, then you can make some sort of action plan. You still have a chance then...IQ.

Whether my informants had become professional criminals after being juvenile delinquents or by chance, their parents or relatives rarely visited them in prison. The parents of the juvenile delinquents usually did not care, or were not able to supervise where their children were and how they were doing. The parents of those who had become professional criminals by chance were usually close to their children, but their sons did not want to invite them to prison. They did not want to add to the burden of their parents by demonstrating their own bad luck - their support and encouragement was delivered by mail.

When comparing Finnish and Italian family perceptions, the differences are clear. In Finland, criminal profession is not passed from father to son. Instead, the children are taught Protestant ethics, which idealise diligence and humility, and which have had a very strong influence on the formation of the generally accepted values in Finland (Weber, 1990). Italian society, on the other hand, is a society of families. Family is the social structure to which you have to be loyal, and which you are to protect, honour and trust (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972). This family-centredness has often been taken to position family and state on opposing sides, and to justify that the family ascertains its existence even by criminal means.

Migration spread Italian values and attitudes to new countries, and with them the cultural attitude of Mafia. Thus, it was not membership or expansion, but attitude that enabled the development of La Cosa Nostra in the United States. (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972.) However, it is worth noticing that American society was to begin with - and still is - a highly unequal class society, just like many Mediterranean countries; wealth and social class determine - at least to a large extent - what one can be and become. (cf. e.g. Bourdieu 1979).

4.4 Times and years spent in prison

The number of prison sentences received by the informants varied between one and six, and the years spent in prison from a few years to over ten years. With some informants, the court procedure was still pending, and the expected sentences amounted to several years in prison. None of the informants wanted to be in prison, and they thought that the loss of liberty was a dear price to pay for the way of life they had chosen. On the other hand, those interviewees who did not regret what they had done but only that they had been caught, said that the time spent in prison is not completely wasted. Instead, it can be spent usefully: you can rest, make new acquaintances, continue with criminal activities, and plan new crimes. These persons saw their own criminal activity as a justified means of enrichment and experiencing excitement. Although getting caught annoyed them, they were nevertheless proud for not ending up in prison due to a stupid, badly planned crime committed on the spur of the moment or under the influence of substances. They had been convicted because of an “occupational accident”; despite the thorough preparation, something had gone wrong in the planning or execution of the crime, or in spending the proceeds of the crime, as a consequence of one's own or accomplice's actions. In the following interview quotation, a person who has already spent several years in prison describes what he has contemplated during his long prison term.

“...Why did I have to do this again and get caught? Everybody gets these ideas. In a way, then, if I compare myself with those others, I can be happy because I wasn't caught for anything stupid. They're often the kind of guys who have killed their best friend when drunk. They don't even remember anything. And that gets you ten years. Every time I look in the mirror when I shave, I think that's [me] who is looking back. I tried to get rich but I failed. I tried to make a living for my family, and myself, but I failed and went to prison. I've got nothing to be ashamed of. I can stand with a straight back and be behind my crimes. I can show my criminal record... If you have done something low and despicable, that doesn't make sense, then you're here for nothing, sort of. If I would for instance kill somebody when drunk... I'm thinking that if I would have to do time for something like that, I would probably be banging my head against the wall for being that stupid... That's an idiotic thing to do, it is totally useless. If you commit a crime, some smart elegant system, and it goes wrong, you can't help it. But if you do something when drunk, that I could not forgive myself. If I commit a crime with a clear head and serious contemplation, and get caught, that's OK. That's the name of the game. Then I know the risk already before I do it. But I won't know that if I shoot somebody when drunk. I won't know that when I leave home that today I'm going to shoot somebody dead and do ten years for it. If I start to plan some import project or something, and get a million in cash so that I can buy the stuff from abroad, and first of all to smuggle all that money abroad, and then have the stuff imported to Finland, and get all the weapons and transports. How they are handled, packed, how they are brought over, how people are going to move around over there in Europe, how you get the money to them, what hotels they're going to use, they don't know anything, so that's where you have to use your head...”IQ.

Those informants who were content with their decision to become professional criminals said that prison terms have also positive effects, and the time in prison should not be wasted. In prison, one is able to continue committing crimes, and to develop new, more profitable crimes. Also, you can make new useful acquaintances with future accomplices, and recruit new reliable persons to your group. My interviews yield a

similar overall picture of the professional criminals' ways of operation as Aromaa's study of habitual offenders¹⁹. According to Aromaa, mutual familiarity, recruiting newcomers, and methods of socialisation serve security objectives of the groups. Time is required to develop a sufficient degree of trust before receivers will agree to enter business relationships with a newcomer. (Aromaa 1983, 53.) In the following quotation, a professional criminal tells about his time in prison.

"...I'm a country boy, you see, so I have made practically all my contacts in prison... Society is actually kicking itself in the arse when they lock people up, big cases and big prisons, well that's where they then make their contacts... We read each other's protocols, so we see who is reliable and who isn't. The reliable ones are then continuing to co-operate. Prisons are the places where reliability is tested and studied. Later, when outside again, you'll know that this guy is reliable, and that you can do anything with him... Back in the 1990s there was a case where they were prosecuting tens of suspects in a narcotics case. One of them wasn't sentenced. That was me, I didn't say anything. Everybody else got something. In this process, you learned that more than half of the people were informers, and some 20 people were reliable. Here you could see again what good it did for society that 20 clever guys got together..."IQ.

All of my informants said that it is difficult to return to "normal" life. Those who wanted to continue the career of a professional criminal said that they did not want and were not able to return to normal work because they had large debts or damages to pay, or a broken partner relationship, or normal society despised them and consequently prevented them from assuming an "honourable" career, as explained in the following quotation.

"...A very important matter was that when you got out of prison, you had huge debts and recovery proceedings, and therefore there was no motivation whatsoever to try to get into that normal rat race..."IQ.

My informants felt that the greatest disadvantage of imprisonment, besides the actual loss of liberty, was the deterioration and destruction of family and friendship relations. In many cases, a long marriage or cohabitation relationship ended, and contact to children suffered during the long prison term. In regard to family relations, a significant difference between gypsies and members of the majority population was found: Family members of the prisoners representing the majority population were either not able to, did not want to, or were not invited to visit the imprisoned person, whereas members of the gypsy culture did not abandon their imprisoned relative, who also did not want to be abandoned. Instead, the ties between the prisoner and his family remained close. Those very few of my informants who regretted their crimes, or who had otherwise come to the conclusion that they were going to give up their criminal career, gave two kinds of interpretations for getting caught: 1) it was a good thing that I was caught, because this way I am able to give up crime, 2) of course it was a bad thing to get caught and be locked up, but when in prison, family and relatives have begun to interest me more, and the criminal career can be given up. The following quotation reflects such considerations.

¹⁹ A habitual criminal is a term used by police when referring to a certain kind of repeat offenders (Lipsonen 1990, 253.) Persons with multiple problems, on the other hand, is a name given by social scientists when dealing with the majority of the prison population mainly guilty of less profitable and badly planned property crimes that result from an excessive abuse of intoxicating substances. (Kääriäinen 1994, 60.)

“...I’ve just made up my mind for sure, and usually what I decide I also do. That is how I’m getting out of this, that it doesn’t interest me any more. I simply can’t take it any more. I mean it is such a life that wears you out. All the time the cops are after you, and all the time you’ve got to be ready. If you’ve got money somewhere, you must always be prepared to protect your family and yourself. There’s always this tension, like when is the bullet going to hit you. You can never know where it’s coming from...”IQ.

Nevertheless, almost all of my informants wanted to continue committing crimes, and to have better luck next time. They saw crime as their profession in which they wanted to become more competent. They wanted to distinguish themselves from habitual criminals who live in boarding houses, abuse intoxicating substances, and are not in control of their lives. My informants thought that habitual criminals commit unplanned and financially unprofitable crimes or kill their drinking companions on the spur of the moment. They are usually drunk when committing the crime, and need a “bracer” before doing it. In contrast, my informants made a clear distinction between work and leisure. When working, they do not use any kind of intoxicating substance, and even when off-duty, they use only non-addictive substances, and never in excess (according to them, only heroin use is totally out of the question). My informants’ views on habitual offenders were very similar to those described in earlier Finnish studies. (cf. e.g. Aromaa 1983; Kivivuori 1992 & 1999.)

Even though there were many variations to the daily lives led in prison, all the informants had one thing in common: they did not have any kind of trouble with prison staff or other prisoners. Those who had been placed in open wards, worked or studied in daytime, exercised or participated in some type of sports in the evenings, and spent time with other prisoners playing games and watching TV. In the open wards, the prisoners live a working man’s life from eight to four, with free evenings spend inside the prison. Those placed in closed wards or in isolation spend their time either in total solitude or together with other prisoners of the same ward, studying, resting, exercising, and going out for one hour a day. The following quotation describes the daily cycle in an open ward.

“...My working day is such that I wake up at seven, the doors are opened, and twenty past seven I go to the bookbinding shop to work on my project. I’m making a scrapbook about myself right now, with leather covers... I’m working there, and then there’s the lunch break at half past ten, and then we go back to work around noon, and then we go out, and back to work, and wait for the working hours to end about half past three, then we go and eat, and then we go out again for 20 minutes, and then we go to the wards, and the wards are checked, and then we have the evening activities. That’s when I go to pump some iron, or play something, usually volleyball. Then the doors are locked half past eight. We are in an open ward. A normal day. On Mondays and Tuesdays I work as a librarian...”IQ.

The older informants who had been in prison several times, said that the prisoner “material” has deteriorated from year to year, and conditions in prison have been made too easy. Prison has become a shelter for the mentally ill and substance abusers who can maintain their addiction in peace. Discipline and respect for the prison staff are gone, as the following quotation describes.

“...prison conditions have improved. This is discussed forever, in the sauna, when going out, or anywhere. When we’re eating there’s always complaints about the food, and in reality the food today is as good as it can get... If they had been here in the 70s, I mean when we were peeling potatoes. The potatoes went into three categories.

Those with buds were prisoner potatoes, but the good ones were given to the pigs. The guards just said that the pig doesn't know how to take out the buds. When going out, we walked at two metre distances between prisoners, and the prisoner uniform had to be neat. The uniform had hooks like in the army and they were not allowed to be open. Everybody had to be in similar outfits when we went into the yard. But that went for the guards, too. The chief of the guards saw to that, so also the guards had to be dressed in a way so as to set a good example. Then you were not allowed to talk. If you did, you lost your points. You got those points for three months. Then you didn't get your milk rations and the extra butter. In those days, you were given extra butter if you worked. Today, there is no work. Most of the prisoners are studying something...”IQ.

Part of this criticism of the younger generation could be a reflection of the truism that the young are lazy, ill-behaved and arrogant if compared with the older critic. However, also many authority statements have expressed concern about prisons having become addiction clinics and institutions for the mentally ill (Arpo 1996).

4.4.1 Men with a name, honourable criminals, and the prison hierarchy

My informants' living conditions in prison were good, probably the best available. This was due to the very strict hierarchy inside the prisons, and to their high status: my informants belonged to the absolute elite because of their criminal merits and economic success, and therefore they were "entitled" to the best possible treatment. The ranking of the prisoners depends on how demanding crimes they have committed, how profitable they have been, and on the carefully controlled use of violence. According to authority experts as well as my informants, the top level of the prison hierarchy is occupied by the leaders and top men of major drug groups, who have a lot of money and a reputation of using violence to deal with problems. More generally, the top level is comprised of perpetrators of demanding and economically profitable crimes, who have committed their crimes skilfully, with deliberation, and of their own free will. A Finnish prisoner serving a life sentence listed respectable crimes and the hierarchy in prison as follows: most respected and feared are those sentenced for homicide, then those who have committed armed robberies, on third place are the perpetrators of violent crimes, and so on. The lowest, despised by all, are rapists, persons who have victimised children and women, and informers (Karhi 1995).

In every prison I visited, there were men who had made a name for themselves. With their reputation and wealth, they had achieved a position in the criminal community where they were respected, heard, and feared. They formed the top of the internal prison hierarchy, and their life in prison was peaceful and easy, at least to an outside observer. An informant who enjoyed the protection of a man with a name describes the situation:

“...Nobody would go and eat at our table. They knew it was ours. There was an incident, for example, when a new prisoner didn't know that it was our table, then somebody would tap him on the shoulder and say: “You'd better move somewhere else. It's not a good idea to stay at this table. It belongs to us.” Nobody would usually be cross with me... They knew where I belonged and I could do anything I wanted. I didn't take advantage of my status, though, the way I could perhaps have done... When we started a game, I didn't need to ask anybody if I could join the game, I just needed to say I'd like to join and there was always a place for me. If somebody else would ask they'd reply that there is no room. Most of them wanted to

be on good terms with me. Sometimes they'd ask about trivial matters, indicating that they wanted to make friends or get closer... ”IQ.

Usually, there are only a few “renowned” men per prison; business opportunities, territories of criminal activity, and in particular, the number of persons who can act as accomplices are quite limited in a closed institution. The territorial power of these men covers at least the prison area, and those who continue to commit crimes even in captivity have no problems in staying in control of their old markets, provided that they are still able to supply their marketing network with merchandise. The groups of the “men with a name” do not usually co-operate, and in most cases, they are not even aware of the activities of the other groups. The following quotation describes a personal experience of becoming accepted into such a group.

“...but it happened already earlier here in prison that I was accepted into the circle of men with a name... As a result, then, I received this position, or this boss learned about me, he had heard so many good things about me from there. What happened then, that I was accepted to the circle of the tough men, it was just like in a Mafia movie. It was really amusing, because there is of course no alcohol here, and the food is what they've got in the kitchen. One day I was invited to the kitchen. It's a big kitchen. There they had a table all set, with the best kind of meat. The kind of food that they don't have in any prison, not for sale, not available. Everything brought in from the outside. Just like you'd have gone to eat in a top restaurant, the table was long and it was loaded with all kinds of food. It made me wonder when the top man in that prison said “yes, please come here and sit with us”. I thought this can't be true. He took a bottle of red wine and opened it. We drank wine, and men were keeping guard in the corridor so that if staff would come around we would be able to hide the liquor and other clearly illegal stuff. So there we drank and ate and talked, and they made it clear that “you are close to them”. They said that if there are any problems, just let them know, and they'll take care of it. They said that if I need money, just ask for help. They took me into the sort of family. When the evening was over, we then took some whisky and started to drink... But before this happened, they would talk a lot with me, asking all kinds of things about my background. They did to me what we were then later doing to others. They wanted to know everything, what had happened and why and when, and what I had been doing before ... ”IQ.

The informant's account of the top men bears great resemblance to Johan Bäckman's description of the “honourable thieves” (or “thieves-in-law”) in Russian prisons. In Russia, honourable thieves are persons who have achieved merits in their criminal career and are above other, ordinary criminals. This means that they have the authority to solve disputes between other criminals, and most importantly, to decide how matters among prisoners are handled. (Bäckman 1996.) According to my informants and other persons I have consulted, Finnish men with a name have a similar authority in prison as their Russian colleagues. The situation seems to be slightly different in Italy and the USA, where according to literature, the local Dons are so much respected that they do not only solve the problems of their own criminal families, but also participate in the mediation of conflicts within the local society, and even between the society and the outside world. (Arlacchi 1986.) At least to my knowledge, Finnish top men have not been able to influence conflicts or the fates of people other than those directly under their power, either inside or outside the prison. However, at least in the USA, problems between the members of criminal families are usually dealt with by the captains, and the head of the family (Don) seldom even learns of them (Bonnano 1983).

It is worth noting that men with a name, or prison gangs, are not unique to the 20th century. Rather, it seems obvious that there have been such people and gangs for as long as there have been prisons. One of the earliest documents tells that in 1820, the Camorra existed among the Naples inmate society, and had rules and rituals of recruitment. (Abadinsky 1990.) It is not known when men with a name started to emerge in Finnish prisons, but for instance in Russia, the tradition of the underworld thieves began already in the 1930s, if not earlier. In Russia, underworld traditions have survived to the present, in particular because the very high imprisonment rates have favoured the socialisation into criminal subcultures (Bäckman 1996).

According to my informants, the top men and their gangs active in Finnish prisons may be so powerful that prison authorities do not dare, or due to the lack of evidence, are unable to interfere in crimes that occur inside the prisons. For prison staff, the closed prison conditions pose a real threat: one day every prisoner is going to be released, and if not before, at least then an economic or physical revenge can be taken. Another problem of a closed institution is that as the prisoners and staff members have to work together on a daily basis for years, different kinds of communication between the groups is a necessity, and this influences the normal daily rhythm of the prison. According to Kääriäinen, the large size of the prisons and the prison wards, and the consequent massing of people quite frequently causes the relationship between prisoners and prison staff to become distant and hostile (Kääriäinen 1994, 159). The guards experience their work to be hard and frustrating as they have to interfere with the same problems and the behaviour of the same people over and over again. The prisoners, on the other hand, are keen to prevent anyone from becoming good friends with the guards, and informing them about relationships between prisoners, or crimes committed in prison or on the outside (ibid.).

In my opinion, a good interaction between prisoners and prison staff is represented by a model where the prisoner has the opportunity to discuss his problems with an outside (non-criminal) person whom he has learned to know over the years. Negative interaction between prisoners and prison staff occurs, for example, when staff members are extorted or bribed to close their eyes to gang activities by promising money, or by threatening the guard or his family with violence. It is not known how many Finnish prison guards have committed suicide or died in unclear circumstances over the past decade, or been discharged because of bribery suspicions or other misconducts. Such matters, as well as assaults against prison staff should be investigated while bearing in mind that not all cases or incidents are automatically caused by the trouble with prisoners. According to one research report covering the 1990s, annually more than twenty prison employees experience violence by prisoners (Alatalo 2002, 52). It is worth remembering that in a closed system, the fear of violence and the temptation of financial gain impose a threat to the prison staff, while for an intelligent and persistent criminal, they are means of exploitation. The following quotation tells about the bribery and extortion of a prison guard.

“...I remember one case, one of these guards we had figured could be useful to us. We just told him that you don’t necessarily have to drive home in that car X of yours, there are even Volvos and Mercedeses in the world. The first thing that comes to his mind is how we know that I’ve got a car X. Which means that we had investigated his background. All about his car, his family, and things like that. This may shake him, and he becomes afraid... he may begin to think late at night when he is at home: “Could it perhaps be a threat as they have investigated my personal matters”. The main point however is that there might be economic benefits involved. Then some time later he was asked in private about these telephones, how is it with their

surveillance... So he got the idea and said that he could find out for us how the telephone lines are controlled... ”IQ.

On the other end of the spectrum from the men with a name are informers and those sentenced for sex offences. My informants thought it was justified to assault and despise these shameful beings who are not even real criminals. The other prisoners seem to share this attitude because usually informers and sex offenders are isolated into the so-called coward wards for their own security – informers, because they have inflicted prison sentences and economic losses on others by disclosing information, and sex offenders, because they have committed shameful crimes and are generally despised. Hurting or killing an informer is a merit, often rewarded with money, whereas hurting or killing a sex offender only brings fame and honour in the criminal world. Information concerning the crimes and reliability of newcomers reach fellow prisoners very efficiently (from mouth to mouth, by letters, mobile telephones, visitors, the media, attorneys, court protocols etc.), and often they are better informed than the prison staff. Court protocols, in particular, are closely studied when a prisoner's reliability is investigated.

My informants unanimously shared the opinion that prison sentences in Finland are too long. Especially the shorter narcotics sentences of Denmark were often referred to. Whether the criticism is well-founded or not, many pieces of criminological research indicate that even very long prison sentences do not eradicate crime or prevent sentenced persons from recommitting crimes. For example, a recidivist study on Finnish prisoners has shown that within five years, about 60 per cent of released prisoners return to prison (Muilu 1999). According to the informants, even a short deprivation of liberty cannot be compensated with any amount of money. Most of the persons I met would have given the state all of their criminal profits if that had saved them from prison. On occasion, these profits were considerably large.

4.5 Time in freedom

The life my informants led in liberty differed from the time they spent in prison only in some respects. Those informants who continued to be active criminals were using all of their time, energy and skills to plan new crimes and make variations of the old ones, and spending and concealing the economic profits derived from their crimes, whether in prison or outside. A clearly lower priority was given to family, relatives, friends, hobbies and other social activities to which time was allocated if there was any available. What dominated my informants' use of time was the objective to acquire more money, by any means, legal or illegal, as much as possible, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In practice, the time spent on committing crimes varied greatly. The top men of the group used most of their time to plan new crimes and make variations of the old ones, laundering money, organising the financing of crimes, travelling and meeting people, locating new marketing channels and smuggling routes, and selecting suitable accomplices to carry out different tasks. Those on the lower levels were mainly waiting for work opportunities, enjoying the money they had earned, and perhaps organising some minor crimes on their own. When developing and planning crimes, it is of central importance to be constantly alert and on the lookout for new opportunities, as described in the following quotation.

*“...If you wait with your mouth open like a young bird, the money is not coming in the mail. You've got to spot the opportunities yourself, and all the time you've got to think, and your brain's got to tick. Like you import meat from somewhere outside the European Union and don't pay the taxes, or you export butter to Russia but actually leave it in Finland and sell it to wholesale markets... Of course you read about some tricks, or you make them up on your own. Then of course we get around in the world and learn a lot. Someone may have a good idea, and we'll take that idea and use it ourselves. Or there may be people with good ideas that they sell to you. Then you may take such an idea, you'll sort of say that yes we can take this one. Everybody doesn't have the resources to carry out those things... All you need to do is to move around and you'll learn about all kinds of things. Then you make some variations and applications, and our project is ready. **If you think about say 100 ideas, how many of them will be carried out in the end?**...I guess half are discarded immediately, maybe even 75 %, then a few of them can be developed, and out of them two, three, or maybe ten can even make sense. That they have the chance of producing something, perhaps...”IQ.*

How the group's financier²⁰ organises his time, is to a large extent in his own hands. When there is enough merchandise available in Finland, the financier spends time with his family, friends, and things he likes. Depending on his involvement in other crimes, he will have a certain amount of leisure time that is mainly used for investing profits and enjoying wealth. Men without families tend to lead quite a fast life travelling, gambling, meeting friends and partying. Family men, on the other hand, enjoy normal family life at home and relax by travelling, as one financier describes:

“...I like to get up after ten. Around ten I am on my feet, and start to have breakfast. Usually I try to go to bed around ten at night, ten, or eleven... we sort of followed the kids' daily rhythm... I took the kids to kindergarten in the morning, and in the afternoon I went to pick them up... If I travelled, it took me two-three days. Because I had no working hours. I was practically working 24 hours a day... When I worked, I worked night and day, no matter whether it was Sunday or Monday... When it got so far that the merchandise had been carried over, of course if you go for instance to Tallinn and deliver the money and then continue by airplane somewhere else, of course you must follow some sort of rhythm. You've got to move when places are open, when planes are flying, and hotels, well they are always open. I don't have any particular working days. That is what all of this is based on. That's why I like this. No working hours, and you really work only one week per month maximum, the rest is leisure time. You drive around in a Cadillac, buy suits, drink, travel and see whores... IQ.

The high-level importers of narcotics want to stay as far away from the drugs as possible, in particular when the merchandise is already in Finland. The financier attempts to protect himself so well that only few contact persons know who the importer is. Importers who are trying to make fast money, eliminate middlemen from the distribution network, hoping to get the highest possible return on invested capital.

²⁰ The financier is responsible only to himself, and it is his responsibility and privilege to acquire the foreign contacts and the capital, and to plan the operation. The financier hires people to bring the merchandise to Finland, and selects the persons who take care of the distribution of the merchandise in Finland (The interviews). The financier is a person who has his own money or contacts to borrow money, is willing to invest, and has the necessary contacts to organise the smuggling of drugs, alcohol or cigarettes from abroad to Finland. (Kontio 2001.)

However, by so doing, the risk of apprehension increases exponentially. The following quotation tells about a rare occasion when the financier and persons of the next level meet, and the financier is directly participating in the crime.

“...once or twice a month, at night, a car would pull into the driveway, and somebody would come and say that now the deal is made... that he'll take the merchandise with him. At night is a very good time to operate when you know how the authorities are working. So you order somebody to meet you 30-40 kilometres away, somebody who is waiting in a car with the money, so he'll come and say that now I'll have the stuff and he'll take it just like that, and he'll change cars once. He'll come in one car, and then he'll change to another car, and the other car will take him to the buyer. The money is coming in the other car...”IQ.

The work of the financier's right hand follows closely the everyday routines of the financier, in particular, when abroad. In Finland, the right hand²¹ is usually in charge of organising the pick-up of the merchandise, unloading and organising hiding places for it, getting wholesale dealers, and accounting for the money he takes to the financier. Usually, only the right hand and the financier spend their working and leisure time together, and know each other's activities in detail. In some cases, they may even be good friends, as described in the following citation.

“...The person who is sort of above me, it is with him that we had a lot to do together, but then there were those who were below me, who were selling the stuff and things like that, with them I didn't have much in common, so that I would have spent much of my time with them. They had so different interests and all. This guy for instance who was above me, with whom we were mostly doing the business together, we were also good friends. We would go to concerts and restaurants and things like that. It was more like a friendship...”IQ.

The life of a wholesaler is much more consumed by the daily commission of crimes, solving everyday problems and organising the merchandise to lower-level dealers. The lower one goes in the distribution organisation, the more common are impulsive, unplanned crimes and the conspicuous spending of criminal profits. In the following quotation, a wholesale drug dealer²² tells about his everyday life.

“...Everyday life was nice, you know. When you're used to that kind of life and doing business and things... Money was moving around fast. Overall, you had the privilege of socialising with quite smart people. Somehow the feeling was that you controlled your own life, although, of course, there were also a lot of these disadvantages. Let's put it this way: it's not too much trouble when things are under control. You're getting for instance a load of merchandise. You call your pal, and he'll come to see you, you'll say you're having this amount of stuff and ask “Do you take it.” In such a situation, you're having everything ready, a ready-made system... Your pal will take care of the merchandise. He'll deliver the money to you every week, depending of course on how well you have the situation under control. Let's say that you'll get some 50,000 - 100,000 FIM²³ a week like that. Then there were my other businesses too. It's actually quite easy. ... at least in the later times when I was doing well, all I

²¹ The right hand is a person who organises the distribution of smuggled goods (drugs, alcohol or cigarettes) in Finland, covers for the financier when he is abroad, and seeks to hide the identity of the financier from authorities and fellow criminals. (The interviews; Kontio 2001.)

²² A wholesale dealer is a person who is selling to his dealers the merchandise he has bought (The interviews). A fence is the receiver or middleman handling stolen goods, liquor, or drugs (Lipsonen 1990, 151).

²³ During the study 5.9473 FIM = 1 euro

had to do was to receive the money. I had men who took care of everything. Then I could just live the kind of life I wanted. I spent quite a lot of time at the Casino, and gambled, and then well I didn't spend too much time with my family, but I could buy every day what I wanted. I had a car worth 600,000 FIM. I had whatever you can dream of, I had money and everything...All I had to do was receive the money. But the disadvantage of the profession is that you may have to go to prison for six, seven years..."IQ.

The middle-level men are free to spend their money any way they want, but when it comes to business, the top men dictate the terms and the schedules. Although the money they make is quite good (several hundreds of thousands of FIM per year), their independence is limited: they receive and distribute the merchandise as parts of the chain, restricted by the ability to buy the stock on sale, even if the demand for the merchandise would be constant. The following quotation explains the situation:

"...Liquor can be sold only when it comes. There's nobody yelling in the market place about it. You may be on the other side of the country, you'll get a phone call saying that there would be a certain amount of liquor. Then I tell him to wait a while, that I'll be coming around one of these days and I'll contact you then..."IQ.

None of my informants liked getting up early in the morning. The everyday routines and the absence of a sense of time may be in part explained by the cyclical nature of criminal work, as suddenly occurring opportunities need to be capitalised. Crimes are committed when it is possible, and as much time is spent on them as the work requires. Some of my informants did not even own a watch or a calendar. Nonetheless, they knew what time it was, because they always arrived to scheduled interviews punctually. Of course sometimes the interviews would be delayed by days or even weeks if the informant was "busy". Roughly speaking, the oldest informants tended to wake up in the late morning, and the youngest in the early afternoon, provided that they did not have appointments. Many of the interviewees were able to stay awake for several days if work or pleasure so required, and sleep afterwards for two days straight. The following quotation illustrates the meaning of time for my informants.

"...I've got no watch or calendar. There's no difference between holiday and working day..."IQ.

Family men and single men shared a similar attitude to spending their time: work determined the amount and quality of the time spent with family. A general slogan of the men I interviewed was that "I do what I want, others better adjust to that". This egocentrism had caused the termination of many partner relationships and friendships, and trouble with authorities already before the onset of the criminal career. Often, the men felt that they were compensating for their permanent absence and infidelity by money and new commodities they gave to their wives, girlfriends and children. In some cases, the wife accepted the infidelity in return for the standard of living the husband provided, as explained in the following quotation.

"...Of course my wife knew that I go and do things. That was my freedom. If she can spend 100,000 FIM a month, I think I can then go and do whatever I feel like. I'm doing it anyway. I have the liberty to do what I want because I'm a grown-up person, so I'm doing exactly what I feel like. There's nobody going to come and tell me that this is forbidden. Well, all of this business is forbidden, for that matter..."IQ.

The higher the hierarchical position of the informant, the more leisure time hobbies he would have – besides drinking and gambling, that is. When not in prison, the men would go fishing, to concerts and boxing matches, travel abroad, fix their cars etc. The persons I met in prison were usually spending their evening leisure time reading or exercising. In prison, the range of hobbies available is of course quite limited, and consequently the role of physical exercise gets emphasised. All the men I met were in very good physical shape and particularly strong. This physical strength was well demonstrated by their knuckle-breaking handshakes. The following quotation by one of the informants describes the impact of sports on his stay in prison.

“...It was actually quite important. They were fellows who were not involved in anything, and outside they could be anything but here they could be for instance someone who was good at badminton. Me, I like to play. He could be just a “badminton pal”. For myself, it was a really good way of getting away from those guys and those businesses. Like when you're outside, a business manager can have a friend with whom he goes to play tennis or something. It's exactly the same thing also in these surroundings...”IQ.

When outside of prison, alcohol plays an essential role in the leisure time of the informants. The use of alcohol does not, however, interfere with work; it is strictly limited to leisure time and celebrating success after completing a project. However, the lower one stands in the sales hierarchy, the more money he spends on alcohol and sweet life, as explained in the following quotation.

“...Sure, I've always drunk liquor, my genes from my father's side are the kind that a lot of liquor has flowed. Sure enough, there was a lot of that sweet life. Money came and money went...”IQ.

The lives of these men, their crimes and their leisure time seem to be determined not only by money, but also by the urge to control one's own actions and make own decisions. The mentality is such that “I do what I want, others do what they are able to do”. The persons feel that for them, crimes offer a rationally analysed method of making money. The profits they have made range from hundreds of thousands to millions of FIM, and the money is spent generously and spontaneously on, for example, women, liquor, fancy clothing and hobbies. They often display their wealth quite openly, as described in the following quotation.

“...For me, money is extremely important... I've got to have money or I cannot consume. I sure got a lot of money, for instance in the country X, I bought five cars at once, and I've got a boat and a yacht and my car is worth 450,000, and so on. Money is important to me in the way that there must be a lot of it. All you can do with money is spend it, give it away. Usually I'm dressed quite well, I'm having quite a wardrobe there. Some broad-brimmed hats and long leather coats and pinstripes and dinner jackets...”IQ.

This relatively open way of displaying one's economic success is entirely different from the life style of an Italian Mafioso who continues to act poor and humble while his organisation is making millions, and his power exceeds the others (cf. e.g. Stille 1996). However, also the Sicilian Cosa Nostra member wants to enjoy his economic success as stated by one of Arlacchi's informants: “although the criminal may die young, his short life has been so good, so filled with work, personal pleasure and satisfaction that a normal man is not going to experience the same even if he lived for 80 years” (Arlacchi 1986, 129).

When my informants discussed the question on how economic success and the satisfaction of their instinct for adventure have changed their lives and attitudes, the most common interpretation was that money and the reputation in the criminal community have in fact exposed their real character and given them courage to be themselves. The longing for adventure and flamboyance that dominate their lives had been a central feature in their lives already before the economic success, as explained in the following quotation.

"...For 18 years, I worked honestly and all kinds of things... First of all, I am an alcoholic, and only after that I am a criminal. We are that kind of people, with adventurous minds, childish, pompous..."IQ.

4.6 Family

Of my informants, six were married and five of them had children. Another six were divorced or had never been married, but had children. The remaining nine men were either cohabiting or without a permanent partner at the time of the interviews, and had no children. The men who were living with their wives and children said that they lead a normal family life of a normal Finnish man. For them, "normal family life" meant that when at home, they took their children to school, kindergarten or hobbies, visited relatives and friends, and took care of everyday chores, as told in the following quotation.

"...Everybody was a very ordinary fellow. Everybody was thinking of ordinary matters. The children's school, their going swimming, things at home, cooking..."IQ.

The divorced men said that their separation had been caused by their constant absence. The wife had gotten tired of taking care of the home and raising the children on her own, and of having to wait for the man all the time. The men understood this in a way, but they often also emphasised the fact that they had been more at home than an average factory worker, as explained by one informant.

"...Well, I've been a good father. I've been at home almost all of the time. I'm more at home than some factory worker. I was always at home, I was always available. I took the kids to day-care and I picked them up from day-care..."IQ.

The cohabiting men spent some of their leisure time with their girlfriend, and especially in the initial phase of the relationship they could even neglect their work for her sake. The leisure time with the girlfriend was luxurious and money was spent abundantly. It was easier to conceal one's criminal behaviour from a girlfriend than from a wife, as explained in the following quotation.

"...I had a girlfriend, but luckily I was clever enough to terminate the relationship, because somehow I had a feeling that there may be a bad ending to this. We separated a few months before all this began to come to light. She didn't know anything. I kept everything from her. Of course, I had lots of money and she was wondering. All I told her was that "I'm in the clothing business"..."IQ.

The informants explained that their wives and girlfriends usually knew that they were up to something illegal, but had no exact knowledge of what it was. Women were said to be of two kinds: adventurous and law-abiding. The adventurous women would have wanted to participate in the crimes of their men, while the law-abiding ones concentrated on taking care of the home, raising the children, and compensating for the

absence of the father. The following quotation describes the relationship of one of the informants.

"...it's a different matter if the woman is of this Bonnie & Clyde type, but an ordinary woman like the one I had, coming from a puritan family, a fine person, to whom I was married. All the fears and everything... one shouldn't do that. You see, I was working at home, there were always these rogues around. Of course that created problems. I would just close my eyes, thinking that you've got food, and you've got a roof over your head, you've got nothing to complain about. You can go to skiing centres, you can drive a Mustang, and ride your own horse, and things. I was not up to the role of a father..."IQ.

The adventurous women may come along to observe the crimes, or they may act as fronts. However, all the men who had allowed their wife or girlfriend to be somehow involved in the commission of the crimes, faced the same problem sooner or later: after the marriage or the relationship was over, the jealous or vindictive women turned the men in, or provided the police with harmful information. Because of these revelations, the men lost large sums of money and spent long periods of time in prison, as conveyed in the following quotation.

"...my old lady told all that to the police. If she hadn't talked, they wouldn't have been able to get almost any of my money ..."IQ.

My informants were proud of their profession and of their crimes. However, they did not want their children to follow in their footsteps. The same notion has been made in earlier Finnish research, too. (cf. e.g. Aromaa 1983.) As in Aromaa's study, also my informants saw the family as a support institution that offered protection and provided an illusion of an honest man, helped in property arrangements (concealing and laundering criminal money), and acted as a service and support unit when the man was in prison. They did not have the slightest interest in creating an organisation like the Cosa Nostra where the profession of the father is passed down to the son. In the organised crime of Sicily and New York, some sons follow their fathers into the world of crime, while others go to school and concentrate on legal business. The girls are married into "honourable" (middle-class) politician, lawyer, and physician families. Marriages to external, non-criminal families serve the purpose of improving the status of the criminal family, and creating useful relationships in trade and politics. (cf. e.g. Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972; Anderson 1979.)

Finnish criminal culture seems to be individualistic whereas the culture of the Mezzogiorno region is family-centred. Even in those rare cases where my informants had committed crimes together with their father or brother, the objective had not been to ascertain continuity but simply to exploit a suitable opportunity. Furthermore, the children of most of the informants were so small that no practical measures had yet been taken to prevent them from turning into criminals. The following quotation presents the method one father has chosen to neutralise the crime opportunities of the next generation.

"...I've been thinking about this, my older son is [old enough]. I've been thinking many times if it's wrong towards the boy that he has not been allowed to do what he wants... He has also been idealising this way of life a bit, romanticised this apparent freedom of mine, and yet I have been quite bad, too. He's been admiring that. I have eliminated this matter from him by putting some property under his name. You cannot be working in this business if you've got property. When you're caught, they're going to take what you've got... As you're living outside society anyway, you've got to grow into this. You can't keep anything under your own name ...You'll have to keep

everything buried in the earth... and for instance my son's wife is fed up with me. Now that it's not going too well between them, she's using this... you know, I have a boat and a motorbike and a few summer houses, under my son's name, well this bitch says just see what the judge says when I get a divorce, the judge will tell you what's yours... So, these kind of things may come up although I have made these arrangements together with the children..."IQ.

A paradoxical feature in the family lives of my informants was that when not in prison, they would have had the opportunity to spend a lot of time with their families, but they were not too interested and did not find time for it. When faced with a long prison sentence, the interest in the family increased, but usually the wife or girlfriend wanted to split up, as described in the following quotation.

"...I've had two divorces so far. I was married for five years to my first wife with whom I have an X-year-old daughter. With the second wife, we were together for four years, and now that I got this five-year sentence the last time.. she divorced me. I would have wanted that relationship to last. It can't be helped..."IQ.

The women who did not leave their men were the ones who visited them in prison most regularly, bringing magazines and TV sets, whereas the accomplices forgot easily or were unable to come for a visit. The following quotation describes how an imprisoned man had started to see his family in a different light.

"For me, family has become more important. I've got an X-year-old girl, and then I've got a boy of Z and one of Q years, and a good wife, she doesn't have a criminal record or anything, she doesn't use drugs or anything... I just heard that the boy had been caught for smoking cigarettes. I was very angry..."IQ.

However, things do not always work out. When I met the same informant a few months later, he and his wife had filed for a divorce.

"...I don't have a family any more. I'll be divorced although we are not changing names and the divorce is not going to be official... I have allowed this to happen, that my wife could not take this psychological pressure. We agreed that she may continue with her life, and I've got three children. I just went to see them. We have these family visits, three hours twice a month. I'm a bachelor now, I've got nothing. That's actually cute. I can travel if I like..."IQ.

The prison sentence as such did not cause divorces. However, it apparently made the wife or girlfriend stop and think what she really wanted from her relationship and from the man. When in prison, he would be more absent than before, but on the other hand, the constant worrying over possible accidents, mistresses and paid women, as well as the excessive use of alcohol would be over. A significant feature of the informants was the apparent lack of fidelity towards their wives: they used the services of prostitutes and acquired mistresses completely unconcerned of whether the wife or the girlfriend found out about it. This conception of morality is entirely different from, for instance, the rule of honour of the Sicilian La Cosa Nostra, according to which the wife and the gun must not be borrowed. On the other hand, Tomaso Buschetta, the "godfather of two continents" was temporarily suspended twice because of his mistresses. (Ahtokivi 1994; Stille 1996.) The Catholic religion and the family-centred culture of the Mediterranean region represent a traditional myth of maintaining facades, whereas the Protestant ethics prevailing in Finland are more favourable to hedonistic lifestyles. These differences between religions and cultures may explain why in Mediterranean countries, it is not customary to boast in public about mistresses and prostitutes, while

this seems to be the case in Finland. In many cases, my informants saw themselves as being entirely independent of other people, masters of their own lives, maximising their own pleasure cynically and brutally at the price of the suffering of others (wife, children, relatives, friends etc.).

4.7 Friends

The longer the career of the informant, the less he had friends who were not committing crimes themselves or living a life that was immoral by common standards. The following quotation demonstrates the way friends changed and how this influenced the man's thoughts over the years.

"...There are no such friends any more. Right here in prison I realised that kind of friends, all your best friends from your previous life, such as schoolmates or army pals, they don't exist any more. My cousins and everybody with whom I have been real close, they are not there any more. You can see it at Christmas, when I get Christmas cards, they're all coming from prisons. All my friends are in prison or criminal in some way... Sort of, one then becomes institutionalised... But it's like you seek your way actively to these circles. It rather feels like that here's a group where you belong, and I feel that they are my real family, that I don't need any other families, and I don't need any people who would be close to me. It's enough that they are my buddies. The way you think about the world changes and gets distorted. That's true. There are no honest friends. Nobody if you don't count the whores or someone like that. I don't mean women but whores. Of course, they are your acquaintances, I know really many of them because I've used their services a lot..."IQ.

The influence of the prison, and the way it condenses the criminal world and excludes outsiders from the circle of friends has been analysed in other studies, too (cf. e.g. Aromaa 1983). Replacing old friends with new ones is natural because as the criminal career continues year after year, there are not many common topics of interest left that the criminal would have with other people, and time is rather spent with "kindred spirits", as explained in the following quotation.

"...I do have even some honest friends, but mostly... Mostly I spend my time with buddies with whom we feel like being on the same wave length... When you're engaged in committing crimes, you won't have so much to do with other kinds of people, or you sort of don't have time for them. And you can't talk with them about these matters at all. And you can't actually plan anything with them either. So you're practically tied up in those circles..."IQ.

Those who had been recruited from prison or from liberty, and were still in the early stages of their career, had been better able to retain their old friends, probably because they were not yet that deeply involved in the criminal world. The old friends were not aware of their new ways of making money or of their new acquaintances. The men had started to commit crimes in order to get rich, but had learned the stressfulness of the new life after a few years, and the old friends were important representatives of a world to which there was no return. Returning was impossible because the accomplices would not allow anybody to leave the group, and if a person defied the rule or turned himself in, he would become an informer in the eyes of the group, and thus fair game for bounty hunters. The following quotation describes the friendship relations of one of my informants.

“...I did have normal friends who were not involved in anything. There were Estonians and Russians who were common honest people. I never could talk about anything to them. I was supposed to be a normal working man. And they never knew. That gave me a sort of a small break. I could forget about all the usual things...”IQ.

4.8 Use of money

The reason why money is analysed separately in this chapter is that money is of particular importance to all of my informants. Money has been the main motive for the initiation and continuation of the criminal career. According to the interviews, the annual tax-free income of the financiers of smuggling, organisers of large-scale procuring, and large-scale receivers of stolen goods amounts to several millions of FIM. The right hands of the narcotics groups and the most active wholesale dealers also make millions, while the regular wholesale drug dealers, and active and reliable couriers have to settle for the annual income of several hundreds of thousands of FIM, and the remaining members of the sales chains to even less. Those who only make a few tens of thousands of FIM are either busy spending, or have committed less significant crimes on their own to increase their income level. Aarne Kinnunen has studied the taxable incomes of persons convicted of narcotics offences, and found that in the state tax statistics, the incomes vary from zero to over 150,000 FIM. The majority of offenders earn nothing, and only 0.8 per cent make over 150,000 FIM. (Kinnunen 2002, 46.) Actual incomes are very difficult to estimate because criminals do not report their incomes for taxation, especially if their property is in foreclosure or they are in a debt adjustment programme. Criminal incomes are reported only if they originate from seemingly legal business activities (i.e. laundered money).

The criminals earn much more than normal taxpayers. However, the lower the man is in the sales chain of smuggled goods, the more probable it is that all the money derived from a crime is spent on sweet life, forcing him to go back to work when all the profits from the previous batch of merchandise have been spent. The more a man earns from his criminal work, the more rationally he is able to handle the money and even save some. This rationality is in part due to the fact that in practice, it is hard to spend millions on alcohol, women, clothes, travelling, cars etc., especially if one does not want to jeopardise his career. The following quotation represents a popular answer to my question on what happens to the money:

“...Personally, I didn't invest in anything. I was living on that money. I had to study this business at least 4 - 5 years before I started to make big money. Then, the incomes were quite huge, I must admit, but I had this problem that I was a gambling addict. I wasn't using drugs. I gambled, I lost many millions at the casino. Easy come, easy go. It was the kind of life that I had cars worth 500,000 - 600,000 FIM, and lots of money. I could buy anything I wanted...”IQ.

A common feature to the way the informants used their money was that when there was money, friends could enjoy the wealth, too. In many cases, the situation resembled the one of celebrities: when all goes well, there are plenty of friends and supporters, but when the man who pays the bills goes to jail, nobody even comes to see him.

“...I was maybe spending more money in the way that I took friends out and bought all kinds of things to them. I liked to do that, and I am the kind of person that I wanted to share some of it with them. That way, you spent more money. I didn't spend much more personally. Of course sometimes I used some fancy hotel rooms, and then

we had all possible delicacies brought up and brought the girlfriend over too and partied... Otherwise I was living a relatively ordinary life..."IQ.

The financiers and the right hands I interviewed were equally eager to spend money on sweet life as the men in the middle ranks. Although the volume of consumption amounted to millions, they were nevertheless spending only less than 25 % of their annual income, while the rest was invested into new crimes, buried in the ground, or laundered through various legal businesses. It is characteristic to these top men of the groups that they defined themselves by referring to a manager of a large company. This imaginary identity is not purely illusory: the responsibility for the availability of the merchandise, for the markets, and for maintaining the right price are typical tasks of a company manager, whether on the legal or illegal side, even if the merchandise and the ways of acquiring the money are different. External signs of the manager status included expensive brand clothing, jewellery, watches, cars, and a good flat in an expensive area. The significance of these external signs reminds us of Bourdieu's study, and of the importance of the habitus when making distinctions between people and structuring one's social position. The egocentric focus is visible in everything that the individual collects to himself – such as profession, posture and the way of dressing because it is through the lifestyle that one's own taste is reinforced. (Bourdieu 1979, 172-175.) The following quotation is an example of the income and sales volumes a good organiser of smuggling can achieve. It is worth observing that the person in question worked actively only half of the year, and cooled the situation down for the other six months. He justified the strategy by saying that it guaranteed a sufficient income level and decreased the risk of apprehension.

"...if we start calculating my income... over ten years, the turnover has been maybe a bit below 100 million... Some 45 million net, distributed over ten years... In the best years a bit more... I can't know for sure. Something like 4 million per year, on average. I don't think that's a terribly lot of money, at least one million per year is spent just on living. Suits and everything, they cost a lot. Everything is always the best that money can buy, like hotels and everything. That's what we are doing it for, so that we can live like that..."IQ.

Interesting, albeit quite sloppy housekeeping was found among the dealers and organisers of the middle ranks. It lacked order and control as the men, although earning up to hundreds of thousands of FIM per year, were in constant debt to the organisers above them, and thus dependent on them and obligated to work for them. On the other hand, it is worth noting that oftentimes this situation was not entirely caused by bad planning - the middle-rank men were intentionally kept in debt by those above them, with the obvious objective of maintaining their interest in their work as it was practically impossible to pay the debts. In addition, these middlemen who had gotten rich very fast were not able or willing to save money, and to start their own smuggling and marketing groups. The money seemed to slip through the fingers without any concern for tomorrow, as stated in the following quotation.

"...I don't know, there are not many who are making profits. Usually it's all spent I guess. I think it's spent on living, travelling and sweet life mostly. Well, a lot of money was spent on cars in this case of the 1990s, and then there were some obligatory insurance fees that were paid for some bars... They were even sued for money laundering because of that... This one guy, he got all kinds of equipment to his home, he made quite large profits... He also fixed his boat with all possible gadgets. He spent several hundreds of thousands on that. On the outside, his house was all dilapidated, but inside everything was the best that money can buy, marble floors and

everything. Also the cars were quite good... Then, number 3, his money was spent on cars and living. He had a woman from Thailand, that was quite costly, and he had a good flat and good cars. He had a Rolex worth a couple of hundred thousand, of course he didn't pay that much for it. I think he bought the Rolex in the Netherlands..."IQ.

All the men I met were going to continue committing crimes even though they had earned and spent many times over the amount of money they had set as their goal in the beginning of their career. They were forced to continue in order to maintain the standard of living they had achieved, or in order to make one more million. To many of my informants, money as such had lost its significance, and possessions had become symbolically important as they were used to raise one's status in the criminal community as well as in the eyes of ordinary people. Nothing was enough, more could always be earned. The conspicuous and swaggering spending of money was typical of my informants, but extremely rare among the Sicilian La Cosa Nostra families. In Sicily, the family, and the patriarch in particular, considers it a virtue to be a good director behind the curtains, and a modest man of the people. (Ahtokivi 1994; Arlacchi 1986.)

It is easier to understand the intensive spending of money if we keep in mind the criminal's permanent fear of apprehension. My informants denied that they had been thinking about the risk of getting caught when committing crimes. However, such thoughts are bound to lurk in the subconscious, and when combined with sudden wealth, it makes the men spend the money as long as it is possible. My informants were well aware of the fact that when in prison, the opportunities for spending are limited. They wanted to avoid imprisonment so much that they were even prepared to surrender all the remaining proceeds of crime if this would enable them to maintain their liberty, as explained in the following quotation.

"...I really had money when I went to prison, I had millions. If there had been the alternative that I could have given that money to the police, and I would have avoided prison, I would have handed over everything. You can always make new money, but you can't buy freedom. It's private. But if we think that I would have to spend the next five years in prison, and somebody would offer me a certain sum, what kind of money would it have to be that I would do five years for it? I think it would be something like 10 million. I wouldn't go below that..."IQ.

The willingness to sacrifice personal wealth partly results from the restricting nature of imprisonment, and partly from the fact that the men know that as long as they are free, they can make another fortune in no time. The following quotation illustrates the point.

"...I never counted it. It was coming in all the time, so it didn't matter. It was just paper. It was easy to make..."IQ.

All my informants spontaneously discussed the problem that life in freedom is very expensive. A lot of money is spent on telephone bills, fuel, and organising and financing projects. Many of the plans and financed projects do not yield anything. Often, commodities have to be sold at low prices due to oversupply or pending apprehension. Allegedly nobody paid direct income taxes to the state, and the length of the period without an "honest salary" was boasted about - some had never had a legitimate job, others had had one years or decades ago. The state did, however, receive exceptional sums of money from these men in the form of indirect product taxes and VATs, as they spent fortunes on cars, fuel, cigarettes, alcohol, restaurants and hotels. The following

quotation illustrates how much money was eventually saved from even very high monthly incomes.

“...on average, I made some 50,000 FIM per month cash. In some months more, and sometimes less. A lot of that is spent on all kinds of ordinary things, just travelling between home and work costs a lot. You have to maintain several homes, and the telephone bills are enormous. If you compare this with honest work, its about even. The advantages of this activity are everywhere else. Perhaps it is this feeling of being your own master and something like that, one feels there's something special. I'm not in any way ashamed of it... Let's say you have earned a million in a year, if you then deduct from that all the expenses, in the end there is not much left. You have to deduct all travel expenses, all equipment, and all mistakes cost a lot, when money is coming in. We make bad investments, too. I'd say it's somewhere between 200 and 300 thousand. About 30 %, 25 %, if we are speaking of a total of one million. I've always had this tendency that the better I'm doing, the more I spend... I guess I've got this genetic flaw that I don't know how to save money when the business is good...”IQ.

Some informants complained that their incomes were actually quite small, as the really big profits are made in economic crime. In addition, in white-collar crime, the risk of apprehension is small, and even if caught, the sentences are very lenient.

4.9 “Own” crimes and business transactions

Independent crimes and business transactions by the members of marketing chains vary a lot, depending on how organised the group is, and which level of the organisation the informant represents. There are three basic rules: 1) the more organised the group, the smaller the volume of own side-businesses (with the exception of the financiers and some right hands who decide on their own projects independently), 2) the higher the person's position in the marketing chain, the greater is his responsibility to keep a low profile and avoid side-businesses that could attract attention, and 3) the activities of the low-level dealers (habitual criminals) are restricted by those above them. The low-level dealers are often substance abusers or in serious debt, and are thus easy to control. In practice, the “own” crimes and side-businesses of the group members vary greatly - in some groups, only the group's own work is carried out, while in others, everybody does what he pleases. The following quotation describes a group where all members were expected to concentrate on joint projects only, any kind of individual actions are forbidden. The activities of this group much resemble those of the Sicilian La Cosa Nostra (cf. e.g. Ahtokivi 1994; Stille 1995).

“...Solo work is prohibited. The only thing where you can do it, the only thing where my approval is not required is immediate revenge. That means that if somebody is offending us in public or in private... then you have to strike immediately. Then, I'll give my approval afterwards...”IQ.

In some sales organisations, crimes that do not jeopardise the security of the group or attract unwanted interest are allowed. This kind of arrangement resembles the one used in the Italian crime families of New York, where members do not receive any salary, are usually engaged in their own activities, and may even compete with each other. They are not obligated to share their earnings with the head of family. A member swears loyalty, receives protection, and, when necessary, provides his services to protect others.

(Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972, 172.) The following quotation tells about the activities of a Finnish group.

“...one guy could go on with his own businesses because he had good contacts. You could do some things of your own but you would always need to ask for a permission... It was a mutual deal, and those boys would always want to have their share anyway...”IQ.

In some groups, the low-level dealers do not have to share the profits of their own side-businesses, instead, their businesses are used for recreational purposes, as described in the following quotation.

“...procuring. Well I would always go and test every woman who came in. One of the four of us had that sort of activity going on, and we used to tease him by asking if the pimp is around... But I had so much work of my own that I didn't profit from that activity, I just went to check the women. I'd let him keep that as his own business...”IQ.

All informants emphasised that it is absolutely forbidden to commit “stupid” ex tempore crimes – regardless of one’s status in the group. If crimes are committed, they are planned and carried out as well as possible. The objective of the planning is to guarantee that nobody is caught for foolish reasons, jeopardising the big business or getting many, maybe even tens of persons, imprisoned for years. The following quotation gives an example of how costly an unpremeditated act may be.

“...once, we had a business and we were dividing the money. I think the guy was having 85,000 FIM in his pocket, and then we left the meeting, and there was a mountain bike leaning against the wall. He'd grab the bike and put it in the trunk of his car, commenting “I'll take that one too”, and off we went. After a couple of kilometres, there was a police car. They'd let me go, and the guy was caught in his own car. Somebody had seen him grab the bike. He was carrying 85,000 FIM in cash in his pocket and they called the law, and the law took those 85,000 from him because of that 2,000 FIM bike...”IQ.

The side-businesses of my informants are diverse - some legitimate, most illegal. Anything goes as long as it yields money. The objective of the members' own crimes is to earn additional income, to launder money derived from crimes, or to participate in the administration of an enterprise, as explained in the following quotation.

“...there may be a restaurant, or a kiosk, or then you can be a car dealer, or you can defraud or make some sort of forgeries or anything else. Just whatever your imagination lets you do...”IQ.

The more a person earns from his criminal activities, the more he needs legal enterprises and other methods of laundering and investing the proceeds of crime. The enterprises may be owned by relatives, hired fronts, or even outsiders who know nothing of the matter. In particular in Estonia, Finnish criminals have used unsuspecting Finns as owners of their companies (Junninen 1999; Junninen & Aromaa 2000). The following quotation describes some forms of entrepreneurship.

“...Some little claims from a construction site I'd sometimes collect for myself. I've got a construction firm in a country X, we'd organise men to the sites from different places, clandestine labour force... Then in city Y (in Finland), I owned a building, just an ordinary sex-night club. An attorney ran it for me with my financing. Girls were dancing or something. That was a sort of a front...”IQ.

Many of my informants described themselves as good private entrepreneurs. They claimed to possess several strengths, such as stamina, innovativeness, relationships, time, and inventiveness in finding and experimenting the most diverse financing and ownership structures in their enterprises. A central feature of these side-businesses is that the activity has been dispersed to many different sectors, to several countries, and under the names of many different people. The objective of the dispersion is of course that if a certain project fails, the authorities are only able to find part of the companies, or if one person talks, all property is not going to be lost. The following quotation describes how multi-dimensional and dispersed the business can be.

“...In country X, this kind of peat business... That's why I am quite a good private entrepreneur. I have many good abilities, and I've got contacts and things, so that I'm able to start a company. It has already come out in the interrogations that I've been financing this company of my relative quite a lot, and that company has got a lot of income, too. Part of that is mine of course, as I've put a lot of money into the company. It's a real estate company anyway. It's been organised in a way that common sense says that there can't be any criminal money in it. As the crimes occurred only afterwards, it can't possibly be a money-laundering target. This is the one of which they said that there's Y's and X's money in the company. There cannot possibly be such money. But of course there is, I own at least part of that company because I've paid at least half of the real estate and other property...”IQ.

4.10 Plans for the future

The future plans of the informants may be divided roughly into three categories: 1) why quit, this is my profession, 2) just a few more years or a certain amount of money, and then I will retire, and 3) those who regret their choice of profession. The why quit - persons are professional criminals who accept and are aware of the fact that the risk of imprisonment, even for long periods of time, is a downside of the profession. They like and value both the profession and the - at least momentaneous - freedom to master their own lives, which weighs more than the possibility of ending up in prison. The excitement of the criminal life, avoiding apprehension, prosperity, sensible activities, and a multiplicity of co-operation partners are the most important things in life. According to my informants, no legal activity produces this much extra adrenaline. They are also fully aware of their own realistic opportunities as non-educated, indebted jailbirds, embittered by the loss of their families, and haunted by the long memory of the authorities. Bad experiences and bitterness will follow them for the rest of their lives, and the criminal way of life is what makes them go on (cf. e.g. Kääriäinen 1994). Because of a permanent foreclosure, legitimate work does not pay off, and life is just carried on as before, as described in the following quotation.

“...I think the truth is, when you are starting to turn thirty - part of us are already over forty, close to fifty, well what do you think that we'd start doing? Go to work on construction sites? I don't think so, I'd rather be quite positive that it's the present kind of living... If I don't win the lottery, but even that would not change anything. Then I'd just be investing. You see one never knows what will happen tomorrow... Now we're living this day, and the situation is like this, and we play accordingly...”IQ.

The men are prepared to continue committing crimes to the grave. However, they are also aware of their own limits and of the power of society as their counterforce. They do not believe there will be anyone to continue their work, as explained in the following quotation.

"...This is totally ridiculous, to challenge society into battle, as the result is in any case prison or prison hospital. I'll try it anyway. It's hard to find successors, too. If I'm ever going to have a son or something, I would not recommend this to him. It may well be that we're the last ones in this trade... that this will fade out when we get older... if we're found out, then we'll do time..."IQ.

Those persons who regretted their criminal career had usually come to this conclusion while serving long prison sentences, or, in some instances, when still committing crimes. Two of my informants had been looking forward to getting caught. They considered their criminal career to be so heavy that being apprehended would at least in some way make up for it. The greatest hope of these two was to be able to start a new life after prison. The most general reasons for regretting one's crimes were becoming aware of the limits of one's life, the death of a close friend, the illness of a close relative, falling in love, and the hope for a new partner relationship. Especially many of those I met in prison were planning and hoping for a new kind of life without crime. In the following quotation, one of the informants describes practical measures to start a new, crime-free life.

"...I have broken off contact with many of my friends, and I want to start a new life. For the sake of my child... when I get out of here, I'll start doing business, honest car business and auctions and things like that. I'll try to find myself a good woman. I have joined the congregation... I really do want to improve my life and avoid the same mistakes. I have been made to pay for them so many times over already. In a way, I'm a legend in these circles... I came to prison to do few months, and now I have already been inside for six years. The sentence was X months, and now it is XX years. I've had my share of bad luck..."IQ.

Also other studies indicate that prison is usually the place where many criminals decide to stop committing crimes. However, promises tend to be forgotten at the dawn of liberty. In Aromaa's study, thieves from Lahti told that when in prison, they wanted to stop committing crimes, but they had a change of heart already on the first day of freedom, and somehow they ended up repeating their old mistakes. They thought that they might perhaps be more successful abroad, away from the influence of their old Finnish friends. (Aromaa 1983.) My informants had similar thoughts.

Some of my older informants had already made retirement plans. Retirement was a common dream regardless of age, the mentality being that this would happen after the next big success. In practice, this meant that retirement was always postponed, year by year, gig by gig. Also, all the informants understood that old-age retirement from this line of business would require lots of luck since the hardships of the trade and violence lead most criminals to an early grave. The interviews indicated that only very few of these men had been able to lay money aside and thus secure their old age. After retirement, the men wanted to write their memoirs, relax, do legal business or simply nothing at all. In the following quotation, the oldest of my informants tells about his plans for the future.

"...at my age, I'll be over 65 when I'm released. I haven't got many years left... I'm so old that I've got to think that I'm retired. My intention is to spend the rest of my days in peace..."IQ.

It was characteristic of most of my informants that they did not regret their choice of occupation, and were not prepared to change their behaviour even if society would offer them a new, promising start, as told in the following quotation.

*“...If society would now make you the offer that all your debts would be wiped out so that you could start again with a clean slate? What do you mean, like start from zero? Would they be giving any money to me? **Just a thought experiment, you'd be free of all your debts and then you would get some kind of interesting work. I don't know what could be legal and exciting work. Would you take that?** I guess I might consider that one. But I don't know if I would be able to live like that. I've played with the idea that let's assume that you'd now be released, they'd give you a million in cash and you'd get out right away, a new Corvette waiting for you at the gate, but the deal would be that if you're caught again for any crime, then you'd be sitting in prison for the rest of your life. Nobody would be able to do that. We had also another game, we played with the idea that if you'd have a brand-new Corvette at the gate, and a million in cash, and released right way, a new suit and jewels, gold watches and things, but on the condition that you must never again enter a certain region in Finland, well I don't think I would be able to do that either any more. It's hard to say anything as there's no knowing how the world's going to change. However, if I'd have 10 million in cash at once, then I could consider what I'd be going to do. But I'm not quite sure if I could. But then there's that you'd have to go to regular work every day. Well, I don't think I'd do that. In a way I'm going to work every day now, too, but that's different. I don't think I would be able to start living like that There are times in here when one gets depressed and thinks that sometimes even normal family life might be nice. Then again, when I'm shaving and looking at myself, I think “damn it, that's nothing for me, I'm still going to make it”. It's only 5-6 years, that goes fast and then I'm back in the game. Then, the world is mine again. If somebody fucks with you, he'll be beaten up... But one doesn't have to be so stupid as to take on drugs trade again. That's quite a crazy game. Today, such a big amount of resources are spent on that - it would be possible to manage very well with all kinds of semi-honest work. **What would be semi-honest?** Well, like this procuring business and things. I consider that as honest work, in principle. Everything else is honest except the drug business...”IQ.*

4.11 Summary: “Adventurers and risk takers”

My informants may be characterised as being adventurers and risk-takers. They have a firm belief that they will get rich by committing crimes - and some of them have indeed done so. In comparison to other people, their readiness to take risks is quite extraordinary - in many cases clearly too optimistic. The men are prepared to risk their lives and very large amounts of money if there is a chance to commit a still more exciting, demanding and profitable crime. However, they are not foolhardy, and do not commit crimes impulsively or without careful planning.

My informants had become professional criminals either as a continuation of a career as a juvenile delinquent, or by chance. The first-mentioned had “chosen” their criminal profession already at a rather young age, while those who had turned professional criminals by chance had drifted into the profession due to the accumulation of personal problems, or while serving a prison sentence. My informants were middle-aged men. Most of them had obtained only the obligatory basic education, and only a few had higher education such as a college degree or university studies. They had served one to six prison sentences, the length of which varied from a few years to over ten years.

Perhaps the best criterion for the professionalism of the criminal activity of these men, or for the feasibility of their rational choices is the size of their annual tax-free income. According to their own statements, all informants had earned an annual minimum of several hundreds of thousands of FIM, some as much as several millions of FIM. The incomes and the ways they are spent may perhaps be put into perspective if the morals and tastes of the criminals are compared to those of another profession. I selected judges of courts of first instance as a reference group because they, in a way, represent a counterpoint to criminals. In their work, the judges operate strictly within the boundaries of law, and they also control that others do the same. The polarity of the professions is further illustrated by the moral values of the two groups: The judges emphasise the importance of safeguarding the interests of society and other people, while the criminals are primarily looking after their own interests at the cost of others – and think there is nothing wrong with that. Furthermore, the judges are inclined to become fully assimilated into their community, emphasising industriousness, cleanliness, impeccable appearance, reliability, and respect for other people. Some judges even regard good taste as a synonym for high morals and obedience to the law. (Kumpulainen 1995.) For my informants, their own good is most important, others are sorry second bests. They also emphasise morals, but in their view this equals to being loyal to other criminals, while society and other people are seen as outsiders who can be exploited for maximum benefit. These comparisons are compatible with Bourdieu's views according to which taste, moulded by one's personal history, connects persons who are products of similar circumstances, and simultaneously serves to distinguish them from others. We use taste to classify ourselves, while others classify us by the same criterion. Taste is visible in everyday choices, in one's entire way of life, and style. (Bourdieu 1979, 58.)

The judges emphasise taste by honouring traditions and good manners (observing other people, politeness), and by using moderate clothes of high quality. They do not spend very much on food or beverages albeit they generally value good food. (Kumpulainen 1995.) My informants, in contrast, spend their criminal income like there is no tomorrow, following their own hedonistic pleasures. For them, it is important to have one or several fine and expensive cars, a big, expensively furnished flat, exclusive and expensive brand clothing etc. They spend on food and beverages at home as well as in restaurants, and when travelling for work or leisure, the hotels are the best that money can buy.

In the following, I make a comparison between the professional ethics and the habitus of my informants and the judges. In her study, Kumpulainen divides the judges into three distinct types: 1) those with an orientation towards work, 2) those with an orientation towards social relations, and 3) those with an orientation towards values. When interviewed, the judges with an orientation towards work emphasised work and its implications for all private and family matters. Work was their central concern and value in life, its importance was stressed, and very much time was devoted to it. (Kumpulainen 1995.) All the criminals I interviewed were work-oriented. When committing crimes, they did not count hours or working days, as work was done when it could be done. They valued the freedom of the criminal life, the opportunity for adventure and for self-realisation, and of course money.

In their interviews, the judges who had an orientation towards social relations talked more about their leisure time and human relations than about their work. They put a lot of effort into the upbringing of their children, and talked a lot about them. (Kumpulainen 1995.) My informants were not in the least oriented towards social

relations and family life. For them, family and intimate relations were relevant only when they went to prison. When free, the men did what they pleased, and their families and other people in their intimate circle just had to live with it. Those who had children did not want them to become criminals. Instead, they hoped that the children would learn a “decent” profession. The friends of my informants were primarily other criminals, and only a few had other friends. Their childhood could be classified into two categories: 1) normal parents and childhood (those who had become criminals by chance), 2) drinking, violent father, parents divorced (those who had become criminals after being juvenile delinquents). None of the present wives/girlfriends participated in the crimes of their men, and only few of the interviewees had committed crimes together with their siblings or father.

The judges with an orientation towards values used their work as a tool to implement values that they considered important. They wanted to make sure that justice was done. For them, morals and value choices were central. The worst aspect of their work was the excessive amount of it which limited leisure time. As they took their work home with them, their families suffered from this. (Kumpulainen 1995.) My informants, in contrast, saw no value conflict in their own activities. For them, the most important thing was that they felt good, others had to adjust to that. The morals of my informants were reflected in, for instance, the way they classified fellow prisoners. Morally accepted, “honourable” criminals included those who had, for example, killed several people (but only able men), robbed significant amounts of money, or earned millions in the drug business. Despised and discriminated, then, were sex offenders, criminals who had abused women and children, and informers, in short persons whose crimes had been directed against those unable to defend themselves, or against the criminal community. Furthermore, none of my informants complained about the amount of work they had to do; they were satisfied as long as business was good.

According to Bourdieu, society is divided into three classes, distinguished by taste. The top class comprises those who have a perfect understanding of distinctions, the so-called legitimate taste. The second class attempts to follow good taste, i.e., it has a good cultural will (social ascenders and the middle class). The third class includes those whose taste is based on necessity because their resources are not sufficient for anything else (the working class). (Bourdieu 1979.) In the criminal world, the highest positions in the hierarchy are occupied by well-to-do professional criminals who innovate criminal concepts by committing new types of crimes, and by developing new variations of the old ones. They make a lot of money and have a reputation of being tough and relentless. The second class is occupied by young able criminals who clearly possess the potential of becoming professional criminals, but whose skills and economic situation, in particular, still require years of work before they accumulate to a sufficient level. The third class of criminals consists of habitual offenders who commit crimes impulsively, intoxicated, or out of material necessity. Habitual criminals and professional criminals co-operate only when the latter need field workers to carry out simple tasks.

For my informants, it was important to be distinguished from habitual criminals, to be professionals. The dominant cause for the activities of the groups and for participating in smuggling was money. The lack of money, and fantasies of big income, exciting life and freedom seemed to be such strong motivators that the men were prepared to risk their liberty and their lives. When carried away by work, the men said they did not think much about failure, apprehension or death because all their time and energy was spent on the criminal activity. The more a man earned from his criminal work, the more rationally he was able to handle and save the money. All the men I met

had earned - and spent - many times over the amount of money they had set as their goal in the beginning of the career. They were going to continue their career in order to maintain their standard of living, because others forced them to do so, or because they wanted to make one more million before getting caught. The men liked their profession despite the risks involved, and they rather chose a brief moment of freedom, doing what they pleased, than long life obeying the rules of others. The only drawback were the authorities - many of the men said that police precincts and prisons were like second homes to them, considering the lengths of time they had spent there.

Finally, I would like to make a few observations about the interesting value conflict between judges and criminals. The first-mentioned represent good taste as modest and industrious heirs of the Protestant ethics, the latter are egocentric hedonists who only think about themselves and rank self-realisation so high that if criminal acts are required, there is nothing wrong with that. However, almost all the interviewees I met in prison would have returned all the money they had made by criminal means if that would have helped them to avoid prison. Freedom becomes valuable when one has experienced what everyday life in prison feels like: 1) Rejected by friends and relatives, in the worst case even by parents, 2) most fellow prisoners are alcoholics, substance abusers, or mentally ill who should rather be placed in a treatment facility than in prison, 3) you have not only lost your liberty but also the right to decide when to eat, sleep, go out, and what to do during the day. During the fieldwork phase, I spent several weeks in various Finnish prisons, and I must admit that after the first excitement, it became increasingly oppressive to go there, and it felt good to be able to walk out through the prison gates even after a few hours' visit. I often wondered what it would feel like to walk through those gates if I had been sentenced to years imprisonment, as was the case with all my informants.

In my opinion, the following questions deserve further attention: 1) Would it be possible to help professional criminals to return to legal activities by forgiving at least a part of their debts, as in this way, legal earnings would make sense again?; 2) How can the negative label received from prison be neutralised so that the person does not have to serve a second sentence after being released? Presently, he is detested for the rest of his life. 3) What could be done about social inequality? Studies of criminal careers have shown that criminal convictions tend to accumulate to a relatively small group of people (Petersilia 1980).

5. Crimes

This chapter deals with the crimes my informants have committed. They date to the 1990s, and have been committed in Finland or abroad. The crimes presented in the text have been anonymised in an extremely careful manner; I do not wish to harm my informants by disclosing too many authentic details. The matter is particularly delicate because they have not been caught for all the crimes they have described to me, and such offences may still be under investigation or perhaps have not even been discovered. The confidential information I received did not concern crimes against persons, but mere property crimes, part of which may already be statute-barred. In my opinion, research ethics – or my conscience – do not demand disclosure of such information.

Although the informants had been selected to represent pre-selected crime sectors, it gradually became evident that such sector-based division does not correspond to reality. This comes up also in literature: one thing smugglers have always had in common is that they want to make money, and supply whatever their clients need as long as they are able to make a profit (Green 1969). My informants were multi-sector criminals; they had been - and continued to be - active in several sectors included in the original research plan, but also in many sectors outside the plan, and were willing to talk about it.

5.1 Planning the Crimes

The informants emphasised that professionals plan their crimes at length and with great care, because with extempore crimes, the risk of mistakes and getting caught is greater. They wanted to distinguish themselves from habitual offenders who commit crimes mostly on the spur of the moment under the influence of alcohol. On the other hand, the informants stressed that successful execution of one major crime may require commission of other crimes. Careful planning aims to minimise the risks of these extempore crimes, and thus reduce the danger of getting caught. Some interviewees used other criminals as warning examples, telling how they had committed small unplanned crimes out of greed and stupidity, and caused the capture of them or their whole group even years after the “main crime”. The present study does not aim to evaluate to what degree such detraction is used to raise the speaker's own status.

The interviewed told that only a minority of offence ideas proceed beyond the planning stage, and are carried out in practice. Most ideas are found impossible to execute, too risky, or the potential profit is too small in comparison to the effort. The offences may be reflected and planned for years. It is important to notice that my informants do not commit crimes in an impulsive manner, or on the spur of the moment, but make accurate and detailed plans in order to minimise mistakes, the risk of apprehension, and the overall interest on authorities' part. They are constantly planning and on the alert for new crime opportunities, developing variants of their old offences, intending to commit more sophisticated versions of their earlier crimes. It was highly interesting to learn how innovative, active, and keen to experiment my informants were when planning and executing crimes in order to make money. Their attitude differed

drastically from that of the ordinary habitual criminals, who at best plan maybe one in eight committed crimes. (cf. e.g. Kääriäinen 1994, 50-51.)

My informants thought that in order to be a good criminal, one has to be born a criminal. By this they meant that some people are better, more creative, smarter and more dangerous because they have been given a criminal mind already at birth. In other words, they can resort to both mental and physical violence against other people, they do not care about the norms and laws of society, and as persons they are self-centred and arrogant. My own interpretation is that it is not possible to be born a criminal, even if both the informants and the classic school, with Cesare Lombroso at the head, claim otherwise. Lombroso's ideas about criminal habitus and abnormal physical features have been rejected a long time ago. In my opinion, to be born a criminal could at most mean that one is willing to earn income by any means necessary. It is also worth pointing out that most people in the world earn a living, and are still capable of conforming to the laws and moral rules of society. Statistics and research reveal that only a minority of people resort to methods placed in the morally reproachable but not legally prohibited grey area, and a still smaller proportion commits crimes if the opportunity arises, or in a premeditated and conscious manner. Those who choose criminal means do it due to the lack of other means, or as a conscious method of making a living and perhaps even living in luxury. At least my informants stated that because they had not inherited any money and had no education, criminal means were the only way to get rich and be successful in Finnish society. According to Kääriäinen, those who have drifted into criminality or have chosen to become career criminals, believe that they had no other choice. In addition, they are bitter towards society, and have a drive for adventure and excitement (Kääriäinen 1994).

According to this study, the persons who have participated in crimes plan their acts carefully. The time spent on planning varies depending on how demanding the crimes are, and how many people are required to execute them. Essential elements of the planning include, for example, outlining in detail the idea and practical execution of the crime, hiring suitable accomplices, acquiring the necessary equipment, and planning the division of the proceeds of crime between the participants. All possible aspects are covered: which persons should be used in the different stages of the crime, who is to select and brief them, what each participant needs to know in order to be able to carry out his part, etc. If there are new or inexperienced participants involved - people who do not belong to the core group - they are briefed on police interrogation techniques, suitable answers, and on how a person who gets caught is going to be compensated if he does not disclose his accomplices and other incriminating details. The following interview quotation describes the planning phase.

“...Many times, you know, you do quite a lot of thinking. When you take note of some sort of good plot, then you start figuring out how you could make the best of it. Then you begin to develop the idea and assess whether it's really possible. If you don't see that there would be serious problems and it begins to look like something, then you go ahead step by step, to the end. Then, this probably develops into some kind of major offence...”IQ.

Planning a crime is time-consuming. It may take months before the crime can be carried out. Most initial plans are rejected due to insuperable problems with the financing, suitable accomplices or equipment, or it turns out that the chances of success are too slim, or that the expected profits are too small if compared to the risk of apprehension and the likelihood of success. The following interview quotation provides a more

detailed view on all matters that need to be considered in the planning stage, and what usually happens to amateurs.

“...It may be a matter of several months. If we talk of drugs, for instance, and then this kind of smuggling operation, well there are a lot of things that need to be organised. You've got to organise the contacts to another country. You've got to go there to find out how things work. Then you've got to make the deals about the smugglers, the routes, and such things. It's quite an intricate process, overall. It does take quite a lot of work. Often, then, the project is in a sort of development phase, so that it may be clear in your head, and you haven't even talked to anyone about it. You think about the scheme, but you haven't yet got the resources for it, but then, eventually the opportunity may sort of come up, so that you have already proceeded to a certain point, and then you realise that now you've got to solve this particular problem. For instance, you've got to find a solution to the financing part, if your financing is not in order. It may be a matter of many weeks until suddenly you get to a situation where the finances can be fixed. Then this project will again move ahead to a certain stage, and then you may again come across a problem that you must beat. If it is a problem that can be overcome, then this project is developed further, but if it is an insurmountable problem, and you don't find a solution, then, in a way, you've got to abandon it, and start to develop something new. The human mind is inventive, you know. If there is will to achieve something, and you've got certain patterns that you have learned by experience, that you can use to carry out schemes, then usually you will be able to make things work out. Then there may occur all kinds of trouble in the distribution stage, but if you would for instance begin to construct some sort of project as an amateur, well, even an amateur may succeed like with sheer luck and have a load of drugs brought to Finland, but when he'd need to begin selling the stuff and all, well then the problems start to grow, as you'd need to have the contacts. These you won't sort of be able to get except through experience and learning. You've already got to have a certain amount of contacts, and you've got to have several years of work behind you if things should work out. They don't go just like that, that you'll just go and get a load of drugs and start announcing out there that I've got some drugs. What would mostly happen then is that if some amateur goes and gets a load of drugs to the country and comes into these circles, he'll find out pretty soon that criminals have taken his stuff, or he'll realise that he's sitting at the police station...”IQ.

Since my informants commit crimes as their main occupation, time and personal commitment to the work are maximal. It is difficult to get an overview of the daily routines of the informants because the rhythm of the work is very impulsive, involving the exploitation of opportunities that may occur quite suddenly. In principle, all my informants were always working - leisure time was spent when there was no work to be done, no money to be made. Apparently committing crimes requires that the offender is always awake and ready to solve different kinds of problems. For example, in the business of smuggling or reselling drugs, operations can always be improved and made more effective. This requires both long-term planning and quick reactions to problems that may occur unexpectedly. It is quite common that when situations are “on”, the criminals hold regular meetings. These daily meetings are always face-to-face, telephones or other such means of communication are not used in the fear that police intercept messages, use various surveillance methods, and identify business partners. The following interview quotation illustrates how carefully and intensively a group planned the smuggling and sale of drugs in Finland.

“...Really a great lot. We talked about these matters every day. Easily, that sort of intensive discussion took some three-four hours, just like that. Like in the evening we could have something on paper that was then discussed, different alternatives. We were always in my cell or my partner's cell, and then we made sure that nobody was listening.. We'd got a tape recorder playing loud in a place where we thought they might have put listening devices, and we always burned all papers we had used for notes. So it was very much this kind of very long-term work. Then when it started to move ahead, things happened on a routine basis, then it didn't take much planning any more except when something unexpected happened. But every time when there was a new project. Like, we could be looking for a new country where you could perhaps get better drugs for a lower price, and then we would think it over again, all of it. We'd always make some alterations to the pattern, but always if we carried out a new plot, then the planning stage was really thorough and long...”IQ.

The persons I met were fully dedicated to matters they considered important. Usually, their world was quite black-and-white, whether we talked about committing crimes, about different kinds of shady deals, or about family and friends. Affairs were either attended to with total commitment or not at all, and persons were either cared for very much or not at all. The time spent meeting accomplices varied a great deal depending on the place of dwelling. In the preceding interview quotation, the men were in the same prison ward, and thus meetings were easy to organise. In the next quotation, the men lived in different cities, and in order to have a meeting they had to travel to a certain meeting place. The degree of dedication is well demonstrated by the fact that all three men in question had a family and small children, but when the drug import business required a meeting, all agreed to attend regardless of the inconvenience of the time or place.

“...A few hours a day. Every day. Usually we had it this way that if you had to talk with the other guy we did it so that one had to drive to see the other one. We lived in different cities, and you always had to go and drive to the other city then... Get into the car in the middle of the night and go to work. Nobody would say that it's too late, I'm not going anywhere any more today. I remember many situations that the X city guy would call and say that would it be at all possible that we'd go together for a coffee still today. I would ask that would it be the same old place there halfway. When he OK'd, I'd get going. It's no more than 80 -90 kilometres, the clock may have been 10 or 11 at night. This goes to show that the daily amount of driving could be at best a thousand kilometres. 10,000 kilometres quite accurately every month...”IQ.

An interesting feature in the planning and realisation of the crimes is that even if the organising of smuggling and the trade of illegal substances was complicated and time-consuming, it was in no way mysterious. The informants thought that matters should be dealt with in a simple manner, with common sense. Sometimes the simplest solutions were not only the best, but also bold, the kind that would take fellow people and authorities by surprise. The following interview quotation illustrates the point.

“...With primary school education and healthy common sense. All it takes is healthy common sense. Because these matters are not really that complicated. They are just sometimes made complicated. Simple ways are sometimes very good...”IQ.

Interviewees believed that the better a crime was planned, the smaller the risk of detection, and the better the outcome. They were not able to give me exact numbers of their crimes, but generally, they estimated that they had been apprehended for perhaps less than ten per cent of their crimes, and even less frequently for those crimes that had been planned really carefully. The advantage of careful planning is that a large number of crimes get rejected already at this stage, as is told in the following interview quotation.

"...It all depends. Many projects may fail, many others may be successful. You can't give a general percentage. Maybe fifty-fifty. There have been quite a lot of failures, too. That I have to admit. It always depends on the planning, like what kind of men you've got... And if it's some kind of ex tempore job, or one that you have been planning for a long time. This one is I think the only well-planned crime for which I'm doing time now... It's the only one of those that have been really planned. If the crime has been thoroughly planned, well, I was never caught for any of them. I mean one that has been well planned and carried out without pressure, for that kind of jobs we have never been even found out... if you've got money that helps quite a lot to get the project together. You can buy equipment and gear and you can bribe people and you can hire them..."IQ.

The informants told that sometimes they had been very close to getting caught, and only good luck or a trick that had taken the authorities by surprise had made it possible to avoid apprehension. In addition to the planning of the actual offence, it is equally important to plan how the eventual proceeds of the crime are to be divided and concealed. The goal is to make such arrangements that even if the perpetrators are caught, the authorities will be able to confiscate only part of the proceeds, or nothing at all. The money may be hidden in a safe place, exchanged for gold, deposited in foreign bank accounts under one's own or somebody else's name, or kept in shoeboxes at home. Gold and jewels are popular alternatives because they will not be damaged if buried into the ground, they keep their value, can be easily exchanged, and are an accepted currency all over the world. At the time of the interviews, towards the end of the year 2001, many said that they had exchanged Finnish marks they had hidden for Swedish crowns, because they thought that large sums of Finnish marks would be hard to exchange for Euros by the end of February 2002.

Essential in the planning of crimes is that 1) there is a demand for commodities, services, or drugs, 2) the persons committing the crimes have the capacity and ability to respond to this demand because they know the loopholes in the legislation, they have capital, they know the wholesale places for the commodities and services, and they are prepared to sacrifice their own freedom, and even life, for economic profit. Furthermore, my informants are very aware of the fact that the majority of population actually approves large-scale smuggling of alcohol and tobacco, and fencing stolen goods; criminals are seen as modern versions of Robin Hood because they supply goods which the poor could not otherwise afford to buy. Good examples of such silent acceptance are the alcohol prohibitions tried in many countries, and the consequent jumps in smuggling. (cf. e.g. Niska 1931; Bell 1953; Bäckman 1996.)

5.2 Committing the Crimes

In the following, the crimes committed by my informants are presented in greater detail. When studying this material, it is important to understand that even though the informants were primarily selected to represent their “own” crime sector, in reality, their crimes were not limited to this one particular sector. Instead, they were active in several fields both simultaneously and concurrently. Most of my informants had committed - or were committing - three to four different types of crimes in the course of the 1990s. The most common primary crime sectors were drugs (seven cases), debt collection (six cases), alcohol or tobacco (three cases), and procuring (two cases). The most common secondary crime sectors included drugs (eight cases), money laundering (five cases), handling of stolen goods (three cases), and firearms and procuring (one case).

All informants underlined that it is a general principle to try to make the crimes as invisible as possible. In practice, this invisibility of the criminal activity was achieved in different ways, depending on whether the crimes were committed in liberty or from prison. In the latter case one had to be particularly careful and ingenious, and to select able people who could take of the practicalities “on the outside”. The following interview quotation describes how one of the groups I studied carried out crimes from prison.

“...The main principle at least with us was that we'd keep as low a profile as possible, so we didn't show off in any way at all. Even here in prison, all those fights and other trouble they have here, we were never involved in any of it. Except it could be that a certain boss had paid someone to beat up somebody or something like that, but otherwise we kept as low a profile as possible. Me, for instance, or anyone else in the top level, I've got no breaches of rules in prison, we have never been reprimanded or anything. Everything looked good on the surface, sort of. The idea was to avoid giving anyone a cause for suspicions, that way you could operate in peace...”IQ.

The informants I met in cafés, shopping malls, restaurants or bars told me that it was easier to commit crimes in liberty, but even then, it was not too easy. It was easier because when you were free, you were able to act and do things the way you thought was best. Problems were caused on one hand by the criminal past and the consequent, permanent interest that authorities had in your business, and on the other hand by the difficulty to enjoy criminal profits in a reasonable way that did not cause suspicion. The interviewees had started to commit crimes in order to achieve a better standard of living, but in reality, it was easier said than done. How could a man living on unemployment benefits enjoy his success without attracting unwanted attention? He certainly could not start driving around in a new, expensive car, use expensive and flashy clothes, live in an expensive house, or travel a lot.

5.2.1 Weapons, violence directed at group members and outsiders

The persons I interviewed thought that the use of weapons and violence was a natural part of professional criminal's life. The more money and the longer prison sentence to be expected for a crime, the more probable it was that violence and weapons would be involved. All informants were prepared to use violence or had actually done so when settling debts, market frontiers or such matters with other criminals. The use of weapons was most common in crimes related to smuggling. In contrast, only a few fences or procurers mentioned weapons in connection with violence. The degree of violence

related to professional crime in Finland has previously been studied in the context of narcotics offences, and the findings of that study are quite similar to mine. Kinnunen's interviews support the view that the Finnish drug culture is not very violent as such, and the exceptional (albeit serious) incidents of violence are connected, for example, with the collection of debts, being turned in to the police, or other such disagreements, and typically occur in the hard drugs business. People involved in illegal markets cannot go to the police if they are cheated. Carrying a weapon gives one a sense of security, and the fact that others know about the weapon may guarantee a certain level of peace and inviolability. (Kinnunen 1996.) This was concurred in by my informants who, for example, stated the following:

"...I prefer carrying a weapon to dying without one..."IQ.

Finnish laws regulating firearms are very strict, and it is quite difficult to buy a legal weapon. However, my informants were able to obtain guns without any trouble. They estimated that acquiring a new handgun would take less than two hours, and the price would be below ten thousand Finnish marks (1,600 Euro) as told in the following quotation.

"...Guns are around really a lot. Let's say, if you need to get a gun, although I've been in prison now for almost X years, I bet that if I could get out in front of that prison gate and if I had a telephone, I'll be able to get a gun for sure. That is no kind of a problem. I believe it wouldn't take two hours even. It could be a matter of twenty minutes. Of course it takes money. You've got to be prepared to pay some 7000 - 8000 marks (1,200-1,300 Euros) for a new good gun... Let's say something like a two-row, one with a two-row case, a 9 mm, 15 rounds. A ZZ 85 with a 9 mm back, or a .44, or some .45 Colt cover, or a .357 magnum. I mean, no war souvenirs... they come usually from house burglaries... at one time, my pals imported guns from America..."IQ.

The black market gun dealers in Finland acquire their guns mostly by the following three means: 1) by buying from fences/dealers in stolen goods, 2) by ordering a burglary into a place where there are known to be guns, 3) by importing guns from abroad or having them imported by some other party. In my earlier research, I found that between the year 1993 and the end of August 1998, Finnish police filed reports on a total of 23 persons importing guns or explosives from Estonia to Finland. However, all the guns brought to Finland from Russia and Estonia do not necessarily remain in Finland but are taken to third countries (Junninen 1999). In the following quotation, a gun dealer tells about his business.

"...Nowadays, as I don't have contacts to narcotics people, neither indirectly nor directly, guns are asked very seldom. Earlier the situation was generally known, that there were not many places if you needed a good gun, fresh cartridges, where you could get guns at a two-hour warning, any time of the day..."IQ.

The persons I interviewed said they owned a gun and would use it if necessary. Yet, according to a detailed study on homicides in Finland in 1996, the great majority of homicides are related to abundant alcohol use. In this study, 72 per cent of those convicted of homicide had been intoxicated when committing the crime. The female victims had typically been sexual partners (marriage, cohabitation, dating and "ex" relationships) of the perpetrator - 63.6 per cent of the female victims and 4.3 per cent of male victims had been slain by a sexual partner. 25 per cent of the female victims and 8.5 per cent of male victims had been killed by a relative. Save for one female victim

slain by an in-law, all those killed by a relative had been biologically related to the perpetrator. 11.4 per cent of the female victims and 87.2 per cent of male victims had been killed by an outsider. These were typically friends and acquaintances (very typically in drinking group contexts) and less often neighbours. A few “outside” killers had been unknown to the victim prior to the lethal interaction (masculine conflicts of honour). Some cases had involved debt collection, and one had been a drug-related contract killing. Some of these homicides had been committed to punish an informer. The homicides had been mostly committed by a knife or some other sharp object (35.2 per cent of the cases), by beating, kicking, or strangling by hands (23.9 per cent), or by a blunt instrument (15.7 per cent). 20.8 per cent of the victims had been shot. The suspected offenders were predominantly men (87.5 %) while only 12.5 % of them were female. (Kivivuori 1999.)

In the 1990s, Finnish police recorded quite statically about 100 homicides and 30 murders per year, clearance rates being over 90 per cent (Rikollisuustilanne 2000; 2001). Annually some 600-700 persons vanished, of whom 20-40 were never found. The missing person was found alive in 83 per cent of the cases, and dead in 13 per cent. If the person was found dead, in more than half of the cases the cause of death was suicide. (Pajuoja & Salminen 1996.) To what degree the permanently missing persons and those found dead relate to conflicts between professional criminals, is not known. However, violence among professional criminals does seem to be common, but also seasonally variable. During the fieldwork period of my study (little over 3 months), at least two Finnish professional criminals were killed, but this does not necessarily mean that the annual rate of these dramatic killings would be close to ten. The informants maintained that guns are often effective violence deterrents; at gunpoint, one is likely to realise that if talk is not enough, something more serious will happen, as described in the following quotation.

“... Well then men came to find out, they went there into a villa, kind of to sort the matter out, that it's you guys who took the stuff, isn't it? Well they were real big guys and everybody pulled their guns and made menacing faces like 'have you got a problem?' The matter froze just like that. This isn't, now if we think of the past ten years when this spirits trade has been big, you know not a single man has been killed. Despite that there have been hold-ups at night...”IQ.

Most of the informants were of the opinion that violence should be avoided until the last possible moment, and disputes should be resolved by talking. On the other hand, they emphasised that if violence is necessary, the situation requires it, or the matter cannot be settled otherwise, violence would be used. In addition, it is evident that violence breeds violence; the informants rather retaliated attacks on them with violence, than reported them to police for investigation. According to my informants, the violence is strictly limited to the criminals themselves and to their conflicts, and outsiders need not to worry, as explained in the following quotation.

“...precision violence. The revenge is taken only on those who are guilty. No car bombs, or anything. Or if I would want to kill you, this is a purely hypothetical thing, well you can be sure that nobody else is going to die but you. Or I may be killed in the attempt. I'd kill myself if I'd kill a bystander. I couldn't live with a thing like that...”IQ.

There are two kinds of precision violence: 1) teaching, and 2) murder. One informant described “teaching” in the following way:

“...the guy is beaten up with an iron pipe. It's not a matter of a long speech, if you're beaten up with an iron pipe like this, and break some bones and give a warning that next time we'll wrap you up and put you in a van and throw you in a ditch...”IQ.

Violence inside the criminal world usually occurs for one of the two reasons: 1) the men in the groups or in the business chain settle their conflicts by violence, 2) competing groups or business chains come to a physical battle.

If the person fails to comply, or his breach against the others has been extremely serious, murder is the last resort. My informants knew of a few persons who had been murdered in Finland in the 1990s because teaching had not been enough. Murder did not, of course, fix the problem, but the informants believed it was a necessary warning to others. Partly it was to demonstrate the seriousness of the matter, and partly it was a question of honour. Cheating is simply not allowed, as explained in the following quotation.

“...We are not killing anybody for light reasons. All other means are used first. We negotiate and try to be fair, but if the guy just doesn't get it, a shot in the head is where it ends...”IQ.

According to Bäckman's study, in Russia, contract murders are connected to conflict resolution between and inside criminal organisations. The murders usually relate to money laundering, frauds inside the criminal community, or previous murders. Most of the victims of contract killings are gang leaders or businessmen involved in the activities of criminal organisations. In the 1990s, there were several hundred reported incidents of contract killing per year. (Bäckman 1996). According to my informants, hired killers can be found both in Finland and abroad. The next quotation describes how easy it is to hire a Finnish or an Estonian contract killer, and how much it costs.

“...The Estonians are all right. Over there, contract killing is real cheap. In Finland you'll find out, if you want a professional to take care of it, it will cost you 150,000 (FIM). All right, there are all kinds of characters here who'll give you a cheaper price, too... In Estonia, the price starts at something like 5,000 US dollars. That's somewhere below 30,000 marks...”IQ.

Violent encounters between criminal groups, or “wars”, are the other type of precision violence. Over the past decades, fights between criminal groups have occurred in many different countries around the world. They are avoided as long as possible, and the violence is directed only at enemy group members. Even so, the bloodiest wars between criminal groups have taken a toll of hundreds, maybe thousands of victims. The number of victims tends to grow because at least in Sicily, the enemy group is preferably killed to the last man in order to prevent the remaining members from retaliating against the deaths of their friends. There have been great wars between families in Sicily in 1962-63 and 1981-83, in the USA during the 1930s prohibition era, the Castellammarese war in 1931, and in Columbia in the 1980s (Abadinsky 1990; Catanzaro 1988; Falcone 1995). To my knowledge, there have not been any extensive inter-group conflicts in Finland. Some interviewees indicated that certain groups were prepared to use violence more extensively when enlarging their sales network. Furthermore, at least one large-scale inter-group shootout had been prevented and settled by an Estonian amphetamine provider.

My informants were prepared to retaliate against the wrongdoings they had suffered. However, many interviewees made it clear that despite the bitterness they felt towards authorities and their actions, violence directed at authority representatives would not only be extremely bad for business, but would also cause unnecessary trouble. A similar line of thinking seems to prevail also in Sicily, even though numerous Sicilian policemen, police chiefs, prosecutors and judges have been killed over the past decades. According to various sources, the victims have typically been subjected to other means of persuasion first, and have finally been murdered as a warning to others. It is worth noting that all possible indirect methods of influence had been tried first, and that violence had come into play only when all other means had been exhausted. (Ahtokivi 1994; Stille 1996.) According to our recent survey, in 1994-1999, 28 per cent of Finnish prosecutors and 15 per cent of judges received verbal threats, and less than one per cent experienced physical violence as a result of their work (Aromaa & Junninen, forthcoming). It is very unusual for criminals to include single police officers, lawyers, or court staff, in their "revenge lists", as explained in the following quotation.

"...then there are these revenge hits that are directed at people who have informed on someone earlier, or who were in debt, of some kind of legal business, like car trade and things. They were what could be called civilians. Then there was this violence against police. And one assault on a barrister. That's about all there was against authorities. But there was also always something in planning, like a hit against a judge, but luckily there wasn't time to carry out the plans..."IQ.

5.2.2 Narcotics

The persons I interviewed had in the course of the 1990s delivered and marketed cannabis, amphetamine and heroin in Finland. At the time of the interviews, they estimated that there were approximately 10-15 Finnish groups who were importing and marketing narcotics in Finland in a professional manner. Usually one group imports and markets only one type of drug, but there are exceptions to this rule. The most important reason for starting an importing and marketing business in Finland is money. The scarcity of professional importers and the small number of sellers have made the selling of drugs easy, and the market has remained relative stable, as suggested in the following quotation.

"...The markets exist there all the time. Now there's a really large amount of stuff... when you think that the NBI estimates that about 5,000 kilos of cannabis is being sold in Finland, I say that it's closer to 7,000 or even 10,000. Or it could be, say 6,500 or 7,000 per year. The market is there all the time for sure, and now here almost all more important cannabis pushers are presently in prison, I mean there are not too many gangs active right now, that it's only the hard stuff, speed and heroin and ecstasy, these are what count today. Even in these matters there are like fads, what sort of demand there is..."IQ.

The groups I studied were usually highly specialised, restricting their activities to smuggling and marketing only certain types of drugs. The arguments for such specialisation were: 1) they had the know-how to do business with this drug, 2) their foreign contacts were limited, 3) they were making a good profit, or 4) these particular drugs were considered less dangerous than other drugs. Similar arguments can also be found in research literature. (c.f. e.g. Johnson, Hamid & Morales 1987.) On the other

hand, my informants were businessmen to the bone, and their actions were above all dictated by the laws of supply and demand, as the following quotation explains.

“...The drugs came, well, from the Netherlands, Spain, and then from Russia - Vietnam or Thailand were for heroin. Then there was a plan to import firearms from Estonia. Time did not allow for them to come into the country. Hormones were brought from Sweden...”IQ.

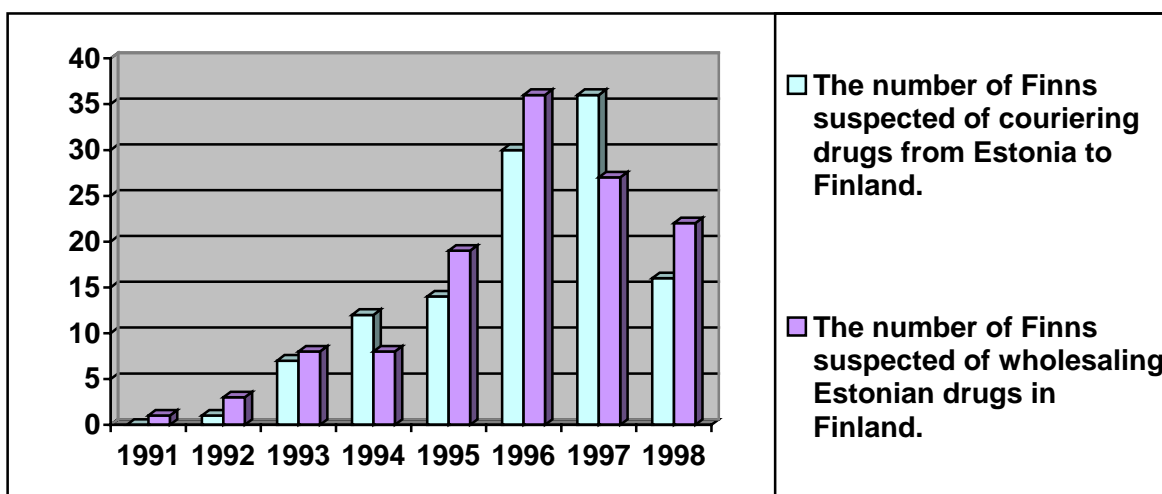
The source countries of the drugs trafficked to Finland have varied over the years. The longer a person has been in the trade, the more distant has his source countries become. The objective is to minimise the number of European middlemen, and the longer the distance between the buyer and the original producer, the larger the potential profit. As far as cannabis is concerned, the scope of the primary countries of origin has ranged from Denmark to the Netherlands and Spain, in addition to which there have been plans to import hashish directly from Morocco. Heroin has been bought from the Netherlands, Thailand, Vietnam, Russia, and the USA. The following interview excerpt describes how the country of acquisition impacts on prices.

“...In Denmark, the prices are the highest, so that the price goes down and the risk goes up when we bring it from more faraway places. In Denmark the stuff may cost say 18,000 crowns a kilo, in the Netherlands it costs 7,000 marks a kilo, and in Spain you pay 3,500 marks a kilo, and in Morocco just 1,500. But the risk grows accordingly...”IQ.

With amphetamine, the trend has been quite the opposite. It was initially bought mainly from the Netherlands, but as drug laboratories started to appear in the Baltic countries, the sources gradually shifted towards Finland. After Poland and Lithuania, the main country today is Estonia. There are so many amphetamine laboratories in Estonia that all the groups importing amphetamine to Finland have direct contacts with them, and some are even contemplating on the idea of establishing an own laboratory in Estonia. The central importance of Estonia as the country of origin for amphetamine brought to Finland was already observed in my earlier research, where Finnish authorities presented their views and perceptions on the narcotics criminality between Finland and Estonia. According to this study, the advantages of Estonia are: 1) the production of amphetamine in Estonia is easy, cheap and safe, because precursor chemicals can be easily bought, there is a large number of unemployed chemists in the country, and amphetamine can be produced in small laboratories with rather simple equipment; 2) Estonia is geographically very close to Finland, and smuggling is easy to organise as there is only one border to cross. The border itself is very busy with about three million visitors both ways per year; 3) should problems arise, the Estonian authorities are easier to bribe, threaten and extort. (Junninen 1999.)

The role of the Finns participating in the amphetamine business between Finland and Estonia has changed over the years as the co-operation with Estonians and Estonian Russians has developed. Nowadays, Finns get involved in the business mainly when the narcotic substances are brought to Finland. They operate as professional importers, financiers and wholesale marketers, and direct the drugs into the existing Finnish markets. The activity expands rapidly owing to the substantial profit that can be derived from the drugs. (Junninen 1999.) In the 1990s, the aggravated narcotics offences recorded by Finnish police ranged from less than 400 to nearly 1,000 per year (Rikollisuustilanne 2000, 2001). Figure 5 illustrates the changing role of the Finns in the amphetamine trade between Estonia and Finland in the 1990s.

Figure 5. The number of Finnish persons suspected of drug trafficking from Estonia to Finland and of wholesale of Estonian drugs in Finland between 1991 and the end of august 1998.



The figures have been calculated from the VIHI, EPRI and Teko registers of Finnish police forces, and from the files of the police liaison officers in the Finnish Embassy in Tallinn (Junninen 1999).

The number of Finns suspected of/apprehended for smuggling or selling narcotics doubled both in 1995 and 1996 from the previous year, and the number of Finns suspected of narcotics offences has multiplied since 1991. It is also worth noting that both smuggling and the volume of the units smuggled have increased over time. At first, when the demand was still moderate, human couriers were enough, but as the volume of the trade and smuggled goods grew, couriers were replaced by cars, then by trucks. A well-organised and active group may import and distribute hundreds of kilos of cannabis, tens of kilos of amphetamine, and several kilos of heroin per year. The largest amounts mentioned in the interviews ranged from five to twenty kilos of amphetamine a week, and from a hundred to two hundred kilos of cannabis a month. In the following excerpt, a person who has smuggled narcotics to Finland and also received drugs in Finland tells about his smuggling trips.

“...I was never caught, even if I may have carried large amounts. I came by airplane, by ferry. I came to Turku on a ferry, I was carrying a kilo of heroin, no problem. Or I came from Spain by air, I was carrying 10 kilos of hashish, no problem. My case was even open when it was going around that belt in the airport. I wondered where my case was, then it arrived, locks open. I closed the locks, took a taxi and drove to town... Originally, I forgot to tell you, I intended to go to Brussels from Amsterdam, and take the plane from there. That route has been used often, they're not supposed to control you there. Anyway, I then took the train, and I changed trains on the way, got off the train and switched trains here and there. I think it was in the Hamburg railway station, there was a regular war going on as they had those football fans there, and about a hundred police I guess came there with all those dogs, and they were shooting down there. I was there with this one-kilo bag of heroin. The situation then calmed down when they were taking people from the train with hands tied up... I looked up the next train and got on it. In Sweden, when the customs came into the train, there were two Russians in the same car, that was enough for them and they inspected the whole car. I went out when they wanted to frisk me too, I was wearing my overcoat, and the pocket was bulging. He checked my passport and said “One more Finn, which case is yours?” I pointed at my case. They inspected the whole car, I was having that kilo all the time right there. All they would have needed to do was

to look a little more closely as that was quite a ball I had. The same thing when I came to Turku, I always came on a false name of course, there they had a big bunch of customs officers. Just like horses with blinds, so they couldn't see to their sides. I came through there. Many times I have brought smaller quantities from Tallinn to Finland... It was amphetamine and hashish, mainly. Then there was some heroin and cocaine, but they were smaller amounts... In the best weeks, as much as 20 kilos of amphetamine comes to the men of this certain X. I haven't of course been personally collecting all of it..."IQ.

According to my informants, the most important element in the drug business is a reliable foreign contact who is able to make regular deliveries from one party to another. The more reliable the foreign contact, and the more stable the quality of the drugs, the faster and easier it is for a group to establish itself in the Finnish market as a reliable supplier, to conquer new markets, and to reduce prices. In the following excerpt, one informant lists a few cities to which the group I have studied has delivered drugs.

"...Hämeenlinna, Riihimäki, Kouvola, Kemi, Lahti, and then of course Helsinki. Then there were shipments where a car just arrived and they drove away, then you can't know where it went except that away from Helsinki..."IQ.

In Finland, the wholesale prices of drugs have gone down steadily. In the 1990s, they halved in a matter of a few years, faster with amphetamine, more slowly with cannabis. On the other hand, drug prices tend to fluctuate greatly with supply and demand. If an important wholesale dealer is apprehended, or authorities manage to seize a large amount of drugs, the prices usually rise. For some reason, Christmas has a similar effect. The following interview quotation tells about the falling wholesale prices of cannabis in Finland.

"...It's only quite recently that the prices have gone down. Back then, 1980 or should I say 1990, 91, 92, it was somewhere around 45,000 marks for a kilo of cannabis, and today the price is maybe 18,000 - 23,000 marks for the kilo, for which they'll sell it out at wholesale level..."IQ.

The second quotation describes the price development of amphetamine in Finland.

"...For such people like X was, twenty used to be the price for which one could sell directly. A half for twenty. And before, you could get 40,000 - 50,000 for half a kilo already wholesale, but now when you sell you don't get more than this 20,000 - 25,000, so you'll sell it by the half kilo..."IQ.

While the wholesale prices of narcotics have fallen, their purity has remained quite stable. The central reason behind this is simple: there is a limit to how much drugs can be cut and prices raised on the wholesale level, because also the next level must be able to do the same in order to improve their profits. Selling drugs is a large-scale business, and a working business relationship is not jeopardised by supplying inferior products. If the retail merchants do not make a sufficient profit, or their clients think the merchandise is no good, the retailers can always change the supplier. In Finland, there are no regional monopolies, and thus there can be many retailers offering the products of several importers side by side, all wanting to sell to addicts their daily fix. The only way to compete against the other importers is to offer good, affordable merchandise reliably. Learning to cut the merchandise and to handle the whole drug business takes place by trial and error. The men learn to estimate, to buy, and to organise the smuggling and the resale in the course of their wholesale career. The purity of

amphetamine is verified by giving samples to the addicts. It can also be tested in a more “official” manner, as the following interview excerpt explains.

“...In the beginning, when the business started, they cut the stuff already in Tallinn, but then things developed so that they got wise also in this end. They went, well I don’t know if this is really true, but they went to VTT²⁴ and other places to have the stuff tested, and then another method was that when the police caught somebody, they knew that they’ll always record the purity in court, I mean how strong it is. And now that the competition is hard, you couldn’t sell anything inferior. Now that we aren’t speaking of grams but of kilos, they wouldn’t want to spoil their business by giving them inferior stuff, instead it was usually really good. In the early days, I remember that the stuff was so fresh that when you put it in a plastic bag, and the bag had some texts printed on the outside, well even the text from the bag would melt because there was still so much acetone in it. The stuff had been taken so fast from the production line that there had not been time for the acetone to evaporate...”IQ.

The serious nature of the narcotics trade is demonstrated by the fact that as a rule, the merchandise may always be returned and changed if the quality is not as promised, as the following citation shows.

“...I do remember some of those half kilo parcels, there was a new one in exchange if the stuff had not been good. That didn’t happen often though...”IQ.

The profits derived from the drugs vary depending on the person’s position in the retail chain. The importer may get his investment back three-fold, the wholesaler makes a profit of five to ten thousand FIM per kilo, and so on, as explained below.

“...If I sell or instruct a partner that you sell for 23 grand, then that is how much we’ll have to get. The guy who takes the assignment, one at a lower level, he’ll get maybe 25 or 30 grand for it. It’s up to him. But that’s the slow part of the business. At wholesale level, the higher you go, the cheaper the prices will get. At street level, then, a kilo of cannabis will be 40 grand. We could sell it for 20 grand. So there’s the commission, everybody knows what it’s worth for him so that you’ll also be able to get rid of it. Then he’ll pay us what we agreed upon...”IQ.

The profits in the Finnish narcotics business have gradually decreased. Nevertheless, the business continues to be very profitable for everybody involved. The reason lies in the growth of the market: although the prices have fallen, the imported amounts have increased, and with them, the net income. There are not many legal occupations that yield a net income of several hundreds of thousands of FIM just by travelling abroad a few times a month, as is the case with drug couriers.

“...If he brought a kilo of heroin, he’d get 80,000 FIM for it. He got the money right away from that place X. The money was there in an envelope, waiting for him. Usually in that kind of deal they’ve received just a few grand. An unemployed guy would make in three months 200,000 – 300,000 FIM. When you’ve been living on unemployment subsidy, that’s quite fantastic...”IQ.

Although the big profits add to the attractiveness of narcotics trade, not everybody is able to set up a working import and marketing group. The same individuals seem to control the business year after year. Group members who have disappeared or quit are replaced by hiring new men who in turn may eventually become financiers of an import group. In order to do narcotics business in Finland, one needs to have a foreign manufacturer, retail network in Finland, and initial capital. The following interview

²⁴ The Technical Research Centre of Finland.

quotation explains how one group was able to operate in a very active manner in the 1990s.

“...It was mainly because this boss had previous experience and know-how, and the way he was thinking in general. So he had already earlier made millions in this business. He already had the necessary contacts, and he had the know-how...”IQ.

All the interviewees who had marketed narcotics in Finland believed that cannabis is not dangerous at all, and that it would do no harm if it was legalised. Only amphetamine and heroin were said to be really dangerous. Be that as it may, all my informants rejected the idea of giving any kind of drug to their own children, as emphasised in the following quotation.

“...I would, fuck, I'd kill if somebody would give amphetamine or heroin to my kids, I'd kill him for sure. That's a fact. Or I'd cut him up, blind him or something like that. He would certainly learn what he did if he'd sell that to my kids. It's another matter, cannabis is a fucking other matter than heroin or some goddamn cocaine, ecstasy, LSD, amphetamine. Cannabis and marihuana are on a different planet entirely, they're a totally different matter. You don't get hooked on them, and they don't do you any harm. It's the same as when you smoke tobacco, so if it's all right to sell tobacco so why can't you sell cannabis, too. It doesn't cause anything. Anybody who wants to get stoned, he'll do it, one way or another, anyway. So why can't they use this legally because this, cannabis and marihuana, is in my opinion less dangerous than alcohol ...”IQ.

My informants were well aware of the fact that when participating in the narcotics business, they were, in a way, promoting other crimes, too. However, the crimes committed by others did not interest them as long as they received payment for the merchandise they sold, as described in the following quotation.

“...Let's put it this way, sort of, if you're involved in the drug business, then you're involved in all crime, because it's the drug business that makes other crime happen, and the addicts commit all kinds of crimes just to get their drugs. Sort of, when people get into debt, they may come to talk to you, you'll tell them “Well its just this kind of thing that you could do for me”. They'll offer you all kinds of things. You know, when people have debts, they'll do bank robberies and anything. That covers just anything, all frauds and all you can do in the field of crime. It's not of course rapes and stuff, I mean, I'm talking of anything in the area of professional crime...”IQ.

There is an interesting discrepancy of interpretations as it has also been claimed that the drug situation in Finland is actually good when compared to most other Western European countries. Yet, also during the 1990s, the supply of many drugs increased and prices dropped. Hashish continues to be the most popular drug in Finland, and amphetamine the most popular hard drug. There have also been indications of an increase in smoked heroin, LSD and ecstasy. (Kinnunen 1996.) Finnish police authorities continue to warn of the dangers of narcotics crime, of the activity becoming increasingly professional and tough, and of the rapid increase in the number of drug users. According to police sources, during the seven-year period of 1990-1996, 16 groups importing narcotics to the greater Helsinki area were apprehended. Four of them had been organised by foreigners living in Finland (originating from Vietnam, Gambia, Turkey, and England), and the remaining 12 groups by Finnish citizens. The prison sentences of the apprehended persons ranged from 3 to 12 years, and the average number of main perpetrators per case was 3-9 persons. The amounts of narcotics that the groups

had imported into Finland varied from less than one kilo of heroin to 30 kilos of amphetamine and cocaine, and to 370 kilos of hashish. The largest confiscation of proceeds of crime/criminal profits from one single group amounted to several million FIM. The groups operated mainly in three different compositions:

- 1) groups steered from prison;
 - 2) groups formed by family members (father, daughter and boyfriend) importing and wholesaling drugs
 - 3) normal groups of free men importing and selling narcotics in Finland.
- (Koskinen 1997.)

Whatever the truth about the Finnish drug problem, it is important to understand that criminal activities always involve risks, and that there is no shortage of entrepreneurs who tend to belittle the significance of organised drug dealing by arguing that for every successful organised effort, there are hundreds of failed ones (cf. e.g. Gottfredson & Hirschi 1990, 213). Furthermore, all the narcotics confiscated in Finland were not intended for the Finnish market. Finland is also used as a transit country in smuggling operations directed at third countries.

5.2.3 Procuring

In the 1990s, Finnish procurers and dealers in female sexual services divided the forms of procuring and sexual services into four different categories:

- 1) procuring Finnish women,
- 2) procuring foreign women imported by oneself
- 3) procuring foreign women rented from abroad, and
- 4) Finnish women selling themselves.

In Finland, just like in any other country, there have probably always been women who sell themselves. The market is demand-driven; as long as there are men who prefer to buy sex, there will be great support for sexual exploitation. Naturally, also the cultural attitudes play an important part in the prosperity of the sex business (Shannon 1999, 123-124). In this study, I will not discuss the history of prostitution in Finland, but focus on the 1990s and the ways prostitution changed at that period. According to Finnish authority sources, the change resembled events which took place in Holland already in the 1970s: instead of being locally controlled and relative small-scale, the number of prostitutes increased rapidly. In the 1990s, the Finnish market was invaded by newcomers from Central and Eastern Europe. (cf. e.g. Bruinsma & Meershoek 1999; KRP 2002.)

In the early 1990s, some of my informants had tried procuring Finnish women, but at the time, the business was not profitable. In their view, the situation resulted from several factors:

- 1) moral resistance to prostitution was strong, and, therefore, the volume of potential clients low,
- 2) finding Finnish women was difficult; most Finnish prostitutes wanted to sell themselves on their own and at their own pace by making use of different kinds of contact columns in the press, and did not need procurers,

3) Finnish women were difficult to procure because they had the courage to refuse work opportunities they did not like.

The following interview quotation reflects the thoughts of a Finnish procurer.

“...I am the first one in town X to start a touring van that sold women. At times I had women living in my premises, a few women were living even in our apartment in town Y. This was in the early 90s, but this was at the time, I had the feeling that the business didn't get really going in that region Z. The women, they came along on a voluntary basis. We used newspaper ads to find the women. One of us drove around Finland and checked them out, and photographed. From that bunch we then selected and took them who worked for us... but the business didn't really work, perhaps I wasn't tough and cruel enough, but anyway, it didn't really work. Not in that region... We quit the activity then because it was unprofitable. One of them got then married here, and then the others too, or that one she also settled down and ...”IQ.

Procuring foreign women or hiring them from foreign middlemen to provide sexual services (prostitutes, topless waitresses, erotic masseuses, dancers etc.) in Finland is a new phenomenon that mainly emerged in the early 1990s. As the Soviet Union collapsed and the Baltic countries gained independence, the economic gap between Finland and the Baltic countries became visible, and exploitation also in the area of commercial sex more common. Particularly in Estonia, it has been easy to hire ordinary young women without any prior experience to work as sex professionals. According to the World Congress Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children, three main forms of sexual exploitation include: 1) prostitution, 2) trafficking and sale of persons for sexual purposes, and 3) pornography (creation, distribution and use). (Shannon 1999, 119-120.) Many of the Eastern prostitutes working in Finland are highly educated; 23 per cent have a university degree, and 16 per cent are or have been university students. The women are young, 20-30 years old, and more than half of them have been engaged in prostitution for less than two years. Only one-third have more than five years' experience (Ministry of Interior of Finland 1999, 41). In Estonia and Russia, the women are recruited face-to-face in streets and restaurants, with open newspaper advertisements, or through informal channels. Usually, the women enter the country with a tourist visa and work for a few weeks (Lehti 2002). The situation in Finland is by no means unique; also other Schengen countries have received women from former Eastern bloc countries who travel with tourist visas but are in fact prostitutes (cf. e.g. Bruinsma & Meershoek 1999, 111).

Considering the Estonian living standards, it is easy to persuade women to come to Finland to provide commercial sexual services. The sums offered amount to only a few thousand FIM, but in Estonia, that equates to several months' net income. In my previous study, I counted from accessible police registers 93 individuals who had forwarded, invited or accommodated Estonian prostitutes in Finland between 1993 and the end of August 1998. According to Lehti, in 1998-2001, Estonians dominated Finnish prostitution market with 68 per cent. Other nationalities included Russians (24 per cent), Finns (only 7 per cent) and others (1 per cent) (Lehti 2002, 64). The percentages were calculated from the records of the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation (N = 72 women). As far as procuring is concerned, the proportion of Finnish pimps has been high from the start. After 1 May 1995, no visa has been required for travelling between Finland and the Baltic countries. This has facilitated importing and changing the girls, but has not significantly increased the volume of the business. This is because already before 1995, it was common to use invitations as fronts, and

even to name unsuspecting Finnish citizens as hosts without their consent. (Junninen 1999). The following interview quotation provides a good illustration of how easy it is to persuade women to come to work in Finland.

“...I have myself also been travelling to Estonia on my free time. Over there, you then persuade them to give it a try. Nobody was forced, we always persuaded. Come and give it a try. From one hotel for instance, it was a small hotel, three girls who were working there came over, I mean they had never been involved in any kind of sex business. They came to work here...”IQ.

There are two primary ways to rent women from abroad: 1) one Finnish person rents and procures women in Finland; 2) several Finnish procurers together rent the women and circulate them from one place to another. Renting the women is always procurer's own business - he decides from whom and from how many partners he rents. Although the contracts with the Baltic or Russian dealer may vary in form and content, certain basic details are always covered: how much rent is paid for the women and on what grounds, how long the women are expected to work in Finland, and when the rent is to be paid. According to my informants, the rent per woman depends on the amount of work she does, in effect on the number of clients. The money received from the clients is split either two or three ways: three, if it is divided between the Finnish pimp, the women, and the foreign dealer; two, if either the women or the dealer – or possibly both – pay the dealer. A similar profit allocation model has been reported from the Netherlands (cf. e.g. Bruinsma & Meershoek 1999). Brothels are deemed illegal by the Finnish law, and are probably quite rare in Finland. The procuring mostly takes place in sex clubs, rented apartments, cheap accommodation facilities (motels, camping areas) etc. (Lehti 2002, 69-70). The following quotation describes how the money is split between the three parties.

“... if they come from a dealer, then there are two kinds of principles. The main rule is that the money is always split evenly, but then the dealer is paid either by me or by the girl, or sometimes both are paying the dealer...”IQ.

The Finnish procurer may rent as many women as he wants. The selection is done from photographs displayed by the different agencies. It is worth noting that if the co-operation with a certain foreign agent proves problematic, the procurer can always go to another agency. Or he may choose to use several foreign partners simultaneously. One of my informants said that he had used at least 20 different agencies during his career in the sex business. He then continued by telling that he and his Finnish friend were presently renting women in turns, and circulating them in each others' places in Finland. The women came mainly from Estonia, but there were other source countries, too, as indicated in the following excerpt.

*“...Nowadays it's Estonia where they come from. Estonian Estonians or Estonian Russians, whatever. Both. Russia is then a second place. In Helsinki, there may even be more Russians than Estonians. **Are there also women from more distant places?** There sure are...Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine. All of these Eastern Bloc countries. And Thailand...”IQ.*

Launching a procuring business in Finland was said to be easy. The greatest causes of concern and amateur errors relate to making oral agreements with foreign dealers, and concealing the procuring activity in Finland. What is essential is that one never operates under his own name, and that the activity does not attract the interest of authority

representatives. For instance, the women are treated well in order to prevent them from informing the authorities, as explained in the following quotation.

"...first of all, you've got to take care of your connections. The deals you make, you must stand behind those contracts and consider very carefully what you agree on... if you make deals with Russians or Estonians, well they're having that kind of system that they'll always try to cheat you and do all kinds of things. You've got to be careful about how you make the deal and how you answer their questions. How you are able to make the contacts and how you can make them agree... An amateur will easily make the mistake that, if he is dealing with the owner of a flat, he'll rent the flat under his own name. In those days, there were no anonymous mobile phone cards either, so that telephones could also be linked to persons. A friend of mine instructed me. He sort of explained to me how the business is being run, and so I started to do it...he is a good friend of mine, and he was doing the same business here in the South and he had no interest to come to the North..."IQ.

According to Finnish law, prostitution by adults is not criminalised, nor the selling or buying of sexual services. However, making profit on another person's prostitution is punishable as a procuring offence. The regulation of prostitution is unsystematic and mainly based on the general provisions of the Penal Code, related to violent crimes, sexual crimes, kidnapping offences, offences concerning the deprivation of another person's liberty, and regulations concerning immigration offences and foreigner legislation. These laws have primarily been enacted for other purposes than prostitution control. Similarly, trafficking in human beings related to prostitution has been explicitly criminalised only in relation to trafficking in children (Lehti 2002). The Finnish situation is not unique, the legislation is quite similar in, for instance, the Netherlands (cf. e.g. Bruinsma & Meershoek 1999, 106). Earlier, the Finnish criminal law prohibited only the procuring for sexual intercourse, and other sexual services could thus be legally capitalised, as indicated in the following statement.

"...In Finnish law, they didn't say that if you satisfy a customer with your hands, well that wasn't prohibited. That wasn't considered to be sexual intercourse. Now they have changed the law, so now it's the same as intercourse..."IQ.

The work of a procurer was said to be intensive and stressful. His daily routines include the obligation to guarantee that there are enough women available, that the women are circulated optimally between the different places he owns, collecting the money, seeing to it that the places are cleaned and in suitable condition, taking care of bank matters, etc. The procurers I interviewed said that they were leading a work-intensive entrepreneur's life, as described in the following quotation.

"...Acquiring business facilities is not a problem. They're not much interested in what is being done in them... Of course you needed to have these sheets and lubricants. The places had to be cleaned once in a while. And all kinds of things, and bank business had to be taken care of, too. There was a time when we had four different places of business. For each, you had to pay the bills every month, telephone bills, electricity bills... there's a lot of things to take care of. The two of us were doing all of that..."IQ.

According to the informants, the women normally work 12 hours a day. During this time, they have a maximum of 15 clients, normally 5-10. Usually, efficiency is maximised by having two women share a flat. A prostitute who works in the Red Light district in Amsterdam earns approximately 300 US dollars per day, of which 100 goes to the owners of the place, and the rest to the girl herself (Bruinsma & Meershoek

1999). According to a Finnish study, the price of a prostitute is 500-1000 FIM per hour. In one weeks time she earns an average of 3000-10 000 FIM, which is the same as four months' salary in Estonia, and even more in Russia. The procurer, then, is able to receive a tax-free annual income of 900,000 - 1,800,000 FIM (with operating costs already subtracted) with just a couple of prostitutes (Lehti 2002). The following quotation describes the working hours and the prices in Northern Finland.

*"...The working hours are from nine a.m. to ten p.m.... Say, from five to ten clients per girl. A girl won't be able to work more than that for several days. Sometimes, she may handle 10-15 clients a day....Usually, it is a matter of half an hour. **How much is that half hour?** 400 FIM..."IQ.*

According to my informants, the business is mostly done in daytime and early evening because at later hours, drunken customers cause too much trouble, and the business becomes unprofitable. Informants underline to the women that they are in service trade, and that they have to be nice to the customers in order for them to come back. The next quotation refers to this.

*"...**What do you mean by a no-good girl?** Well, like she's an addict, or an alcoholic, or otherwise unfit. She won't sort of understand that these are the kind of rules we have here, that this is the way you have to behave... or if she'll steal something from the client..."IQ.*

The extent of the involvement of the Finns in the Finnish and Estonian sex business remains uncertain. According to the present study as well as my previous study, Finns seem to dominate the procuring business in Finland. This interpretation is also supported by Lehti, according to whom the procurers active in Finland between 1998 and 30 April, 2001 were mostly (80 %) Finnish men. In another 7 % of the cases, a Finn co-operated with an Estonian or a Russian person, and in only 13 per cent of the cases, the sole procurer was Estonian or Russian. The percentages have been calculated from the records of the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation (N = 75 procurers). (Lehti 2002, 73-74.) These results diverge clearly from statements made in the Finnish press, according to which prostitution in Finland has over the last few years been taken over by Estonian and Russian criminal groups (Harju 2002b). In recent years, the annual number of procuring offences recorded by the police has varied between 20 and 30, and about 40 % of these have been handed over for prosecution. The number of sentenced persons has been about 15 per year. As a rule, there have been more than one person prosecuted in each case, and about two-thirds of the prosecutions have resulted in a conviction (Lehti 2002).

Both my own studies and Lehti's study have concluded that most foreign prostitutes active in Finland are from Estonia and Russia, but their number can only be estimated. My estimation is that there are about 400-600 Estonian and Russian prostitutes active in Finland on a weekly basis (this figure is based on my informants' estimate that there are about 100 active Finnish procurers in the business, and on average each procurer has two or three facilities with two women in each). Furthermore, my informants estimated that there are about 1,000 Finnish women who are selling themselves more or less regularly. According to an anonymous procurer there are 63 brothels in Helsinki (Santavuori 2000, 87). If we apply the details provided by my informants, this means around 130 prostitutes (two prostitutes in one brothel) and around 1,000 customers per day in the Helsinki city area. In his study, Lehti summarises that "at present, about 90% of the prostitutes who are active in this country are coming from Estonia or Russia". His estimate is that there are at present at least 400-600 foreign prostitutes in Helsinki alone

(Lehti 2002). Although Lehti's findings differ significantly from mine, together they give a rough indication of the present situation in Finland.

According to my previous study, Finns are also involved in Estonian sex business (Junninen 1999). This is also supported by Lehti, according to whom part of the organisers are active outside the Finnish borders, and it is therefore difficult to make them legally responsible. Furthermore, the prostitutes who are their victims are usually unwilling and unable to assist the authorities. The relationship between the victim and the procurer is symbiotic since the prostitute is not only being exploited but also making an economic profit herself (Lehti 2002). Entering foreign sex business is, however, not very easy, and many who have attempted this have ended up in trouble as the locals have taken their property and business, or informed about the competitor to the authorities, as has happened to some Finnish entrepreneurs in Estonia (Junninen 1999).

When discussing the popular hypothesis on the symbiosis between prostitution and organised crime, my informants held three different views:

- 1) the procurers are only interested in procuring;
- 2) some persons active in other sectors have also experimented with procuring as a sideline;
- 3) procuring is not economically profitable and is morally reproachable.

None of the procurers I interviewed wanted to have anything to do with other types of crime because this increases the risk of detection, and there simply is not enough time for other activities if you intend to carry out the procuring business properly, as is explained in the following quotation.

*"...From what I know, there are a few who are also doing some other kinds of business, but if you want to do prostitution business properly then you shouldn't take on anything else. **Why?** Because if you do something else on the side, you know this prostitution business is hard work. It isn't like many people would think that you just acquire a flat and put the girls in the flat and then sit at home and wait for the money to come pouring in. It's nothing like that. **Could you explain a little?** All right, well, for instance you're always in trouble with the authorities and with the girls too. All kinds of things all the time. You've got to be always available. The phone's got to be open day and night. You can never go on a vacation..."IQ.*

Some of the narcotics offenders I interviewed had experimented with procuring at some point, and some of the men in their group were doing it presently, or planning to try it or some other semi-legal business because in Finland, the sentences for drug offences are so severe in comparison to the profits. Such activities and plans have also been noted by Finnish police representatives who have commented on them in recent statements. (cf. e.g. NBI 2002, 9-11.) A third opinion concerning the relationship between prostitution and other crime was that although the offenders themselves frequently pay for sex, they are not willing to procure such services because it does not yield sufficient profit, it does not hold a high esteem in the criminal world, and you may have to beat up the women in order to make them comply. Beating up a woman was considered repulsive, and yet everyone was ready to kill an informer or beat up a sexual offender. Whether this is one example of the high moral values of these men, or of something else, remains an open question. The following quotation expresses a deep contempt for procurers.

"...These people who are messing around with whores, it's exactly that kind of people who are playing the role of a gentleman, like pimps and such characters. They are men in a class of their own... importing whores... It's even more generally like

this that burglars and pimps, neither of them are respected at all. Going to steal from people's homes, or then this selling of people. This thing with the violence, that you use fear to make the women understand. They're very often having their own ideas these women. They'll have their fits and you'll have to beat them up... ”IQ.

According to research, the relationship between prostitution and other crime may also be based on need. The prostitute herself may become acquainted with narcotics because 1) she is forced to become a courier, 2) she is not able to stand her work and begins to use drugs as a relief, 3) the procurer offers drugs²⁵, and after she has become addicted he makes her pay for the drugs by prostituting herself, or 4) she has begun to sell herself in order to get money for drugs, this is particularly common among heroin and cocaine²⁶ addicts. (Hunt 1990.) However, direct ties between prostitution and drugs do not appear to be very common in Finland (Kinnunen 1996).

5.2.4 Alcohol and cigarettes

The smuggling of alcohol, and in particular, of strong distilled spirits to Finland has long traditions. Its volume has varied considerably over time. Perhaps the most famous Finnish spirits smuggler is Algot Niska who organised the smuggling and trafficking in spirits from Estonia and Germany to Finland during the Prohibition of the late 1920s and early 1930s (Niska 1931). Smuggling spirits to Finland experienced a new boom in the early 1990s, when the import of Estonian and Russian spirits began to increase. In 1992-1998, Finnish authorities recorded 41 Finnish wholesale dealers suspected of trafficking large quantities of spirits from Estonia to Finland (Junninen 1999, 70). It has been characteristic of alcohol smuggling to regard the smugglers as some kind of modern day Robin Hoods. The clientele includes people from all walks of life – from the men in the street to civil servants. The smuggling and sale of alcohol is not considered to be morally reproachable. On the contrary, when buying “illegal” spirits or other alcoholic beverages, people make a silent protest against the high alcohol taxes collected by the state. In this, Finland does not seem to be an exception - also in other countries, prohibition or a very strict regulation of the availability of alcohol has been found to promote the development of organised criminal groups and the accumulation of the necessary initial capital (cf. e.g. Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972; Bäckman 1996). The illegal merchandise is not only bought by private citizens, but also restaurants are mixing smuggled alcohol in their drinks, as indicated by the following quotation.

“...X for instance, he was selling to this restaurant in Helsinki, it was thousands of litres that he could sell every summer. They had quite good contacts to those restaurants and other suitable places... ”IQ.

Selling spirits and alcohol in Finland is punishable under two statutes: 1) the sale of beverages that contain more than 5 per cent of alcohol is a state monopoly, 2) the alcoholic content of beverages imported to Finland must not exceed 52 % (weight), stronger spirits (up to 96 %) are classified as illegal narcotic substances. The punishment for the illegal sale of alcohol is a fine or a maximum of two years of

²⁵ Or, as has been recorded in the context of trafficking research, the woman may even be made an addict by force.

²⁶ Or amphetamine in the case of Finland and other countries where also amphetamine is a popular hard drug.

imprisonment. If the alcohol offence is committed in a professional framework, the minimum punishment is six months, and the maximum four years of imprisonment. The offence is considered professional if it is repeated, and if the intention has been to use it as a permanent source of income. In the end, the distinction between a professional and a habitual alcohol offence is usually made on the basis of the amount of alcoholic, and the income derived from the activity (Utriainen & Hepola 1985). Due to differences in national legislation, one can legally buy strong spirits from some EU-countries, but if imported to Finland, he commits a narcotics offence.

Characteristic of the smuggling and trafficking in spirits and alcohol to Finland is that the same men have been doing it for a long time, for decades even. They told me that at one stage of their lives they had been alcoholics, but after quitting drinking, they had gradually developed into organisers and financiers of business that involves large amounts of alcohol. Although they claimed to be adventurers, their primary motive for the activity was money. In the following quotation, an interviewed veteran recounts the reasons for entering the business.

"...Spirits you know, those spirits men I knew, as I'm coming from that town with a harbour, the men I knew they had been on sailing ships, they had lived through the Civil War, or they had been in the war in Spain, they had lived in the Spirits era, they had been in the Winter War. That thrilled me, always when the spirits men were telling their stories, I was already, back in the 1950s when they were building the X-town highways, I was already then selling a lot of alcohol to the truck drivers. Myself, I've been drinking since the age of 15. I've always been selling... I was selling spirits already as a kid. The instinct warns you, prison scares you, but your blood makes you go on. Today, why I'm still involved, I think there's nothing else to it but this habit, now that the profits have become so low and the risks have increased. A leopard cannot change its' spots..."IQ.

In the 1990s, the spirits imported to Finland came mainly from three directions: 1) from Russia, hidden in timber trucks in barrels, cans or bottles, 2) from Estonia in barrels, cans, or bottles hidden among all kinds of merchandise, and 3) from the EU in containers (18,000 litres) loaded with bottles, or on trucks concealed among other merchandise. The spirits imported in barrels and cans were bottled in Finland, while the labels were printed in Estonia. Lately, bottling has become increasingly rare because empty bottles are hard to come by with. The informants told me that they had been asked to buy entire Russian or Estonian alcohol distilleries, but as far as they knew, none had been bought by Finnish clients. The greatest problem preventing the establishment of alcohol distilleries in Finland was the lack of suitable places with 1) large amounts of clean water available, 2) something to prevent outside interest caused by the abnormal consumption of electricity, and 3) at least 15 meters high industrial hall. In the following quotation, an informant tells about the development of the smuggling of spirits into Finland.

"...Earlier, we were importing the stuff from Russia in barrels, and then we bottled it here. However, the problem was that there is only one bottle factory here. Every time you had to buy 20,000 empty bottles and caps, and the labels were printed in Estonia. Now we're bringing some 4,000-5,000 litres, American spirits bottled in Estonia, that's mostly what is coming. It's been four years since we brought the stuff inside loads of timber, but earlier, that used to be the general method until they started to X-ray the loads..."IQ.

The smuggling of spirits to Finland underwent profound changes in the course of the 1990s. Perhaps the most distinct one of them occurred when Finland became a member of the European Union in 1995, and border control of goods arriving from other EU countries was abolished. Although the smuggling was considerably facilitated, one major problem still prevailed: how to buy the merchandise tax-free from the factory, and thus maximise the profit in the black market. The following quotation describes the co-operation with foreigners and the ease of smuggling.

"...Today the spirits business if you bring it from EU countries is that you buy it from the factory, and there you've got special organisations that make it possible, because that's the problem, how to get it from the factory tax-free. Taxes paid, you can buy as much as you like, but there is tax there too, and there's not much left of your business then. There's a special organisation whose business it is to get the stuff out of the factory, together with the documents to take it out. That's one, then there is the transportation thing. We're taking care of this transport part, then. Then it's here. When you drive over from EU countries, according to the Schengen agreement and such things, the borders are free. Normally there are no controls. No customs formalities or anything, we're just driving through and with good luck, wherever you are coming from, you just wave them hello. The stuff is carried over like shit. Full loads (18 000 litres)... "IQ.

According to the informants, there are so few renowned spirits smugglers and wholesale dealers in Finland that if a load already brought into the country should for some reason remain "afloat" (the buyer does not accept it), it is be offered to one of these renowned spirits wholesalers, who has the money to pay for the load and the channels for distributing it. The spirits smuggled into Finland can be sold at a price that is about three times the investment. The profit could be even bigger, but organising the transport and other matters is also costly, as explained in the following quotation.

"...today, I'm importing as a team with this foreigner, so what I'm selling Finland for 68 FIM, I'm paying 21-22 FIM for it myself. The part for which I give a receipt, that's where my part is. We've anyway got this risk during the transport.... like I wouldn't want to lose this little money I've managed to make, so I have taught him, I take the risk together with this foreigner, so he'll get a better price if I buy it over there, but he's also taking the risk because there is anyway this risk of getting caught..."IQ.

Several of my informants said that smuggling spirits into Finland is beginning to be old-fashioned and not very profitable; the market is shrinking and profits decreasing. The following quotation describes how a man who has been in the business a long time sees its future.

"...smuggling spirits is a thing of the past. We're soon like the last of the Mohicans. The importers have become really scarce, you see the spirits men of the old league have grown tired of drinking, and there's no exotic flavour to it any more. And the young people, today's youth, they don't drink strong spirits, they're just drinking those fucking ciders and stuff. Accordingly, the profits you make from spirits are also disappearing. Earlier, just go back some 6, 7 years, you could still get a clean profit of about 100-110 FIM per litre..."IQ.

Estimates of how much spirits and other alcoholic beverages are professionally smuggled into Finland are very vague. The figures derived from authority sources, my previous study, and the present study are so conflicting that no definite conclusions can be drawn. In 1995-1997, customs recorded per year 14-36 attempts of professional alcohol smuggling from Estonia to Finland. The volumes of the smuggled spirits varied

from a thousand to tens of thousands of litres. (Customs crime investigations 1997.) My own estimate is based on the quotation below. According to this source, the amount of spirits coming to the greater Helsinki area is about 40,000 litres per month; when multiplied by five (one million inhabitants in the capital region, five million in the entire country) it makes 200,000 litres per month and 2.4 million litres per year. Albeit that the smuggling of alcohol to Finland is common, the resulting costs to the state in the form of unpaid taxes are not very significant (under 10 per cent), whether calculated from the confiscations or my estimate. In the 1990s, Finns consumed about seven litres of absolute alcohol per capita per year, amounting to a total of 35 million litres (Statistics Finland 2001, 415). The proportion of the confiscated alcohol is minimal if compared to the legally sold alcohol and tax-free imports. The following quotation provides an estimate of the amount of illegal alcohol coming into the greater Helsinki area, and of the smuggled spirits the authorities succeed in confiscating.

“...It's coming in here like they say on a tram line, well it's each month coming here to the capital region some 40,000 litres. Like maybe one full container and then a lot of these smaller quantities. They're coming hidden in other merchandise. They'll bring 4,000-5,000 litres hidden in the load... some policeman may say, like what was just in today's newspaper, that there's this gang who has imported 50,000 litres of spirits and a million cigarettes. Come on, what's 50,000 litres, that's just two and a half containers. I remember once, a guy told me who owed me, what was the estimate by the customs of how much stuff is being brought over, this guy X said to me: isn't anybody else smuggling this than you, I mean this much is just what you're importing alone...”IQ.

As the sales of spirits have shrunk, the smugglers have begun to import “better” alcoholic beverages, such as cognacs and whiskies. The alcohol is bought in Europe tax-free by using companies as a front, and then forwarded to Finnish black market or restaurants. In this matter, like in many others, Finland is following in the tracks of Sweden; my informants said that spirits have not had a market in Sweden for quite some time. The following quotation explains how easy and profitable the alcohol business is in the European Union.

“...then when we're talking about these better liquors, cognac and such things. Today, you don't know what's going on, you see. They're smuggling that, too. In Germany, there are some supermarkets, fuck, they're selling whisky, I'm not sure if it's 3 DM or what but it's about 10 FIM in promotion. Then when they have received it to the supermarket, he can sell, the idea is that once I've got this shop then I can buy say 20,000 bottles of this liquor. 3000 bottles are sold in this promotion campaign, the remaining 17,000 bottles I'll sell to you and you'll transport it then to Finland...”IQ.

One important feature of the black alcohol trade is that not all the illegal alcohol sold in Finland is smuggled into the country. Another method is to buy alcohol in Finland allegedly for export (no VAT paid), but instead of exporting, it is sold in Finland. For example, I read about a case where a group of Finnish criminals claimed that they were exporting tax-free beer and vodka to Tallinn, and acquired 12,000 litres of Finnish vodka and 300,000 cans of Finnish beer. They then established a distribution organisation, and sold the beverages in the greater Helsinki area. In this case alone, the revenue losses of the Finnish State amounted to about 4.5 million FIM. The profit these professional criminals made in the project amounted to about 1.7 million FIM. (Annala 1994.)

Some of my informants working in the spirits smuggling business had at some stage of their lives developed an alcohol problem but presently, many of them were teetotallers. The teetotallers understandably said they were not consuming any of the alcohol they were handling, but the others did not admit such abuse, either. They would rather go and drink in restaurants, as explained in the following quotation.

“...myself, I haven’t drunk spirits practically ever, I’ve always bought my liquor from the shop, or, as I’ve been travelling a lot, I’ve brought the liquor with me from abroad. I haven’t been to the alcohol shop too often, but for me it makes no difference whether I go and buy the vodka or whisky bottle from the shop because I’m spending anyway, in a bar I may spend several thousands (FIM) in one night, so the price doesn’t make much of a difference to me. I’d rather not buy my bottle of spirits or take it from the load. I’d rather buy legal liquor, so I’ll know at least that it’s OK. I’m not going to make any mixtures of my own or anything like that. Also, spirits are not too suitable for mixtures, anyway, you’ve got to mix them a day or two before if you want make a punch of it for instance. It’s ordinary people who are the most usual consumers...”IQ.

My informants were of the opinion that those who are importing spirits and other alcohol to Finland are also importing tobacco. The tobacco is usually brought among other merchandise a few thousand cartons at a time. Whole containers would be too expensive to buy and too risky to smuggle. The following quotation reveals information about tobacco smuggling, prices and the countries where cigarettes are counterfeited.

*“...It’s the same men who are dealing... The liquor men were more concentrated on liquor, but then they were also importing some tobacco... Tobacco is damn expensive to buy, even if it’s tax-free directly from the tobacco factory. You know, the stuff that is coming in now, it’s fakes. Not whole containers that would come from the tobacco factory, you can’t even get out from the factory area if you don’t have the tax guarantees and everything in order....They’ve got these fucking big fake factories. In Latvia, Russia, Poland, the Far East in particular...Part of their production is fakes... I mean they are some sort of tobacco factories that are making tobacco for consumption in their own country, and then they’ll print, because they’ve got the equipment, fakes from that tobacco. **What is the price of a carton if it’s bought in those countries?** If we buy tobacco from Russia, there it’s fuck some 38 FIM per carton. Here, at wholesale level, it’s 72-75 FIM, and the consumer gets it for 120, when he’s paying 220 in the legal market... so for instance in the metropolitan area, the import is about two full containers per month. No more than that. Most of it comes today from Estonia hidden among other merchandise, and very small amounts from Russia ...”IQ.*

My earlier study supports the statements of my informants: between 1994 and the end of August 1998, 20 Finns were suspected of being involved – as dealers or receivers – in smuggling cigarettes from Estonia to Finland. This is only one-fifth of the number of those Finns participating in professional organising and wholesale dealing of alcohol over the same period of time (Junninen 1999). According to Finnish authority sources, in the five year period of 1992-1996, the volume of smuggled cigarettes confiscated at the Estonian border by Finnish customs multiplied by the factor of 30. Perhaps this is indicative of a more general trend in Europe; also in Germany, the volume of confiscated cigarettes increased 30-fold, albeit that this occurred earlier, in 1987-1993 (von Lampe 2000). In the investigations by Finnish customs, it was often impossible to conclude whether Finland was the intended destination country (Finland also serves as a transit country), who owned the cigarettes, or who had ordered them. According to

Finnish authority sources, unveiling the final destination of the cigarettes was difficult because the drivers of the Estonian smuggling trucks were unwilling to tell who had hired them (Customs crimes investigations 1996). Mr. Lauri Ervola, Head of Enforcement of the National Board of Customs, believes that of all the cigarettes smuggled into Finland, at least part is in transit to Sweden. For example in 1997, Swedish customs confiscated 40 million cigarettes, which is more than five times the amount confiscated by Finnish authorities. (Harju 1998.)

According to von Lampe, also Germany serves as a transit country, used to an increasing degree when smuggling cigarettes from Eastern Europe to the United Kingdom. von Lampe has identified three more or less distinct channels through which cigarettes are supplied to the black market: 1) cigarettes are purchased in low-tax countries and smuggled into Germany, 2) cigarettes are purchased in Germany or other EU countries for export to non-EU countries, typically in Eastern Europe, but are diverted to the black market before they leave the country, and 3) cigarettes purchased in Germany or other EU countries are exported, typically to Eastern Europe, only to be smuggled back (von Lampe 2001). On the other hand, there seems to be an objective incentive for cigarette manufacturers to keep the black market going, because their profits are the same regardless of the circumstances under which the cigarettes are eventually sold to consumers and because the low black-market prices promise increased sales (von Lampe 2001).

5.2.5 Stolen goods

According to my informants, the Finnish market for stolen goods is extensive, covering all the commodities available in the everyday retail market. Any type of article can be delivered either without delay or at short notice. In 1990s, the volume of professional receiving offences recorded by the Finnish police ranged from less than ten to nearly one hundred cases per year (Rikollisuustilanne 2000 & 2001). The legal and black markets operate side by side. The advantage of the black market is the price level which is only about half of that of the legal market. The stolen goods reach the markets in two principal ways: 1) stolen goods are offered to receivers, 2) after receiving commissions, the receiver orders certain commodities from a (professional) thief. The professional fence has several kinds of sources who deliver goods: 1) narcotics addicts who finance their habit by stealing, 2) professional shoplifters who travel around Finland stealing clothes, food, electronics etc., 3) different kinds of burglary groups who commit house, office, shop and construction site break-ins for a living, 4) criminal groups or individual persons who make use of credit cards, credit accounts, or hire-purchase contracts, and buy valuable merchandises (domestic appliances, electronics, tobacco, coffee) all over the country without the intention of paying. According to an Australian study, of stolen goods, 46 per cent are domestic appliances, and 20 per cent jewellery (Stevenson & Forsythe 1998, 44). The following quotation describes how stolen goods are supplied to the fences in Finland.

“...There are big fences and small fences. In a way, every small dealer is already also a fence. He hasn't got money of his own. First he'll sell to a dealer, and the dealer sells it once more to a bigger dealer. He can sell that bike for 300, and the next level sells it again for 350 or 400. He's getting the money right away. This big dealer has it dismantled. They can take care of anything, cars and all. They are the receiver business, and they are never found out...”IQ.

The receivers I interviewed would usually buy and handle any kind of stolen goods if they knew they were making a good profit. The stolen goods continue their journey in different ways: 1) the origin of the merchandise is concealed, the receiver changes it through his contacts (for example, wholesale agents of stores chains) into something else, and the chain sells the stolen goods as legal, 2) the merchandise is sold directly through newspaper advertisements or similar marketing channels, the receiver places the advertisements himself, or uses fronts for this, and sells the merchandise in small quantities to ordinary consumers by himself or through middlemen, 3) the merchandise is stored away in order to “cool it off” and wait for a suitable moment when to sell, or for a suitable customer who will pay the expected price. According to my informants, only few receivers are specialised in buying only certain kinds of commodities such as firearms, jewellery and art. The following quotation recounts how much stolen goods there are in the market and how they are moved around.

*“...I have been selling grass. At first just small amounts, like tens of grams, and then those characters who were stealing all kinds of stuff, they brought this merchandise to me. I bought it and then I sold it again to town X to this certain guy.... He would buy anything, only you had to have big enough quantities of it. He had an enormous number of contacts. I have sold him everything, fur coats, leather jackets, guitars, gold... and then I have bought from him all kinds of things, firearms, gold, you name it. Cars and everything except not stolen cars. All kinds of stuff. There’s always a market. For instance, it was just in his case, he’d always sell to acquaintances, and then he’d sell to businesses... I had these characters, they’d go stealing from shops, leather jackets and things like that. I could receive, what, five-six leather jackets a week. They could be worth 2,000-4,000 FIM. I’d sell him a jacket for 750. Then, there could be leather coats worth 5,000, and he’d sell quite a lot even directly from his home... He could have a number of those 5,000 FIM coats hanging there, and when a friend of the family came to see them, he’d say: “Why don’t you buy a fine coat, you’ll get it for 1,500”. He got money that he could invest in stuff like that, so although the money was tied up in the merchandise, there were good profits involved.... **If a thief would bring you a coat with a price tag of, say, 2,000, how much would you then give to this addict?** Well, for instance once I bought, a fellow brought me 4-5 guitars, these Gibson guitars. They were semi-acoustic guitars, costing about 7,000, or 7,000 - 10,000. I gave him some 50 grams of grass, that means they cost me about 2,500. Then I sold those guitars for 3,000 - 4,000 each. For those five guitars, I made some 20,000. They cost me 2,500. Leather jackets, I’d pay 300 - 400 for them. Then I had a couple of characters, that was one arrangement, that the jackets didn’t cost me anything. The money sort of came into the family, it was a kind of family arrangement...”IQ.*

A central feature in the business of stolen goods is that the merchandise changes hands at a strongly reduced price. The client benefits from this type of arrangement because he pays no more than half of the retail price. The thief, on the other hand, is not as lucky; he has to settle for a cut that is no more than 10-20 per cent of the product’s retail value. New, high-quality merchandise is easy to sell at half-price, albeit without receipt. (cf. e.g. Levi 1998a, 433-434.) The buyers are ordinary citizens who think they are making a bargain and are not concerned with the origins of the merchandise. The informants claim that people become even more interested when they hear that the merchandise is stolen, and that, in the end, the bill is paid by a bank or insurance company. A similar finding has been presented in British research (cf. e.g. Henry 1978; Sutton 1995). However, it has also been claimed that these “normal” people to whom thieves and fences often refer are mostly their friends, family members or relatives, in other words

their own support networks (Aromaa 1983; Cromwell, Olson & Avery 1993; Wright & Decker 1994). The following quotation explains how stolen merchandise is moved around in Finland.

“...No. It's mostly not stored. Stolen goods move. It's being sold to so-called honest people. For instance, you've got a pal who has contacts with someone in the business. He could for example sell your pal a car radio/cassette player. He'll say “Buy this, here's a cassette player worth five grand. You'll get it for five hundred.” So he gets greedy and buys it for five hundred. Then he may offer it to you. He'll say, “here's a good cassette player for you for just a grand”. You happen to need a cassette player like that. So it's going to an ordinary civilian. There's much crime, sort of, that people are guilty of these receiving offences, but they are ordinary honest people. They're no criminals. They may buy a car cassette player or car tyres or things like that. Somehow that's the way it is in this world, that is not considered a crime. Then it's maybe considered a crime if you're caught. The stuff is sure going to civilians. No real criminal would ordinarily keep any stolen goods in his home. Well, there may be something sometimes, but not in the sense that you'd keep it there for good, because that is pure foolishness. A criminal is a criminal, he knows that the police knows. They'll make raids, they'll search your home and then you'll be found out. That doesn't make any sense...”IQ.

According to an Australian study, as much as 80 per cent of stolen goods are stolen on commission. Family members, friends and relatives of the thieves constitute 37 per cent of the active clientele, while drug dealers and fences order 46 per cent of the goods. (Stevenson & Forsythe 1998, 43.) Although it is difficult to estimate the volume of commissioned thefts in Finland, my informants said that it is very common. The following quotation provides an example of how this type of theft is handled.

“...Yes. There were often also these orders. For this, you'll need a real professional booster. I made for example gigs like this, that I'd tell some character “Now I need a size 54 Hugo Boss suit, go get me one and I'll pay you a grand for it”. Then I could have it on the same day still. It depends on the kind of merchandise. Some stuff is difficult to acquire. Instruments and music equipment, for instance, new ones in particular were quite hard to get. Sometimes you could have them anyway. Then, guns are very much asked for, so that when people were doing house burglaries and stuff, well then ... there sure is a lot of use for them in the underworld ...”IQ.

An informant who had bought merchandise by making use of false documents said that any kind of legal merchandise is easy to sell. Shops and kiosks, in particular, do not ask many questions about the origin of the goods if they can buy them at half price. The goods must be in retail packages and the tax stamps intact. These goods are sold gradually to ordinary clients as normal, “off the record” products. Another of my informants told that he sometimes switches goods with a wholesale business. This means that he would provide stolen goods, and the wholesale company would give something in return that is not stolen. Only restriction is that the wholesale company will only accept stolen goods that belong to its normal assortment, and can thus be sold as normal goods. The thief benefits from this arrangement as goods that may be hard to sell in the marketplace are switched into other kinds of goods more suitable for this particular channel. The following quotation tells how stolen goods are sold in normal shops off the record.

“...a damn fine country, this Finland, that we’re having all these supermarkets. Tobacco, coffee...they're selling a van load a day... if I'm selling a van load of tobacco, well I'd want to get rid of all of it at once because I know that I'm getting more of it all the time, so I'll sell it at half-price. This chain then continues, he'll probably sell it again, so if I'm selling at 60, he'll give it away as presents as he only paid half the price, or he'll sell it again to somebody at 70... or he's having a small kiosk where he can sell it gradually at full price, off the record. I mean if you've got a kiosk and you're working in it yourself, you don't have to punch everything into the cash register...”IQ.

Receiving and selling stolen goods is a relatively safe business, as police solve only a small percentage of burglaries (according to an Australian study, only 5 per cent), and buying the loot is even less risky. As the goods are sold several times over, they become increasingly difficult to trace. (Chilvers 1998; Prenzler & Townsley 1998.) In my previous study, I calculated from the available Finnish police records that between 1991 and the end of August 1998, approximately 60 persons were suspected of exporting stolen goods from Finland to Estonia. Stolen goods were transported mainly by small groups with a few members (Junninen 1999).

Several pieces of research have found a close link between narcotics and the business of stolen goods. According to an Australian study, middle-level drug dealers and fences bought and resold 55 per cent of the goods that had been stolen in the territory of New South Wales. Legal businesses sold 28 per cent of the stolen goods, and the remaining 17 per cent exchanged hands through other channels. (Stevenson & Forsythe 1998, 31.) According to a Finnish study, property crime is connected, in particular, with the use and sale of amphetamines. Interviewees confirmed that such people are ready to steal anything that can be easily capitalised: clothes and consumer electronics from stores, bicycles from the street, mobile telephones and stereo sets from cars, money, gold, bank cards and consumer electronics from homes, and money, bank cards and cheques from businesses. In 1994, for example, persons who had been suspected of drug offences between 1992 and 1994, committed a significant proportion of thefts (30 %) and handling stolen property (50%) as well (Kinnunen 1996). My own informants believed that drugs and stolen goods are often related. However, they emphasised that only the street-level men of the drug groups are directly involved in the stolen goods, because the amounts of narcotics they are selling (no more than a few tens of grams) may still be quite easily exchanged for stolen merchandise. If a dealer is selling much larger volumes, it becomes practically impossible for him to receive and resell equivalent volumes of stolen merchandise. One of the groups I studied had insisted that their street-level men systematically provide different kinds of construction equipment and machines. These were subsequently used on construction sites in Estonia, where the group was renovating restaurants and brothels used for laundering incomes derived from narcotics and alcohol sold in Finland.

5.2.6 Investing the proceeds of crime

According to my informants, there are many means of investing, spending and laundering the money derived from crimes: 1) financing new offences, 2) depositing and investing abroad, 3) domestic investments through a front in real estate or legal business, 4) certain amount of money in cash or gold for daily spending 5) different kinds of loans to other criminals and ordinary citizens. The proceeds must always be placed safely, and so that the risk is dispersed. This way not all the money is lost if something unexpected should happen. The second important requirement is that it should be possible to invest at least part of the money in a way that makes it look as if it was honestly earned. This allows the criminal to enjoy the fruits of his work freely and without reproach. The third important aspect is that he must always have enough money so that he and those close to him can lead a comfortable and luxurious life, and that he can take advantage of unexpected opportunities for new business. The fourth criterion is that part of the profits is invested for the development and realisation of new crimes.

The more my informants earned with their crimes, the more long-term planning and consideration was given to money laundering and everyday consumption. Persons who earned millions of FIM often invested in both legal and illegal sectors. The activities of the interviewees could be compared with the money transactions of the Lupollo crime family in New York almost a hundred years back. The Lupollos invested the criminal profits in two family business branches 1) legal business (olive oil, candy), and 2) criminal business (lending money, usury) (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972, 151). In such two-dimensional business, the two sides support each other and form a viable symbiosis as 1) the legal sector receives cheap capital from the criminal sector, and simultaneously launders criminal money into legal money, 2) although the profits of the legal business may be reduced by the fact that only a part of the criminal money can be laundered, this is nevertheless better than no money at all. In addition, the legal sector is able to sell merchandise and services at knock-down prices, and thereby force competitors out of the market, increase market share, and create monopolies, and 3) if the price competition does not produce desired results, the illegal branch can always threaten competitors or eliminate them by other means. By intertwining the legal and illegal business practices, the Lupollo family was able to considerably improve their competition position and accumulate capital. My informants did not generally make clear distinctions between the legal and illegal sectors, but operated in both simultaneously. They were prepared to buy and sell anything, and to accumulate the necessary initial capital by whatever method as long as there was profit to be expected. The following quotation illustrates the point.

“...if you for instance commit an armed robbery. You can't be doing that all the time and in large numbers. The money gets spent anyway. You can't commit robberies every day, and yet you'll get a long sentence. Drug business is so-called hidden crime, meaning that you can do business behind somebody else's back. First, you make starting capital by a robbery, you can think this way. That's what they think everybody is doing but only very few are doing it this way. Nevertheless they think that you can invest money and buy something for it. It doesn't have to be drugs, necessarily, but the profits in drugs are so good. It doesn't matter if you're buying firewood, if you get it for less and sell it for more, well it's always profitable. Or whatever, car wash chemicals, clothes, T-shirts, jeans. You buy cheap, you invest your money in this merchandise. Over time, you'll sell it gradually and then you have much more. Let's assume that you make starting capital by a robbery and you invest it in something, then you can calculate that “I don't need to make robberies any

more, I won't get caught, perhaps, I'll just go and let reliable men sell this stuff for me, they'll be selling it little by little and paying me for it, so I can make a nice living without trouble ...”IQ.

After the initial capital is invested, the criminal proceeds are distributed quite evenly between three main sectors 1) financing new crimes, 2) investing (in real estate, consumer goods, crimes committed by others) and money laundering, and 3) consumption. According to my informants, all the crimes I studied had initially been financed by Finnish investors. An investor is prepared to risk his money, earned by various means, by financing the import of illegal goods to Finland (narcotics, spirits), by running an illegal business in Finland (procuring), or by selling illegal goods (cigarettes with no taxes paid, stolen goods). There may be one or several financiers who either participate in the crimes themselves or remain outside the criminal circles. If the financier participates in the crime, he usually also plans and supervises the project (cf. e.g. Kinnunen 1996; Kontio 2001). The idea behind the financing is that while the financier bears the economic risk, he also makes the biggest profit if the scheme is successful. In Finland, the financier usually also organises and controls the activity, whereas, for instance, in the New York Cosa Nostra families the financier confines himself to financing various crimes by lending money to his group members, expecting a good return on the investment. If no profit is made, violence is brought into play. (Ryan 1995, 22). The profits of the Finnish crime investors I have studied are about four times the invested capital, while those lower in the hierarchy earn from hundreds to tens of thousands of FIM, depending on their position. According to Kinnunen, in Finland, the prices of drugs are about 2-3 times higher than in Amsterdam, from where most of the drugs are imported (Kinnunen 1996).

According to my informants, the initial capital needed to start a smuggling business is about 200-300 thousand FIM. Amassing this money is said to be the most difficult part, because if things go as planned, the business will soon finance itself. Financing is executed in several different ways: 1) investor puts his own money into the project, 2) investor collects the money from several sources and negotiates the interest with each of them, 3) the business is started with small amounts of money, and the volumes of smuggled goods increase as successful sales are completed, and 4) the project is financed collectively, and the profit is split among the members of the group. The following quotation describes the organisation of the financing.

“...That is a relatively small-scale business. We didn't need that much money, you'll need some 200 - 300 grand...Well, it's quite a lot, you won't have that kind of money in your pocket? Part of it we collected on our own. The other half we borrowed. There are many places in the world where you can get money. If you have kept your act together, you'll be able to borrow money...”IQ.

According to my informants, it is possible to start procuring and dealing stolen goods with a rather small initial capital, and the activity can be expanded by investing part of the profits in enlarging the business. The following quotation describes how an informant invested a few thousand FIM in a sex business that later expanded into a business chain with a turnover of hundreds of thousands of FIM.

“...You don't need almost anything. All you need is a place and a treatment table and a little furniture. Ten grand, twenty grand? That's all it takes. Say, if two guys put into the business 2,000 FIM each, or 4,000 FIM. That will give you a good start. This one we have started from one single shop. With what one shop yielded, we had a second one, and a third one. At one stage we had also a fourth shop, but that was only for a while. What we got together was always re-invested in that business...”IQ.

According to my informants, the profits made from the criminal activity depend on the size of the investment and the amount of merchandise sold. The division of the profits depends on the organisation of the project. The proceeds are usually divided in either of the two methods: 1) the model of one or several investors, 2) the model of similar work input. In the model of one or several investors, the financier(s) who import the merchandise, the procurer(s) who bring the girls into the country, or the Finnish fence(s) who supply the stolen goods get their profit by selling the “merchandise” for more than they originally paid for it. In the sectors I have studied, there are also people involved who receive one-time payments for the crimes they commit (mules, debt collectors etc.) When the perpetrators can operate freely, goods and money go from hand to hand, and if this is not possible, variations are created. The group described in the following quotation operated from prison, and divided the profits and financed new crimes by making use of a front company.

“...Well, it was divided according to how much we had invested. So, if we now bought for some 300,000 FIM heroin from the Netherlands, then we got a profit of something like four times as much. We were then having this company X that served as a sort of agency. Whoever brought these drugs, he could then go and get his money there. I had arranged that there was an envelope with the payment for him, and later when this guy who had sold the drugs got the money for them, he'd bring it again in an envelope to this company, and I could get it from there later. It was me that usually split the money then to the boss because he was in here. Then the other guy who was close to him, he was outside, and I'd give him his share, too. Then at times I was keeping everybody's money because it was usually through me only that the business proceeded, and therefore it was natural that I was keeping most of that money. Then, occasionally, we'd put aside a few hundred grand so that nothing was done with it. It was just put aside, stashed away so that if something would happen, there would always be some money to use. It was very strict. We counted carefully, this might seem funny, if you had a few million FIM in your plastic bag in fifties and hundreds, so you'd think it doesn't matter much if you give fifty to one or the other, but it was very strict. The money went explicitly through the boss' hands. He was very strict, that he'd get every single penny that belonged to him, and to me, and so on...”IQ.

In business relationships based on an even division of labour, one man, for example, organises the financing, another handles the necessary foreign contacts and the smuggling into Finland, and the third takes care of the distribution in Finland. Their inputs are equally important, and everybody receives the same share of the profit as explained in the following quotation.

*“...We'd split even. **Three ways?** Yeah. **Everyone was equally valuable?** Of course. How would you be able to say that one was more valuable than the other. However, if someone worked harder, well that doesn't make sense either. Then the others would work harder some other time. That will be a source of conflict if someone's saying that your share is smaller than what others are getting...”IQ.*

In the model of jointly financed and organised smuggling and distribution work, profit is in principal divided according to the amount of work invested, but everybody will also pay a part (a certain percentage) of his profit to group's joint funds. With these funds, the group is able to finance new crimes, buy and maintain property, and pay monthly subsidies to imprisoned members and their families. If there is no money in the fund, the subsidies are of course not paid. The following quotation describes how the money is split in a group that is operating collectively.

"...It's like this that the goods that we've got, it costs everybody the same as it costs me, and everyone has his own clients... Then you pay a certain percentage to the club. That club isn't for me, it's for those who are doing time. We'll send it to them, so they can make it. We're taking care of the families of those who are in prison, for instance I just bought a car last spring to the wife of a member so that she can go and see him, things like this. It's not so important who is making money. I can always go to my stock and take a few grand if I run out of money..."IQ.

According to my informants, investing criminal money and laundering money are relatively easy processes, and there are many methods that can be applied. The most common aid in money laundering is a reliable front (wife, cohabitee, lawyer, children, relatives, friends or any reliable person) who may legally own and run businesses, so that the authorities will not be able to confiscate real estate, cash, bank savings or company capital that are under the front's name. The front is the façade whose property the criminal uses and controls. The front is used when investing in real estate and other property, or in legal business activities, and he is formally responsible for the ownership and management of the activity in return for a small compensation. In Finland, fronts are not difficult to find. In fact, there are people who practically offer their services, as stated in the following quotation.

"...Fronts are born every day. There are two types of them. Those who are on their way down, they have been normal people, with normal dreams, and they have for some reason been ruined, and they may have a drinking problem, or it may be a love thing, or it could be that they have just for some reason drifted into crime, and then realised that burglaries and robberies do not pay off, that this is much easier. Then there's type B, that is rather common, they'll come along for the excitement, or they just don't care. Somehow they're admiring this specialist or his lifestyle, or his stories blind them. The specialist asks "Do you know anyone who would be suitable for this?", well it's like in network marketing, that if you're not offering the business directly to him he'll think "Why not me." He'll get this urge to jump. I've never used this recruitment method on purpose but it has happened this way unconsciously, then. I've really just asked "Do you know anyone", and the person has volunteered right away..."IQ.

Usually, the fronts are reliable outsiders, but in some cases also persons close to the criminal - cohabitees or children, for example – are used, provided that they are not subjected to foreclosure proceedings, and are therefore able to own property. However, close relatives are seldom used since the property of, say, a spouse can be more easily detected and confiscated than the property of an outsider. The following quotation refers to one of the very few cases where close family members of a criminal have owned a considerably large property.

“...He had put under the names of his youngest child and some other close relative expensive flats and cars. He had a flat worth millions and the Mercedes of ex CEO X and other cars, too. At home he had installed stereo equipment worth several hundreds of thousands, I think they cost 500 grand. Things like that. So that's where he put his money, and it was all under the name of his wife, or actually it was his girlfriend or partner...”IQ.

It is also possible to use ghost companies as fronts, or persons who themselves are not even aware of the fact that there are companies registered under their name. In my earlier study, I identified from the available Finnish police register data a total of 233 companies (Finnish and Estonian) suspected of criminal activity. One person could own hundreds of ghost companies, and he was selling them at 3,000 FIM per company. Perhaps the most interesting case was that of the thirty Finnish pensioners who had been registered as the responsible owners of thirty Estonian companies, and who were totally unaware of the arrangement. Out of these thirty companies, 28 were in fact owned by one and the same Finnish man with a criminal record. (Junninen 1999.) In the 1990s, car dealers were especially popular fronts in Finland. Buying, owning and selling dozens of cars was an effective means of laundering money. One of my informants told about a case where money coming from their group was laundered through a large car dealer in Helsinki. The owner of the company was a homeless man, and in reality, the business was run by a group of criminals.

“...Usually, cars were bought in this manner, or we were already having these cars, they were under the name of a big car salesman, a few cars that we were using. I don't really know everything. A few cars were also under the name of a construction company ...”IQ.

The criminal would typically have a new, expensive car at his disposal, although on paper, the car was owned by the car dealer. In the criminal world, car is an important status symbol and proof of one's success. The following quotation provides an example of how the symbiosis between legal car dealing business and criminal money works, and how easy it is to buy cars in Finland.

“...There's nothing special to it. It's quite normal. But I need to have such car dealers under whose name I can register cars so that they are not seized from me. I've got the contacts. The characters from the car dealer knew roughly what kind of business I was doing. That's clear. That didn't interest them. They know that I am working in illegal business, they know that I'm not just an ordinary employee. They understand for sure that if you go and buy a 500,000 FIM car and pay cash that you're not just a normal man... Usually those people are much richer than me. They may have a big family company or something. They don't think much of such an amount of money... When I bought this car, it cost 575,000 FIM. It belonged to an acquaintance of mine, or he had made a down payment deal on it. I bought it so that I was driving the car and I said “Yeah, this is OK for me”. So we agreed on the price. We went to the car dealer who had the financing contract on the car and I was carrying a bag full of cash, and this acquaintance from X-country was with me. I said “Would you make this deal for us.” They were having these secretaries, and everybody was busy counting the money because most of it was in hundreds. .. When the deal was made I told the owner “Put this car under your company's name because I can't have it under my own name. The chap says “sure”, and when the money was counted and I jumped into my car and drove away in my Mercedes, I didn't even look at the papers...”IQ.

The use of fronts for controlling criminal property has been noted in many studies. It is actually more unusual if the names of the criminals appear in company documents, where as in the New York construction industry, for example, members of organised crime are openly listed as owners, managers or employers (New York State Organized Crime Task Force 1988, 85). Perhaps the most common form of investing criminal money is to buy a restaurant. Restaurants are owned both in Finland and abroad. More than half of my informants engaged in smuggling were somehow involved in the restaurant business. In the following quotation, a Finnish advocate has acted, on behalf of his client, as the formal owner and manager of a restaurant in Finland.

"...In X-town [in Finland] I had a house, just a sex night club. An advocate was running it with my money. Four girls were dancing or something. That was a kind of front..."IQ.

Restaurants are bought, constructed and renovated. Refurbishments are done by illegal workers using stolen tools, equipment and materials. Smuggled alcohol and stolen or smuggled tobacco is being sold. Often, the refurbishing of the restaurants and the bribery of various parties requires a lot of money, as described in the following quotation.

"...I had a construction company that was so big that it was also running all kinds of other businesses such as this restaurant-hotel. There were I think 20-30 different businesses that this company could run. We were making these restaurants, we were renting real estate on long-term contracts, and then started to build them, they were all under my name and I was still in normal employment then. I was working as an ordinary carpenter. A lot of money had to be spent. One time I had 50 men working for me. Money had to be used for salaries and materials. When you for instance build a brothel into an old multi-storey house, that costs quite a lot. Or if you build a restaurant-hotel, it takes a lot of money. For example in Estonia where you need a licence and permit for everything, and my company had these licences so that it was able to operate... When they were then making those inspections, it was not always that the inspectors really came to see the site because there was a deal. We were giving 10,000 crowns to the inspector in their headquarters. He'd never come to look at the place. He just stamped the documents. It's probably the same over there even today..."IQ.

In some cases, my informants used as fronts and visible business partners such Finnish businessmen who were not allowed to act as active partners in domestic companies - in Estonia, their activities were not restricted. The most common reason for business injunctions in Finland are payment problems and the resulting blacklistings. Similar examples of this kind of co-operation were already found in my previous study. (Junninen 1999). For such businessmen, the co-operation with "real" criminals is not always very safe; they have been known to lose their money and subsequently also their partners. In addition, since their own activities have not been legal, they seldom dare to go to the authorities for help, as explained in the following quotation.

"...This number two man, he wanted to have the money for all these restaurants, and then he didn't pay them back, he didn't pay my money, either. He said "You see now that all this is under your name, you'll then become director of this place. Then you'll automatically get the money and you don't have to do anything" Well, it was obvious that they were using you, like they were using many other Finns, too. They took Finns as partners for their money. You paid many hundreds of thousands and you never got a penny. Every time when the restaurant was ready, "out you go". "You better not go reporting to anyone but you won't get the money. We don't need you. We haven't got

anything to pay you with". In this way, they just cold-bloodedly threw you out. One of these guys who was tricked like this, he went to the embassy and reported them, that they are operating on drug money... Then they started to plan to kill the guy but this happened when the whole thing was collapsing. If that hadn't happened well I'm sure they would have killed him, no doubt. If the boys had not been caught..."IQ.

A third method of hiding and re-investing the proceeds of crime is to deposit the money abroad in different currencies. In the 1990s, it was quite easy to transfer money from Finland, and even if the control of money transactions has improved, there are always simple ways of sending money abroad, as described in the following quotation.

"...To go to a bank abroad and deposit the money. It's quite simple, or it was. I guess it's not that simple any more... You have an acquaintance somewhere far away, you just call and ask him "Can I deposit some money into your account?..."IQ.

When it became more difficult to send the money directly, focus shifted to couriers and the use of accounts opened under bogus names. My previous study report includes several examples of such activity. (Junninen 1999). The following quotation describes the methods of one of the studied groups.

"...When the money poured in, it was coming in the most surprising ways. The men were carrying the money and there was lots of it. This was only money for X. I don't know much about the money transfers of Y except that there were the bank accounts of one fellow that were debited. I don't know if my accounts were used, I mean I had opened one account just for this purpose, and Y had the right to use it. I don't know even today if it's ever been used ..."IQ.

Some of the interviewed financiers handled all their visible money transactions abroad in different currencies and behind the fronts of their companies. The following quotation tells how simple this is in practice.

"...Always whatever money came in it was exchanged for different currencies and then if it was invested in some other business then it remained in Estonia. I've got all my contacts in Estonia, so that it's there where I've had all my money transactions. I haven't had any kind of money transactions in Finland..."IQ.

By sending and investing the money abroad, the criminal looks after his interests. Should he be apprehended in Finland, the money is safely abroad, waiting for the release of the offender, as explained in the following quotation.

"...I had it this way that I had quite a lot of money behind certain persons. And then I had one reliable guy behind whom I was keeping really a great lot of money. He was doing very well, he was suspected of hundreds of kilos of grass and the police tried to get him, to have him extradited, as he is a citizen of X country and this country would not extradite him. So his situation was good. He'll never have to answer for these crimes..."IQ.

The amount of money available for everyday spending varied quite a lot depending on the informant. The top men of the groups seemed to keep millions of FIM in closets, shoeboxes and plastic bags. The men who were lower in the distribution chain had a lot of money or nothing at all, depending on the employment situation. The purpose of the cash is to secure a sufficient standard of living and the availability of money even in unexpected situations, such as a sudden opportunity to finance a new shipment of merchandise. The following quotation gives an idea of the resources of a financier who was making millions a year.

“...At home, I was having at one point 3 million FIM in cash in my clothes closet in a couple of plastic bags... It didn't worry me at all because I wasn't committing any crimes myself. I'm not a criminal, I'm a businessman. My credit records are clean and everything is in perfect order...”IQ.

Part of the cash could be buried into the ground, or it could be exchanged for gold first and then buried. Burying cash was explained to be problematic because over the years, the bills take on the smell of earth, no matter how well they are packed. The money that was not buried or invested in business could always be given out as loans. Many of the informants were lending money: some gave loans only to a small circle of people, while others had developed it into a large-scale, international credit business. In my previous study, I observed that Finns are giving loans to their countrymen in Estonia; according to Saari, money has been offered to Estonia from as far as Italy (Saari 1992, 170). According to my informants, loans to acquaintances may be interest-free, while strangers may have to pay an interest of up to 30 per cent. Similarly, loan periods vary a lot from mere hours to several years, as described in the following quotation.

“...I don't care a bit what someone is doing if he needs money like if it's my neighbour, if he needs money, I'll lend it to him and I don't need any guaranties. But then if a criminal comes to borrow money from me, for example 100,000 FIM, then I require some sort of security, so that if I know I can trust him, I won't take any interest, or if it's a good guy, I think he doesn't have to pay interest, but if it's a crook who just wants a loan, he may have to pay interest, maybe 30 %. An ordinary guy, like my brother's old pal who is my friend or something, would need money for something, like he'd want to buy a car or a flat, I can give him a loan of 100,000 FIM. He doesn't have to pay anything for it, that's like between friends...”IQ.

When money is being borrowed, there are at least two kinds of debts: 1) pay or die, 2) pay if you can. The pay-or-die debts are loans where the debtor and the creditor are usually not acquainted, and consequently their relationship is not close, as is the case in normal banking, too. Interest rates are high, and collecting is handled either by the creditor himself, or by a third party to whom the original creditor has sold the loan. In some cases, failure to repay has caused the killing of the debtor. The pay-if-you-can debts are issued by acquaintances or other creditors who may try to recover their claim but will not commit or order a murder if they fail to do so. The following quotation provides an example of how debt problems are handled in the criminal world.

“...There was one fellow who told me once, I had owed him many hundreds of thousands, and then one project failed seriously, I still owed him less than a hundred thousand. I went to him. We were driving around in a car and talking about things. I went to him hoping that we could develop some new business that could help me take care of this debt... The money I was supposed to get existed all right but the guy died and the money was stashed away somewhere. We never got that money. The guy died of a heart attack, that was a stroke of bad luck. The guy whom I owed, a little over 70,000 FIM said “you know, this is now the situation, if you don't pay your debts, you'll be dead”. I told him “come on, don't be ridiculous. You won't kill me for a lousy 70,000 FIM. I've been making hundreds of thousands for you. This is completely ridiculous. Of course I'm going to pay my debt if I only get a chance. It's hard to sell if you ain't got nothing to sell”. We settled the matter then...”IQ.

A third way to reimburse a debt is to do different kinds of services or favours to the creditor. These may include acting as a courier if the debtor has no criminal record, or as a front if his credit rating is in order. According to my informants, those debtors who have a criminal record or whose credit rating is poor will probably have to rob a bank or commit some other desperate crime in order to get out of debt. The interviews revealed how some people involved in illegal business ingeniously take advantage of the clumsiness and carelessness of those operating at the lower levels of the distribution chain. The lower-level dealers are given large quantities of valuable merchandise on credit, knowing very well that all of the money is not going to be recovered. Due to the excess supply of the merchandise, the dealer will probably fail to sell it at a reasonable price. He may also be apprehended and consequently lose part of the merchandise. When he finally realises the hopelessness of his situation, it is too late. Through extortion and threats, the creditor can order the debtor to perform different kinds of services and obtain different kinds of commodities. The vicious circle of debt is irrevocable, and due to the unreasonably high interest rates, the debts are virtually impossible to pay back. The following quotation tells how such a circle typically works.

*“...The kilo man, he was always in debt... It was at least some 50,000-60,000, and often much more. So he was all the time in a circle of debt, he was only given half-kilo parcels so he would always be under control. He was then able to come up with some instalments all the time. All those instruments for instance. **Was the idea to make it impossible for him to pay his debt even if he happened to have the money?** He would of course have been allowed to pay, but they're never able to do it, these kilo men. They never have that kind of money... They were paying as they were selling. That way, they were paying back some 20,000 - 30,000 FIM at a time. In the region of one town for instance, I believe we emptied all construction sites in the area. He brought those diamond drills, there I think, one was brand new. The drills cost 10,000 FIM each. Tools are insanely expensive. **What if such a kilo man stole two scooters worth 100,000 FIM altogether, how much did the kilo man get for these scooters?** Well he didn't get more than a few thousand. **Less than ten thousand?** No, of course not, he can't get that much for them. I'm not quite sure but when the police recovered one of them I think it was 2,000 FIM for one. That's all he got.- **Was this kilo man unusually stupid then or is this the way these things always go?** Well, no. You see, they were just not accepted, even if he'd try, but they were not estimated worth more. **You mean 2,000 FIM for stuff worth 50,000?** Yeah, but no. Well that's just the way it was. There were such totally crazy things sometimes that you couldn't but laugh. When they're giving computers worth forty grand for nothing. **“You don't have to pay for this, I'll pay the debts separately”** I saw one of these computers, it was a portable one, there was a price tag of 42,000 or 43,000 still on it, when he brought it to Tallinn he gave it to X and said **“You don't have to pay anything for this.”** What can you say. When someone is in serious trouble, nothing is worth anything. Those kilo men, they could be happy if Y was quiet and didn't threaten them. I mean he would threaten something like **“if something is not going to happen soon, then...”** They were always thinking that now that we were able to settle this thing again, now he'll be quiet so he isn't going to start shouting again. That's completely normal in those circles...”IQ.*

The debts from the illegal market are usually recovered by persons or groups specialised in such work. Collectors frequently resort to psychological (threats, extortion) or physical violence, and if the debt is still not settled, the debtor is killed as a warning to others. My informants said that they knew of a few cases where the debtor had been killed. However, according to the literature, violence and intimidation play a much smaller role in the loan sharking business than official accounts would suggest; the bond

between the lender and the borrower is usually strong, and they both know that money will probably be borrowed also in the future (Reuter 1983, 108). In most cases, the prospect of violence is intimidating enough. When reading Finnish newspapers in order to create a background for profiling and selecting suitable informants, I noted that criminals make use of public statements made about them by the press and authority representatives, and knowingly construct an image of a dangerous criminal, which is very useful in the debt collection business.

Summarising this chapter on money, my informants may be roughly divided into two groups: 1) those leading a relatively normal life, 2) those living in luxury. The first-mentioned save most of their income and live the life of ordinary, albeit well-to-do people. They invest their money in different projects, and are constantly looking for more profitable crimes, either to be committed or financed. The men living in luxury are part-time criminals and part-time conspicuous consumers. They throw their money away by drinking and gambling, and when the money is gone, they sober up and go back to work, that is, commit new crimes. I believe that the men of the first group are professionals who deserve to be taken seriously, and who are able to do almost anything they want to do. The men of the second group, on the other hand, are adventurers or opportunists. They lack the work ethics and professional pride of the “prudent” men, and spend their money as quickly as possible.

Criminal investments are socially significant because they distort economic competition in at least two ways: 1) company take-overs, i.e. criminals take over businesses by resorting to threats and violence. In Sicily, company take-overs have been a frequent phenomenon for a long time already. The scheme is quite simple: first the criminals ask for money, then they offer services and advice, then they want to become partners, and finally they take it all (Arlacchi 1986; Saari, 1992; Stille 1996). 2) price bias created in conjunction with money laundering. Here, products or services are sold at a very low profit or even at a loss to facilitate the laundering of criminal money into legal money. Small profits and negative contribution margins facilitate market takeovers and create monopolies, because those entrepreneurs who are genuinely trying to make a living are not able to compete, and too low profits make them go bankrupt. For a criminal, small or negative profits are not a problem: the illegal profits are so big that the legitimate sector of the economy provides a logical investment vehicle (Ryan 1995, 9). In research literature, one of the most popular examples of market takeovers is the garbage (solid waste) collection business in New York City and another unnamed north-eastern state. The business was dominated by small partnership or family corporations with a longstanding reputation for anti-competitive practises and racketeering involvement (Reuter 1983, 10-13).

According to Italian research, the USA and Italy are dissimilar in that in the USA, criminal money is usually re-invested into criminal markets because the FBI controls money laundering effectively. In Italy, the control is less comprehensive, and thus the illegal money tends to be invested into legal markets through various companies or banks. Before the 1982 anti-mafia laws, there were not even proper legislative tools to control such an activity. (Arlacchi 1986, 102-103). According to a Finnish researcher, illegal money is laundered into legal one by utilising various forms of economic crime, such as fictitious receipts and false bookkeeping. Organised crime also makes money on economic crimes, including variations of false loan arrangements and promises, tax evasion, VAT frauds and bankruptcy crimes (Salminen 1998).

5.3 Committing crimes: summary

The men selected for the interviews were originally profiled to represent different crime sectors as defined in the initial research framework. However, they were also able to tell about many other types of offences that they had committed themselves, about crimes that others had committed, about new crime opportunities, and about crimes that have become history. The reason why I have dealt with the various crimes only slightly more extensively than originally planned, is very practical: in the time available and as a consequence of the initial data collection plan, it was not possible to go much beyond the collected material. In other words: my informants would probably have been able to provide relevant expert knowledge about many matters beyond the original data collection plan, but in practice, it was not possible to make full use of this capacity. The most essential observation in the context of committing crimes is that crimes are planned, prepared and carried out with extreme care. One of the most important criteria for achieving the status of a professional criminal is, in addition to money, how remarkable crimes he is able to plan and execute without getting caught.

Another interesting observation concerns the services and commodities my informants are producing, including prostitution, narcotics, alcohol, tobacco and stolen goods. It seems that there is great demand for such services and goods among the common people. The situation provides an excellent example of double standards: the parliament elected by the people has passed and continues to pass laws that the police are attempting to enforce, and at the same time the people are buying and consuming illegally produced services and commodities at an increasing volume. One conclusion could be that such criminals and service providers are not going to disappear as long as there is a demand for their services and products. My informants commented this matter by stating that if they are caught, there will most certainly be others who continue to market the same services and products. Some interviews provided good illustrations of the alleged solidarity between criminals, which in reality seems to be a myth, as every interviewee eventually turned out to be just an ordinary "homo economicus" who only cared about his own material benefit. The criminals said that it was sometimes utterly useful to turn in a competitor or two in order to facilitate a takeover. Research in other countries has repeatedly shown that regardless of the country, the criminals are providing illegal services and commodities that have been prohibited by society. The most common illegal services include the sale of narcotics, alcohol and firearms, organising illegal gambling, procuring prostitutes, and trafficking/smuggling persons (c.f. e.g. Arlacchi 1986, 89-110; Bäckman 1996; Stille 1996, 157-158; Shannon 1999, 119). On the other hand, it is worth remembering that not all goods smuggled into Finland are intended for domestic market. Finland is used as a transit country for goods that are later transported to Sweden or Russia (cf. e.g. Harju 1998, Astikainen 1998).

One objective (besides the excitement) of professional crime is to transfer proceeds of crime into legal business. As the wealth increases, criminals tend to develop their businesses into a more lawful direction. Legal business has one clear advantage over the illegal one: it can be conducted without unpleasant breaks - prison sentences - and yet the profits are about the same. It is important to realise that the more society as a whole becomes connected and entangled with organised criminal activities, the more pervasive these activities become, and the larger is the number of ordinary people who are directly or indirectly dependent on business financed or protected by criminal activity. The island of Sicily in Italy serves as a cautionary example: in the beginning of the 1990's, the local mafia, La Cosa Nostra, was estimated to have 5,000 - 6,000 made members.

However, its real strength lay elsewhere. Some estimate that between 100,000 and 200,000 Sicilian families (on a island of 5 million people) depend directly on some form of illegal activity sanctioned by the Mafia: traffickers of the drugs, underground lottery tickets, contraband cigarettes, bootlegged audio-tapes and videotapes, or even very simple unlawful actions like selling daily consumer goods in a grocery store paying protection money. Billions of dollars of drug money is being recycled into hundreds of apparently legitimate businesses: construction companies, restaurants, clothing stores, supermarkets. (Stille 1996, 157-158.)

The income derived from various kinds of businesses is large even if the majority of the population would never consume illegal products or services. According to an American study, the majority of Americans do not use services such as loan sharking, money laundering, pornography or prostitution. But the man in the street does not realise that when he buys something from a regular shop, the price might include a surcharge that goes to the crime family. (Ryan 1995, 7-8). According to my own calculations, some of the Finnish criminals I have interviewed were able to earn several million FIM tax-free per year. The figures representing the profitability of the various crime sectors presented in Table 6 are based on the price estimates given by my informants. The prices of the commodities bought for smuggling to Finland include the direct costs caused by organising the transports and various kinds of necessary arrangements in the other end of the chain.

Table 6. Estimates derived from the interviews, concerning the prices (in FIM) of smuggled products, stolen goods and illegal services in Finland in the late 1990s.

Goods	Price abroad	Price upon arrival in Finland	Wholesale price	Retail price
Hashish (kg)	3,500 - 6,000	5,000 - 8,000	20,000 - 23,000	45 - 65 (g)
Amphetamine (kg)	1,000 - 2,000	1,200 - 2,200	40,000 - 50,000	200 - 400 (g)
*Heroin (kg)		720,000		2,000 - 4,000 (g)
Alcohol (l)	7	21	65 - 70	120 - 150
Tobacco (carton)	38		72 - 75	120
Stolen goods (piece)			10 - 20% of the normal price	40 - 60% of the normal price
Procuring	--	--	200/0.5h	300-400/0.5h

* Heroin price estimates are from the study of Perälä 2002.

Based on this price information and what was told by the informants, it is possible to estimate that if a criminal buys 100 kilos of hashish from Spain, the price is about 350,000 FIM. In Finland, the hashish can be sold in the wholesale market for 2.3 million FIM, amounting to a profit of about two million FIM for each successful smuggling operation. A shipment of liquor (18,000 litres or one full container) bought in, say, Germany, costs about 380,000 FIM upon arrival in Finland, and in the wholesale level it can be sold for 1.25 million FIM; thus, the profit for one load is about 850,000 FIM. According to my informants, a Finnish procurer will “normally” have from six to ten women in his brothels. The women have on an average eight clients per day, and the procurer collects one-third of their earnings, or 4,800 – 8,000 FIM, amounting to a monthly income of 144,000 – 240,000 FIM. For their investment of 10,000 FIM, receivers of stolen goods are getting about 50,000 – 60,000 FIM. Such calculations allow the conclusion that those who have the necessary know-how, perseverance and energy to be active criminals in any of the aforementioned crime sectors, are able to reach a very good tax-free income level.

The old myth of the really competent criminals never getting caught may of course be true. Therefore, it may also be true that the offenders I have profiled and interviewed are the wrong type: incompetent, imprisoned. However, on the basis of these interviews I can repeat a conclusion that was already made in my previous study: Finnish cross-border crime is professional, somewhat organised, and rational. On the other hand, in the 1990s, the activities of the Finnish professional criminals were less organised, less systematic, and less dependent on foreign (Estonian and Russian) criminals than depicted in statements by Finnish police representatives.

6. Professional criminals and their organisations

One of the main objectives of this study was to define the groups of Finnish professional criminals, which I attempt to do in the present chapter. First, I introduce some globally well-known forms of organised crime groups and their organisational structures. As Schelling points out, there is no unique Mafia or organised crime. It has been generally accepted that the different organised crime groups provide illicit goods and services to the general public. The groups try to monopolise their criminal activities in order to maximise profits and to minimise the risk of apprehension. Protection is an important source of income in the sectors of organised crime. The customers end up paying the cost of the protection as the shopkeepers add it to the price of the products. This also happens in the legal sectors when the shop chains sell only to their branch outlets and demand their customers (single shop owners) to buy all their products from one place. (Schelling 1971.) Criminal organisations operate all over the world from the richest to poorest societies. No continent makes an exception. The variation between the organised crime groups and organisations arise from differences in number of participants, target orientation, and sphere of operations. Most of the entities that are called organised are active only in restricted areas; they are loosely structured and independent. (Koskinen 2001, 63.)

The different forms of organised crime can be classified in three categories: hierarchical networks, ethnic networks, and enterprise models, as Jay Albanese has presented them. Albanese justifies his classification with the following arguments. In the *hierarchical* model, the group formation is based on blood relationship or other connections that tie persons together and form an organised crime family. The crime activities are operated through hierarchical structured control links. The basic unit is the family with graded ranks of authority from boss down to soldiers, where the boss oversees the activities of family members and the commission of the bosses of all families handles inter-family relations and disputes. In the local *ethnic* model, the structure of organised crime derives from the context of criminal activity. Cultural and ethnic ties, rather than hierarchical structures, bind the group together. Individuals control their own activities and take partners as they wish, and in most cases there is no evidence to connect these groups with national crime syndicates. In *enterprise* models, organised crime structures are incidental and related to criminal opportunities. Organised crime and legitimate business are involved in similar activities on different ends of the “spectrum of legitimacy” of the business enterprise. The operations are not ethnically exclusive or especially violent, and the only objective for the action is to enhance profits. The involvement of persons is rarely centrally organised. (Albanese 1994, 78-89.) In the following, the main characteristics of these three forms of structures are presented, as well as the transnational activities of some other groups.

6.1.1 Sicilian hierarchically structured families

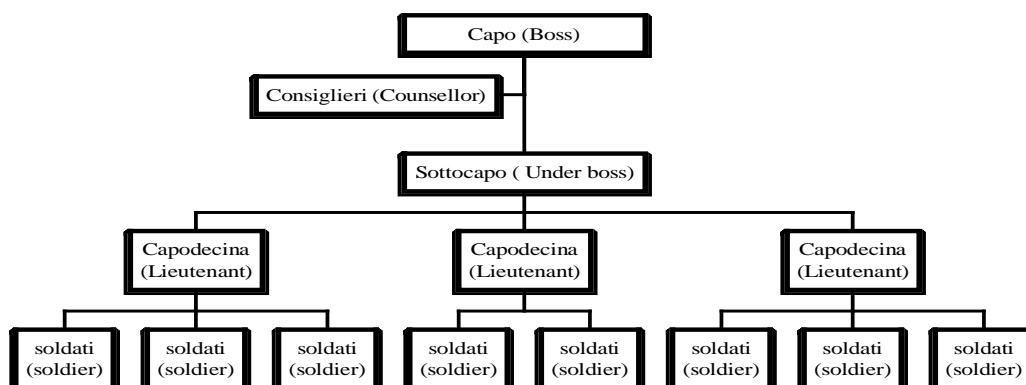
The oldest and most powerful organised crime combination in Italy is the Cosa Nostra of Sicily. In 1993, it contained 67 clans and 1630 affiliates (Catanzaro 1992; Santino & La Fiura 1993, 42). The unique history and culture of the Sicilian people, dating back to the times when the isle was a battlefield of different nationalities, is the basis for the fact that people are loyal to and trust only their family and blood relatives. The family patriarch arbitrated all ambiguous situations and had the responsibility of ensuring that the family survived conflicts. Families strengthened and enlarged through suitable marriages or alliances with other families of an equal status. For centuries, the aristocrats hired someone (capoletto) who would employ his family (famiglia) to protect the aristocrats' property (houses, cattle and land) and to take care of water distribution. The families (famiglia) formed unions (cosca) with other strong families, first within villages, gradually expanding into regions and finally in the whole of Sicily (consertoria) as they were able to distribute "justice" in larger areas. This informal control of society was hierarchically formed, and, thus, the word mafia got its meaning. (Abadinsky 1990; Santino & Fiura 1993.)

By the beginning of the 20th century, when land had lost its central importance as the only source of property, the capolettos' families and the alliances of families (cosce) had become strong and wealthy enough to move into the cities and expand their protection services into new areas, such as protecting and extorting retailers and rackets, controlling votes in the local and national elections, etc. During the 20th century, when the state gained in authority to handle conflict situations in the society, the ability of the Mafia to control political power was the key to its survival. Political connections helped to acquire a major share of the subsidies that the Italian state and later the European Union have distributed in their attempts to modernise the Sicilian provincial autonomy. The Sicilian Mafia did not get involved in smuggling things, especially drugs, until in the 1970s, i.e. very late in its development. (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972; Santino & La Fiura 1993.)

The power of the mafia in Sicily is based on individual loyalty to one's family, and the loyalty of those families to the organisation. The objective of the organisation is to protect participants and induce fear in non-members. A man of honour is feared because he belongs to the organisation, prepared to use violence against others, but he is also respected, because he behaves like a gentleman and is considered a benefactor. The member's loyalty to his family is based on the selection process that all future members go through. If a young man is born in Sicily and does not have relatives in the police or judiciary, and if his father has not been killed by the Cosa Nostra, he can prove his ability to follow orders, demonstrate special skills to commit demanding crimes, and, in the end, kill someone who is a threat to the organisation. Only after this can he be accepted as a member of the family in a special ceremony where he promises omertà and vows loyalty to the family. (Arlacchi 1996; Gambetta 1993; Falcone 1995; Stille 1995.)

The Sicilian La Cosa Nostra is usually presented as having a hierarchical organisation model that is based on the families. Its structure is similar to a pyramid: at the top all power and responsibility lies in the hands of one man who carries the responsibility for the gains and losses of the family. (Arlacchi 1986; Padovani 1992; Catanzaro 1992; Short 1996.) The organisational model of Cosa Nostra structures is presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Hierarchically structured Sicilian Organised Crime Family (Abadinsky 1990, 158).



The above hierarchically structured group acquires its power through threats, assault and murder, and enforces discipline over its members as well as non-members. Fronts keep order and control in a multistage area. The same applies to public officials, who also are corrupted into protecting businesses and to making certain decisions. With and through non-member persons, associates and fronts, the group participates in, controls or influences both legitimate industry and illegal activities. (Abadinsky 1990, 158.)

In the same way as the power of the family concentrates to one man, also the power of all Sicilian Cosa Nostra families concentrates to one man until he is dead - even if he is imprisoned or lives in another country. In Sicily, the Cosa Nostra's power passed on the mandate of territory, where every family has absolute power on its territory concerning committed crimes and related actions. The heads of families (capo) from the same region form the commission of the province (commissione provinciale), except in Palermo, where there are so many families that usually three families select the representative of the region (capo mandamento) who belongs to the commission of the province. The commission of the province decides who represents the province in the commission of the whole of Sicily (commissione regionale), which is the highest body and decides and solves all Cosa Nostra matters in Sicily. (Saari 1992.)

6.1.2 Cosa Nostra of New York - a hierarchical network model

The North American Cosa Nostra is for the most part a product of Sicilian immigration. The leap towards real wealth and power happened during the 1930s' prohibition period. The smuggling and resale of alcohol accumulated enormous wealth which in turn was invested in various legal and illegal sectors. (Santino & La Fiura 1993.) The businesses of New York's Cosa Nostra families can be divided into legitimate industries and illegal activities. The legitimate industries include food products, product markets, real estate, securities, restaurants, bars and taverns, catering industry, garment manufacturing, waterfront, labour unions and vending machines. The illegal activities include gambling (numbers and bookmaking), narcotics, loan sharking, labour racketeering, extortion and alcohol. (Ryan 1995, 164.)

In 1993, the number of members in the five New York Cosa Nostra families was 720, which would mean an average of about 140 members per family (Santino & La Fiura 1993.) In New York, the five Italian-American crime families are structured like a

network. Each member of the families is an independent operator, not an employee – the person receives no salary from the group. Instead, the made guy, or wise guy, is authorised to make money by using the family connections in the family business areas. He obtains the right to use these connections when he is accepted to be a member of the family. He is an independent entrepreneur who pays part of his earnings as a franchise to the head of the family and his nearest caporegime. (Abadinsky 1994, 35-36.) The loyalty to one's own crime family supersedes the loyalty to one's own blood family (Ryan 1995, 24). The mob members are violent and aggressive, and they are constantly seeking for new opportunities to make money. In a typical pattern, a made guy, a franchised member, can exploit non-members who are eager to associate with him in order to become connected since an associate shares some of the status and connections that the crime family enjoys. The member-as-patron, thus, sits at the centre of a network of non-members and clients, the person's "crew", which constitutes an action-based unit for co-ordinated criminal activities. If a member is able to generate considerable income, he gains greater status in the family and can become a candidate for advancement to caporegime. (Abadinsky 1994, 35-36.)

Most of the activities of the family members are not under the direct or indirect supervision of the head of the family (boss) - actually there can be many members in the family that the boss never meets. The boss often learns of the activities of the family members in the periodic briefings of the caporegime or when he receives his part of the crime profits. The head of the family and the members have investments and partnerships in both illegitimate and legitimate businesses that may also involve non-family members. Unlike bureaucratic organisations, the money moves freely in one direction only - when the boss gives someone money it is an investment and expected to be paid back with profits, or violence is guaranteed. The main duties of the head of the family are peacekeeping between the families and bestowing permission on to his family members to do business with the other families' members. Solving disagreements between the family members is done by the family consigliere or caporegime; on the other hand, the disagreements or business transactions between family members and non-members are the member's own responsibility. (Bonnano 1983, 157.)

Family structure is a kind of network. The family consists of the boss who usually is a senior citizen; it takes years to gain the respect of the members, to acquire knowledge of profitable businesses, and to build the necessary connections to the authorities and politicians useful in regards of the group's businesses and its protection. The bosses set up a network of interests, or areas, of influence and businesses that range from clothing to gambling, from food stores to urban services, from tenders for public works to trade unions, and make a distinction between a racket and a legitimate business (Santino & La Fiura 1993, 51). Basically any white male who is accepted by the boss of the family can become a member of the family. In New York, the power of Cosa Nostra is based on the criminal sections divided between the families in the city area. Usually, one family is active in several sections, like organising illegal gambling and having strong union contacts, while some other family is operating in the fashion industry and prostitution. Naturally, in practice, the division of committed crimes and operated crime sections is not very clear. In principle, several families can operate within the same region of the city in different crime areas. This kind of overlapping is typically an American feature. (Albanese 1996.) Compared to the Italian Mafia, the American Mafia is a parasitic phenomenon operating in the margins of society. The Mafia of Southern Italy, on the other hand, has a central role in almost every aspect of economic and political life in

Italy, and the Sicilian La Cosa Nostra family takes care of all criminal activities in its territories, with no exceptions allowed (Stille 1995, 63).

The role of the New York commissions is: 1) to regulate and facilitate relationships between the five families, 2) to promote and facilitate joint ventures between families, 3) to resolve actual and potential disputes between families, 4) to regulate the criminal activities of the families, 5) to extend formal recognition to newly chosen family bosses and resolve leadership disputes within families, 6) to authorise the execution of family members, and 7) to approve the initiation of new members into the families (Ryan 1995, 23). The New York Cosa Nostra is a criminal network where criminals from different families commit crimes in various sectors and even the same sectors in different areas of the city. The advantage to the network participants is the possibility to avoid situations of open competition and the security of power that the group gives against criminals who do not belong to the network. (Kaplan & Dupro 1997; Williams 1997.)

6.1.3 Colombian cocaine cartel group formation based on business structures

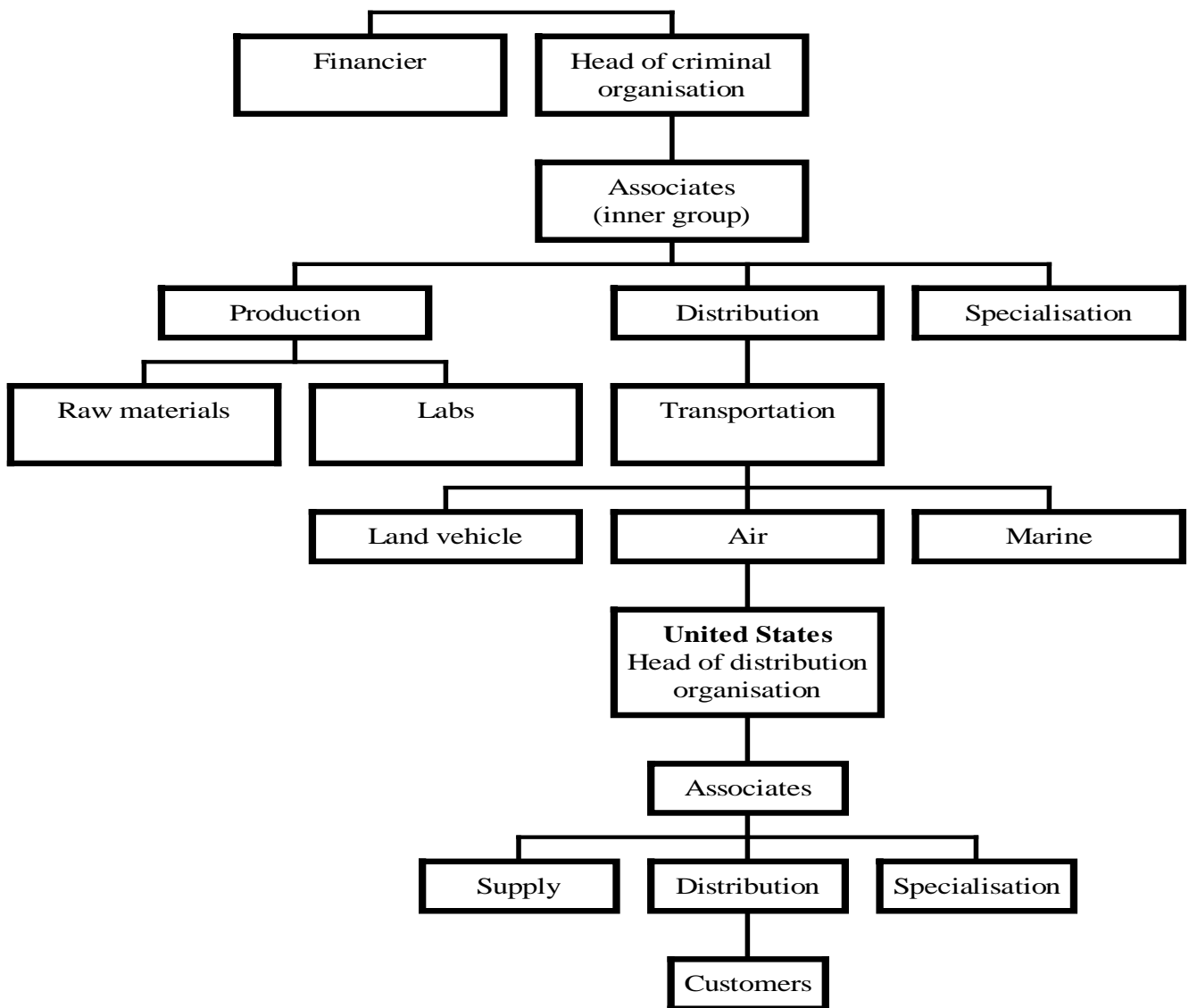
The Colombian groups started cocaine production in the 1970s, and because the business became so profitable, the groups developed into cartels. The two main cartels are the Cali and Medellin cartels. They are not structured organisations with rigid rules. Rather, they are a group of individual companies who share the action among themselves and a number of smaller bands. The cartels' working methods and operating areas vary. The Medellin cartel is primitive and capitalist by nature, personified in Pablo Escobar (died in 1993), who had his own army, and who regarded himself as a state, challenging the legal one. The working methods of the Cali cartel, on the other hand, are considered to be modern. Its bosses have always sought agreement with political power, and, therefore, they work within the state. The Cali cartel top is a triumvirate, and under it and its command are about 50 local gangs who take care of cocaine production and distribution. The number of persons involved in the business is about 5,000. The Cali cartel is represented by famous lawyers and big industrialists who look after everything from constructions business to radio stations. In Columbia, the Cali cartel is organised in autonomous groups that manufacture and deliver the drugs abroad, and, abroad, in cells that are responsible for the wholesale of drugs, and that are under the control of a co-ordinating centre. (Santino & La Fiura 1993.)

In addition to their sophisticated and organised structure, the cartels are well known for their ability to use violence and to corrupt officials. Victims of violence and corrupted officials include numerous judges, prosecutors, and police officials in South, Central, and North America. (Kenney & Finckenauer 1995.)

The structure of the Colombian cocaine cartels is very effective for cocaine production, and the profits concentrate in the hand of the financing person(s). Actually, the members of cartels are just hired to do their work in cocaine manufacturing and distribution. The group is like a giant, illegal business enterprise that pays wages to the workers on the basis of their merits. The number of subcontractors and outsiders is enormous, and most of them never see the leaders or talk to them directly. Few members of one section are aware of the other sections involved, and the loss of one member or even a whole section does not threaten the stability of the entire organisation. In fact, at the lower levels of organisation there are many workers who

move from one organisation to another, and are often unaware of which organisation they are working for at any given time. At the highest levels, the members are well insulated from the physical operations of their organisations. (Abadinsky 1990, 236.) Figure 8 represents the cell structure of Colombian cocaine cartels.

Figure 8: Typical Colombian Cocaine Organisation. Source: U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (Abadinsky 1990, 234).



6.1.4 Transnational organised crime

The Chinese triads, the Japanese Yakuza, and Russian organised crime gangs each have a strong position in their own countries, but they also have a transnational quality that is based on the use of immigrants abroad. These three different forms of transnational organised crime groups, their working methods and areas of crime are briefly introduced in the following.

6.1.5 Chinese organised crime groups

Triads as a criminal organisation originate to the fall of the Ch'ing dynasty in China 1911 when many members of the Ch'ing triads turned to criminal activities and moved to Hong Kong (Abadinsky 1990, 251). The Chinese Triads of today influence in Chinese communities all over the world - in Hong Kong, Taiwan, North America etc. The size of one Triad varies from 100 to several thousand members, and there are 4 main triad groups in Hong Kong alone. (Santino & La Fiura 1993, 67.)

Resorting to crime was necessary because of the need for currency to buy military equipment needed in the fight against the new Communist government in China (Abadinsky 1990, 251). In Hong Kong, the Triads control the rackets, the real estate sector, gambling, prostitution, private police forces, and drugs (Santino & La Fiura 1993, 67). The main global criminal activity of these Triads has been the trafficking in opium from the Golden Triangle of Southeast Asia, and over the last decades, trafficking in human beings has become another main activity (Abadinsky 1990, 251).

In the USA, Triad members have been associated with Tongs that are Chinese legitimate business associations, ethnic societies at the centre of local politics in Chinese communities. According to the FBI, the Tong associations have been able to transcend the boundaries of legitimate business and crime, and are using Chinese companies as fronts for their organised crime activities. In the United States, the Tongs control large-scale vice operations, gambling and Asian prostitution in urban areas with a significant Chinese population (Keene 1989, 14). When the Tongs begin to apply Triads' ceremonial practices, they tend to get many members of Vietnamese origins, who are appreciated because of their skills in firearms (Abadinsky 1990, 251-252). In Hong Kong, Triads use killers that usually come from the mainland China to solve the occasional wars between groups for the control of territories and illegal activities (Santino & La Fiura 1993, 67).

Chinese organised crime groups smuggling Chinese people into foreign countries are arranged as "task forces" rather than families. Members form small groups that assemble to perform a particular job. The structure of this organisation is highly responsive to sociological and market changes and constraints. (Zhang & Gaylord 1996.) The image research gives of membership in Chinese secret societies is fluid and mobile rather than fixed and traditional (Chin 1998). In the USA, Chinese gangs are better organised than other ethnic gangs because they are closely associated with adult crime groups and more involved in profit-generating criminal activities, such as extortion, the smuggling of aliens, gambling, and prostitution which require the gangs to function as units with their own specific tasks. Adult organisations are Tongs, and teenager gangs are Triads. The Chinese Triad gangs function as the "street muscle" for the Tongs, performing such tasks as guarding gambling clubs and massage parlours sanctioned by the adult group, collecting debts from outsiders, and occasionally

working as couriers for heroin trafficking groups (US Congress Senate 1992). According to a report by the Dutch police (1987), Triad 14K has a monopoly on the heroin trade in Northern Europe (Santino & La Fiura 1993, 68).

6.1.6 Japanese Yakuza

The origins of Japanese Yakuza organisations date back hundreds of years, as at the end of feudalism, Japan united under one central power (emperor), and samurais and other knights lost their status (Abadinsky 1990, 247). In the mid-1990s, the yakuza had more than 100,000 members. Its strongholds are still in Asia - Korea, Taiwan and Philippines – making it the largest organised crime group in the world (Santino & La Fiura 1993, 68-69; Kenney & Finckenauer 1995, 260). Yakuza is important to the political sector as electoral agents, fund raisers and private guards. The yakuza have avoided involving themselves in the traditional drug trade of cannabis, opium or heroin, and has instead invested in traditional Japanese drugs, amphetamines, which are produced in South Korea (Santino & La Fiura 1993, 68-69).

Originally, the Yakuza were a mixture of outcast samurai, deceptive itinerant peddlers, professional gamblers, and criminals who, under the leadership of their kumi-cho (boss), were able to exert control over sections of Japan's urban areas. Present day yakuza view themselves as modern samurai, maintaining exotic rituals, such as extensive tattooing of the body and self-amputation of fingers. Rituals manifest the ability to withstand pain and the commitment to yakuza life. (Abadinsky 1990, 247.) The structure of the yakuza is based on a father-child relationship between the boss and the soldier (Seymour 1996). Despite radical changes in other aspects of the organisation, the mentor, teacher, patron, and sensei roles remain essential to the group. In the Yakuza, each group is called family (ikka), and the stress on ritualised and unbreakable bonds is comfortable. The relationship between the one having the status of a father or leader (oyabun) and the one with the status of a child or subordinate (kobun) is expressed in terms of protection and service. The kobun offers absolute obedience, and in return the oyabun grants favours and offers his protection and influence. Climbing the ranks is dependent on the amount of money sent up to the superiors of the organisation. (Iwai 1986, 214-216.)

In Japan, there is a relatively low rate of street crime, which to a large extent results from the symbiotic relationship between yakuza and police. The yakuza keep disorganised street crime under control. However, there are serious problems with amphetamines in Japan, produced by the Yakuza in laboratories around the country. (Kaplan & Dupro 1996.) The Yakuza are also active in the international trade of humans into sexual slavery where women and children are bought and sold through Third World countries (Abadinsky 1990, 249). The Yakuza's main activity in the United States is money laundering which is partly done by large-scale real estate purchases in Hawaii, California, and Nevada by unknown Japanese organisations (Kenney & Finckenauer 1995, 261). This money laundering takes place also in the Japanese legitimate businesses, when the members of the Yakuza are involved in legitimate business like banking, real estate and corporate take-overs (US Congress Senate 1992).

6.1.7 Russian organised crime

Rosner writes that when the Russians arrived in the USA, they adapted to the new criminal system without difficulties. They just continued familiar patterns of behaviour adopted from the Russian social system where non-legal values had not been shunned. (Rosner 1986, 132-133.) The only difference between Russian and other ethnic organised crime groups in the USA was that the members of other ethnic groups were poor and non-educated professionals, while the Russian immigrants were highly educated survivors, skilled in all sorts of hi-tech gadgetry, already involved in sophisticated white-collar criminality. Some of them were also veterans of the Soviet army or the KGB (Kenney & Finckenaer 1995).

Russian organised crime is not a new phenomenon. On the contrary, it is based on the Soviet Union shadow economy and old legacy passed on by the prison underworld. The shadow economy in the Soviet Union was extensive polymorphous activity that contained production, delivery and consumption of legal and illegal products. The professional criminals in the Soviet Union also organised gambling, prostitution, robberies and blackmailing. The lack of money-laundering opportunities kept the Soviet Union organised crime less efficient and more loosely structured when compared with the groups of the Western world. The dispersion of organised crime into the big cities and the southern parts of the Soviet Union started in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the state domestic policy was liberalised and criminal law reformed. The criminals of the underworld composed alliances with the businessmen of the shadow economy, and started to bribe authorities together. In the mid-1980s, the activities of organised crime groups widened and became more effective and profitable, because: 1) the state's anti-alcohol campaign created the opportunity to make big profits by selling illegal alcohol, 2) collecting protection money (rekets) became even more profitable when private entrepreneurship became legal (Bäckman 1996).

In the 1990s, the main criminal activities of the modern Russian organised crime groups were: collecting protection money, arms and drugs trade, prostitution, distilling and selling alcohol, raw material trade, economic crimes, and money laundering in approximately 40,000 companies and 400 banks they owned or dominated. This modernisation of organised crime has followed the same path as in the United States and Italy. Profits have been legalised into properties, stock and legal businesses. This development has also decreased violence and the number of murders. The leaders of several criminal groups have become businessmen who are engaged in legal and illegal business in Russia and abroad. (Ibid.)

In the 1990s, there were about 6,000 organised crime groups in Russia, of which 150 were larger than others. The number of dangerous criminal group chiefs was approximately 3,000, and on an average one out of ten of them were "thieves-in-law". The criminal organisations are hierarchically structured with a clear division of labour and a rigid discipline. The decisions are made collectively by several leaders. Normally, a person who commits the actual crime is not even a member of the group but receives the necessary information through several intermediate authorities. All the involved persons are experts in their area, and the groups have inquirers, bodyguards, soldiers, consultants (lawyers, economists) and persons for public relations (journalists, politicians and artists). Although the names of the groups are based on nationalities, only the leaders and the inner circle of the group represent the same nationality, and most of the members are ordinary Russians. (Ibid.)

6.1.8 Conclusions on the forms and models of organised crime

One conclusion concerning different forms of organised crime is that there is no one and unique form of organised crime. Sicilian organised crime (La Cosa Nostra) is widely regarded as a synonym for the word Mafia, thanks to the entertainment business. In mass media, the word “Mafia” has become a synonym for all serious crime activities that take place in society, as illustrated by the following newspaper headlines: “Man killed Mafia style” (shot in the neck), “Dog killed Mafia style” (a dog was found in a lake, in a bag filled with stones) (Iltalehti 1999). However, there is no one and unique “Mafia” even in Italy: in Sicily, there is the Cosa Nostra, in Naples the Camorra, in Calabria the 'Ndrangheta, and in Puglia the Sacra Corona Unita. It is even less possible that one unique “Mafia or Organised Crime” would exist in the rest of the world. The different kinds of classifications and definitions of organised crime provide the state authorities with means to understand and submit to state control the complex phenomenon of professional criminals and the crimes they commit.

The three different group structures described above may be summarised as 1) vertical hierarchical groups, 2) horizontal hierarchical groups and 3) enterprise cartel groups. The vertical groups like the Sicilian La Cosa Nostra are strictly structured groups from the ordinary soldiers to the head of the provincial commission. A single family has absolute power over its territory, and the single soldiers are the task force that commits the crimes that the head of the family decides upon. In the horizontally structured groups such as the New York Cosa Nostra, families form criminal networks that provide and maintain a criminal atmosphere where single members improvise crimes that are constricted by certain rules and areas. The difference to the vertical hierarchical model is that in horizontal networks, criminals are more like individual entrepreneurs whose actions are both supported and limited by their networks, and who pay a certain percentage of their income to their supervisors who, on one hand, ensure that these agents may work effectively, and on the other hand, solve disagreements. In Sicily, La Cosa Nostra is part of society (mentally and practically), but in New York it is an outsider that affects society. The enterprise cartel model is a mixture of the two aforementioned forms. It is strictly controlled by one or a few persons who hire workers to do certain jobs, but the men who participate in the cartel activities are also protected against other cartels and society at the same time. In the eyes of “normal” citizens, the agents’ social status improves when they are paid and protected by the local cartel. Colombian cocaine trafficking organisations are constructed to control each intermediate step, and to export cocaine. (Kenney & Finckenauer 1995, 263.)

In the USA, the Reagan commission was the first to pay attention to the fact that organised crime is changing, and that it is not the exclusive domain of the La Cosa Nostra any more, if it ever had been (Lupsha 1987). Cressey was one of the first to use a structural model to define organised crime in *Theft of the Nation* in 1969. His principal objective in this book was to consider organised crime as a social problem and to explain it in a logical way. From Cressey's perspective, organised crime was authoritarian and bureaucratic, rationally designed to maximise profits, and grounded in a code of behaviour with rules and procedures carried out by persons occupying functional roles in a division of labour. The structure was based on the fictitious family, an important integrating mechanism needed to maintain an organisation that was dominated from the top. The structural model is not a totally closed system. It indirectly recognises the environment through the relationship between the corrupter and the corrupted. However, the relationship is not interactive. The corrupted is seen as a part of

the organised crime structure, not its environment, who responds to certain actions. The model also ignores market dynamics, focusing, instead, on internal organisation as the unilateral creation of its participants. (Cressey 1969.) Later, Cressey continued his ideas of the structural hierarchic criminal organisation in a global perspective.

Theoretically, structural models based on classical concepts (division of labour, scientific management and bureaucratic attributes of precedence, rules, procedures and functional roles) still remained the predominant determinants (Cressey 1972; Cressey 1997). Originally, structural models of organised crime were designed to meet the definitional needs of those in law enforcement responsible for investigations and prosecutions in technologically complex urban environments (Smith 1994, 124). The kinship-based, patron-client description is primarily associated to Albin's and Ianni's works on ethnic perspectives of organised crime in the USA. These works offer an alternative to the structural model, and they were presented to the President's commission in 1967.

The studies considered social conditions of Mezzogiorno (Southern Italy and Sicily), and its cultural and social influences to organised crime. The studies were more focused on behaviour dynamics than the organisational structure of organised crime. Albin used a structural-functionalist approach, viewing organised crime as an indigenous phenomenon. He explains that Italians who were born in the Mezzogiorno Italy imported the patron-client structure and family kinship values with them to the new culture: the East Coast in the United States. Immigrants were the basis of the enlargement of Italian organised crime in their slums in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The enlargement meant that Italians used their old Sicilian values and moral codes in the USA, and adopted organised crime as a natural form of criminal culture (Albin 1971; Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972).

Ianni represents Italian-American crime families as a mixture of Italian and American culture. Elements that Italians imported with them from Southern Italy were: 1) strong family system of obedience to the father and respect of the mother, 2) weak or alien political structure, and 3) individual-family honour (vendetta). The elements that Italian immigrants discovered in the United States were: 1) crime as a ladder for social mobility, 2) "new" immigrant status, and 3) acceptance of criminal-hero by popular culture. With the help of these elements, the Italian immigrants developed "Unione Siciliana" that was the base of future Italian-American organised crime families (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972, 61-62). Those criticising Ianni's ideas like to point out that the American Italians are not morally more deprived than immigrants from other countries. The Italians just followed and copied the Irish and Jewish method to advance in the social hierarchy (Abadinsky 1990).

The different organised crime groups can be active in the local markets, national markets and international markets. The reason that I introduced Chinese, Japanese and Russian organised crime as transnational organised crime was that over the last twenty years, when transnational organised crime has been a hot topic, groups from those countries have probably been most frequently mentioned and studied as transnational organised crime groups. To the advantage of these said groups, many of their fellow-citizens have moved abroad during the last twenty years. These own national centres abroad have offered easy access to foreign criminal markets and begot the phenomenon of transnational organised crime groups.

The introduction of these different models and forms of organised crime served my study purposes and attempts to clarify the phenomenon of organised crime in Finland. But, as Vold pointed out in the 1950s, the terminology that describes criminal behaviour should be coherent and accurate (Vold 1958). The real-world phenomenon seems to be so complex and intangible that, unfortunately, we still seem to be in the same situation. The main problem is the rapidly changing world: as one phenomenon is defined, several previously unknown ones are yet to be recognized. One problematic topic of debate is whether a motorbike gang should count as an organised crime group or not. On the basis of this study and according to the persons I interviewed, motorbike gangs should not be defined as a new form of organised crime, because the bikers are considered to be second-class criminals who are more keen on riding their bikes than on making serious money by committing crimes.

6.2 Finnish professional criminals and their organisations

One of the main objectives of my study was to define the structures of Finnish professional criminal groups in the selected criminal activities that included alcohol, drugs and tobacco smuggling, handling stolen goods, and procuring. None of the 14 groups that I studied were able to fulfil the 14 variables presented in chapter 2.2, required for a group to be classified as an organised crime group. It could be discussed whether or not the sample I used was representative. The Finnish authorities estimate that the number of Finnish organised crime groups varies from less than thirty to nearly sixty (NBI 2001; Statistics 2001). Court statistics, however, list just a few cases per year in which article 6.2 of the criminal code (organisation as an aggravating circumstance) has been referred to by the Finnish courts of law. My informants estimated that there were 10-15 active groups in Finland, as the following quotation describes.

“...there are some 10-15 gangs here that are distributing drugs...That’s about all there is to this organised crime. It’s mostly about drugs...Then, there’s some arms trade, and some collection of debts... I mean there’s nobody paying protection money or anything. Just drugs trade and a bit of prostitution, that’s what we’re doing in Finland...”IQ.

Table 9 presents the studied groups and my estimation of how well they fulfil the study variables. In the Table, and later in the text the different group features are presented as a summary of the variables. Detailed information cannot be disclosed in order to avoid the recognition of the studied groups.

Table 9. Evaluation of the criminal activities of the studied 14 Finnish professional criminal groups in the 1990s, and the variables of organised crime used in this study.

Group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Criminal activities														
Alcohol/tobacco	--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	X	--	--	X	--	--
b) Drugs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	--	--	X	--	--	--
c) Handling stolen goods	--	--	--	--	--	X	X	--	X	--	--	--	X	--
d) Procuring	--	--	X	--	--	--	--	--	--	X	--	--	--	X
Total number	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
Variables														
1 Bonding	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2 Continuity	X	--	--	--	S	X	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
3 Co-operation between groups	S	X	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	X	S	X	S	--
4 Corruption/violence	X	S	S	--	--	S	S	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
5 Division of labour	X	X	X	X	X	--	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6 Expanding nature	X	X	--	--	--	S	--	--	--	--	S	--	--	--
7 Money laundering	S	X	--	X	X	--	--	S	S	S	S	--	X	--
8 Monopoly	--	--	S	--	--	--	S	--	--	S	--	--	--	--
9 Multiple enterprises	S	X	X	X	X	--	S	X	S	--	--	--	S	--
10 Non-ideological nature	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
11 Profit and/or power	S	S	X	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
12 Rules and regulations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	S	X
13 Specialisation	X	X	X	X	S	S	S	X	X	X	S	S	S	S
14 Structure of group/ <3 persons	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	--	H	H	--	--
Total (max. 14)	11	11	9.5	9	9	8.5	8.5	8.5	8	7.5	7.5	7	6.5	5
Percentage of the total	79	79	68	64	64	61	61	61	57	54	54	50	46	36

X= fulfils the criteria completely, S= fulfils the criteria partly, -- = does not fulfil the criteria, and H = hierarchical. * crimes not included.

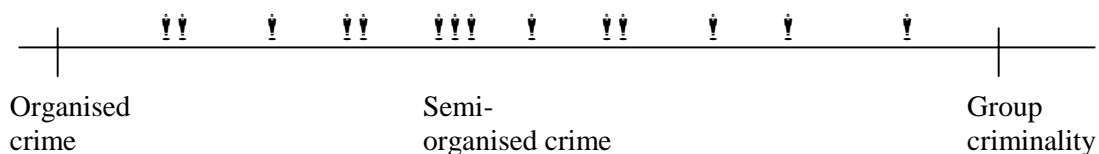
It is worth noting that the above classification of variables of the studied groups is suggestive at best, because all activities of the groups are not known. The classification is based on the interviews of my informants. Complementary information was also gathered from public sources (TV, radio and newspapers) and trial documents. On the basis of this information, I constructed my subjective classification of the level of professionalism and the organisational level of the studied groups. It was often difficult to say whether the group was able to fulfil a certain criterion completely, or whether it fulfilled it by three-quarters, or by half or less, and several times I had to make compromises. Focusing separately on each aspect helped to understand the groups and the co-operation between them. Organised crime is not confined to a single group, and indeed, no criminal organisation operates autonomously. Each group depends on others for the supply and distribution of illegal goods, money laundering, fencing operations, and it is quite normal that they share persons and resources. An American study shows that gangs can be racially or ethnically homogenous, and still quite willing to go outside their group to form criminal partnerships (Ryan 1995, 2).

The objective of categorisation was to classify the studied 14 professional criminal groups as either organised crime groups or criminal groups, as the Dutch researchers have done in their study (Fijnaut et al. 1998, 11). It became obvious during the study

that it would be unrealistic to apply only these two categories. On the basis of the interviews, I developed a third definition of a group of semi-organised crime²⁷.

In this study, the middle category (semi-organised crime) was used to draw a line between organised crime and group criminality, because something was needed between the two. Accordingly, I started to consider the variables as a continuum, where the groups' actions and forms meet some of the variables and elements of the defined classes but not necessarily all of them. This way all groups could be placed on the continuum of organised crime and group criminality, as presented in Figure 10.

Figure 10. The studied 14 Finnish groups on the continuum of organised crime-group criminality.



It is important to notice that the group's location on the continuum is not stable; actually, the groups are in constant movement. The group activities demonstrated in figure 10 reflect the complexity of the activities of criminal groups during the 1990s. A group's location on the continuum is determined according to its success (its losses or gains in smuggling and marketing, the participants' daily efforts, actions of other groups to take over markets, authority actions to imprison persons, etc). An other important observation is that organised crime and group criminality are not the ends of the continuum, on the contrary. The continuum represents a space in which different groups are ranked according to the level of professionalism of committed criminal activities. At the time of this study, the status of the groups was as follows: one was moving upwards, towards organised crime, the status of seven was not changing, four of them were on their way down, and two were inactive.

I classified nine of the studied groups as semi-organised crime groups, while the actions of the last five could be classified as group criminality. Two of the semi-organised groups could nearly be defined as organised crime groups, but not quite. These groups seemed well-organised, their activities were continuous and effective, and their leaders were determined, experienced, and capable professional criminals. However, once I compared them to the aforementioned, well-known forms of international organised crime²⁸ groups, something was missing. However, there is no reason to believe that the activities of these two groups are not ongoing, even if their leaders have been in prison for years. The groups have hired new members and daily routines are re-organised. The only ascending group will certainly catch up with the two top groups, and depending on its success and the effectiveness of authorities to prevent future crimes, it may even eventually attain the 14 variables for a classified organised

²⁷In this study semi-organised crime means that the group's organisation and the crimes it has committed partly fulfil and partly do not fulfil the definitions of criminology, EU and UN (presented in the chapter 2.2) for organised crime. It may be that the group cannot or even does not want to fulfil them completely, and thus, its crimes and group structure have qualities of both organised crime and group criminality.

²⁸International organised crime: activities of one-country organised crime groups are involved in relations/partnership with organised crime group/s of other countries. Usually this term is used to describe partnership co-operations between different groups from different countries. (Ryan 1995.)

crime group. The next two groups on the line are stable or descending. Normally, stable groups do not aspire to develop, and the participants are satisfied with the way things are. The fifth group was plunging due to recent problems in all of its operations.

The main reason for not classifying these five groups as organised crime groups was that they did not fulfil all the criteria. Firstly, Finnish authorities were able to work undisturbed (with only a few exceptions) even when the group leaders were captured and convicted. Secondly, the groups had existed for years but their continuity was yet to be established, and at times their activity had been in a state of suspended animation and at risk to stop. Thirdly, the groups operated in only one criminal sector, smuggling illegal goods to Finland; and their international contacts were weak. They only had contacts to those foreign groups who supplied products to them, and the Finnish groups were not able to expand their activities abroad like transnational organised crime groups do. Fourthly, the groups did not have permanent monopolies in the markets of their products, as they would not have been able to maintain their monopolies in case of a failure to import goods to Finland.

I classified also the next four groups as semi-organised crime groups even though they were not interested in or capable of developing their activities. On the other hand, these groups committed crimes in a more professional manner than the criminal groups. The crimes committed were serious (i.e. harmful to society) and profitable to the groups, they were committed in a professional manner, and also the continuity of the groups was on a level that made it possible to define them as semi-organised. These four groups differed from the others in that they were less hierarchical in their structure, and did not meet the criteria for organised crime as well as the previously introduced groups.

The last five groups worked so erratically and were so loosely structured that they could easily be classified as criminal groups. They committed serious crimes and their activities continued for several years, but the aim was more to have fun than to develop into a serious criminal group. A typical problem among these groups was the lack of professionalism, personal attitude and willingness. They did not have the ambition or capacity to develop their actions and personal relations to a higher level. The participants of these groups were satisfied with occasional work opportunities and the money that they received for their services. They were keener to protect their personal freedom, substance dependence, or other excesses, consequently needing occasional work opportunities as the earlier loot had been consumed.

In the following chapters, I will not separate these groups into different categories. Rather, I will introduce all informants as one study group. In some cases, when it is technically possible and necessary, I will introduce differences between semi-organised groups and criminal groups.

6.2.1 Number of participants

The number of group members and other involved persons in smuggling and resale operations varied from a few to tens of operators, depending on the definition of a group and on what basis the involved persons were counted. My own opinion, based on the interviews, is that there were two to five persons per group who operated so closely together that they could be described as a group. There could be more than ten persons involved in the marketing chain, but they would come and go on a market basis and could not be counted as group members. The following statement describes the number of the members in alcohol and tobacco smuggling business.

"...Now there's my pal with whom I work, that's one, then there's myself, and then there's this man of mine... It doesn't take more than three men. One who takes the commodity out and one who takes care of the taxes, that's a second one. I am together with this Estonian fellow, and only I am in contact with this man of mine. That's all it takes. Then there's this man who owns the warehouse, we rent the warehouses from different persons. The rent contract is old, and the receipts, so that this guy who has rented it is supposed to have paid the rent so that if they're caught it's not going to be on the owner of the warehouse. The papers are made so that it looks like the warehouse has already been rented for a month by this same person. There are several men around who are just renting warehouses to people like us..."IQ.

According to the interview statements concerning the number of participants in the drugs smuggling and dealing organisation, the number of inner circle participants was estimated to be somewhere between two to five, depending on the group. The number of participants reduced during the 1990s, because the profit margin of the sold products shrunk.

"...the core in such a drug group may comprise of 2-5 persons. But mostly, these days, because the prices have gone down so much, it's usually 2-3 guys. They then contact other guys who handle different stages of the work: one takes care of the smuggling, one of the distribution, one of the sales, and one of the transports..."IQ.

In the smuggling business, the number of involved persons is limited to only a few, because 1) three people suffice to run the activities effectively, 2) shared profits per participant remain as big as possible 3) the risk of getting caught is as small as possible. Additionally, there are other persons involved for several different reasons, as the following statement explains.

"...the profits are shared like in the business world... according to each person's involvement and who is in charge... someone may be involved on a percentage basis, for sales provisions, or he may be working for someone else hired for a specific job..."IQ.

The minimisation of risks is also important, because the fewer persons know the participants and the routes of illegal products, the smaller the risk that the information reaches the authorities. The following statement discusses how the trust between persons works.

"...behind the right hand, and he'd have two-three front men who were sort of those he could trust. He knew that they can be trusted, that they're not going to inform on him..."IQ.

In the business of procuring and handling stolen goods it is normal that persons are business partners in a chain that sells services and goods on a business basis. These business chains may involve several persons from supplier to reseller, and the turnover of the involved persons happens on a market basis like in the legal markets. Persons buy and sell goods when the price, need and quality correspond to the standards that guarantee a profitable resale. Only sometimes, two persons work on the same level and receive the same amount of the profits from the joint business. The principal rule is that persons work alone, each according to their capacity, as pointed out in the following statement.

“...I’d estimate that one person is able to run five cities. Of course, there are also those procurers who aren’t able to run a single joint properly....”IQ.

In conclusion, the number of Finnish professional crime groups varies, depending on different estimates, from a few to tens, and the estimated number of participants varies from tens to one hundred persons. The smaller number of groups and persons are my own estimates based on the interviews. The larger numbers are the Finnish police estimates based on their sources. When I compared my estimates to well-known international forms of organised crime, the difference in the numbers of organised criminals was enormous. The number of involved persons in Finnish organised, semi-organised and group criminality groups is far from thousands, tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of members as found in international organised crime groups in the USA, Italy, Colombia, Japan and Russia (cf. e.g. Santino & La Fiura 1993).

6.2.2 Drug, alcohol, and cigarette smuggling organisations

In the beginning, my model was constructed on the basis of drug dealing organisations, but in the course of the study it turned out that it could also be used to describe the alcohol and tobacco smuggling organisations. The reason for this is that all smuggling groups have similar needs for organisational structures and for certain key roles in a smuggling and marketing chain. Products that are sold in Finland are bought and smuggled into the country from several sources. Cannabis mainly comes from Europe, for example from Holland and Spain. Amphetamine and tobacco (fake Marlboro and LM) come from the Baltic region (i.e. Estonia, Lithuania, and Russia). Heroin comes from Holland, Thailand and Russia. Alcohol comes from two different directions, from Holland and Germany or from the Baltic region.

The highest level in a smuggling group consists of financier and his right hand and left hand²⁹. On the top of the Finnish smuggling organisation is the financier - the man with money and international connections. Money means that he has “loose” money for risky investments such as buying smuggled goods from Europe or the Baltic Sea area. International contacts means that he knows persons from abroad who are able to sell illegal merchandise such as drugs, or he has contacts that are able to organise spirits or tobacco tax-free straight from the factory. These contact persons can be Finns living abroad or local persons.

²⁹ The left hand is the violence and debt collection expert of the group. The left hand collects the debts on behalf of the financier, and, upon his command, carries out violent revenge operations against parties that have been harmful to the activities of the group (IQ).

Exceptions to this model (one man in charge) are the groups where the roles of financier and the right hand are intertwined, and the two persons form the top of the group together. Some of the studied groups were equal-partnership groups in which the roles of financier and right hand are inseparable, because two men together invest money and bear the risk of smuggling. Both partners have their own marketing channels in Finland to distribute drugs to the different cities. The third form of group structures is the smoothly structured group, a partnership of several men. Here, one organises funding, another organises the smuggling of the goods, and the third organises the marketing in Finland. In whichever manner the responsibilities for the group's actions are divided, one man alone is responsible for running all the practical matters in Finland. He organises the unloading and storing of the goods, and informs the persons responsible for distribution when and where the goods can be picked up and how much they will cost.

Under the financier is the right hand who assists the financier in organising deals, planning smuggling operations, and investing the profits. The main responsibility of the right hand is to take care of the wholesale distribution in Finland. The right hand sells drugs, spirits or tobacco to the middle level. The right hand also protects and covers the group's financier if authorities start to dig around. The middle-level dealers cover for the right hand, and the lower-level men for the middle-level dealers. The system is developed during the operations on need basis. Every operator has chosen the men under him on the basis of personal trust and their marketing qualities - naturally, this trust is secured by money and the threat of violence, as the following statement describes.

"...There was nobody else here but my right hand. My intention was only that as every now and then people go to prison in this work, and so will this right hand of mine. I've paid him half of what I make myself... He gets it with the understanding that he'll take the blame for everything if we get caught or something. And it's him who will go to prison. This has happened four times before. So he is sort of the fifth right hand who was made responsible for the crimes..."IQ.

If the group has a left hand, he is the person who works directly under the financier and organises all the violence that the financier considers necessary. Even though the left hand has the same status as the right hand, he has nothing to do with the smuggling or marketing of the goods. He is the financier's trustee who is unknown to the other members of the group. A left hand existed only in one of the studied groups. The other groups did not have a full-time violence specialist, the required violence and debt collection was either commissioned or executed by other group members.

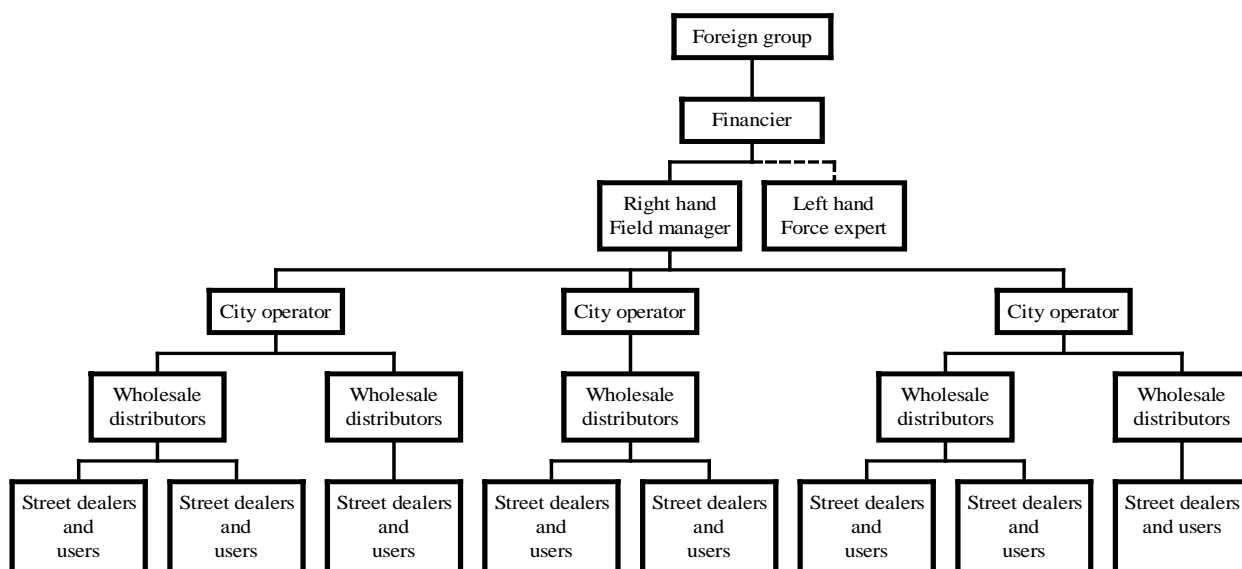
The right hand organises the distribution of the goods in Finland through trusted men under his command. One to three persons form the middle level of the group. The middle-level men cover for the right hand in relation to the authorities, and sell the goods to their own trusted friends on the lower level. The middle-level men can be called city operators, because they are responsible for the operations of separate cities and for the distributing channels through which they sell the products, as the following statement describes.

"...This guy over there in town X, he had a real good pal who'd cut the merchandise into suitable packages. He had wholesale buyers who'd buy 10, 20, 30 kilos..."IQ.

The lowest level of the marketing chain of the illegal goods is occupied by the kilo dealers and the hundreds of litres dealers who sell the goods to their own trusted hundred grams and tens of litres dealers. The marketing chain continues, and the amounts get smaller until the goods are consumed.

The internal relations between the participants of the marketing chain resemble trust-based businesses rather than friendships. In the marketing chain, everybody is responsible for his own finances, customers, working methods etc., as far as the actions do not harm the business of the others or attract the interest of the authorities. Naturally, sometimes business relations can develop into real friendships in the course of the years, but business always remains the most important connecting element. The decision-making process in the group follows the same logic: the operators know exactly enough of the actions of the others as is necessary for them to carry out their own duties as business partners. The following figure was completed on the basis of the interviews.

Figure 11. The basic structure of the Finnish drugs, alcohol and cigarettes dealing organisation.



The above model of the structures of smuggling and resale organisations is quite similar to the one Johnson has presented regarding the drug distribution business in the USA, or the one used by the Finnish police, or the one in Lampe's study on the networks distributing untaxed cigarettes in Germany (cf. e.g. Johnson et al. 1987, 1990; von Lampe 2001, 9; Kontio 2001). The difference between my view and the description by Finnish police representatives is that the latter introduce Finnish as hierarchically structured organised crime groups, whereas my view is that even if the group structures are hierarchical, they are above all marketing chains that import and resell drugs, spirits and tobacco, lacking a clear command chain from top to bottom. My informants emphasised that all persons involved are independent traffickers who are involved in the business because of greed. Also Aarne Kinnunen came to a similar conclusion when he studied the drug markets in the Helsinki city area. His study showed that the Helsinki drug markets, at least as a whole, could not be deemed organised. The markets are in a constant state of flux, in part due to the fact that there are no fixed organisations in the area that would have divided the markets among themselves and that would be able to operate effectively without a break even when some members of the organisation were

imprisoned. Groups that engage in drug offences have a tendency to fall apart once detected. Thus, to a large extent the markets appear to be confused and unsettled. (Kinnunen 1996.)

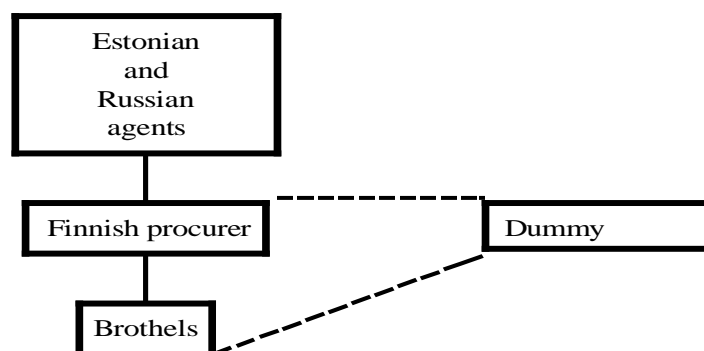
6.2.3 Procuring organisations

The structure of a typical Finnish procuring “organisation” is a one man, or at most, a two-man enterprise: a person or persons hire the girls from a foreign supplier and procure them in Finland. The procurer also manages anything else that the running of the business requires. He rents and furnishes the flats that are used for brothels, publishes ads in local papers, organises the work of the girls and their circulation between the different places that he runs in several towns or in the same city, arranges all the daily routines such as clean bedclothes, cleaning, etc. The procurer also collects the profits and divides them between the girls and the agent who rented the girls to him. Normally the girl’s earnings are divided into three. One-third goes to the foreign supplier, one-third to the Finnish procurer, and the last third to the girl.

There is no need for a complex organisation in the procuring business, because one or two people can manage everything. The advantages of the simple organisation include 1) less persons involved, larger incomes for the participants, 2) less persons know who runs the business, and, consequently, the risk of getting caught is smaller. The procurer’s daily routines resemble the life of a “normal” small-scale entrepreneur; they are filled with work, long hours, economic risk and responsibility. A procuring business can be launched with small initial capital. It is possible to hire five to ten girls with a few thousand euros and to procure them in two or three apartments guaranteeing a comfortable income for all the persons involved (girls and procurer).

The girls are mainly “rented” from Estonia or Russia from local pimping patrons or patronesses. Another way is to meet normal girls (without a background in sex business) in those countries, and ask them to work under him as prostitutes in Finland. Owing to the high living standards in Finland, finding Estonian and Russian prostitutes is relatively easy. (Junninen 1999). Figure 12 was constructed on the basis of the interviews.

Figure 12. The basic structures of Finnish pimping organisations.



It should be pointed out that a front (see Figure 12) is only required 1) when the procurer does not hire the girls straight from the street, hotels, etc., but is using foreign agents, 2) the Finnish procurer is subject to recovery of a debt by distraint order in Finland and therefore cannot legally own or earn anything.

6.2.4 Marketing organisations of stolen goods

The markets of stolen goods in Finland can be roughly divided into two categories: 1) markets of drug-related stolen goods, and 2) trafficking in stolen goods. In the market for drug-related stolen goods a) the middle-level drug dealer gets a secondary income from handling stolen goods that he accepts as a payment for drugs or in return of the drug purchaser's debts to him, b) the middle-level drug dealer is forced to provide the top operatives with expensive things, such as jewels, cars, machines, etc. to compensate for existing debts. A trafficker in stolen goods is a person who has money to invest and connections to sell products forward. The goods are bought from professional shoplifters or regularly working burglars. Usually a trafficker buys anything that is valuable and available in large amounts, but some of the traffickers are specialised in special kinds of merchandise such as weapons, art, gold, etc.

Over time, persons who are buying stolen goods on a regular basis attain a reputation that they are dependable buyers and sellers, and receiving goods from several sources. It should be noted that even if the operator is well-known and reliable, he has to pay well, because the thieves and burglars will sell to whoever offers the best price for the goods. Every batch of goods is resold on an auction basis, where the best offer gets the goods. Thieves and burglars are not obliged or committed to selling to the same trafficker, unless they owe him money or services. The person who supplies the stolen goods is active, and the others who offer and purloin the goods are his customers. Once he has bought something to sell, he advertises and sells the goods further.

Stolen goods are mainly sold in three different kinds of transactions 1) through newspapers and in marketplaces to normal people, 2) to normal shops or through front companies that sell them as legal goods, 3) goods are bartered with normal shops or other persons who handle stolen goods in a different city or country. Loads of stolen goods are sold on a daily basis to normal people through newspapers and in marketplaces. The circulation of stolen goods is more complicated if the goods are first exchanged into other goods that can be sold in legal business transactions. Loads of stolen consumer goods such as coffee or tobacco, etc. end up in normal shops, restaurants and kiosks that sell them as if they were legally purchased. Figure 13 is constructed on the basis of the interviews.

Figure 13. The structure of Finnish stolen goods organisations.



The basic structure of the stolen goods market is very simple. The trafficker buys and sells the goods on a market basis. The structure becomes a bit more complicated when the trafficker is subject to a debt recovery procedure and cannot own or earn anything. In this case, his businesses are looked after by an ostensible partner who runs a legal business as a front that owns everything used by the stolen goods trafficker (house, summer cottage, cars etc.). Handling stolen goods gets still more complicated when the goods are bartered before they are sold. This exchange is done through the trafficker's contact persons or friends who run a shop, a kiosk or a wholesale firm that has no problems with the authorities.

6.3 Emergence of Finnish professional criminal groups

According to my informants, co-operation between persons emerges because it is necessary for organising smuggling and marketing of commodities and services. The informants stated that the greatest difference between a professional criminal group and, for example, a motorcycle gang, is that the professional criminal groups evolve from the necessity to commit crimes, and they only include members who participate in the crimes, whereas motorcycle gangs emerge in a reversed manner: as the group concentrates on the motorcycle hobby, the club and the hobby of individual members can eventually become financed by criminal means. According to my informants, it is important to realise that in professional crime, the first step is not to collect a group of people, to make up rules, and agree on the division of labour, and only after this to contemplate on the crimes that could be carried out by this group. On the contrary, the initial idea is to make money by criminal means, and only then persons are recruited and required to carry out the plan. As the groups emerge, the central power that keeps the underworld organisations together is the mutual trust between the participants. Since it is not possible to make legal coalitions or other binding contracts, the only available possibility is for the participants to maintain a gentlemen's agreement where oral promises replace written contracts. (Vold 1958.)

The main reason why professional criminal groups emerge is the possibility to benefit from the open market situation regarding the demand for illegal services and commodities. The illegal market may comprise of the delivery and marketing of illegal goods, or selling legal goods that have been acquired by criminal means. The most common goods in the illegal market are tobacco, alcohol, narcotics, jewels, valuable metals, and the most common services are sexual services and debt collection. There is a demand for these goods and services, even if they are prohibited according to Finnish law, or acquired by criminal means. The smuggling of various commodities and their sale on the black market reflect the willingness of the general population to buy illegal goods or to consume illegal substances or services. Marketing chains emerge as a response to a need, and organising and resale of commodities require the co-operation of many different persons operating on many successive levels. In this co-operation, services are exchanged for money, and the outstanding debts are secured by violence. The cause and the ideology of establishing the groups is money. The idea is to produce as much money as possible as quickly as possible for all participants. In practice, the objective and the model of the groups could have been copied from a Colombian cocaine cartel, in which each cell participates in producing and selling the cocaine on the basis of needs within the sectors they control. Theoretically, the activity of such

groups is rational, as depicted in economic theories. (cf. e.g. Santino & La Fiura 1993; Kenney & Finckenauer 1995; Reuter 1983; Schelling 1967 & 1971.)

The existence of an informal market is nothing new. There are research results about it at least since the mid-20th century. In economic life, even commodities and services that have been deemed illegal or unacceptable are wanted and required. Organised crime provides them. Consequently, since it participates in a competitive market, it has to be organised both in order to defend itself and to achieve an effective control of its marketing activity. The most violent struggles created by competition occur rather between underworld groups than between underworld and upper world representatives. (Vold 1958.)

The emergence of groups is also a matter of age structures. On one end of the age continuum are the young people who are in the beginning of their criminal careers, usually committing their first crimes, practising the skills required for committing crimes, and acquiring partners together with their peers. On the other end of the continuum are the old and experienced professional criminals who are committing crimes together. Solo careers are less common than exclusively co-offending ones, but the typical criminal career is a mix of offences committed alone and with others. Co-offending is more characteristic of juvenile than of adult criminality. (Reiss 1983, 117.) Models of co-offending include 1) single criminal acts typically when the career is very short, such as in murders or series crimes (for instance, sex offending), 2) only group offending, such as terrorism or political crimes, and 3) other crimes such as bank robbery, procuring etc. (Reiss 1979). In my view, the way the individual acquires the skills required for the commission of crimes and adopts the relevant world of ideas may be compared with a time-glass. Generally, young persons take the first steps of their criminal careers in groups (cf. e.g. Salmi 2002, 102). The phase of committing crimes in a group is followed by a phase of individualisation during which some stop committing crimes, and some continue to carry out gradually more and more demanding crimes, simultaneously adopting the rules and behaviour models of the criminal subculture. During the individualisation phase, the real criminals are distinguished from the amateurs. These gifted and able persons become the leaders and generators of ideas of professional criminal groups, using the less gifted and less ambitious criminals as helpers. The leaders and middle-level men of professional criminal groups are skilled, bold and reckless (Kääriäinen 1994).

The persons I interviewed had collected people around themselves, or joined the activity of a certain group for four main reasons: 1) money (to get rich), 2) the crimes I studied could not be carried out on a solo basis, 3) the wish to belong to a group, and 4) for their own safety.

The most important reason for participating in the activities of the groups and the smuggling is, of course, money. The lack of money, and dreams of big incomes, exciting life and freedom seemed to be such strong motivators that the men were prepared to risk their freedom and their lives. However, once they were carried away by the work, failures, apprehension and death were not given much thought because all their time and strength was consumed by the criminal activity. Increasing the number of members of the group will increase the criminal profits up to a certain limit. The connection of group size and profit is described in the following quotation

“...The chance to make money. You go there, buy the merchandise, bring it over, and sell it. Of course, if there are several men working together, they have decided to sell together, then they're able to acquire a larger amount and then they'll import that. That's the way it gets started...” IQ.

A third important reason for participating in the groups was the need to belong to a community, the operations of which are well known, and the members famous. Particularly in prison, belonging to a group led by a notorious convict yields many advantages and liberties that the other prisoners do not have. The following quotation illustrates the point.

“...I had the feeling that I was flattered, that a person like that was interested in getting me to join his people as it was known that he really was the toughest criminal in this country, that's what was always in the press. I have become acquainted with him here in prison, or I knew about him in a general sense. It sure flattered me. I got this feeling, and I noticed that I was appreciated by those around us who knew about this, that we had something going on between us. We had a table of our own in the cafeteria, and we had a lot to do with each other...”IQ.

The fourth important reason for the emergence of the groups was the personal security of the criminals. Even though the men are adventurers who act tough and are supposed to manage on their own, they are also despised by relatives and society alike, making the authority of a strong leader and the feeling of security provided by a homogeneous group significant things. The importance of personal security is accentuated when abroad, as told in the following quotation.

“...Somehow, once inside that criminal circle, one felt safe. You would not be robbed. Normally, they would beat people up, steal and rob in the middle of the day. You were sort of safe then. They wouldn't touch you. This was something that you could feel yourself. I've nothing to be afraid of because I know this and that fellow...”IQ.

6.3.1 Gender of the members and the tasks of women

All of my informants were male. According to them, it is exceptional for women to participate in the activities of Finnish professional criminal groups and this happens only when a specifically defined need requires it. As a rule, Finnish professional criminals work among men in a male world and under male rules. Exceptions that require the use of women are: 1) fronts in smuggling operations, 2) acquisition of information, 3) interpreters, 4) formal owners of property, and 5) couriers. The most common case was the use of women as fronts on smuggling trips and in some singular instances as the final links of sales chains, the objective of their presence being to decrease the interest of authorities in the group when the smuggling was going on or when small quantities of merchandise were being peddled, as is evident in the following quotation.

“...Yes, there could be a woman or two involved. If someone hands over a load for instance in Spain, if there are two guys or a man and a woman in the car, that won't attract so much attention if they carry the merchandise in their car. At least we don't have women in other roles...”IQ.

A second common situation is that women – wives, girlfriends, and friends of these women – acquire useful information. The information is needed for the planning and carrying out of the crimes, to conceal the proceeds of crime, and to punish informers and authority representatives. The women acquire and forward seemingly innocent information from different public registers and records about authority actions and the business world. Usually, the women are made to get the information so that they are not

even themselves aware that they are dealing with criminals, as described in the following quotation.

"...We didn't have any women directly involved, but later there were situations where we needed addresses of policemen... we had contacts; we had women we knew working in the tax office and in a bank. This way, we got addresses of policemen and other people of that sort from them... but none of them understood that they were involved in anything criminal. Some of them did admit that they had suspicions, or knew that at least something illegal was going on..."IQ.

Wives and girlfriends who are good at languages or foreigners are used as interpreters in negotiations with foreign sellers or persons providing women for prostitution. In some cases, women of foreign origin function as interpreters and business partners of a Finnish procurer in the sex business in Finland exploiting Estonian and Russian women. The following quotation is an example of foreign women who are involved in the activity of a Finnish group.

"...here on the top level, they sometimes used their own Russian-speaking wives as interpreters. The number one man had one, and this other guy, they were both having wives who acted as interpreters. In my case, I was always yelled at by the bosses: "why I don't tell to my wife where I'm going and what I'm doing". I said I can't involve my own wife in this kind of matters. He said that "it is totally normal". This person just didn't get it. "Our wives are so reliable that they can be told." he said. I can't understand that one involves one's own wife. There were always boys available that were provided by the mafia, who could speak Finnish, Estonian or Russian, you name it..."IQ.

The fourth important role of women is to act as the owner of the man's property if he is officially without incomes and means, and as the one who earns the taxable incomes of the family. The idea is to indicate that the incomes of the women are at least theoretically a source of the criminal's luxurious standard of living, as told in the following quotation.

"...The women go to work so that we have some taxable incomes that explain our standard of living. I've got a flat that costs millions, and my pension is 2,000 a month, I've been pensioned for X years, and I'm receiving 2,000 cash after taxes, so how do I explain it? The old girl must go to work so that we can explain on paper to the tax authorities how we are paying the debt from the flat, like we wouldn't eat anything or buy any clothes..."IQ.

Furthermore, the interviews mentioned the fact often reported in research reports and authority materials that prostitutes are used as couriers smuggling narcotics across borders (cf. e.g. Junninen 1999), as told in the following quotation.

"...One fellow was using them [women] as couriers. He had them carry quite a lot of merchandise to Sweden, but they were smaller amounts. It was in the early times. He was using these prostitutes quite a lot. Sometimes he used his own wife to import merchandise to Finland..."IQ.

The only complaint regarding the loyalty and reliability of the women concerned occasions that involved separation or jealousy. Those of my informants who had involved their female friends or confided in their women had usually regretted this later, and after the relationship had ended they had paid a dear price. One of my informants had lost 1.2 million FIM after his ex-wife informed the authorities about the hiding place of the money of the man subjected to recovery proceedings. The following

quotation tells about a problem caused by jealousy and of the consequent change in the woman's attitude.

"...but I was having a woman who liked this Bonnie & Clyde idea, she wanted to come along just as sort of company. It was a mistake that I took her along. I had to pay for that. In her spells of jealousy, she kept calling to the police although she didn't have the facts... With women, when jealousy comes into the picture... she's unpredictable, just like men are. If the boys have been using women, a woman driving the car and things like that, I've told them that they must definitely not involve any woman..."IQ.

My informants may be divided roughly into two groups, according to what they thought of female criminals. The oldest men said openly that in their view, the woman should take care of the home, not of crimes. Committing crimes and providing for the family belong to the men, and women take care of the children and the home. My younger informants repeated to a degree this traditional gender role model, but on the other hand they genuinely pondered why they had not had more co-operation with women. The younger men thought that in many situations (such as interrogations), a woman would be smarter and more reliable than a man, but for some reason their good qualities are not made use of in the marketing chains. According to an American study, youths are especially strongly fixed to gender stereotypes. Youths are more likely than adults to limit their choices to persons of the same sex (Reiss 1983, 133).

According to the study by Kinnunen, police think women are easier to break in interrogations. He followed the careers of the 1962 birth cohort in Finland. Out of the persons who had been arrested for narcotics crimes between the years 1977 and 1996, only 16.6 per cent were women. His interviews with both the drug police and the drug users suggest that the drug markets are very male-dominated. The drug police, in turn, try to get the girlfriends of men suspected of serious drug offences to reveal what they know. As wives or girlfriends, women are generally well informed of what their men are doing. The wife or girlfriend of a man who commits drug offences may be the only one whom he fully trusts. It is more likely that a woman will open up to the police since she, often for the sake of her children, has more reasons than the man to live in accordance with prevailing social values, and women may grow more rapidly tired of a restless life than men. (Kinnunen 1996.)

A typical attitude among my informants was that they were above others, and women and persons of other ethnic or national backgrounds were used only when necessary as helpers and fronts in frontline tasks. The helpers were not highly valued – using one's wife or girl-friend as a courier or a brothel madam in Finland can hardly be seen as a significant token of love, as the women would be sentenced to several years in prison, if caught. Also elsewhere, the world of professional criminals is male-dominated. An exception has been noted in the Naples Camorra in Italy, where a woman has been responsible for the daily operations and leadership of one group. This woman, Rosetta Cutola even ran one of the most important crime families of Naples, when her brother was in prison. Nevertheless, it is very rare even for a Camorra group leader to be a woman – in Italy; this is particularly unusual as Italy as a society is still more male-dominated than Finland. This is demonstrated clearly also in the attitude of the Sicilian Cosa Nostra towards the activity of the Camorristi. The Sicilians eyed their undisciplined Neapolitan cousins who allowed their women to get mixed up in the Camorra with amusement and contempt. (Stille 1996, 324; Saari 2000.)

6.3.2 Ethnicity of the groups

My informants were almost unanimous in that they thought that only Finnish born men could be counted on when it came to serious situations. Romany were considered to be unreliable, seeking for the advantage of people of their own kind, and informing on others in interrogations in order to save their own skin. Also foreigners were looked upon with great reservations. According to the interviews, there had been foreigners involved in the activities of only three groups, and in general, they would not want to take Romany, Estonians and Russians along because of a lack of trust, as told in the following quotation.

"...All of us have enough experience that we can say that it doesn't make sense to do anything with Roma because they are not reliable. They are not considered to be reliable..."IQ.

This lack of trust in foreigners became increasingly interesting as it turned out that the higher the informant was in the marketing and smuggling chain, the more likely it was that he in fact harboured a relationship to a trusted Romany or foreign criminal with whom he dealt with. International contacts are used to purchase goods and to smuggle them to Finland. Then members of the Romany people were needed in order to distribute the goods in Finland among the Romany population. The low level of co-operation between ethnic groups in Finland is probably in part due to the fact that there has been no need for it as all Finns, Swedish-speaking Finns, Romany and Lapps have all operated mostly within their own peer groups. In the new situation where Estonians, Ingrians, and Russians have become established in Finland, the co-operation of ethnic Finns has increased as they have joined forces against the new immigrants.

The requirements that my informants had in regards of the gender and ethnicity of co-operation partners resemble quite closely those reported of Sicilian organised crime, where only native Sicilian men are eligible for membership (cf. e.g. Arlacchi 1986; Ahtokivi 1994). On the other hand, my finding contradicts the ethnicity requirement of organised crime families of New York where the criterion of original Italian family roots was given up already in the 1950s, when Bonnano was selling memberships also to persons with non-Italian backgrounds (Bonnano 1983). Due to voluminous immigration, organised crime in New York is assumed to be ethnically much more mixed than for example Sicilian organised crime. The intermingling and co-operation of ethnic groups in the USA began in the Castellammarese war in 1930-31 where Italian Neapolitans and their alliances, non-Italian mobsters (mainly Jews) fought against old Sicilian Moustache Petes. The young generation of Italian-Americans won after they had killed many of the Moustache Petes and formed gangs of their own in the new mode of the urban criminal syndicate, not the old rural brotherhood. The new syndicates did not follow provincial lines, and working relationships with non-Italians, particularly Jews, were established. (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972, 58-59.) After the war, Charles "Lucky" Luciano became the leader of Unione Siciliana (Moustache Petes). It became a strong continuous organisation, and the members did not have to be Sicilian (or Italian) to be in the Unione. Jews like Meyer Lansky and Bugsy Siegel entered its highest council. (Cressey 1969, 55-56.)

An important feature of the co-operation between different ethnic groups in the USA has been that young people have grown up together and have learned to trust each other, irrespective of the colour of their skin or their ethnic background. Second generation Italian immigrants served as liaisons between the Sicilian mafia immigrants and those

who were not of Italian origin (often Jews). The reason for this was that the second generation had access to the half-world of organised crime gangs that were not of Italian origin. Thus, second generation Italian-Americans developed new kinship-like networks and hierarchical patterns of organisation. In this, the first and strongest base was loyalty to family, but it was also possible to do business with those of non-Italian origins. (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972.)

6.3.3 Timelessness of the groups

When discussing the timelessness of groups and marketing chains, the unanimous view of my informants was that when organising smuggling and trade of commodities or substances, or establishing a brothel, they do not pay attention to how long they intend to go on with the activity. The continuity of the criminal activity of the group was guaranteed only in two of the groups that I studied; in a third one, some attention had been paid to the matter. The objective of all other groups was to carry out the criminal project at least once, and if it was a success, the group would try to repeat the crime and to make it more profitable and sophisticated, the aim being of a certain amount of money. Eventually, the activity was continued until the group was caught. It is normal that greed increases together with success, and it becomes necessary to continue with the crime in order to maintain the ever-growing standard of living, as described in the following quotation.

“...I guess it's always like this in the drug business: one thinks that we'll go on until we've made a certain amount of money. He led such an expensive life that all the profits that came in were spent on living, boats, cars, flats, all kinds of things. It never grew big in the sense that he would have been able to get bigger amounts of the stuff and bigger profits. It always remained in the 5-20 kilo range...”IQ.

Some of my informants had been able to operate for decades before being apprehended, while others had been caught after a few years. However, the apprehension of a group or a part of it did not automatically mean that the group's activities were terminated. The activity may have ceased and started again after the person was released from prison and reorganized his business or it may have continued already when he still was in prison. The best guaranty of prolonged continuous activity seemed to be that the group was active for only part of the year, and kept a low profile otherwise.

Particularly those involved in smuggling spirits were of the opinion that the activity varied between more active and more passive periods according to seasons. Seasonality means that sometimes the group could import several loads in a short time, then lie quiet for a few months doing other kinds of business and spending time with the family and hobbies. The smuggling was continued when the stock was exhausted or when the demand in the market grew. The seasonality of the activity decreased the risk of apprehension as the interest of authorities decreases. It is possible to enjoy the fruits of one's work in peace as the prices of the merchandise remain high, because of the large demand in comparison to what is supplied. Some of the spirits dealers whom I met were more active smugglers, while others would work in the spirits business only as a sideline of other legal activity as is evident in the following quotation.

“...A maximum I’d say of just a few months. Many also have other businesses, so that they do not concentrate exclusively on this, like smuggling spirits or something else. They would keep many other jobs; I mean even quite honest work. Smuggling spirits, and the whole spirits business, in general, is not even thought to be criminal by many people...” IQ.

The ambitions of my informants in regard to the continuity of their activity may be roughly divided into three parts: 1) the men of long-term activity, 2) those who continue until they are caught, 3) one-time criminals. The men of long-term activity are professional criminals who regard criminal offences to be their occupation. The crimes are any kind of profitable and honourable offences that vary according to demand and supply. They know that certain illegal services and commodities have a constant demand, and that their price depends on the supply. The men of long-term activity understand that a criminal group is an enterprise that will flourish only as long as it is able to offer commodities and services to willing clients for a suitable price. The success of the group is based on the fact that there are people who are prepared to pay the required price for its services and commodities. (Vold 1958.) Such organised criminal groups have existed for centuries. For example, in Sicily the mafia is a specific enterprise, an industry, which produces, promotes, and sells private protection. It developed over the last one hundred and fifty years. (Gambetta 1993, 1.) The age of organised crime in the USA is estimated, depending on the source, to have existed for over a hundred years (Abadinsky 1990). These criminal groups have secured their continuity by moving their criminal profits into legal business, and by integrating into the political system and legal structures of the state (Arlacchi 1986; Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972; Stille 1995). A second mechanism of securing continuity is that the values and methods of organised crime are transferred to the next generation as cultural traits (Shaw & McKay 1972, 73). Italian-American crime families are actually a number of lineages linked together into a composite clan. Each clan has its own territory. Because of its kinship base and its territoriality, the clan can establish and maintain its own rigid code of familial law and pass authority from one generation to another (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972, 172).

Those professional criminals who continued offending until they were apprehended also committed crimes as an occupation. However, their choice of career was a sum of coincidences, and drifting into professional crime was not their ultimate goal in life. The most important reason why these persons were dissatisfied with their criminal lives was because they were aware of the risks involved and because they were reluctant to lose their lives as victims of violence or to spend long times in prison. The ideology of these criminals is crystallised in the consideration that criminal minds do not exist, but that as one is without work or accommodation, something has to be done despite the fact that the career choice comprises both good (money) and bad (prison) aspects. (Aromaa 1983). In some instances, the criminals who continued until they were apprehended were one-time offenders who were not able to or who did not want to stop at one crime. The reason was either that the first project was successful, and the profit expectation grew accordingly, or that the first offence failed as a consequence of which a new crime had to be carried out in order to pay the partners of the first offence. The one-time offenders stopped offending during their first prison term as a result of falling in love or being born again, for example; also, many one-time offenders perish as victims of violence in the process of committing the planned crime or in its aftermath, in conflicts with other criminals, and also by suicide.

6.3.4 Monopolies of activities and products

According to my informants, it is impossible to gain a monopoly position concerning the imports and marketing of a given commodity in the whole country, at a national level or even in the larger cities. A monopoly may be achieved only in one or a few smaller towns if the group is able to produce certain services or products on a permanent basis, with competitive prices and quality. Of the 14 groups that I studied, only three had controlled the trade of a certain substance or services in Finland in the course of the 1990s. The scarcity of monopolies in Finland seemed to be an outcome of several simultaneous factors: 1) the markets are difficult to control as there is a multiplicity of entrepreneurs at various levels, 2) the reluctance of the smugglers and dealers to resort to violence and to spend money in order to achieve a monopoly position, 3) the small size of the country, together with effective actions of authorities. These three reasons exist both together and separately, no single factor being able to explain the lack of criminal monopolies in Finland. According to literature and to my own reasoning, illegal markets emerge in circumstances where there already exists a demand for prohibited goods or services, and the criminal organisations satisfy this demand. Criminal organisations may, however, also create the demand and subsequently monopolise the market (Koskinen 2001, 63). When considering the monopolies achieved by Finnish professional criminals, it is essential to realise that they have lasted for a few years at best, which cannot be compared to decades or generations as is the case in Sicily, the USA, or Japan (cf. e.g. Santino & La Fiura 1993).

A central feature of the monopolies in the different crime sectors that I studied was that the closer to the importer the dealer is and the larger the amounts of the merchandise and services are that he buys each time, the more faithful to the same source. This way he is able to rely on the quality and steady availability of the commodities. The situation of small and less professional dealers is different in that they buy and sell when ever possible (both in terms of money and of availability), trying to maximise their profits through numerous small streams of activities. Of the crime sectors that I studied, the markets were shared most effectively (regional monopolies) and agreements of price cartels were agreed upon among Finnish procurers (an oral agreement accepted by about 15 Finnish procurers together). The procurers had agreed that half an hour with a prostitute in a Finnish brothel costs 400 FIM in the north, and 300 FIM in the south. According to my informants, the stolen goods in Finland and from Finland to the neighbouring countries were moved according to market conditions only, and the one with the best offer buys and sells the commodities again. In the trade of alcohol and tobacco, smuggling groups that had been active for years created their own stable marketing networks. These permanent resellers purchase the alcohol in entities of thousands of litres, and sold it again by the hundreds of litres. The monopolies concerning narcotics and alcohol vary across cities according to the competition between sales organisations, depending on the successfulness of the smuggling and of the resale operations. Monopolies are difficult to achieve even if the group was active only in one single smuggling sector (alcohol, tobacco or drugs), and impossible if the group is importing two different types of goods. It is common in the smuggling business that one importer imports and markets a single type of goods, or a maximum of two types of goods through his group, and distributes these in different cities in Finland. The following quotation describes the cities where the financiers of the bigger Finnish narcotics groups live, and the actual level of planning of the activity of one group in the 1990s.

“...The bigger gangs were in Kotka, Espoo, and a few in Helsinki. Then there was one in the Tampere region, but the others were more or less on an amateur basis... They are not that systematic and tough. We would have had real good chances in the direction of Vaasa... We wouldn't have needed to be afraid of anything. We were prepared in case somebody would have tried to push himself in; we would have made space then. That is how we were thinking. We knew that we won't be beaten. Our activity there was so systematic. We had a strong continuity so that we knew that we could get all the drugs that were needed. It often happens in this business that somebody imports a certain amount of drugs, and after that the activity is finished. We had continuity, and because of this we were competitive...”IQ.

In the crime sectors that I studied, competitiveness is primarily achieved through reliable delivery, the quality of the merchandise, and price. The reliability of delivery and the quality of the commodity are the most important features in the markets. The price competition is ostensible because it is easy to find out what the buying and selling prices of the commodities are. Price competition is usually not allowed. In a situation where one group would start to dump, the other groups selling the same commodity or service interfere rapidly. The price competition will be terminated by violence or by informing the authorities. The following quotation describes how the markets work.

“...The price cartel was made up in the way that if someone would start lowering prices, he would immediately receive the message “stop or something will happen”. Then there could be some violent incidents or something...”IQ.

An interesting feature concerning the sales of illegal merchandise in Finland was that complete long-term monopolies are beyond the reach of the groups both because of lack of opportunity and of motivation. The Finnish situation is entirely different from, for example, the Colombian cocaine trade, where the Colombians have ensured that the profits from the entire cocaine trail (from the raw materials to the retail dealer) are going into the pockets of the cartels by resorting to violence and bribery (Strong 1996). One must of course take into account the scale of the activity in Finland that is determined by the small size of its population and by its geographical location. An international drug distribution network may have a membership of hundreds or even thousands of persons doing different tasks, whereas a Finnish distribution chain would comprise of a maximum of tens of persons. Because of the small numbers of staff, the volumes of smuggled commodities remain relatively small; however, on the scale of Finland these volumes are significant. The efficiency of Finnish law enforcement also prevents the criminal activity to grow into larger and more visible dimensions since the larger and more visible the activity of the group develops the more certain it is to be detected. Glaser has presented a calculation based on simple probabilities: if the likelihood of success of a single crime is as high as 80 per cent, the likelihood of being able to commit a similar crime ten times without getting caught is only less than 11 per cent. As the number of participating offenders increases, and as each participant will also continue to commit crimes of their own, the risks of apprehension will grow even more. (Glaser 1978, 89.)

Achieving a monopoly position in the trade of illegal substances in Finland may not be necessary in the end because 1) the markets are too complex and impossible to control, 2) there is no need for a monopoly as a small slice of the trade of an illegal substance will allow all participants a large remuneration in comparison to the work involved, 3) the professional attitude of most of my informants was insufficient since their objective never was to achieve a monopoly; they had rather entered the smuggling

business because it promised quick and large returns with reasonably little effort, and the money could be spent at liberty in any way they wished, and 4) one's position in the market does not depend so much on oneself and one's own activity, but on the relative positions of the groups in the source countries of the substances and girls that vary from day to day; the steady availability of the merchandise very much depends on the foreign partner. According to Reuter, illegal markets are not characterised by monopoly control. The degree of competition is irrelevant; the market may be oligopolistic or perfectly competitive (Reuter 1983, 151).

According to my informants, the existing Finnish professional crime monopolies operated parallel to each other, city by city. One group may be selling spirits, another focuses on tobacco, a third one takes care of procuring, a fourth one is selling heroin, a fifth one hashish, and a sixth one amphetamines, all in the same city and without conflicts. The peace is maintained because each group operates only in their own crime sector whether aware or unaware of each other, and does not compete with the other groups. New markets are conquered only in other cities by taking over markets of one's own sector. As a consequence of the parallel structure, one group may be selling cannabis to one city and amphetamines to another, but it could not distribute both amphetamines and hashish to both cities since other groups already distribute cannabis to one city and amphetamines to the other. Taking over the markets from another group can succeed only if the groups do not share source countries and groups, and if they are additionally prepared to resort to violence, to use of money, and the help of the authorities. In Finland, the groups operating in one city have not formed a coalition as is the case in Sicily where several families could exist in the same village as long as their spheres of activity did not conflict. Sometimes families joined together into a *cosca*, when their interests and businesses were related (e.g. selling cattle and controlling water rights). (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972, 30.)

According to the interviews, a Finnish group that had been distributing hashish in a certain region in Finland for a long period of time wanted to commence marketing amphetamines through their existing hashish distribution network. The group was indeed buying amphetamines from Estonia, and selling it as planned. This resulted in a problem as another Finnish group had already been selling amphetamines to the same region and obtained the merchandise from the same Estonian laboratory. It protested to the Estonian supplier, demanding that they stop selling to the second group. The protest was successful. The new group would still have been allowed to continue buying amphetamine from the Estonian laboratory for distribution in other regions in Finland but they refused to do so. The new group, then, ordered amphetamines from the Netherlands and continued distributing it through its old cannabis marketing network. The source does not reveal how long the group was successful in this operation. At some later stage, the Finnish customs found a large amount of amphetamines and weapons from a truck coming from the Netherlands to Finland, and the members of the group were apprehended. It was not clear how the conflict between the two groups had evolved in the meantime, or how the Finnish customs were informed of the truck arriving to Finland. The question obviously is whether the first group informed the authorities of the truck because they were afraid of being beaten in an armed confrontation and were thus using the authorities to eliminate the new competitor. In other countries, occasional wars between groups, concerning territories and markets have taken place, the most recent major war in the USA having occurred in the 1930s, in Sicily in the 1980s, in Colombia in the early 1990s, and in Russia in the 1990s (cf. e.g. Ryan 1995; Stille 1995; Strong 1996; Bäckman 1996).

Regarding monopolies, the previous example does not provide much support to the interpretation of Finnish authorities that state essentially that Estonian and Russian organised criminal groups control the Finnish amphetamine markets. According to my informants, the Estonians and Russians decide to which Finnish clients the Estonian and Russian narcotics laboratories sell their products. They have no way, however, of preventing or influencing the arrival of narcotics from other countries, or their distribution in Finland. According to my informants, the greatest obstacle to the emergence of monopolies in Finland is the fact that the markets are unstable, meaning that the Finnish buyers are constantly on the lookout for products, routes, better quality and better prices for narcotics, alcohol, tobacco and women.

There has been a long and lively debate in criminological literature concerning the existence of monopolies over marketing territories and markets. Sicily is presented as having the most strictly defined territories controlled by families. Also, persons close to the crime families have always been able to use the names of their famous relatives for their own benefit in their legal businesses. The tendencies towards common ownership and control are naturally found only within the inner nucleus of the *cosca* (Arlacchi 1986, 137.) Support to the existence of monopolies has also been provided by a number of statements by gangsters. An ex-member of the *Cosa Nostra*, the Sicilian Leonardo Messina has commented “In my area you can't move a pin without *Cosa Nostra*, in Sicily the mafia controls all public contracts”. (Stille 1995, 11.) In the United States, monopolies worked in opposite ways: in the 1970s there was a strict ban within the American *Cosa Nostra* from getting involved in drug dealing. All men of honour who distributed heroin into the United States were blamed to be members of the Sicilian *Cosa Nostra* families, because Sicilians owned the import licence³⁰ of heroin into the United States. (Stille 1995, 128.) In Japan, the *Yakuza* controls the procuring and amphetamine businesses quite openly (cf. e.g. Iwai 1986; Kaplan & Dupro, 1997).

The existence of monopolies has also been subject to doubts in the literature, and some sociological studies have interpreted the views of authorities as an attempt to create panic because of crime. The sociologist Daniel Bell is sceptical toward Cressey's writings and the hysteria about a large Mafia conspiracy. According to him, crimes simply cannot be earmarked for Mafia, as unfortunate as this might be. (Bell 1963). It is also justified to ask what kind of power would be able to force a big group to obey - why should a New York family accept national committee decisions (if one exists), since it has no power other than the power of its individual members (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972, 109). In Sicily some local crime groups have allowed some minor thefts to occur in their territory in order to reinforce the popular illusion that if the existence of *La Cosa Nostra* is not accepted, petty crime is going to flourish, and the living environment becomes less secure (Ahtokivi 1994). According to my informants, the fact that no such regulation of petty crime exists in fact proves that there are no real territorial crime monopolies in Finland except for those in prisons.

³⁰ Licence means that someone has monopoly over the markets of certain products, and the new groups who want to enter the markets need a permission to sell products on the same markets and to buy products from the same sources (cf. e.g. Stille 1996, 129. “Pizza Connection”)

6.3.5 Professional quality of activity

The degree of professionalism of the groups was defined in this study according to 1) the methodicalness and the long-term quality of the activity, 2) the seriousness with which my informants took their assignments and worked to improve the methods and productivity of their profession, and 3) the way the respondents used intoxicating substances. According to my interviews as well as the study by Aarne Kinnunen, the methodicalness and the long-term character of a group's activity is mainly determined by the ability of the financier of the imports and the right hand of the group to bring substances to Finland and to select capable persons to take care of the distribution in Finland (Kinnunen 1996). At times, the efficiency of the importing activity, the quality of the substances, the efficiency of the services, and the willingness of the group to defend its position by force are tested by new groups that attempt to enter the business, as well as by existing groups. Furthermore, Finnish authorities are also interested in the efficiency and professionalism of the groups. The better and more professionally the smuggling and marketing is organised, the less surprises there are in the routines of the participating persons. However, in the criminal world, nothing is permanent and unproblematic. Rather, a multitude of matters and problems need to be solved every day.

A marketing organisation and the persons running it leave the business for two main reasons: 1) lack of initial capital and ability to ensure the continuity of the financing that would guarantee the constant availability of the merchandise even in case smuggling operations were exposed and the authorities would confiscate the drugs or the central group members go to prison, 2) weaknesses in the reliability of the distribution chain and the ability to maintain the quality of the drugs, guaranteeing the demand for the drugs and a profitable price level. In all of the groups that I studied, the financing and the distribution network were (or are) strictly under the control of two to five men. Only in four of the groups that I studied, the continuity of the activity was safeguarded even in case that part of the central members died or decided to retire. None of the groups that I studied would have been able to survive a situation where all of the group's central members would leave the markets for good (quit or die). In such a case, the markets would be reshuffled and divided among other existing groups and/or new groups wishing to enter the business. Should a group quit, the active middle-level dealers would join the marketing chain of other importers, continuing to deal drugs on the lower levels familiar to them, meaning that they expand the marketing network with their own clients.

Of the fourteen groups that I studied, only one was equipped with a substitute system that aimed to protect the activity in case the financier would retire or something would happen to him. According to all indicators used in my research framework, the activity of this group was on the highest level of professionalism and came closest to the international definitions of organised crime presented in the first part of this study. The following quotation tells about ways of securing the continuity of the group.

“...whoever would have left, even the boss himself, and it would have continued. We've always had replacements. I would have taken his place if something would have happened to him. This operation would have continued as if nothing at all had happened. It's like a business company. If an employee leaves, they won't quit but they hire a new person in his place and everything goes on as before. We make long-term plans. We may have the idea that after one year, both will have two million in cash. Objectives like that. There can hardly be other kinds of objectives. Except,

perhaps, that we could plan to acquire a certain region to ourselves and expand the regions where we are selling drugs...” IQ.

In some of the groups that I studied, the continuity of the group had been safeguarded in case the main organisers were apprehended, so that the merchandise and services could be delivered also from prison to the existing marketing areas. According to my data as well as literature, it is a rule that even if the activity is organised and controlled from prison, the drugs are not distributed in prison. The first reason for this is that the prison markets are too small in volume and profits. Secondly, the risk of apprehension is too great in a closed society. And thirdly, the objectives and interests of real professional criminals are in freedom beyond the prison walls, unlike habitual criminals for whom the prison serves as a dormitory (cf. e.g. Karhi 1995; Kinnunen 1996; Kääriäinen 1994).

My second indicator of the professional level of the criminal activity referred to the constant effort devoted to develop working methods and the productivity of one's crimes. This feature was often described in my data. According to my informants, a professional criminal carefully assesses and weighs the pros and cons of his actions in advance. The following quotation illustrates this.

“...if you act like a professional, you have figured out all the alternatives in advance, and if you then get caught, you'll be very cool about it. The attitude of a professional is rather that you avoid useless fuss and you won't bang your head against the wall. It doesn't mean that you'd surrender or break down but you choose the rational way to behave, with your own objectives in mind, both regarding authorities and prison life in general. A person who has been in this trade, he knows what the disadvantages are and he's prepared to confront them if necessary. He's perhaps even prepared to die. Everybody knows what may happen. If you start feeling scared then you'd better quit. It does happen all the time that somebody enters a game that is too tough for him, or ends up in some kind of a bad spot and has to go in hiding...” IQ.

One of the most important characteristics of a professional criminal was considered to be the ability to solve problems rapidly and unscrupulously. He must also be adventurous and reliable, strong willed and have courage not to talk in police interrogations. According to many of my informants, as the Finnish drug markets expanded rapidly in the course of the 1990s, drug groups that had not been strict about these requirements had eventually paid a high price as it happened often that unreliable members talked in interrogations. According to my informants, the situation was different in the sectors that had grown only moderately, such as the distribution of alcohol and tobacco, and dealing in stolen goods and also procuring. In these sectors, the growth of the markets has been tackled in a more careful manner, continuing to operate only with old reliable partners even if the demand for the commodities would have been much greater.

According to my informants, the more professional the group is, the more absolute the order that, in order to minimise risks, the men are not under the influence of any kind of substances when committing crimes. A general and common rule according to all of my informants is that hard drug addicts cannot participate in the activities of professional crime groups in any way. The organising, distributing and marketing of smuggling, procuring and dealing in stolen goods requires accuracy, careful work and reliability. My informants were also aware of the large economic risks and the long prison sentences involved, and for this reason it was important to carry out the work as well as possible. Persons who are addicted to substances were considered to present a security risk for the group because a person who is drunk or high easily attracts the

attention of authorities, and also talks too much to his friends, restaurant acquaintances and the police, thereby causing an unnecessary danger to the other criminals. The following quotation is on the strict attitude to intoxicating substances.

“...never. Myself, I don't have a problem. I don't actually even use much alcohol in civilian life. The boss is also totally strict about this, he only uses alcohol or beer, but nothing else, not even tobacco. All of these people who were in the inner circle; none of them used any kind of drugs...”IQ.

According to my informants alcohol use or smoking grass on one's leisure time is not a problem as long as it does not interfere with work and cause a security risk to other people. Three of my informants were teetotallers in respect to alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. All the other men said they used alcohol in their leisure time. Furthermore, three of my informants said they used cannabis regularly, and one of the men said he used amphetamine on a daily basis. My informants explained that a dependence on intoxicating substances changes a professional criminal to habitual offender relatively rapidly, and increases his risk to be apprehended, killed by his friends or dye accidentally. He will, therefore, be able to regain his status as a professional criminal only if he succeeds in beating the habit and is very lucky. My informants were rational professional criminals who did not use drugs or alcohol to relieve the tension committing crimes created, contrary to habitual offenders that are described in Finnish research (cf. e.g. Aromaa 1983; Kivivuori 1992).

6.4 Characteristics of professional criminals, recruiting new members, and the rules of criminal groups

According to my informants, professional criminals and persons who participate in marketing chains have to meet the following requirements: 1) reliability, meaning that what is agreed upon and promised will also be adhered to, 2) a proven ability, will and skill to commit crimes, 3) calmness and determination, good nerves and the ability to act and make decisions under pressure, 4) healthy and regular ways of life that help endure the hardships of the profession and do not attract unnecessary interest on the part of the authorities, 5) sentences and criminal merits only for honourable and carefully planned crimes directed against the public power or business institutions, and absolutely no shameful criminal history (sex offences, crimes against women or children). In addition to such personal characteristics, he must have contacts, new ideas, or other features that are directly useful for the groups because the marketing rings prefer to recruit persons who can help run the business and perhaps even expand it. The character of a good professional criminal has to be guaranteed by somebody who knows him and is able to recommend him to the one who is hiring help. The following quotation is an example of the qualities of a good criminal, the kind of personalities suitable to participate in a group, and of the homogeneity of professional criminals.

*“...first of all, he must never have informed. That's the most important thing, that he has never talked, he is reliable... then of course if he is able to do different kinds of things and is able to use his head, and of course he must lead a calm life and know how to act when needed, and he must not be addicted to anything... like in the normal business world, similar features. He must be prepared and ruthless, ready to do anything if need be. **How long have you known these guys?** Some of them for longer time, some for less. Those I have known only for a short time, have different kinds of merits so that they can be accepted quicker. Those without any kinds of merits have*

*to wait longer for us to get to know what kind of fellow he is. Some of them are friends from long time back who have been in the trade for a long time and with whom we have done many joint operations... some of the men you can use for a certain task, another for other tasks... everybody is not ready for everything. But then there are men, who are totally reliable, you can rely on them and tell them everything, they know how the operations are done. **In such cases, did all four of you know the same things?** Well, not every detail. And they didn't ask any questions. All of them had their own projects as well that I had given to them and told them to keep to themselves... **What kind of special skills are needed in a good group?** Well, one must be able to use violence if needed, but good social skills are important because they often help prevent violence. They'll need to have some brains, some sense, know how to act, then there will be no conflicts, and then of course they must not be under the influence of any substances, or alcohol. Their way of life must be sensible..."IQ.*

According to Aromaa's study, membership in the Finnish underworld is usually acquired through personal presentation, and persons who are not considered to be dangerous for the other criminals of the underworld may become members. The underworld had their own meeting places, slang, rules of conduct, sanctioned loyalty requirements (the prohibition of informing), on which there was a broad consensus and with which the members attempt to distinguish themselves from legal society and protect those who participate in the activity (Aromaa 1983). Rules of honour and codes of conduct of the Sicilian La Cosa Nostra and the New York Cosa Nostra include that 1) you must not touch the wife of another man of honour, 2) you must not steal, 3) you must not exploit prostitution in order to make money (you may use its services), 4) other men of honour must not be killed except in very exceptional circumstances, 5) co-operation with the police is absolutely prohibited, 6) the ideas of other men of honour must be respected, 7) one's conduct must always to be straightforward and respectable, 8) matters of the Cosa Nostra are never to be revealed to outsiders, and one is not to present oneself directly to an unknown man of honour but only in the company of another whom he knows (Ahtokivi 1994, 34; Arlacchi 1986, 19; Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972, 154).

When comparing the recommendable characteristics of Finnish professional criminals with the international code one notices that the Finnish criminal world does not emphasise the ethics of "honourable" conduct as much as the traditional organised criminal groups in Sicily and New York. In fact, the more honourable conduct is expected from a Finnish criminal, the more responsible his position is in the criminal hierarchy and in his own group. Persons who operate in the higher levels must know or must be able to learn all relevant ways of doing business, and they must have the intelligence to create variations of old crimes and develop new ones. At lower levels, this is not required; it suffices that the men act according to instructions. The rules and requirements are not written but they are transferred from one generation to the next as oral tradition. No one will ever find any written codes of the mafia, but still its laws are as tough as iron and they are universally accepted, nor will anyone encounter lists of members, and still the bonds of men of honour are stronger and more impenetrable than if they were documented in any report (Stille 1995, 113).

New members are taken into the Finnish groups and marketing chains only when needed, and there are no particular rituals connected to becoming a member such as those mentioned in international literature (a murder committed by the candidate, burning the image of a saint, a ceremonial wound, drinking a cup of sake, cutting off a

finger, or acquiring a tattoo (cf. e.g. Stille 1995, 114-117; Falcone 1995, 114-115; Kaplan & Dupro 1997). Some of the Finnish groups that I studied had not taken new members for years, while other, permanently growing groups could have recruited more people than were available. At the time of the interviews, the growing groups seemed to be drug groups. The following quotation is an example of how a new dealer was accepted the marketing ring.

"...one of my men comes and says "Here, I know a good dealer". I say "All right, you sell to him then". I don't want to see the guy, so that "If you think he's good, take a double package and give him half of it. You'll be responsible for both, and you take some percentage for yourself from him." That's the way it usually happens..."IQ.

The distribution of spirits was a diminishing sector. Those of my informants who were marketing spirits said that if they won't move to other commodities such as weaker alcohol beverages, the group would soon become superfluous. In other cases, the existing group will still operate but for diverse reasons new dealers or other helpers will not be hired, as in the following quotation.

"...No, I'm not. No, because this is going fine just with the present volume, and you see I've got this conditional sentence pending, I wish to keep a distance to this business. These men I got, they hire the truck drivers, car drivers and the rest. They rent the cars, this guy who is next to me; he's getting the men who are doing the work. This one guy is the man who makes the warehouse contracts; he's renting the warehouse in his name so that the owner is clean..."IQ.

According to the literature, the recruitment of groups can vary, but the main recruiting method was to have a look at the person's criminal history. The younger the member, the shorter the time that he is a part of the group (less than six months on an average) (Reiss 1979, 143-144). High-rate offenders may commit only few or even a single crime in one group and then change to another group. The more specialised the offender is, the more he has contacts among a number of groups. Moreover, the most active offenders belong to several groups, and so they themselves serve as links among their groups. (Reiss 1979.) The groups and the persons joining them are dissimilar, and the needs of the groups vary according to crime type and season. Some adults may form co-offending relationships that appear to be transitory, and there is a continual search for new co-offenders. Most criminals work from day to day, or week to week, with whomever they can put together for a particular work. Each job requires different personnel, different plans, different resources and even a different working schedule. (Reiss 1983, 142-143.)

My informants reported that new members were recruited to Finnish distribution chains by announcements or by hiring. The option of announcement concerns situations where a person participating in the activity of the group wished to expand his sales network. That is, when somebody wants to hire a new dealer, he orally asks the dealer above him whether he is allowed to hire a new dealer for whom he vouches. The new dealer is hired depending on need, either to take care of a particular singular task, or on a more permanent basis. The following quotation explains how the studied groups hired new persons for the groups.

"...I was very close to this boss, and he'd state that we need a man for such and such thing. He'd ask if I knew of anyone. It's always done by contacts, recommendations, so if I'd say here's a good guy, then they'd have a look at his papers. This means that they would try to find out if he had talked previously, and if he's considered to be reliable, and then they'd start the jungle drum in the inner circle, among those who

are quite close to the core group where we were. The jungle drum would find out what he's been doing before, if he owes somebody for something, if he's ever cheated on anybody. All such things are found out. It's all about reliability, that's the most important thing. Then, if he turns out to be good, it would be up to me to decide whether we would take him on or not. You see, this boss, he has nothing to do with these guys. Of course you were not supposed to talk about him to anyone. He did not sort of accept the man in any direct manner. But if he had previously heard something or knew something, he could say "He might be all right, but you see to it then, make the final decision..." But it could often be... it could take as much as several months to learn about all the background information, anything that was possible to investigate..."IQ.

The rules that were applied in the Finnish criminal groups that I studied were quite simple. 1) The central rule is that the promised and requested sums of money for merchandise and services are paid in every case, 2) matters related to work are not discussed with anybody who is not connected to the actual work, and work-related discussions are always face-to-face, 3) one's personal doings (criminal or leisure activity) must not jeopardise the smuggling operation or the marketing of substances or involved persons, 4) informing is sanctioned at least by serious violence, or even death, 5) matters that have been agreed upon are executed as promised, or - in case this cannot be done - as well as possible. According to Aromaa, the group defines its members by itself. I.e., a professional thief accepted by the group is a professional thief (Aromaa 1983, 55). In Sutherland's view, professional stealing is organised crime activity (Sutherland 1972). The interviews implied that the process of recommendations and checking the candidate's background is given so much weight that when somebody is accepted as a group member; he immediately receives the same rights and trust as others who have been part of the activity for a longer time. The appreciation and trust are demonstrated, for example, in the way money is handled, as explained in the following quotation.

"...You see, we're never counting the money in the first place but, see, if I here give you 800,000 FIM and I give you a million. I'll say "here is a million and here is 800,000", the other guy will put the money in his bag and that's it. If you come later and tell me that there was 10,000 or something like that missing, I'll say it's the way I told you. In this circle of ours, trust is 100 %... Of course, the money has been counted so that when I take it with me... sometimes I'll count them... Normally I don't. Mostly they come in wads of 100,000. Sometimes I count, sometimes I don't. In my time, there's only been very few cases of complaints. It's all based on what I'd call the romantic attitude of the criminal... It's all based on a kind of Cosa Nostra..."IQ.

6.4.1 Relationships between groups, leaving the group or joining another group

In the view of my informants, interaction between Finnish groups is not common, and it is rather dictated by the market situation than reflects a voluntary search for companions. In the criminal activity of groups, each is typically attempting to operate within their own realm and as inconspicuously as possible. The more recently a marketing or service chain is established, the less familiar it is to other criminals and to the authorities. The crime sectors dealt with in this study, i.e. the marketing of substances, commodities and services do, however, require a certain degree of visible activity. Otherwise the clients would not know what is available in the market for which

price. A consequence of this requirement of visibility is that, over time, the members of different groups operating in the same region and serving prison sentences in the same prisons will become acquainted with each other. The following quotation gives an example of how the networks of criminals emerge.

"...Well, I know all of these characters by sight and by name... The same goes for them... we know who is doing what in this town... It's nothing special, we may sit an evening together or maybe make some deals. It's a kind of a network of contacts, this criminal scene here. It's just like, for instance, in the IT business, there's a lot of them in the market. It's the same with us, everybody knows the so-called firms and who is establishing them and what they're doing and what they might do, and how seriously you should take a certain organisation..."IQ.

Different groups may do business or exchange services over time, but this only takes place under market conditions and between individual members of the groups. The co-operation between different groups is always based on the mutual trust between individuals which benefits the activity of the entire group in the best case. The objective of the co-operation is not to create a relationship of dependency or a power concentration between the groups. The co-operation does not result in establishing cartels. Instead, it is based purely on a business-like attitude where each group is protecting its own interests and participates only in co-operation that is directly profitable for itself. The co-operation of criminals is steered by the fact that the market exists all the time, and everybody wants to maintain or strengthen the position that they have achieved. The following quotation describes some forms of co-operation.

"...Yes, sometimes here's a guy who has his own import operation, and here's another who also imports, they know each other, they may sometimes co-operate. This one is importing and he's got plenty of stuff. The other one happens to be in a hurry, he'll get some from the first guy, who will a small profit then. Of course there are people may sit together in restaurants... But I don't believe that it's very organised in that that they'd meet and make some deals about markets and things... I think that these drug markets are hard to control, there are so many entrepreneurs, and there's more foreigners coming all the time... I don't think it's possible to bring order to that..."IQ.

How persons move from one marketing chain to another depends entirely on their position in their own group. The financier of the group and the top men are masters of their own lives, and they do what they consider to be best. As for the dealers of the group and the men who are often used on a one-time basis, the rule applies that the higher and the more important his position in the chain is, the less he is allowed to have his own side businesses or deals from other groups. To leave a Finnish group is practically impossible - membership is equally final as the membership of the Sicilian La Cosa Nostra. Once a man joins the group he always has to live the life of Mafiosi, because a man of honour can be released only at death from his family (Stille 1995, 109). In Finland, the methods applied to secure the solidity of the group are money, extortion, and threats. The men are primarily bound to the activity of the group by money. The men employed on a one-time basis who do not become indebted to the dealers above them are forced to stay in the activity by threats on them or their family, and the dealers working on a percentage basis are kept in their places by extorting them with their debts. The following quotation describes some of the debt relationships emerging between criminals.

“...whoever worked for me, the poor bastard was always in debt to me... He was never able to balance his economy, and therefore he was always available because he has this debt. He’s bad in handling money. He doesn’t invest, so his share is also quite small... Now, recently there hasn’t been too much work, and there hasn’t been much for him either... he counts on me, just as I count on him, and he knows that if he has economic problem, if he needs a little help, he knows that if he comes to talk to me, his problem will be solved...”IQ.

The right of men working on a one-time basis to go over to another group or to work simultaneously for several groups varies according to the status and abilities of the man. The more irregularly the person is working and the more modest his contributions are, the less restrictions there are for him to grasp various working opportunities. Those men who have been trusted for a longer period of time and who are able and popular, of course know more about the activities of the group, and for them quitting is much harder as the following quotation shows.

“...No way. I imagined that I’d just move quietly over to Finland and try to go underground here. But it wouldn’t have worked out... I was just imagining. I might have received a bullet in my head, I don’t know. Maybe they would have leave me be. It’s hard to tell now, afterwards. Lets’ assume that somebody would have informed on them, the first one they’d have suspected would have been me. And then they’d send the men after me...”IQ.

6.4.2 Relationships between members, and causes of conflicts

The persons with whom my informants co-operated and had joint business with had become familiar to them over time; they had spent time together and committed crimes together. They have become friends with some; others have remained just business acquaintances. My informants would generally trust only their countrymen, born Finns, just like Sicilians trust Sicilians. A Sicilian trusted his family and relatives first and foremost, then the paesani, Sicilians, Italians, etc. He would, for example, help the paesani bring their relatives to the USA and then do business among them. (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972.) The core of the group, comprising of the financier, the right hand and the top men, may have spent a lot of time together both at work and leisure. However, nobody knew everything about the activity of the group, even if they were trusted friends, as explained in the following quotation.

“...the three of us and the two of us, we spent a lot of time together, but not everybody participated in everything... These four in this group for instance, the mutual relations between all of them were not the best possible. There was a kind of destroy and reign principle, that’s the way it always is...”IQ.

The personal relationships within the groups varied over time, at times members had more to do with each other, at times less. Typically, when a crime was planned and carried out, a lot of time was spent together, and when the criminal profits were spent, the members had less to do with each other. A common feature seemed to be a strong comradeship and inter-member competition where, in the end, everybody only thought about himself, as explained in the following quotation.

“...Yes, we were like that, the boss trusted me very much and we had a lot to do with each other, and we were even living in the same ward here in prison, and he was pleased to know, what I had heard from others, he liked me a lot. But for my part, the relationship was perhaps not quite the same. I was there mainly for purely economic reasons. We had this confidential relationship also here in prison, so that we were

doing all of these things that we did together, and we'd talk a lot about them together. But there was also a sort of competition too, so that if I had some kind of plans, some projects of my own, he'd be sort of jealous, he didn't like me starting to do something without asking him so that he wouldn't sort of be involved. The others noticed that too, those who lived in the same ward, that he was very keen, he kept asking me what I was doing and saying that he wanted to be a part of it... Overall, the three of us who were the inner circle, we had a lot to do with each other and talked really openly, but there was still a little competition at times, because for him it was real important, for the boss, that it was him, if there was a story in the paper, a violent thing, that it was him to whom it sort of belonged, so that the underworld would know that it was his doings, so that nobody would think that it was something that I organised... he wanted to maintain this certain kind of reputation. That was often very important..."IQ.

Some of my informants had many criminal and non-criminal friends, and in some cases they could spend a lot of time together and even have the families along. However, there were limits to the friendship. Business and friendship went hand in hand as long as there was no conflict about dividing the money. If a conflict about the money arose, friendship of many years would be jeopardised, as in the following quotation.

"...There's a certain close circle of friends that is together. They're working with the same objectives, the same things. Then usually also the families stick together, and the thing is probably that when there are the same kind of people and they have the same kinds of ideas about things, that will pull people together. Then also controlling each other is easier, you'll be able to notice what's going on in the life of the other guy... Then if we speak about the clients, you won't have much to do with them anyway. But of course, myself, I've been working things in that direction also. I've been selling and I've even been a lot with the clients because they have been my friends. To quite a large extent, business is based on friendship contacts... And when I started in this business, the guy with whom I started, he was also selling me stuff, and I had a lot to do with him. Our families spent time together. We visited his home with my family. Then he'd only come to see us on his own. He also had a big family but he was not usually going around with his children except in their home village. We'd always stay there for the night... There sure is a kind of feeling that you belong together, and then when you work together, there's all this loyalty and things..."IQ.

Some of the leading figures of the groups may organise birthday parties or Christmas parties to the men of their group and to their common business partners. Only one financier in my material would indicate his business partners as openly as this, remunerating his marketing chain. The following quotation describes two parties that he organised.

*"...Well, I have invited, the people come who are invited, and they can order what they like, I'm buying, they eat and drink what they like ...**Are you sort of unique as I haven't heard...** You know, I haven't been to anybody else's Christmas party. I've unique qualities like that. The doormen and everybody else, they know what's going on, and who it is. First we have the normal eating and they can take a coffee and a cognac, but after that, the bar is open and I'm buying. You can bring along your girl or your pal from your gang. I put no limits to that. Then when we leave, I pay whatever there is, and I may wonder who the hell had this ice cream here... Back in place X, five years ago, I think we brought ten whores from Tallinn, two bands from Helsinki, and there were also these pigs around, and the invitation was that everybody is welcome. Well, there were a hundred or some people. Dancing, orchestra, the whole circus. I'm the only one who has organised parties like that. Last*

summer I also threw such a party. There was all the liquor anybody ever wanted to drink...”IQ.

According to my informants, the most common situation is, however, that only a small circle in the groups knows each other and operates together. This is in part for reasons of security, but in part also directly related to the size of the network in the sense that in large networks, it is difficult to know all participants. Usually the lower-level dealers learn about a new load of drugs only when there is new merchandise to be sold, as explained in the following quotation.

“...usually, the people there don’t know much about each other because the men who sort of own the commodity, they’re somewhere out there. Then there are just the persons who are selling the stuff, and then there are the men who transport it. Then there is the contact person who says that now a new load is coming in... So, the guy who sells the stuff doesn’t know about it before the merchandise is on the spot, like ”Now it’s there.” ...”IQ.

The disagreements between group members may be roughly divided into two categories: 1) disagreements about the way the group operated, about how the money was shared, and about the quality of the commodities, 2) disagreements concerning normal human issues, triggered by stress etc. In financier-organised smuggling, disagreements about the committed crime are rare because the financier plans it, arranges the financing and hires the suitable men to carry out the job, as told in the following quotation.

“... We really don’t have situations where we would disagree. I set the programme: this is what we’ll do. I’m independent, the other guy is not, but it’s me who provides the final scheme. He’s entitled to do certain things, such as in the previous project, when he bought a van... without asking me, and he paid 40,000 for it although the price of that car, if I’d be selling, would only be 25,000... He has this kind of small power to buy and act on his own. They’re the kind of decisions one has to make on the spot. We avoid phone calls when the situation is acute, even if we are using pre-paid phone cards...”IQ.

Most of the disagreements in the trade of commodities and humans are caused by inferior quality and high prices. If the quality does not correspond to what was agreed upon, the price is either lowered, or the commodity is replaced by new substances that meet the criteria. Negotiating about quality and price is important because, as pointed out in the following quotation, the markets and the source of income of many men must not be spoiled by inferior or overpriced merchandise.

“... Well, in the end all matters are settled by talking. It depends of course on what the disagreement is about. Is it about the quality of the commodity, or is it about delivery... Actually it can’t be about other matters than the quality of the stuff. Of course, they always have the right to return the merchandise. Of course, think for instance of a situation where you’ve got 10,000 litres of spirits coming, and somebody tells you that it’s no good, like when you have already passed a few thousand litres to the next level and he tells you that it was shit. Of course you’ve got to take it back and check it. If it is shit, then you can’t put it into the market because that would spoil the market. After a while, nobody is going to buy merchandise of that brand any more...”IQ.

When part of the men in the group commit other crimes together than the main crime of the group, it is more likely that disagreements between them arise about how the crime should be carried out and how the profits should be divided. As a rule, disagreements are avoided already in the planning stage by agreeing that all those who participate in the planning are equal, and the division of the profits is based on mutual agreement. In some groups, one of the group members may become the primus motor of the group because of his criminal career, his daringness or his inventiveness, and because of this he conceives, plans and dictates the crimes the group will carry out to a large extent. In crimes that are conceived, planned or financed together, the profit is divided according to the input of each participant. It is often necessary to also hire men who are not group members to carry out specific tasks related to the criminal project. These men receive a singular payment and they have no influence in the way the crime is carried out or in how the profits are divided. Usually these men are habitual criminals who are flattered if a person with a tough criminal reputation asks them to work in a criminal project. On the other hand, only those who concretely participate (conceive, plan, or carry out) in the crime are entitled to a share. Nor does anybody receive money for offering protection, as is reported to be the case with the leaders of Italian organised criminal groups in New York (Bonnano 1983). The following quotation describes some methods of solving disagreements.

“...It depends on what the disagreement is about. If there is disagreement about what the group is doing, then of course the one who has the best abilities influences the group. I guess there is then a sort of vote. They'd discuss the issue and ponder to find the best solution and then they act accordingly. If there is a disagreement, I usually throw up my hands and walk out. It's hard to tell, it depends on the group. Everything depends on what kind of people they are and what kind of deals they have made. There may be many kinds of disagreements. Sometimes the guys may kill each other. That's quite rare, however, but personal relationships are often kind of complicated...”IQ.

6.4.3 Getting caught, informing, and taking care of imprisoned members

All of my informants were in one way or another prepared for getting caught and being informed on. The more professional the group was the more effort was spent on attempting to minimise the risk of apprehension. The most important methods applied to minimise the interest of authorities included: 1) the commission of crimes and the membership of marketing chains is restricted to professional criminals only, that is, men who are able to keep their word, to use their brain, and dare and are literally able to do whatever the situation requires, 2) the background of new members is studied meticulously, and a recommendation by a common reliable acquaintance is demanded, 3) future crimes and the participants in the crime are only known to the persons immediately involved and even they know only what is necessary in order to carry out their part of the offence, 4) the persons participating in the offences are primarily volunteering; and if they have been forced or extorted to participate, they are aware that informers will be killed. Furthermore, all persons who participate in the crimes share the principle that nothing is told in police interrogations. Instead, the strategy is that they wait for the trial without admitting to anything in order to see what facts the prosecution may have, as described in the following quotation.

“...As few people as possible know about your doings. It's the boss and the two of us who are able to select, to minimise what people know about your affairs. The boss,

he's able to do this most clearly because there's only the two of us. Everything is never told even to the guy closest to you. You only tell him what he needs to know. He didn't know what happened elsewhere. One guy never knew the whole system; he'd only know the part he was doing himself. We also make preparations for stashing the money, and then we have instructions so that in case we should be caught, they'll know where the money that is required for the next operations is hidden. Overall, we try to figure out the interrogation tactics of the police and give some advice. The main principle is that everything is always denied... In court, if it ever gets so far, you'll learn the facts the police have got..."IQ.

My informants' opinions varied as to how well they had succeeded in selecting their accomplices in different situations. The following quotation is a good crystallisation of the criminal mind-set where the blame for getting caught is only on oneself, and police are never given any kind of help.

"...I've always had an attitude that, if I'm caught, it's because I made a mistake. Nowadays, unlike how before, if this guy here gets caught he is never able to admit that it's his failure. He'll inform. In the old days, there was not as much informing. There were tough spots for sure, but the guys were tougher then. Like Y. We had agreed that we're not going to talk, and we were caught in a hotel over there, we were staying there with false names. After 17 days in jail, he wouldn't even tell his real name, so we were 17 days in jail. A cop, X, he said that you can tell us your name at least. There was this funny incident, there was this detective Z here, and there were four of us who were arrested. The young superintendent said that you've got to bring them in separate cars so that they can't agree on anything. Z said that "We can bring them in one car, and they won't say anything anyway..."IQ.

Many of my informants had been anticipating getting caught in several different manners: 1) they used different sources in order to learn whether the authorities were interested in the person, 2) they placed the proceeds of the crimes in the names of other persons and, thus, beyond the reach of the authorities, 3) they make the family accept the possibility that the father may be away for years, 4) they collect personal utilities needed in prison to be available at need, and 5) they help friends who have been imprisoned because it was known that they would do the same in return. My informants said that they do not think of the possibility of getting caught when committing crimes, but if this would happen it would of course feel bad, even though they would try to consider the time in prison as a forced vacation for improving physical condition and resting. Already at the beginning of their criminal career, my informants had been aware of the fact that even with good luck and personal skill they would get caught sooner or later. Some of my informants had, indeed, organised their affairs during the course of their careers in such a way that they would, upon release from prison, be able to become a full-time retired pensioner, as described in the following quotation.

"...The way I think is that when I've committed these crimes, I haven't spent that money but I have invested it somewhere. Right now, I'm in a situation where I don't need to stay here once I'm released from prison. I have arranged my things in another country, and I can retire. I don't need to come to Finland except on vacation. I'll be beyond the reach of anybody and of the Finnish authorities..."IQ.

Many of my informants had received several warnings and learned that the authorities are keeping an eye on them, but they had continued to commit crimes despite of this and just waited for what was coming. Their behaviour is somehow understandable but also stupid at the same time. What makes their behaviour understandable is that each additional day brings in more money, and often it is impossible to stop the activity rapidly for reasons that are beyond one's own control. What makes the behaviour stupid is that an occasional freezing of the activity or at least assuming a lower profile temporarily or in some respects could have helped avoid apprehension. The following quotation describes the mood when waiting for the inevitable to take place.

"...We sure noticed that police were watching what was going on in our shop. The surveillance started right after that Finnish girl had left. All right. We just continued. We just could not stop it either. We just had to wait and see what was coming..." IQ.

According to my informants, the biggest mistake that a criminal can make, when he is apprehended, is to start to clear his crimes by himself or to inform on his accomplices. The less they help the police, the better the chances of minimising the economic and physical damages. Informing is to be avoided particularly since an informer is always at the mercy of the authorities as the accomplices abandon him and threaten to kill him or at least to beat him up badly. Albeit that the risks of informing are well-known, almost all of my informants had been informed on for one crime or another, as in the following quotation.

"...The police are investigating things in order to make people confess, these criminals will confess all kinds of things to the police. The best microphone they've got when a crime group is caught, it's what the guys are telling them outside of the protocol in jail discussions to the investigator. That's where their microphone is..." IQ.

In Sutherland's study of professional criminals, the most serious consequence to an informer was to prevent him from being able to make money by telling the other professional criminals gangs that the person is an informer, and, thus, not suitable to participate in the activity of the group, which excludes the persons from the criminal gangs (Sutherland 1972). In Kinnunen's study of Finnish drug dealers the fact that persons have been turned in by informers, and the efforts of the police to cause turmoil and tensions in the drug markets, have apparently contributed to the hardening in and distortion of the Finnish drug markets during the 1990s (Kinnunen 1996).

The apprehended members of the marketing chains who do not help the police in their investigations or do not inform on their accomplices, receive several benefits from the group depending on their present status and on existing agreements in addition to a good reputation: 1) the best treatment in prison from other prisoners, 2) everything a prisoner is allowed to own in prison such as TV, radio and 500 FIM of one's own money per month, 3) their family is taken care of, 4) they receive numerous working offers, etc., upon release or already in prison, as described in the following quotation.

"...It all depends on what kinds of deals have been made. Generally, the idea is to help. At least what I've got, as I'm in prison for the first time now, and I've got a lot of acquaintances who have been in prison earlier, I've always brought them magazines and stuff, even if we had not been doing business together, but in general, everybody who is in prison, I've tried to help them. Money for tobacco, magazines, television, things like that. Myself, I was always telling people that they should make this kind of agreements with each other that in case one gets caught, the other one should then help..." IQ.

According to my informants, it was a common rule that the lower the man was in the marketing chain, the less he received help in prison from the other members of the group. In some groups, the person who was caught was provided all the help available, in other groups the prisoner and his family were helped only to the degree that was thought to be necessary to keep him from talking, as explained in the following quotation.

"... When he was caught, nobody took care of him. All his wife was told, I have to make this correction, was that the boys had to pay the rent of the flat to his wife. They took care of that but that was all. As far as I recall they wouldn't have paid that either if his wife hadn't made such a racket about it. Nevertheless, then they started to pay as they thought that it's easier to pay than to kill as this one guy was still in prison. There would have been the risk that he would then have started to talk, if something would have happened to his wife..."IQ.

6.5 Finnish groups and their contacts with foreigners

One of the aims of my study was to investigate co-operation of and interaction between Finnish and foreign professional criminals in Finland and abroad, as well as how the criminal territory of Finnish professional criminals has expanded abroad. According to my informants, it is possible to carry out crimes in the studied criminal sectors resorting to purely Finnish forces only in handling stolen goods, and only if the goods are both stolen and sold in Finland. In the other crime sectors, the informants were operating in Finland with domestic resources, i.e. they take care of the marketing and importing of merchandise and persons after the illegal substances have been bought or the women have been rented from abroad. A Finnish person who organises the substance business the renting of girls always operates abroad under conditions dictated by local criminals (local citizens, immigrants living in the country, or Finns living in the country). Finnish citizens living in the main countries where the commodities or services are bought, i.e. the Nordic countries, Estonia, Russia, the Netherlands, and Spain, are often used as scouts who are relied on to establish relationships with local criminals.

According to my informants and to authority information, Finland's neighbouring countries are often used as transit countries for commodities aimed for the Finnish markets or when travelling abroad (c.f. e.g. Junninen 1999). Finns also use their neighbour countries as transit countries in smuggling to Finland (e.g. cigarettes and amphetamines from Estonia to Sweden, cocaine from Europe to Russia, or radioactive substances from Russia to the Near East (ibid.)). When travelling or moving commodities from one country to another, transit countries often have to be used. They are also often useful in confusing one's tracks in regards to the authorities. Furthermore, my informants implied that many Finns participated in various kinds of legal and illegal business abroad; they owned companies and laundered money that was made in Finland by criminal means. Foreign banks were often used as hiding places for proceeds of crime: Finnish criminals deposit, circulate, and change their proceeds into foreign currencies in order to conceal their property from Finnish authorities. The money in Estonia, Russia, Germany, the Netherlands, France, or Spain is controlled by a local front or by the criminal himself when he travelled abroad for work or leisure.

In the following three passages, I will analyse the relationships between Finnish and foreign professional criminals, how these relationships are created, how they are maintained, their advantages and disadvantages, crimes committed together, and experiences on foreign accomplices.

6.5.1 Advantages and disadvantages Finnish groups confront when operating abroad

Most of my informants said that they had never seriously contemplated selling drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or procuring women abroad. Only a few of them had taken a few single loads of spirits to Norway, amphetamines to Sweden or Norway, or sold stolen goods to Sweden or Estonia. Those who had smuggled illegal substances from Finland to abroad said that there is an export from Finland to Scandinavia because: 1) the price is high in Sweden and Norway, 2) many of my informants had good contacts to the Finnish and local criminals operating in the countries, 3) they could operate more freely in these countries because they were not familiar to the local authorities, 4) circulating the substances and commodities is a part of the criminal business, i.e. when the opportunity arrives, even the most momentary profits are grasped on the terms of the opportunity. The drawbacks in committing the crimes abroad included: 1) the less familiar markets and unpredictable business partners and authorities, 2) the more severe sentences for smuggling and selling drugs or spirits. The following quotation describes the creation of foreign relationships.

“...In the X-group, and that’s from where I came to this team, what I know is that they come and buy this stuff.... Or they have some business of their own. It’s like there are four, five guys in Sweden, and they’re working in the same way. Some of these people in Finland are able to sell in Sweden too... and Norway, there’s good money for the stuff. They’ve got tough sentences too, but you’ll also make better money over there...”IQ.

According to Swedish researchers, Finnish criminals are known in the Swedish underworld for being violent and solving problems with knives. Finnish-born persons were the largest ethnic group among perpetrators of homicides in the 1970s and early 1980s in Sweden (Olsson 1986; Martens 1997).

According to my informants, selling drugs, alcohol or cigarettes or procuring girls in the Baltic countries or in Russia is not possible because: 1) there is no money and demand for the substances or the services, b) the domestic criminals take care of these sectors, and foreigners are easily defeated. Many examples were recounted about how Finns had established restaurants and brothels in Tallinn as partners of local people, and soon the Finns had been pushed out of the companies by local criminals, without any kind of compensation (cf. e.g. Junninen 1999). According to my previous study, Finns living in Estonia were serving as intermediaries and fenders between Finnish and Estonian criminals, and were laundering money in Estonia by owning restaurants, construction companies, and other legal business. When Finnish criminals operate in Estonia, they typically use the country as a safe haven. They also understand that they are able to operate more freely because the crime prevention agreement between Finland and Estonia is so bureaucratic and rigid that the police do not hunt the Finns for their old crimes committed in Finland nor for their new crimes committed in Estonia (Junninen 1999). My earlier study that was based on authority information indicated that Finns were largely operating in the Baltic countries and in Russia. However, the informants of my present study were of the opinion that the disadvantages of expanding abroad were greater than the benefits. According to them, the conclusion was that selling criminal substances abroad could very well yield better profits, but the disadvantages (confrontations with local criminals, authorities and legislation) of the

foreign ground and a foreign culture to persons that did not know the local language were often seen as too large a risk, as in the following quotation.

“...One must always keep in mind that, whatever you do, it is an alien territory and an alien culture and an alien system, and the police may have a different way of working... of course, it may be more difficult ... Maybe in some countries you’ll be able to bribe the police...but it’s best to stay as far away as possible from them...”IQ.

According to my informants, moving to Europe or still further is even more difficult than moving to the neighbouring countries of Finland. The men thought that transnational organised crime may in some respects be successful in the neighbour countries of Finland where there are plenty of Finnish countrymen and the terrain is more familiar. The problem of Finnish transnational organised crime in general, however, is that there are only limited numbers of Finns as emigrants in the world, and it is difficult to attain a bridgehead position amongst the local criminals who defend their markets. The following quotation analyses the possibilities of moving abroad.

“...To move abroad and start to distribute the stuff around the world? Why not, such an idea has certainly come to my mind, but that takes really good contacts. Nobody will let you take a piece of his bread... if you’ve got pals somewhere in the Netherlands, you can’t go tell them that you’re going to sell to those other guys. But you can tell them that you’ve got these clients, and you may ask what the price they can give me is. Then, I’ll sell it once more. I’ve got dealers who’ll take it...”IQ.

This trade of illegal commodities and services by Finns to Finns between different countries is not very different from the transnational crime reported of Colombian cocaine, Mexican marihuana, or the Sicilian Pizza connection, where countrymen abroad are acting as accomplices (Abadinsky 1990; Stille 1995). Whether Finnish groups are able to achieve a licence of marketing a certain commodity remains to be seen. The situation is changing slowly, however, and what occurred in the US over decades may take place in Finland more quickly. The growth of influence and wealth of the Cosa Nostra in the United States continued after the Second World War when they got involved in heroin dealing. The Italians took over the markets in the USA already in the end of the 1800s, and gained significant positions only after working towards that goal for 50 years (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972, 1).

When speculating about transnational crime, it is essential to realise that the conquering of a criminal sector is never final. In the same way as the Italians conquered their markets from the Jews and the Irishmen, part of the markets have eventually been conquered from the Italians by new, more aggressive criminal groups. As American and Italian scholars maintain, the Irish came first, and early Irish gangsters started to climb up the social ladders in their slums. As they came to control the political machinery of large cities, the Irish attained wealth, power and respectability through consequent control of construction, trucking, public utilities and the waterfront. In organised crime, the Irish were succeeded by the Jews who dominated gambling and labour racketeering for a decade. The Jews quickly moved on up the ladder into the world of business and more legitimate means of economic and social mobility. The Italians came last and started the same process up the ladders in the late thirties (Bell 1963, 12-15). Today the Cosa Nostra does not have a monopoly in its traditional activities that have been taken away from them by the new ethnic mafias which have been more protagonist, rich and aggressive (Santino & La Fiura 1993, 53).

It is of interest to see when the Finns are able to gain turf in Estonia in a similar manner as has already occurred in Sweden (c.f. e.g. Olsson 1986; Martens 1997). There is, however, also the chance that the Finns will lose part of their domestic markets to the growing Estonian and Russian minorities in Finland, in the same way as the Jews and Irish were superseded by Italians in New York. According to my informants, moving abroad was seen as a similar problem as the one faced by foreigners trying to take over the Finnish markets. Part of my informants thought that it is impossible for foreigners to take over the Finnish markets, while others were of the opinion that this is already taking place, the most pessimistic of them saying that the Finns were 100% on the leash of foreigners, and were messenger boys in their home country. These most pessimistic opinions have also been supported by some recent statements of Finnish police representatives. In the authorities' statements, the narcotics business in Finland has been claimed to be completely under the control of Estonians and Russians (Harju 2002a). The following quotation supports the above opinions.

"...Russians are ... controlling soon, and already today, the entire heroin trade. The heroin is coming over with the prostitutes. It's well in the hands of the Russians, sort of. They've had ten years now to gain ground here. The Finns are more like distributing the stuff. The Finns are still controlling the cannabis quite well..."IQ.

The different kinds of opinions of my informants were that heroin trade in Finland is to some extent in the hands of the Russians, and the trade of Estonian amphetamines is to some extent in the hands of the Estonians. This idea receives support from the fact that these substances are presently coming to Finland primarily from these two countries. On the other hand, all the respondents that were interviewed were saying that the distribution of the substances in Finland is controlled by Finns. The idea of the strong position of Finns in their own markets is also supported by earlier research. According to Kinnunen, the status of foreigners in the Finnish drug market was unimportant in the mid-1990s. In addition, the drug traffic - with the exception of the small-scale sale of hashish in downtown Helsinki - is quite tightly in Finnish hands. Russian and Estonian offenders have not been able to obtain an appreciable foothold in the Finnish drug markets despite of many claims that this has happened or will happen. (Kinnunen 1996.) And according to Bäckman, Russians are using Finland primarily as a transit country and a place for their vacations (Bäckman 1996 & 1999). In contrast, Finnish police have expressed their concern of the Finnish drugs and procuring markets being controlled by Russian and Estonian organised crime groups (Harju 2002a; Harju 2002b).

The question of who has the dominant role in the markets is interesting because the owner of the "licence" dictates the terms of sales. On the basis of the interviews, it seems to be too optimistic to believe that someone could have the licence to decide where, who and what drugs are being sold in Finland. The Finnish drug markets are not entirely dependent on or owned by Eastern imports, and drugs are also bought from Western countries. For this reason, I believe that Estonians and Russians cannot have a monopoly on the Finnish markets of these drugs in a similar manner as was the case with the Sicilians in the 1970s in the US heroin markets or the Colombians in the US cocaine markets.

The owner of the "licence" is questionable also in the procuring business in Finland. According to Finnish authority information and a Dutch study, the similarity between Finnish and Dutch procuring business is obvious. Both sources state that the prostitution markets in the two countries have been occupied by East European criminal syndicates, operating as transnational organised crime groups. The groups may have taken over the markets and subordinated the local procurers to the status of hired hands because the

procurers in both of these countries are dependent on the delivery of the women for their clubs and they also fear for violence of Eastern competitors (Bruinsma & Meershoek 1999; NBI 2001; Harju 2002b). The Finnish procurers I interviewed did not see themselves as hired hands of the Estonians or Russians, but considered themselves their subcontractors. My informants said that the Estonians and Russians are certainly able to decide who is providing women to who in their own countries, but the Finnish procurers are independent in hiring their women and making them work in any city in Finland they choose.

Those of my informants who thought that Finnish crime is in the hands of Finnish criminals said that of course the substances and the women are coming from abroad, but just as in normal business, their owners change at some stage, and the Finns are making the money in Finland.

The differing interpretations of researchers and of Finnish police may probably be explained in part by a difference in perspectives and goals. The control perspective represented by the authorities is based on the need to control differential behaviour by relying on legal definitions, whereas the views of the researchers are based on their attempt to gain knowledge about different kinds of behaviours. However, there may be a need also to consider the motives of my informants as they strongly emphasised that they are in charge of their own activities and that they made their own decisions in Finland and not the criminals of the neighbouring countries. Also, it is equally justified to ask why the Finnish authorities see the situation in a completely opposite light. Both have their own interests that they protect with their interpretations: 1) the criminals have a need to emphasise their own professional skills and independence, and 2) the authorities have the need to defend the shortcomings of their own activity, indicating that they are indeed able to control the Finnish criminals, but the entire problem is caused by those foreigners who cannot be reached because of the lack of resources, language problems, and the rigidity of international co-operation of authorities.

The business-minded interpretation that criminal substances and services are exchanged is also congruent with theories of rational choice and those understanding organised crime as a rational business. The central idea of rational actions of the interviewed persons is that one should not attempt to cover all sectors of crime as it is safer and less troublesome to make profits in the domestic market. Furthermore, theories on organised crime as a type of business provide support to this idea, as their interpretation is based on the idea that all crime is a kind of business that is based on exchange of commodities and services for money (cf. e.g. Haller 1990; Johansen 1996). Some of my more cynical informants commented that the Russian mafia in Finland can be compared to the peddlers of smuggled goods on the roadside to Porvoo (between Helsinki and St. Petersburg). The argument provided in support of this view was that very few would be buying anything from a Russian unable to speak Finnish if the same commodity is available for the same price from a Finnish dealer.

6.5.2 Creating and maintaining connections abroad

My informants had mostly become acquainted with foreign criminals 1) in a Finnish or foreign prison, 2) through a mutual acquaintance, 3) on the spot independently. The foreign contact persons of the Finns were most frequently Estonian, Russian, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, or Spanish, depending on where the illegal merchandise was bought. It is also often the case that Finns who live in these countries act as contact persons and guarantors between Finnish and foreign criminals. According to my informants, Finnish prisons are convenient places to get acquainted with foreign criminals. In prison, there is time to investigate the reliability of the person with the aid of court protocols and through personal discussions.

Albeit that the foreigners in Finnish prisons are primarily only couriers, they are nevertheless valuable because of their background as Estonians, Russians, or Dutchmen. They have an extensive network of acquaintances in their home countries, and, thus, they are able to provide useful foreign contacts for Finnish criminals.

The growing numbers of foreign prisoners in Finnish prisons has given rise to public debate as to how the legislation should deal with this issue. Finnish police have already required that foreign criminals should be returned to their home countries to serve their sentences for quite some time, because they are believed to creating new contacts in Finnish prisons (Junninen 1999). Numerous legal experts have been opposed to forcibly returning foreign criminals to their home countries to serve their sentences. According to them it is not possible to guarantee the prisoners' security and fair treatment, or that their prison term would not be extended. For example, in Estonia, the prison term is fully served, without a possibility of conditional release towards the end of the sentence (Ibid.). Finnish police have also required the introduction of a similar law as the one presently in force in Sweden, where prisoners are not allowed keep the records of their trials as they are serving their sentence. The primary argument provided in support of this is that it would be more difficult for prisoners to learn about the reliability of each other as this is essentially done by reading police and court protocols. This argument is not fully convincing as it is possible to settle the matter of reliability equally well by resorting to mutual acquaintances, the person's criminal history and personal discussions. Furthermore, it is not possible to prevent prisoners from talking to each other in prison. The Swedish law was stipulated primarily to protect sexual offenders giving them the opportunity to conceal the reason why they had been imprisoned, thus making it possible for them to serve their sentence in safety. The following quotation describes how contacts are created in prison.

"...The contacts are made in prison... that's where I made them. I was at the time doing time in X, I was inside for more than ten years, and that's how I got all these free contacts... In my case, one guy moved to Denmark. Through him I could buy the stuff, and this way I could also make more contacts, and again I heard there was somebody else I knew. That's the way it goes. The contacts will open up if they see that you're a reliable and watertight guy. It's up to you where you want to buy; I mean how much air you want to pay for the stuff. That doesn't require any magic tricks. This is just cold business..."IQ.

Other popular methods to create contacts between Finnish and foreign criminals are through mutual acquaintances, and by the method of feeling around. The advantage of business relationships made through mutual acquaintances is that in this way, trust is achieved instantly as the mutual acquaintance guarantees both parties. The drawback of the method of feeling around is that trust is built up slowly, step by step as successful

deals are completed. According to my informants, the method of feeling around is risky because often a random acquaintance proves to be an unreliable swindler who is trying to cheat his business partner. The undeniable advantage of the method of feeling around is that, with good luck, one may find a business partner who is completely reliable and not known to the authorities, and able to provide high-quality merchandise for a good price. The following quotation tells about creating relationships.

“...Some of them come through friends, and some I’ve found just feeling around, and some others have been made over the years, little by little. It may happen through quite random acquaintances, through which I’ve come to a further contact and so on... Friends of friends and somebody may give you a place, and they’re often giving addresses too, saying this is where you should go and ask...”IQ.

Foreign contacts are made by similar methods as contacts with Finnish criminals. Good guarantees for a functioning business relationship are time, mutual acquaintances and successful deals. The location in which the contacts are made is purely random, depending on the place of residence of my informants. For example, the railway station of Amsterdam was said to be one of the best places for new contacts because there are always many “nibbles” meeting the incoming trains who sale drugs and contacts.

The contacts with different kinds of foreign co-operation partners naturally multiply by more time spent abroad and by committing more joint crimes. As the criminal and legal activities extend over time and as the number of events grows, an increasing number of new contacts are needed, and these are acquired as a side product of the criminal’s own activity and with the aid of foreign acquaintances. A single good foreign contact may suffice to build a good criminal contact network through which it is always possible to buy substances and services. The following quotation describes the contact networks of one of my informants.

“...These contacts of mine... all of these with whom I have worked are born in Estonia. Part of them are living in Sweden, right now there’s nobody living in Finland, and then in Estonia. You see, it’s the Estonian men who have the contacts to the Russians, because the Russians have the tax thing with which the merchandise can be taken out from the factory. That’s controlled by the Russians. These Estonians, then, they take the stuff out from the factory together with the Russians, so that it can be taken out tax-free...”IQ.

6.5.3 Crimes committed together with foreign partner, and personal opinions concerning them

The largest proportion of the crimes that my informants had committed with their foreign contacts is connected to smuggling, dealing substances and women, and money laundering. According to investigations of the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), foreign women are forced into prostitution in their home countries (NBI 2001), in which case the persons who rent women from abroad are guilty of aiding and abetting in extortion or intimidation. The crimes are committed together with the foreign accomplice because it is not possible to acquire the merchandise in Finland for a profitable price; the best profit is received from importing the commodity, not from distributing the substance that is already in the country. My informants said that doing business with foreigners is like any other business where both participants profit from the deals. Co-operation is takes place without obligations concerning the future, and the power and command -relationships prevail deal by deal as long as both parties are

satisfied. According to my informants, there is no foreign co-operation if there is no business involved. The following quotation describes forms of co-operation within the boundaries of a certain project.

“...Usually when there’s talk about drugs, there’s also talk about international crime. The two are interconnected. Nobody here grows cannabis, for instance, or that’s very rare. It has happened, for sure, but that business is still in its infancy. These things, they belong to the Netherlands, Spain, and Morocco. It sure is international action. Myself, I’ve also had much to do with foreigners. I’ve got many guys from Israel with whom I’ve made many deals. They have then had a meeting, and there you’ll learn about the structure of the group, like if I’m for instance on the financing side, then there has been a guy with the contacts, and the possibility then to go and buy... and then there has been another guy who has organised the transports. Everybody’s got their own task for which he’ll get paid...”IQ.

In money laundering projects abroad, Finnish criminals have, on their own or together with foreign criminals, established different kinds of companies, started construction projects or bought real estate from abroad to be used as fronts for money laundering as well as for profitable business. According to my previous study, as many as two hundred Finns with a criminal background were involved in business enterprises in Estonia alone in the 1990s (Junninen 1999). The following quotation describes the co-operation of a Finnish and a local group in Estonia.

“...the restaurant would not pay protection money, the brothel didn’t pay, nobody paid protection money. If they wanted to get rid of a partner in the company, he was just kicked out. He was given the option that you go and don’t talk to anybody if you want to stay alive. They involve unsuspecting people in their businesses, and when the business starts running, they’re told that we don’t need you any more. Your money goes like that. They’ll give the company a new name...”IQ.

International co-operation between criminals has occurred throughout the history of smuggling because criminals deliver commodities to the existing markets and make money for themselves. In modern times it is just taking new forms, criminals also launder money, and they are involved in the sex business and in tax crimes such as double invoicing. These crimes are possible because the authorities of some countries are corrupted or incapable to enforce laws. (Porter 1996.) According to my previous study, Estonian authorities were said to be easy to bribe (Junninen 1999).

The tendency of crime to encompass larger markets has varied over time and across regions. For example the Sicilian La Cosa Nostra was interested only in the political and legal affairs of their own country for quite a long time. As Ianni pointed out: “no cosca ever attempted to annex or even invade the territory across the ocean. The heads of Sicilian mafia families were of some wealth, and considerable power and prestige, and had a hard-earned middle-class status. There was no reason to leave Sicily until Mussolini and prefect Cesare Mori began arresting and killing suspected mafiosi in the later 1920s and early 1930s. Like the vast majority of Sicilian immigrants, they came as individuals, and probably not to stay in the USA.” (Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972, 48.)

Extensive international co-operation between organised criminal groups was instigated by the massive profits derived from the narcotics business. Perhaps the most extensive co-operation presently exists in the narcotics trade as the largest organised criminal groups are co-operating over three continents. The Sicilian and American mafias were in contact with the Colombian cocaine cartels. Having already saturated the flourishing American cocaine market, the Colombians were looking to expand in Europe, and the Sicilians helped them reach the wealthy northern Italian markets by

bringing cocaine back to Europe, sometimes in direct exchange for heroin that Colombians smuggled to the United States from Southern America, thus, lending Sicilians a new route for heroin in the 1980s (Stille 1995, 271).

International co-operation of criminals aims at maximising the profits of the participants by expanding the activity. According to my informants as well as international research literature, it is easiest to expand the activity in co-operation with countrymen who speak the same language and share similar values and cultural heritage. Criminal groups are more easily able to operate transnationally in part due to the links between the syndicates (Shannon 1999, 126). There are good examples of such transnational organised crime groups and specialisation: Colombians do cocaine trafficking; Nigerians work in credit card and mail frauds; Chinese, Dominicans and Mexicans traffic human beings; Russians work in insurance and health industry frauds, human trafficking and arms smuggling. (Shelley 1998.)

Cross-border crime is not a new phenomenon; it has existed as long as borders have defined nations. On the other hand, opinions have been expressed such as: “the rise of transnational organised crime in the last decades of the twentieth century was as unexpected as the end of the Cold War”. The reason why transnational organised crime has been the big issue in the 1990s can only be guessed, but it has been suggested that the western world needed a new threat after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Williams & Vlassis 2001). Transnational organised crime also changes traditional organised crime and it is manifested on the state, local and federal levels. In the old times, the extortion and violence (including contract killings) were the domain of local hit men, but nowadays the foreign groups import hit men from their own country to fulfil only one contract (Shelley 1998).

The personal experiences my informants had about foreigners were very conflicting. Some of them had very good friends among foreigners, while others were of the opinion that no foreigner can be trusted. Those of my informants who had friends among foreigners had usually known them for a long time; some had even given their economic matters into the hands of their foreign friend, so solid were the relationships. Trusting another person with one’s money is, in my opinion, a signal that the friend could truly be trusted, because all my informants thought that the worst possible loss that they could face was the loss of their criminal profits.

Some of my informants thought that the Russians were the most unreliable foreigners, while others thought the same of Estonians, Dutchmen, or Spanish criminals. It was not possible to name a nationality that would be more unreliable or reliable than others according to the interviews. Instead, it seems that each informant thought that the most unreliable nationals were those who had cheated him or one of his acquaintances. The confidence in foreigners turned out to be a matter of taste. The following quotation crystallises the core of trust, stating that if you don’t have any unrealistic beliefs about yourself, you won’t fall from any great heights.

“...From what I have seen here when those Russians have been caught, it seems that all of them have turned each other in. That’s terribly common. That’s why you should avoid any action with the Russians, as the trust thing does not work very well in that country. Somehow it feels like they are not really reliable. Of course it very much depends on the person too... I’ve heard also of a case where some sort of a Dutch organisation was behind the operation, and still they have been cheated and defrauded... Anyway, the way I see it, it doesn’t pay to start playing any kind of king here... There’s always going to be somebody who’s coming fast. It’s best... that I’m able to acquire a livelihood and the feeling of security for myself, and I’ve got a few pals I can trust so that nobody is going to come and make a fuss. Myself, I’m usually

quite social, and I have always tried to make peace between everybody, and to negotiate. By no means would I want to be some sort of a Boss of Finland, because there is no such thing and there probably never will be one. This is business in all respects. We're just operating in a different branch. The competition is not always that tough. In a way, it is tough, however. All means are allowed. That is in fact what makes this work easier. But the sanctions are also quite tough. It's either death or prison, whatever..."IQ.

6.6 Summary about the Finnish groups

In conclusion, the Finnish professional criminal groups that I have studied do not, in my opinion, fulfil the international definitions of organised crime, as provided by the criminological literature, the European Union or the United Nations. My informants were also of the opinion that their activities should not be defined as operations of organised criminal groups. Of the 14 Finnish criminal groups I studied, the most efficient ones were classified as semi-organised crime groups, but almost one-third of the groups were classified as group criminality. The basis and "indicator" for my classification is the existing international definitions and the globally known organised criminal groups, their activities and their basic philosophy (La Cosa Nostra, Cosa Nostra, the Colombian cocaine cartels, Yakuza, etc.).

In my opinion, this study is a successful test of how known international definitions can be used to define organised crime. The starting point of developing these definitions was the need for control and surveillance from the part of authorities, and the classification cannot be directly applied to define and outline the extent, the ways of operating, and the quality of organised crime. Nevertheless, the definitions have important merits, and they are helpful in conceptualizing the problem and in developing solutions. The problem of organised crime can be clarified further by continuing to work on the definitions, by academic research, and by systematic analyses of the masses of information gathered by the authorities. Improving the general level of knowledge on organised crime would help citizens grasp the problem, and give authorities in different countries in their domestic and international legal work means for crime prevention. However, even the best analysis of organised crime is always based on historical information, which is always partly or sometimes even entirely outdated regarding new forms of crime and new ways of operations of criminal groups. Nevertheless, the available historical information is not worthless, for it is often stated that "The farther back you look, the farther forward you are likely to see".

The greatest problems of Finnish professional criminal groups are the lack of monopolies and the poor continuity of the activity, as a consequence of which the activity is unsystematic and short-sighted aiming solely at momentary profits. Therefore the groups also lack long-term objectives related to power, or plans of how to advance from the stage of making money to the stage of stabilising one's own economic and criminal status. When comparing Finnish professional crime to Sicilian or Colombian organised crime, the differences in the scope of the activity and efficiency are clear. According to my informants, Finnish professional criminals wish to lie as low as possible, beyond the reach of the eye of Finnish authorities, whereas in Sicily or Colombia, organised criminal groups are mocking legally elected governments, carrying out the most blatant crimes and protecting their monopoly status inside the borders of the country without any concern for governments or their civil servants.

The most important feature of the Finnish professional criminal groups that I studied was that the groups are not solid and do not have a hierarchical structure even if they apply the operational model of a stepwise marketing chain. In that chain, the commodities are distributed from the top to the bottom according to kilos and sales incomes, and everybody receives his remuneration only for work done and nothing else. A specific feature of the marketing chain is that if there are no commodities to be sold, there is no marketing chain either, but each person who participates in the chain is making whatever money is available for a living. The co-operation may continue later if something that can be sold turns up. In such cases known and trusted persons will be contacted first and asked if they were still interested in doing business. The groups that I studied had another significant shortcoming: the relationships between the persons involved were very individualistic and not regulated in advance. The individuality was reflected in the indifference of my informants of anybody else's economic security except their own. The feature of lacking advance regulation was reflected in unrealistically optimistic expectations of the ease in which the crime could be carry out and of the sophistication of the accomplices in obeying commonly accepted norms of behaviour and in avoiding interfering with or hampering other people's lives. In real life, under the pressure of authorities or accomplices, the noblest goals will regrettably often collide with the wall of cowardice and the importance of saving one's own skin.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that some of the Finnish groups that I studied are clearly willing to develop their criminal activity and to commit crimes that have increasingly serious consequences and an increasingly long in duration. According to my analysis, it is indeed important that the activities and the crimes of Finnish professional criminal groups are monitored actively, in order to avoid a similar situation as in Estonia, Russia, Italy, Colombia etc., where the local criminal groups are too powerful for the state to control, and there are no means or courage left to effectively interfere with their activities.

When studying and defining Finnish groups, I noticed that the categorisation of the groups as such is unimportant, in that the authorities use it primarily as a method of control with which they attempt to understand and to structure crimes committed by groups. The interpretation by the authorities aims to control and sentence, where the commission of crimes as part of an organised criminal group may be categorised as an aggravating circumstance that makes the punishment harsher. From the perspective of control, the objective is to aid sentencing without attempting to understand and explain the activities of the groups, the interpersonal relationships, or the motives of the persons to participate in the commission of crimes, etc. After becoming aware of this control-centred perspective of the authorities, I consciously attempted to expand the perspective of my study, abandoning the black-and-white division into organised and group crime which has been applied in numerous reports that have been made by authorities themselves or to serve them directly (cf. e.g. Fijnaut et al. 2001).

In my opinion, the crimes committed by groups cannot be subdivided into only two categories. Rather, according to the model I have presented in this study, I have placed the groups that I studied on a continuum, the other end of which represents group criminality, while the other end stands for organised crime; in between the extremes, all kinds of intermediary forms of the concepts are found. With this conceptual tool, I have been able to study the ways in which the groups have emerged and how they have evolved, and, in some cases, how they have deteriorated. None of the groups that I have studied, or of the Finnish criminal groups described in literature, had achieved the developmental path of Estonian organised crime as described by Markina. According to

Markina, Estonian organised crime has progressed rather rapidly from the brutal phase that is physically dangerous to the participants to a presentable elite, committing sophisticated economic crimes, as the economic profits grew and the normative and legal system of the society developed. (Markina 1998.) Estonian organised crime has developed into the direction of organised crime of the greater world, similar to the American mafia that is a parasitic phenomenon operating in the margins of society. In southern Italy it plays a central role in almost every level of economic and political life. (Stille 1995, 10.) A comparison between the organised crime of Finland and of the countries mentioned before is futile since the groups that I have studied can still be classified into Markina's first stage of accumulating capital and are far away from the following steps, to say nothing of the stage of social acceptance. Whether some criminal groups of earlier times, for instance the families that grew rich in the 1920s and 1930s by smuggling spirits, were able to move to the higher levels of committing crimes, is beyond the scope of the present study.

A particularly interesting feature of the groups that I studied was the high level of individuality and the dominant role of the leader. In the groups that I studied, the financier and the top man of the marketing chain were absolutely above all others because without him, the other persons in the marketing chain had nothing to sell. This kind of absolute one-man domination is found in many studies of organised crime. Power and its concentration into the hands of a small number of leaders is as such an interesting research topic, as well as the question of what binds the members of the groups together in a situation where one's own work, health, and economic well-being are totally in the hands of a superior person (cf. e.g. Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 1972; Stille 1995; Falcone 1995). The group dynamics and the community spirit of the groups are, in regards of Finnish professional criminals, what I have attempted to illuminate also in this study.

7. Empirical findings and theoretical discussion

The theoretical part of this study deals with two issues: 1) the theoretical discussion of the motives of an individual in becoming a professional criminal and 2) the theoretical literature on organised crime.

7.1 Individual actions and rational choice theory

To understand the behaviour of the interviewed persons, it is relevant to analyse the criminal mind. We have to consider the consequences and reasons of actions.

As early as in the 18th century, Cesare Bonessana, marquis de Beccaria (1738-94) wrote that human nature is understood as a free will hedonism (Vold 1958, 24). According to classical criminology, human beings mainly behave in a rational manner, and the goal of that behaviour is personal gratification. Rational selfishness is the dominant characteristic of human nature that is part of our relationship to crime and congruity. Crime is always selfish actions of human beings and beyond the control of society. It is an inherent characteristic of human nature to choose a deviant way to behave when needed and when a person believes that he or she can conceal the consequences and avoid to be caught. Humans are selfish, cynical, their strongest need in regard to other persons being the capability to cheat them. (Roshier 1989.) The purpose of an individual's rational actions is to maximise the relevant causal relationship of action and consequence. For example, the individual joins a group in order to smuggle and trade illegal goods, since he is not able to do this on his own, or the operation is not economically profitable considering the risks. However, in social studies and in interpersonal interaction, the causal relationship only refers to the wish that things happen according to plan. It is assumed and planned that things will work out in a certain way, even though the outcome is affected by various unpredictable factors: other persons who participate in the operation, authorities, the weather, the working hours of the customs sniffing dog, random outsiders, etc. According to my informants, they attempted to minimise such uncertainties by careful planning and with the threat of violence. For example, it is possible to make things work according to plan by resorting to violence; using threats or violence against a random outsider who has by chance observed the crime, the profits or the merchandise can be transferred to a secure place, and apprehension can be avoided.

Rational behaviour does not require any commonly accepted goals. It only includes an individual's optimal actions to achieve the wanted result. (Moser 1990, 1.) In the utilitarian conception of the world, every human being acts in a selfish and rational manner in order to make his or her life as good as possible in all situations. Humans tend to think optimistically that if they consider carefully all the consequences of their actions and consequently act in a rational manner, they can solve their problems (Simon 1990, 189). The achieved goal of the criminals' actions is naturally to benefit as much as possible from the committed crimes. In my research material, my informants have studiously selected smuggling, procuring or handling stolen goods as their particular area of crimes, because these are the most profitable crimes that they know of and are able to commit. In addition, the foreign partners required for these crimes have been selected according to where the price-quality ratio of the merchandise is best.

Rational goal orientated behaviour can be divided in two different parts: 1) individual and 2) group behaviour. Inconsistent circumstances create more opportunities to attain the wanted goal(s) (Moser 1990, 2). The same fact also affiliates the studied persons whose personal goals in terms of seeking adventure and prosperity have been attained as they have participated in the actions of a criminal group. In rational behaviour, the decision-making of individuals and groups affects at least individual or group will, the causal effects of the behaviour, personal gains and values of rational behaviour (Moser 1990, 9). In my research material, criminals and criminal groups used their criminal experience and domestic and foreign contacts to reach the markets and to distribute their commodities in Finland. In a causal sense, all the criminals' actions are, in the end, aimed to attain money and power.

The individual is aware of the risks and possibilities of the actions when he or she makes choices. A human is a "homo economicus" whose nature it is to be selfish and who is willing to maximise his or her personal benefits and minimise the personal input by comparing the costs and gains of certain choices. A person who is not held in custody acts effectively by his or her rational choices to attain various personal goals, money, appreciation, etc. (Kangas 1994; Therborn 1991.) Naturally, the individual tries to maximise profits and minimise disadvantages of the actions, and applies a kind of gambling mathematics to calculate the best way to act. From the several possible ways to behave, the individual chooses the operation model to his or her actions that promises the best possible profits with the smallest risk. The different options are ranked according to their profits and risks. (Luce & Raiffa 1990, A 22.) The interviewed persons had calculated their personal risks and profits from time to time, and on the basis of those calculations, they occasionally changed the country of origin of the smuggled products and their ways to organise the smuggling, selected new partners and market areas, etc. The main elements of those calculations have been personal income and safety.

There are always uncertainties involved, such as how the other party will behave and react to the actions in a game where everybody tries to maximise their personal success (Luce & Raiffa 1990, B55). This same problem exists in the lives of professional criminals as they test the laws of society in search of personal profits, as the authorities on the opposite side are doing their best to prevent crimes and to apprehend offenders. When the number of participants in the smuggling business increases, the shared personal profits may decrease, or at least do not increase in proportion to the number of participants. The explanation is simple: 1) when the number of effective partners in the marketing chain increases in a reasonable manner, the group is able to smuggle and distribute bigger amounts, and to launder and reinvest the profits more effectively, but 2) if the number of participants increases faster than the markets, each participant's profits decrease because more persons are sharing the same income. In my research material, there was not a single situation where too many persons occupied the group, because the goods were sold from level to level in separate business transactions, and everybody was striving to increase their own markets and personal profits. This willingness or even short-sightedness of participants to concentrate on the momentaneous profits is partly caused by avarice and partly by the awareness that sooner or later the authorities are going to interfere. My informants seemed to think that it was better to take reasonable risks in order to earn, spend or hide as much money as possible before they were caught.

The main problem of this rational cost-benefit analysis is that, in reality, the decision-makers cannot assess all relevant costs and benefits. In most of the cases, it is

impossible to estimate the indirect and optional costs and benefits, all of which may affect the outcome. (Päivänsalo 1997, 10-11.) Partial or total failure is always possible in normal human actions. This risk of failure is probably more critical in the criminal's life than in others' because the sanctions for criminality involve long prison sentences, serious physical injuries or death. Yet, persons are willing to take those risks to gain personal prosperity, and organised crime is a rational answer to the economic circumstances of society where there exists a demand of illicit products and services (Vold & Bernard 1986, 308).

The criticism of the theory of rational choice claims that the theory is not convincing because rational thinking does not always precede our actions. People can do things out of habit even though they may not be rationally thinking of the best option (for example, people may use the nearest services or favour certain brands that might be more expensive or unreliable, disregarding the price or quality of customer service). Scholars such as Vanberg have attempted to explain this dilemma with a synthesis according to which human action is not largely instinctive but people act according to in-built norms³¹. In-built norms help the decision making process and minimise the time, efforts and extra costs brought on by a strange situation. (Vanberg 1988, 147-156.) On the other hand, the criteria of rational actions change from situation to situation; it is usually best to maximise your own gain but sometimes self-esteem and dignity are more valuable. Thirdly, the problem with rational choice is that it is not realized if one is satisfied with a certain achievement level (e.g., laziness, extra time) and is, thus, not willing to strive in order to maximise the result. Fourthly, the short-term and long-term rational actions vary and there is no absolute maximum for the amount of the gain. Fifthly, altruistic decision making can affect the decisions in that one may not necessarily use rational for one's own benefit, but considers the effects, advantages and disadvantages from another person's point of view. A sixth problem is that decision making may be based on false or insufficient information and this may result in faulty decisions. A seventh problem is that repetition reinforces decision-making. For example, the more often you smuggle, the better the operation can be planned and carried out, thus, bringing greater benefits for the people involved. Rational choice theory can also be criticised for the fact that it does not take enough into consideration the surrounding environment and its effect on the success and final conclusion of the actions. (Toivonen 1999, 62-66.)

It is important to notice that the goals of rational action vary, are culturally bound and depend on the individual's goals. Economical rationality is one of the global behavioural norms which takes advantage of the consideration of the influences, options, and advantages and disadvantages of different actions. Looking for options, and choosing and executing them create transaction costs, to which I will be return later in the section on economic theories. According to Elster, rational choice theory is a hermeneutical theory which helps us to understand why somebody acts in a certain way. It is impossible to say beforehand which actions are rational. (Elster 1986.) With this long analysis of rational choice I try to convince my readers in the same way my interviewees tried to convince me that they were in control of their lives, made their own rules, enjoyed victories and suffered from losses. In a way, it would have been interesting and rewarding to consider the reasons for the selfish behaviour of humans, as

³¹ In sociology norm is a shared expectation of behaviour that reflects what is considered culturally desirable and appropriate. Norms are similar to rules or regulations in that they are prescriptive, although they lack the formal status of rules. Actual behaviour may differ from what is considered normative and, if judged by existing norms, may be deemed deviant. (Marshall 1994, 359.)

explained before. However, even though rational choice theory may be applied to define the criminals I studied, and it also applies to the other professional criminal groups investigated in other countries, the theoretical deficiencies force to look for a better answer to why people join together to form groups. The following chapters will focus on group formation and what keeps them together.

7.2 Group formation theories and Finnish professional criminality

The theoretical approaches that are applied in several organised crime studies can be classified into three main categories: 1) sociological organisational theories, 2) anthropological ethnic and cultural connection theories and, 3) economist illegal enterprise theories (cf. e.g. Arlacchi 1986; Abadinsky 1990; Kenney & Finckenauer 1995; Liddick 1999). These three approaches are presented below.

7.2.1 Sociological organisation theories

In sociology, theories related to the formation of group structures include the following: the development of capitalism, human relations movement, structural-functionalism (open systems and contingency theories), phenomenological sociology (interactionism). The following deals with the main characteristics of this discussion that can be related to the phenomena of organised crime and group formation.

The best-known sociological theory about organised crime to date, and the one with the widest explanatory range is undoubtedly Merton's anomie³² theory, which is known in criminology as the strain theory (Bovenkerk 2001, 119). According to Merton, the American Dream makes everyone yearn for economic success, but the opportunities are not equal for everyone to attain this goal. Individuals create their own goals and their own means by protest or revolutionary activity. The result of this strain is a social and moral climate where people devise alternative and even illegal ways to reach this goal. Merton writes that a social structure holds out the same goals to all its members without giving them equal means to achieve them. It is this lack of integration between what the culture calls for and what the structure permits that causes deviant behaviour. Deviance then is a symptom of the social structure. (Merton 1967). Merton's idea of the person's constant willingness to achieve something better is useful also in this study. This is because all of my informants confirmed that the main reason for their criminal career was the will to attain economic prosperity and personal status in their life. The crimes were chosen on the basis of profits. And because the most profitable crimes required the co-operation of several persons, the criminals formed or joined resale and smuggling chains.

Merton's theory does not focus on crime per se, but rather upon various acts of deviance, which may be understood to lead to criminal behaviour. Merton notes that

³² Anomie is linked to Durkheim, who used biological thinking to analyse industrial society, which he saw emerging from "mechanical" to "organic" solidarity, through "anomie", based on "a normative belief system" and the "independence of parts" (Durkheim, 1990). Anomie is the absence, breakdown, confusion or conflict of norms in the society. It is also necessary to societies, because when some behaviour is classified as unacceptable, the opposite behaviour is acceptable. This yes/no categorisation helps society to classify the limits of human behaviour in addition to which they gradually change human behaviour and society's laws - the behaviour that was not acceptable yesterday may become acceptable tomorrow. (Marshall 1994, 15-16.)

there are certain goals which are strongly emphasised by society. Society emphasises certain means to reach those goals (such as education, hard work, etc.,) However, not everyone has equal access to the legitimate means to attain those goals. The stage then is set for anomie. (Merton 1967). These life goals set by society are important also for the persons I interviewed. They tried to achieve the standard of living in society by their own means without the help of education and inherited money.

The second theory that covers group formation is the structural-functionalist (system) theory, developed by Talcott Parsons. This theory has dominated sociological discussion in the past. It is a broad perspective that views society as a system of enduring groups composed of statuses and roles supported by a set of values and related sanctions that maintain the continuity of the system. The theory assumes that organisations are never self-sufficient or self-contained. They depend on outside forces of inputs and receivers of outputs. Organisational patterns reflect that dependency to explain organisations of society from the view point of a human biological model. The key requirements for organisational maintenance, which can be seen as the overriding goal of any organisation, are those which apply to all social systems; namely adaptation, goal attainment, integration and pattern or value maintenance. (Parsons 1971.) Organisations are seen as “open systems” that are in a dynamic relationship with their environment, receive various inputs, transform these inputs in some way and export outputs. The organisation is open not only in relation to its environment, but also in relation to itself; it is open internally in that interactions between components affect the system as a whole. The open system adapts to its environment by adjusting the structures and processes of its internal components. (Hassard 1993, 45.) In this study, the structural-functionalist theory helps understand why groups develop in a first place. The groups are born when certain rationally thinking criminals realise that they cannot handle smuggling and drug dealing by themselves. This is when they look for persons to work with them whose values (they can do anything for money) and abilities (sales, physical attributes, courage etc.) complement each other and make committing crimes possible. Also contempt towards informers and authorities is the result of common values and criminal integration which helps to protect the group from getting caught.

Human relations movement studies like the one by sociologist Philip Selznick opened a second approach to analysing organisations. He studied the way social processes that occur in informal, unofficial social relations of organisations could constrain or even subvert the official goals of the organisation. He perceived organisations as co-operative rather than hierarchically controlled social institutions (Selznick 1966). Selznick's idea of organisations as co-operatives rather than hierarchically controlled social institutions fits my study well, because the persons I interviewed had long criminal careers and had learned to think with a criminal frame of mind. On the other hand the groups were born in opportunistic situations and they grew or died according to the needs and skills of the persons working in them. In the 1970s, David Silverman, influenced by phenomenological sociology and especially interactionism referred to the organisations' own goals and needs as organisations, instead of reifying the organisations. Human beings can have aims, and organisations are the solutions and outcome by which motivated humans attempt to resolve their problems. Organisations are socially constructed by the individual actions of members that had habituated expectations to each other, not because the institutions created organisational goals that their members wanted to achieve. The official goals of the organisations may bear no relationship of the actual operative goals, and organisations frequently have multiple and conflicting goals. The approach of seeing organisations as

structures of action focuses on the circumstances determining the actions of individuals in organisations, where their personal goals are not in conflict with the goals of the group or organisation.

David Silverman considers that formal organisations have three distinguishing features that also fit well the groups analysed in this study: 1) they arise at an ascertainable moment of time; time is an important aspect, because smuggling (alcohol, tobacco and drugs) and prostitution take place when there is a market for them and profit can be made (there was a similar “growth spurt” in professional crime in the 1930s in Finland and the USA when alcohol was smuggled because of the prohibition); 2) they are not taken for granted as much as non-formal organisations (such as the family); it is a matter of honour to be “a professional criminal” and to belong to a group with others who have the same status - this is taken extremely seriously; to commit serious crimes with the group brings financial benefits and also fame in the minds of other criminals; wealth also brings respectability in the eyes of ordinary people; 3) organisational participants often seek to co-ordinate and control other members of their organisations; co-operation and control are important, because it is up to the group to arrange and maintain internal control in serious crimes where the sanctions are hard (long prison sentences or death) and society's control cannot reach the inner dealings within a group. (Silverman 1970). Silverman's ideas and my own findings about the actions of my informants in the distribution chain fit well together, because the groups were born from the need to solve the problem of missing human resources in smuggling.

Dwight, whose observation of organisation theories focussed on defining the organisational patterns that are determined by the persons occupying certain roles and enjoying certain relationships and secondly on determining the activities a person had undertaken, strengthened Silverman's idea. The main assumption of the theory is that organisations are created by the interaction of their members, and organisations cannot be self-structured. (Smith 1975, 121.) These phenomenological ideas of group formation and origin could be closely related to my informants' experiences of group formation. On the other hand, equal interaction between the group participants is ostensible, because the person who is above the others uses economical and physical threat over the other persons to make them act as he wants. On the other hand, he cannot treat persons under him anyway he wishes because he is also dependent on their co-operation and on their common business interests. The strong will of persons participating in the groups was clearly evident in the persons I interviewed, they did as they pleased. This same individualistic way of thinking was also recognisable in the persons researched by Hobbs and Sutherland.

A great deal of organisation theories have been criticised for their normative pro-managerial bias on how wider relations and power of control affect society and have affected internal relations in organisations. Their individualistic analysis of the members of the organisations is more psychological than sociological in perspective. On the other hand, the critics have forgotten that it is sociologically impossible and meaningless to define organisations on the basis of various forms of human life and societies. Typologies of organisations involve attempts to classify the variety of key characteristics of organisations, such as who benefits from operations or how compliance is obtained from members. The approach to organisations as social systems is particularly identified in Parsons' structural functionalist theory and Merton's work on organisations. According to their observations which fit the persons I interviewed and also the people Hobbs and Sutherland researched well, organisations consist of social

systems in interaction with other social systems whose values and goals are related to those of the wider society. Most importantly, the objective of a group's social system is to maximise the economic profits of its participants. These goals are usually in conflict with the goals of normal members of society when the adaptation and goal attainment is money using every trick in the book. Integration and values maintenance of the group provide security to the members and maintain participant loyalty to the group, which is important in maintaining criminal activities.

It is true that none of these sociological theories directly attempt to explain organised crime. On the contrary, they try to explain why humans have a need to form and join in different kinds of groups during their lifetime and that is why they are introduced to be useful in organised crime studies. Organised crime is a group action that is based on the willingness of persons to work together, and share the same values and norms in their behaviour. It is common that persons in the groups have a similar ethnic background or share a selfish money orientation. These issues are discussed in the following chapters.

7.2.2 Ethnic and cultural connection theories

Bonds of culture and ethnicity may tie persons to groups for several reasons. In a common culture, there are traditional codes of allegiance and honour that idealise the gangster relationship, or there may be shared rituals that take on special significance of love and fear among gangsters. A shared language outside the language of the dominant culture is valuable for expediting crime and maintaining secrecy. A common culture also provides a system of personal control into which members are socialised at an early age, so that the power of the culture is strong and lasting. (Goodson & Olson 1995.) In the following, three main cultural and ethnic theories are introduced: 1) differential systems of values, 2) differential associations, and 3) culture conflict theory that can be related to the formation of organised crime. All of the groups that I studied comprised of Finnish males with similar ethnic backgrounds, and thus the groups cannot be compared in regards of their ethnic characteristics. The cultural and ethnic connection theories are briefly dealt with in the following.

The differential systems of value theory was originally conceived sociologically to explain and describe juvenile delinquency in certain city slum areas in Chicago. The theory suggested that lower-class slum youths violate law and become juvenile offenders because they adhere to a unique, independent value system that exists in and is the product of the lower socio-economic slum areas of major cities. In those slum areas, juveniles see daily how adult criminal gangs are engaged in theft, marketing stolen goods, controlling legitimate businesses, and are involved in illegal businesses such as drug dealing etc. (Shaw and McKay 1972.) There are no full-fledged slum areas (even if some suburbs are populated with poorer and lower-class people) in the Finnish cities, where young people would be able to see adults committing crimes on a daily basis. On the contrary, a young person who starts to commit crimes is gradually sucked into criminality when he gets to know more and more fellow criminals who are doing similar things in the same area.

The value system of slum areas is very different from the value system of middle-class areas, and the two are in strong conflict. The lower-class persons are keener on personal goals like such as excitement, enjoyment, freedom, and leisure. This world of personal goals may make people seek their pleasures and earnings from illicit activities. The middle-class persons are keener on economic, political and social success that is

earned in a legal way. The lower-class oriented value system and its traditions are passed down from generation to generation in a process of cultural transmission. (Shaw & McKay 1972.) This kind of cultural transmission was not evident in my study. Only few of the relatives of my informants have a criminal background, and all of my informants said that they do not wish their children to follow in their footsteps in committing crimes. Another interesting matter is that the theory does not pay attention to the fact that the lower-class slum boys may not always have any other possibility to earn money than to commit crimes, and the middle-class boys who have money may maximise their life benefits by other morally questionable, if not illegal behaviour. The need for personal success regardless of the means was also apparent in my interviews. My informants made it clear that even if they were not educated or did not expect to inherit money, they still wanted to progress in their life and this they will achieve in their own ways. The fastest and maybe only way to succeed in life has been to commit profitable crimes.

The criticism of the differential systems of values theory mostly concerns the idea of different values of the middle and lower classes and their influence on the formation of organised crime. The question is whether it is reasonable to believe that organised criminals are interested in economic, social and political success, even if these may be defined in middle-class terms. Another question is whether it is possible that middle-class or non-criminal persons are not interested in excitement, enjoyment, freedom and leisure and obtaining these goals in an illegal manner similar to lower-class people. (Kenney & Finckenauer 1995.) A good example of this willingness for upward social mobility was given by Buschetta in his testimony that concerned differences of the Sicilian Cosa Nostra and the American La Cosa Nostra. In his testimony he said that in America all the mobsters' children are educated as doctors, lawyers etc. and keener on middle-class careers. Their upward mobility in society by legal means is guaranteed, and they are too keen to have a comfortable life that they would bother to follow in their ancestor's footsteps. In contrast, in Sicily, this kind of willingness to move upward by means of education does not exist on a same scale, and even in modern times, sons of mobsters are eager to follow in their fathers' footsteps. Secondly, because Sicily is still economically poor and unbalanced, organised crime can recruit hungry youngsters from poor conditions to the difficult and dangerous profession of organised crime activities. (Stille 1995.) This same willingness to move upward socially (not in social status, but in prosperous lifestyle) in whichever way was common also to my informants.

Edwin Sutherland's theory of differential association suggests that criminal behaviour is learned in a process of interaction with other persons in communication in intimate personal groups. When criminal behaviour is learned, the learning includes the techniques of committing crimes (complicated or simple) and the specific direction of motives, drives, rationalisations, and attitudes. The definitions, skills, and rationalisations to violate state laws (favourable or unfavourable) are not learned in the city slums or the lower class living areas, but in normal life that occurs everywhere. The principle of differential association is that the person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favourable to violation of the law over definitions unfavourable to violation of the law (Sutherland 1947, 5-7). The theory assumes that young persons living in a certain area where different kinds of criminality occur which require the co-operation of the participants, such as organising gambling, pimping prostitutes, dealing drugs, etc., where there are successful criminal role models pursuing these activities and where the prevailing atmosphere is to disregard the law, where there is intimate personal contact between young people and successful criminals, the persons are especially

vulnerable to learn organised crime orientations in their normal daily life (Kenney & Finckenauer 1995). The theory is based on the assumption that crime is rooted in the social organisation and crime is an expression of that social organisation. A group may be organised for criminal behaviour or organised against criminal behaviour. (Sutherland 1973).

The main argument against the theory of differential association is that organised crime activities such as dealing drugs or money laundering are not the same kind of criminality that you are able to see in daily life (e.g., stealing cars or breaking into houses). My informants had started to commit crimes on their own without any previous experience or connections to the criminal world. However, once they had started to commit crimes, they had easily found soul mates from other criminals they met; the good connections to fellow criminals especially being created in prison. The supporting argument of the theory is that even if the criminality is different in practice, a criminal mind and the willingness to commit crimes can be learned in urban street gangs living in poor conditions, and after this it is possible to join organised crime activities. Albeit that social equality in Finland is on a high level, my informants said that they started to commit crimes through their own free will as a way to improve their standard of living and to achieve a better social status and to get more excitement in their lives.

The third cultural suggestion that has been used to explain organised crime and its emergence is Thorsten Sellin's culture conflict theory. Sellin suggested that the cause of criminality should be understood in terms of normative conflict in a situation where two different cultural conduct norms, beliefs or values meet in the society. A norm conflict can occur when the laws of one country are assignable to the justice system of the other country, without considering the cultural background of the societies. A straightforward application of the same laws to different conditions may cause a lot of problems and difficulties in society when the cultural norms of immigrants or a subculture area come into contact and conflict with the cultural and subculture laws of the surrounding host country and its complex society. Conflict between the norms of divergent cultural codes may arise 1) when these codes clash at the border of contiguous culture areas, 2) when the case with legal norms, the law of one cultural group, is extended to cover the territory of another, or 3) when members of one cultural group migrate to the other. (Sellin 1938, 63-70.) Later, the theory was also related to the causes of organised crime. It was used to explain the birth of organised crime in the United States in the late 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th century when large numbers of immigrant from different parts of Europe arrived to America. In particular, Francis Ianni argued that Italian immigrants transported the problem of organised crime along with them from Italy. He explained that because Sicilians immigrants have a different ethnic background, poorer living conditions, less education and were less wealthy than the majority in the USA, they were more willing to commit crimes. They had done the same in Italy, where the only way upward for them in society was to commit crimes. Because the Sicilians had the tradition to commit crimes in an organised crime group, they transferred also this approach to the USA. (Ianni 1972.)

Culture conflict theory explains that these cultural differences make it easier to commit crimes in a new society, because the ethnic society has a different language, closer family relations and a cultural tradition of secrecy. In one way, the criminal structure has been created to protect the minority group and to help it in a difficult economic and social situation. A criminal group that commits crimes abroad can also be a transnational satellite group of organised crime, like the Sicilians were in the USA or the Japanese were in Korea in the twentieth century or the Russians are now in America

and Europe (cf. e.g. Bell 1953; Ianni 1972; Kaplan & Dupro 1997; Shelley 1998.) On the basis of this and my previous study, it is obvious, that Finnish criminals are using Estonia and its opportunities (different laws, social and cultural norms and values etc.) to commit crimes there and to smuggle merchandise to Finland (Junninen 1999). On the other hand, the moves to Estonia and other countries are not permanent. They are used to exploit the border and the communication problems between officials in different countries. If the price and quality are right, smuggling products (alcohol, tobacco) and women for prostitution would be done from any country. Abroad, business takes place regardless of race or nationality between those who can offer the goods at a competitive price. The seller in a foreign country can be Finnish or of some other nationality and a Finnish person can be the intermediary or help in making a contact. According to my research, Finnish professional criminals do not use their countrymen living abroad to help with crimes as much as, for example, Italians, Russians or Japanese according to literature (cf. e.g. Ianni 1972; Seymour 1996; Williams 1997; Shelley 1998.) On the other hand, the biggest reason for the formation of transnational organised crime groups can be the fact that a large amount of people have emigrated to new countries from the countries mentioned, and it is easier to find accomplices from a large population.

Critics of the ethnic explanations of organised crime point out that ethnicity as a perspective is too narrow. It is true that members of ethnic organised crime groups may have traditional cultural foods, stories, and beliefs in common, but what brought them together were their criminal activities (Mahan 1998, 53). Not all immigrants commit crimes, and even of those, who commit crimes, a small fraction joins or participates in organised crime activities or groups. First, you have to have a criminal mind and a willingness to commit crimes before you can be part of an organised crime group. As any other people, most of the immigrants would also like to gain a higher level of education, a good profession, and social prosperity in a legal way. The theory that regards ethnicity as one factor of organised crime states that ethnicity is not the only cause of criminality and in that way it cannot be responsible for organised crime. But as Albinus has stated: "ethnicity can at best be regarded as a variable that becomes significant only when it is found in combination with a host of other variables that seek to explain the complex puzzle of organised criminal involvement" (Albinus 1988, 347-348). According to the persons I interviewed and the literature, criminals form groups and organise their actions mainly because of economical reasons. The economic theory of organised crime will be presented in the following section.

7.2.3. Economic theories

The economic theories related to the organised crime discussion explain how criminal activities are organised in the groups. The theories explain that the main objective of forming an organised crime group is to make business and money by committing crimes that require the co-operation of several persons. The connecting idea of the economic theories is that markets and economic competition between the criminals, and the competition between law enforcement versus criminal behaviour are forcing the criminals to organise their systems and relationships for committing crimes in a more efficient manner.

Organised crime is part of the economic structure of society - illegal of course, but nevertheless, the criminals act like businessmen. The only difference between normal business and organised crime business is that normal businessmen are doing legal

business and organised crime groups are doing business both within the legal and the illegal sector. The illegal business may, for example, be smuggling illegal commodities to the markets, organising illegal gambling, pimping prostitutes, etc. The legal parts of businesses, similar to legal companies, may be used as fronts for illegal money laundering. The reason why organised crime is able to act like this is that no society is free of wrong-doing and it is always possible to act against the laws or use the laws loop-holes, or that corrupted officials close their eyes from illegal actions or the overlapping partnership between legal and illegal business (Haller 1990; Johansen 1996). The advantage of the economic theories is that they, as well as sociological theories, are applicable for understanding changes of group structures over time and across markets, etc.

The multiple-constituencies theory approach departs radically from the classic goal-centred, organisation-focused perspective. According to it an organisation (corporation) is simply a legal construct under the law, which allows certain organisations to be treated as individuals. Organisations exist, but they are not defined solely by their formal structure. They are the results, not the initiators of action. They are formed when constituencies or stockholders meet around their shared interest in a group of activities. The organisation is not a particular structure but the locus of incentive exchanges. Stockholders include external constituencies (clients or customers, competitors, suppliers, regulatory agencies) and quasi-insiders (board of directors, commercial associations, public relations consultants), as well as internal participants and groups (owners, managers, workers). Each constituency shares goals with others while holding unique interests and expectations. Each tries to move the centre of its interactions - the organisation - in its direction. They collaborate and compete in establishing priorities, as conflict is virtually inevitable. Structures reflect interaction and conflicts. (Smith 1994, 132-133.) Similarly, a group that operates in an illegal business sector, like drug smuggling, can be classified: an owner (financier), manager (right hand), workers (dealers), etc., of who all have their own separate and important parts in the marketing chain. The common feature to all participants is that all of them want to earn money and get rich, serving as many customers as possible, using the quality of products, the reliability of delivery and the price as their marketing assets. The illegal markets are always under the scrutiny of local authorities who may ask for bribes or disturb the business in some way. The extra dimension in the illegal markets is the use of violence and other unsophisticated methods in order to prevent competition and to maintain the *esprit de corps*.

Transactions cost³³ economic theory assumes that organisations come into being only because they are needed. Organisations exist because of certain costs that accompany transactions. Without those costs, transactions occur naturally in the market without the need for organisations. The principal transaction costs are those of learning and haggling over the terms of a trade. Classical economic theory assumed that parties in that process would be rational, have full knowledge of conditions underlying the trade, and try to minimise cost and maximise profit through production efficiency and product desirability. In a simple face-to-face exchange between buyer and seller, the simple market mechanism suffices. However, most transactions are more complex. Product reliability and warranties, for example, entail extended learning and haggling that prolong the life of a transaction beyond the point of initial exchange. Or, learning

³³ Transactions costs in organised crime activities of professional criminals are created by the organising of the work and taking advantage of the markets and cost of acquiring clients and partners, actual business costs, exchange operations control and securing costs. (Koskinen 2001.)

and haggling may have to be undertaken repeatedly as different components of production, evaluation, and exchange satisfaction are played out. (Smith 1994, 133.) The same is relevant in the criminal business. When somebody has something to sell, his world is full of interaction, and when he cannot offer anything, only the authorities may be interested in his doings. The important thing to notice is that the illegal markets always exist; the demand for services and products is never-ending, only the availability, quality and price of the products vary.

It is hard to understand the meaning of transaction costs in economically rational behaviour without taking into consideration the oligopolic nature of illegal markets and criminal branches of organised crime. Violent courses of action and monopolistic markets make it possible to accept even high costs and transfer them into the prices. On the other hand, low transaction costs do not explain the existence of organised crime (the cost can be high too; long prison sentence, death or losing the possibility to commit crimes). The market formed by regulations is essential for organised crime to exist. One should remember that besides business profits organised crime is interested in social power which makes it easier for its members to work and gives them an accepted position in society and also opens up opportunities to make even more profits. The development of organised crime has in many cases started from political circumstances, not just economical, and often it has a political agenda. To understand this, one must pay attention to things introduced by criminological research on particular ethics of economic organised crime, which differentiates it from the universal ethics of legal capitalism. To forbid guns, drugs, alcohol etc. creates an illegal market, but this kind of criminal responsibility deregulation in itself does not decrease the efficiency of the economy or add to the cost of transactions. On the other hand, the “rules of the game” and social commitments guarantee entrepreneurship and continuous lucrativeness, and lower the transaction costs of legal business. The cost of organised crime, on the other hand, rises when it is forced to use violent methods to maintain rules and to get affirmation and use corruption to maintain social obligations and social standing. Legal and illegal business work under the same requirements of rationality and efficiency. Different time periods of strategic actions affect the way in which actors estimate the operative transaction costs of juridical institutions and guarantees. For somebody who is looking to get rich quick, the lack of deregulation can be “the land of the free” but for somebody who wants continuous profitability it can mean anarchy and lack of predictability. The rational consideration is dependent on information, risks and costs, but also time, goals and values. (Kyntäjä 2003.)

Cost estimates that reflect uncertain or unknown conditions may become so non-negotiable that a marketplace contract cannot be reached. The cost of learning and haggling can be controlled or reduced, however, if one party is given authority over the terms of trade by incorporating it into an organisational setting. A firm is thus defined when the price mechanism governing exchange is replaced by the instructions or orders issued by a boss. A firm has come into being to economise on transaction cost. Nevertheless, organisations have costs, because of errors, inefficiencies, and administrative rigidity. The boundaries of the firm are determined not by the balance between power and dependency in the decision-making, but by the marginal point where cost savings from internal transactions and internal costs of rigidity and error are equal. (Smith 1994, 133-134.) The cost of errors is even more disastrous in the professional criminal's world where a mistake or the failure to carry out a task or a business that has been agreed upon can cause personal injuries, death or years in prison.

In neo-classical economic theory, a firm is seen as a result of the demand for illegal products. This creates illegal enterprises, and because human is “homo economicus”, it attempts to monopolise the enterprise. This, in turn, is easiest to do by organising the persons involved in illegal enterprises - and that creates organised crime. The essence of illicit enterprise is a bilateral relationship between customers and suppliers that occurs in a range of circumstances. Customers in a relationship can be classified initially into three groups: 1) those with legitimate needs for which the legitimate market is unresponsive, 2) those with illicit needs who cannot risk dealing with legitimate entrepreneurs who keep business records that could be subpoenaed and 3) the extortionists (or pirates) whose intent is simply to exploit the domains of other entrepreneurs. They interact with suppliers whose motives may have multiple stimuli: 1) a fear of failure greater than a fear of illegality, 2) contempt for the law and/or its minions, 3) a high tolerance for rationalising questionable behaviour, 4) a desire for profit at any cost or 5) a principled disagreement with certain legal restrictions (Smith 1994, 136).

The margin of legal and illegal markets is an interesting question: what is the difference between unethical but legal market behaviour and ethical but illegal market behaviour? This question has been discussed by several authors in contexts such as illegal price cartels in legal markets or black-marketing of legally regulated products. How does a single firm's behaviour affect the reputation and creditability of the industry of which it is a part of? Even though asset specificity, uncertainty, and opportunism are potential reasons for using payments as an organising mechanism, in both the retail and wholesale trade, conditions for non-enforcement are not uniform in either sector. Non-enforcement is accompanied by monetary exchange in some instances; in others it is not. The most likely condition, however, is opportunism, particularly in the retail trade. It can work both ways. The enforcement officer may be opportunistic, seeking payoffs from networks with insufficient social or political influence. On the other hand, the network may encourage organised payments as a means of controlling opportunism within the local industry. Customers have a resource if a retailer tries to back out of implied contracts, and networks have mechanisms regulating competition in the market. Illegal markets act in a similar manner as normal markets, you cannot deal in everything otherwise your business becomes too extensive and impossible to control - you have to concentrate on two or three primary articles or services that you know best, like my informants have done (Schelling 1971; Haller 1994; Smith 1994).

The conclusion on economic theories and organised crime is as one sided as in the case of sociological and anthropological theories. It answers to some of the questions of how organised crime came to be, but it does not fully support the phenomenon theoretically. In an economic sense, individual entrepreneurs make selective rational choices between legal and illegal activities about what is best for them and their business enterprises (Reuter 1983). According to Schelling, the difference between unorganised criminal activity and organised crime is that the “latter seek to govern and control the whole economic structure of the underworld”. Schelling believes that organised crime involves a monopoly of violence at the most fundamental level that allows it to attain and maintain a rule-making role. Organised criminals control, regulate, and tax the criminal firms actively involved in the production and distribution of illegal goods and services. It is the monopoly of violence and threats which allows organised crime to “reap most of the rents” generated in illegal market sectors, without running the risk associated with the direct management of illegal enterprises. The actual enterprises producing and distributing in illicit markets are vulnerable to law

enforcement pressure and competition from other entrepreneurs, the centralisation of illegal markets occurs in those industries which readily lend themselves to monopolisation, and it is this reality, according to Schelling, which gives rise to organised crime and its co-ordinating influence. (Schelling 1967 & 1971.) On the other hand, vulnerability in illegal markets does not lead to centralised control but results in fragmented markets. Especially this downplays the importance of violence and corruption as organised influences. (Reuter 1985.)

Economists Fiorentini and Peltzman have stated that Shelling's and Reuter's conceptualisations are supported in part by the available evidence. The degree of organisation in organised crime seems to vary from one type of illegal activity to the next depending on several factors, such as distribution systems, prevailing attitudes and public policies concerning the given illegal commodity (Fiorentini & Peltzman 1995). But the strong appeal concerning the explanatory power of economic theories comes from Peter Reuter, when he writes that "in summary the Mafia's dominance of illegal markets and the importance of that dominance to the Mafia have never been supported by any effort, either scholarly or official, at systematic empirical testing. The economic scholarly literature has provided rather loose ex post theoretical support for the assertions but the theory has been never well developed or subject to rigorous testing". (Reuter 1983, 6-7.)

7.3 Conclusions on the theories

As a conclusion of the theories, I present their advantages and disadvantages in furthering the understanding of my study. In the end of the chapter, I also elaborate my own view that could theoretically explain the main aspects of the Finnish groups that I have studied. This theoretical elaboration is enabled by my study method (inductive logic) that allows theoretical ideas to be derived from empirical findings.

The rational choice theory succeeds in explaining the individuals' reasons to commit crimes and to participate in the activities of the group. A group whose success depends on the contribution of individuals can effectively maintain group control and working capacity. The smaller groups are more effectively able to prevent influences of its passive members and outsiders on their racket. The small groups can be selective in buying merchandise. (Kangas 1994, 77-78.) According to my interviews, the whole idea of being a professional criminal and forming any kind of crime groups was based on this simple notion. Together, the persons can earn much more and faster than if they worked on their own. It is also important to notice that it is not possible to commit the studied crimes alone, as they require a small effective and easily controllable number of persons to work collectively.

An individual's behaviour cannot be explained from his or her ethnic or cultural background or other similar factors. The subculture of violence in my empirical group was not learned in childhood, in the way Wolfgang and Ferracuti explained the vicious behaviour of black youths in America. (Wolfgang & Ferracuti 1967.) My informants had learned to use violence in order to attain goals in the course of their criminal career. For them, violence was never aimless behaviour to self-present nefarious feelings but instead, instrumental behaviour resorted to if necessary. Committing crimes could not be seen as a life-long career that goes on forever. My informants wanted to commit highly profitable crimes for a period of time, and after that retire to enjoy the profits.

Sociological theories explained skilfully the modernisation of human work and its demands to form groups as unofficial and official goals that affect the group's interaction. These theories are useful to explain how groups manage difficulties that arise either from the inside or outside of the groups. Anomie and the change from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity of groups is at least in some way recognised in Markina's work where she explains the formative process of organised crime in Estonia after its second independence in the 1990s. According to her, the formative process of organised crime in Estonia has taken place in four stages: 1) forming of gangs, 2) accumulation of capitals, 3) battles of areas (the blood age), and 4) transformation of activities into new crime areas. All of these stages have taken place within ten years, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. (Markina 1998.) A similar, but slower development process has also occurred in the past in Italy and Japan (cf. e.g. Stille 1995; Kaplan & Dupro 1997). Sociological theories explain acceptably the need of outputs and inputs of persons, because it is obvious that also criminals have to think about the motives of their actions before joining a group, and those motives can be various, such as money problems, thirst for power, need of excitement, etc. It is also important to notice that groups are open systems and have close relationship with their environment. The values and sanctions of the group are related to the objective of securing its continuity even if the participating individuals may have multiple and conflicting goals.

The ethnic succession theories have advantages especially when they are used to explain how different kind of suburbs or emigration cause different kinds of crime problems in a city or on a national level. It might be that when a young person merely sees violence, apathy, drugs and money problems, he or she can more easily disregard laws and become involved in criminal life, as his or her daily living is strongly focused on surviving. In city slums, criminal behaviour can be learned very easily, and because they seem to form on a race basis, ethnic succession can be used to explain the emergence of organised crime. Nevertheless, this kind of ethnic succession demands a lot of apathy from the part of the surrounding society and a government who allows slums to evolve and social inequality to develop. It is a grave mistake to claim that the cultural conduct and norms of ethnic persons may differ to such an extent that they would not know what right from wrong in any society, situation and circumstances. Today, such ethnic theories are not appreciated, since, especially in the United States where nearly all inhabitants are immigrants and their descendants, all minorities have started from the bottom, whether Irish, Jews, Italians, South Americans or Russians. Thus, ethnic succession is strongly blamed to be a nationalistic answer to modern politics that claims that all bad things come along with the immigrants who have different customs, language etc. (cf. e.g. Ianni 1972).

The economic theories are useful in explaining the transactions and need of business when persons are committing highly profitable crimes in groups. The meaning of all criminal actions is to yield as much money as possible as easily as possible to the participants. The inputs and outputs of a person's actions are related to money making and securing the business. In a modern world, this kind of "emergence" of organised crime could be closely related to the fall of totalitarian or dictator societies where the central power and its users have ruled or formed a strong tradition of parallel markets (Russia and other socialist countries) or totally "new" items like cocaine (Colombia and some other South American countries). In chaotic social situations, rich and powerful persons want to gain more money and power and derail society from its track. Few persons create new forms of earning and investing money, because the state is not able

to form a new and strong central administration that could limit the greed and violence of “businessmen”. On the other hand, those new wealthy businessmen try to stabilise their power by creating an image as benefactors who try to help the poor and uneducated people (cf. e.g. Strong 1996; Bäckman 1996).

As a conclusion of the different theories discussed above, no theory alone is able to explain the formation, forms, qualities of individuals, and business of organised crime. However, by combining different theoretical ideas together it is possible to understand the process of group formation, individual reasons for joining and staying in groups, or the marketing nature and structure of the business. Theories can be seen as attempts of authorities to control existing social problems. The main problem of the theories is that they try to concentrate and understand the problem on the basis of the experiences of one country. A single central theory of organised crime is not possible, because all societies and crime groups differ from each others. The theory that might be most useful to explain the situation in America might be totally useless in explaining Sicilian organised crime or the Finnish situation. Another theoretical problem is that to define organised crime, general organisation theories have been used which are developed to explain the birth process of society’s legally working organisations and not organised crime.

Even though the theoretical moles were not able to explain organized crime extensively, it did not affect the end result or conclusions of this study. The present research has dealt with mainstream theories which together were able to shed light on how criminal groups are born in modern society. Approaches based on the single-solution idea should be replaced by new ideas that try to solve the problem on a here-and-now basis. The dilemma of organised crime exists, but fitting the ideas together should concentrate on understanding different kinds of empirical information, reality, and society that could generalise the forms, individuals and businesses of organised crime into a theoretical form.

The meaning of this theoretical criticism is not to undermine the existing theories or to confess to the helplessness of research. On the contrary, the criticism aims to prove that more work, studies, and individual thinking is needed globally to form a complete set of theoretical and empirical models that help understand organised crime. In a similar manner, definitions of organised crime are needed to bring more light on the problem. In my mind it is not very useful to study Colombian, Sicilian, New York etc. forms of organised crime groups by using the same theoretical assumptions when the information and the applied empirical tools can vary. As Zetterberg has pointed out, even with more information, the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical action remains wide (Zetterberg 1962, 16). The gap between the language of the practitioner and the nonprocedural language of the theorist comes from different tools and needs in their daily work and knowledge. The meaning of this criticism of the gap between social sciences theories and practical actions is not to depress social scientists, but pick up the point that in social science, there are no single truths that could be discovered, on the contrary all societies are unique, and theoretical and practical practices should also be individualised. (Zetterberg 1962.)

In my opinion the most useful theoretical perspective for my study is the mix of theories that contains the following levels: 1) individual motives, 2) gains and disadvantages of groups, and 3) earning money in criminal business. These will be dealt with in the following paragraphs.

The central pillar of organised crime is the rational professional criminal who regardless of reasons or costs wants to maximise his or her personal gain and starts to commit crimes. The crimes a person decides to commit must be highly profitable, that is, illegal services or products that cannot be provided legally. In most of the cases, committing crimes or providing that kind of services, demand co-operation between people. The help and involvement of other persons rustle up a group of people who have the same goals, moral codes and values: to get rich and avoid failure. The individual is purposeful and prepared to take great risks to gain wealth through illegal business. A person can become a criminal through being a juvenile delinquent, or he can drift into illegal business through unfortunate coincidences. It is important to notice that the group is not established first without a reason for its existence. On the contrary, the group takes new members for restricted periods of time and on the basis of their usefulness and capabilities in the planned job. The individual works within a group and supports its structures only for personal status and financial gain. Groups are built on the competence and trust of the people involved in the group's actions. Contacts can be born through work, friends or ethnicity, but one thing in common for all of them is that they are formed to maximise the financial interests of the persons involved by any means necessary.

Belonging to a group affects the member both positively and negatively. The positive aspects are new friends who have the same goals: to do conduct as profitable crimes as possible. The group is also built on similar values and moral codes which approve the self-centred way of thinking and hurting others through crime, taking only into consideration the largest possible financial profit and the interest of the criminal. Furthermore, belonging to a group adds to the individual criminal's physical safety and encourages and supports the chosen way of life. The negative aspect is group pressure that limits the person's right to decide how to spend his time and what to do. The individual has to be a part of the group and a person is responsible to the group for the continuity of criminal action and results. The group decides when and what kind of crimes he commits and what part he plays in those crimes. The group can be built on an ethnic or economic basis. In a foreign country, the ethnic group provides security but also helps identification. In a business chain, selection of the persons is based primarily on the group's need and the person's skills, while in ethnic groups the essential core of the group remains always the same.

The laws of money and economy also rule in the crime-conducted business. Profit can be made both in the legal and in the illegal sector by illegal means. Larger profits can be made out of illegal products and services. The legal business is for money laundering but it is a goal to make it profitable as well. The goal of criminal business is to maximise the profit and to minimise the production costs. The difference to legal business is that the means to an end are very obviously illegal. The profits are being maximised through monopolies and producing new products and services that there is a shortage of for the seller to be able set the price. The production costs are kept as low as possible by limiting the number of persons involved, operating with small stock, changing the countries from which to buy and sell according to prices, as in legal economy.

8. Summary and conclusions

To summarise my study, the original dissertation plan with the focus on analysing Finnish professional criminals, their offences, and their group formation by means of qualitative thematic interviews of professional criminals was a good choice. The thematic interviews yielded a good overall picture of how Finnish professional criminals operate, how they establish groups and select the crimes to commit, and how the participating individuals see their lives in the present, the past and the future. The selected approach made it possible to specify the research questions in the course of the fieldwork as new and unexpected aspects came up. Inductive logic was a particularly good choice for the focus of the theoretical analysis of the study because this perspective allowed theoretical ideas to grow from the empirical material and in this way did not restrict the findings that emerged from the data, or their interpretation.

The hypothesis of this research was whether the Finnish professional criminals who act in cross-border crime form structured groups or organised crime groups, and it was carefully studied. Criminals work together because, 1) the studied crimes were not possible to commit alone, 2) when several people commit crimes together, there is a larger monetary gain, because the sold amounts grow exponentially. The predictability of the research findings does not decrease their scientific value, because through them Finnish professional criminality, smuggling (alcohol, tobacco and drugs), procuring prostitutes, handling stolen goods, was well documented. Secondly the study brings a criminological interpretation based on empirical data into the social debate dominated by the authorities. It also brings the research to the same level as in the USA, Great-Britain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Italy, Russia, Estonia, etc. (cf. e.g. Sutherland 1972; Ianni & Reuss-Ianni 197; Hobbs; Fijnaut et al. 1998; Rikspolisstyrelsen 1997; Stille 1995; Bäckman 1996; Markina 1998.)

The conclusions my study provides about Finnish organised crime are quite different from what Finnish authorities, in particular police representatives have given about the phenomenon in public. According to the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation, the Finnish drug, alcohol and procuring markets are being controlled by Estonian and Russian organised criminal groups. According to my own interviews with Finnish professional criminals, Estonians and Russians are indeed selling merchandise to the Finns, but the relationship is one of business, not one of subordination. Secondly, the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation maintains that the number of Finnish organised criminal groups has more than doubled from ten groups in 1995 to 23 groups in the year 2000, less formal estimates being as much as three times this figure. According to my own study, there was not a single organised criminal group in Finland in the 1990s, but rather there was a mixture of different kinds of groups of professional criminals, where the participants, offences, and the time span of the activity varied greatly, depending on the success and failure of the different crimes. Based on the evidence provided by my study, I classified the Finnish groups of professional criminals that I studied as either group criminality or semi-organised crime.

There are puzzling discrepancies between the information provided by researchers, crime statistics and criminal courts and the interpretations by police representatives. According to police interpretations, Finnish organised crime has become significantly more organised and more violent, and the number of groups has grown rapidly over the 1990s, whereas researchers utilising the same sources (interviews with Finnish criminals, police interrogations, informer sources, and crime statistics) as well as the

courts represent an opposite opinion. Are the police employing the media as an instrument with which to create insecurity in the population and in this way creating pressures for political decision-makers to provide the power apparatus with more resources? A recent study about the growth of a general fear of violence, paralleled by the growth of violence-related headlines in the afternoon tabloids, illustrates clearly how the headlines have increased and become more fear-inducing although both crime statistics and victim surveys are unable to indicate significant changes in the volume of violence (cf. Kivivuori et al. 2002). Have the police used the media to mould the popular image of organised crime and made it appear as if the drug trade and organised prostitution were connected to it? Has the constant display of crime topics caused Parliament to criminalize participation in criminal groups and prohibit the selling and buying of sexual services by lower-level statutes in a situation where solid information about the matters is missing? The question is of criminological interest, as my own interview data, crime statistics, and court data indicate that the degree of organisation of professional criminals or their crimes have not changed significantly in the course of the 1990s, whereas the popular police-influenced depiction of the situation has become increasingly unrealistic.

The central regions of activity of the criminal groups active in Finland are quite similar according to both my data and to Finnish authorities. In both cases, the main regions where the groups are active are the largest cities of the country: Helsinki, Tampere, and Turku. The report of the National Bureau of Investigation and my own study differ in estimates concerning the city of Lahti referred to by the police, while my data mentioned also the city of Oulu and the Kymenlaakso region. However, more significant than the individual cities is the question of which geographical regions in Finland these cities control. In my view, these cities control and contribute to organising the trade in the regions of Kymenlaakso, the state capital region, in the province of south-western Finland, in Häme, and in Ostrobothnia, or in all Finnish regions that are rich both by population and economy. It is quite obvious that crimes should be committed, groups established and business made in regions where the money and the markets are.

According to police information, Finnish organised criminal groups are active for an average of five years, and they are organised in three hierarchical levels, 3-5 core members and 5-12 assisting persons. My interviews do not allow a count of the average period of activity of the groups, but my previous study indicated that the criminal activity that is reported in police and customs sources relatively is mostly small-scale criminal business and one-time fraudulent projects, where the number of participating persons is small, and the duration of each project usually less than a year. Systematic long-term activity has been observed or suspected of primarily in cases that are related to the manufacture, smuggling and trafficking of drugs, importing and marketing alcohol and tobacco, and value-added tax frauds. The duration of these crimes also only infrequently exceeds the limit of one year. It is, however, often observed that the same persons have been involved in one project after another, and this clearly indicates criminal activity is a permanent way of life for certain individuals (Junninen & Aromaa 1999). The probability for these persons to repeat crimes has been noted in an earlier Finnish study which investigated the birth of organised crime during the prohibition and the flourishing of the black market during the II World War in Finland and USA. (Takala 2001). The police estimates concerning the number of members and of the hierarchical levels in the groups correspond to my own estimates. However, unlike the police, I am not defining these groups as being organised criminal groups.

According to my informants, the number of people who are actively participating in professional group criminality and semi-organised crime in Finland is rather small and variable, and the number of passive random dealers is considerably larger. The largest volume of criminal projects is related to the imports of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and women for prostitution to Finland. The level of professional skills is also very variable across the marketing chains. The organisers, financiers and wholesale dealers know their trade well and have a professional attitude towards it, being aware of the risks involved. The habitual criminals who are acting as retail dealers on the lower levels of the marketing chains are satisfied by the chance of earning modest sums of money or to finance their own addiction. As a consequence of their one-time character, the studied crimes do not comprise large, permanent or hierarchic criminal organisations. Instead, they are carried out in flexible and opportunistic project groups with variable compositions. These groups are active in many different manners, connected with business enterprises that are used either as fronts or as crime instruments. The crimes, however, represent a broad scale of criminal projects, with the common feature that they exploit the specific circumstances of the border between Finland and its neighbouring countries, the differences in the standard of living, legislation, and law enforcement. In the cross-border trade of commodities, the participants receive monetary gain according to their work and sales input as the commodities change owners. The power aspirations in regards of interfering with criminality in another country are quite limited because it is important to maintain the trade relationships, and the seller's interest in the commodity is terminated when the deal is made.

The crimes that I studied, and the co-operation between criminals from different countries, are facilitated by the common interest of getting rich and the difficulties of police co-operation concerning international cross-border crime. It is a commonly known fact that although there have been numerous conferences and legislation guidelines about international cross-border organised crime, and co-operation of authorities has been enhanced, all of this is always based on historical information, and it is difficult to find effective means of preventing professional crime (cf. e.g. Joutsen 1997; Ulrich & Kivimäki 1998). However, powerful interventions have yet to be undertaken in order to amend the situation. According to my previous study, the greatest problems for international co-operation are the passivity and bureaucracy of authority activities. In regards of the Finnish adjacent region, the problems seem to be related to a lack of resources, shortcomings in training, and, to some extent, also to corruption. The problems between European Union member countries are primarily related to the investigation of crimes and the incompetence regarding co-operation across administrative sectors. In Finland, the criminal investigations are directed by police officers, while in France this task is the prosecutors', and this causes problems in authority co-operation (cf. e.g. Pajuoja 1998). Still another problem is that the Finnish police have not yet to become sufficiently accustomed to working together with police forces of the Baltic countries, Russia, or the co-operating European Union member countries. The background of this problem is that the personal contact networks between the authorities of the different countries are weak, which hampers attempts to deal flexibly with problems.

In a theoretical perspective, the outcome of my research is a rational human being, "homo economicus", who of his own free will and with his own work is prepared to earn more money regardless of what means are to be employed. Money and the actual or illusory personal well-being that it yields makes people willing to commit crimes that require the co-operation of several persons. The co-operation between criminals is

opportunistic activity the goal of which is solely to maximise one's own benefit. The background, crimes and future of my informants could not be explained by theoretical arguments derived from traditional research concerning organised crime. The groups are established according to need, not through a voluntary process where a group comes together. The groups are joined and members are recruited only according to need. It is not the case that a group would be established before it has a clear purpose. It is also not customary to maintain a certain number of persons in the business structure if it is possible to carry out the crime with a smaller number of persons. According to my informants, the groups are rather homogeneous because the participants do not want to operate and do business with people of a different kind. The homogeneity of the core of the marketing chains was easily observed since almost all of my informants were white Finnish men between the ages of 25 and 45 years. The men had entered the business voluntarily, and all of them had a rather long and variable criminal history before the time of the interview. The economic theories referred to at several stages of this research report provide the best support to the views of my informants that concern the emergence of the groups, of their continuity, and of their termination. Interestingly, and contrary to economic theories, my informants did not attempt to create crime monopolies since it was possible to achieve sufficient economic profits by using less effort and with lower risks.

Finally, I am pleased to add that the persons who participated in the interviews made my research project possible, gave many excellent ideas that helped carry out the study, and dispelled some of the mystery surrounding the dangerous professional criminal. The critical perspective inherent in scientific work makes me ask, why these persons agreed to participate in the interviews. Did they perhaps wish to boast about their accomplishments, deceive me about their activities, businesses and power aspirations, or did they sincerely wish to help a curious researcher to understand the life of a professional criminal? My belief and hope is that sincerity and curiosity as "adventurers and risk takers" was the central reason, their own personal interests only playing a marginal role. During my research I got the impression that the people I interviewed were aware of how much information they could give without putting themselves in danger, but still satisfying the researcher's curiosity without breaking the criminals' most important rule, the code of silence. As Sutherland wrote "if he is a thief, he is not going to say anything to hurt anyone, and, if he is not a thief, he does not know anything that would hurt anyone." (Sutherland 1937)

9. Literature

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Appendix 1.

Comparison of the individual characteristics, the crimes and organisations of professional criminals in different countries. The characteristics of Finnish professional criminals are from my interviews (2001), those of British professional criminals are from Hobbs (1995), and those of American professional criminals from Sutherland (1937).

Personal characteristics	Finland 2001	England 1995	U.S.A 1937
Age, education, and social status	25-45, primary and secondary school, lower middle class	20<40 years, primary school, secondary school	Not very young or old. Middle-aged men who start to think of their future (retirement)
The criminal career	Juvenile delinquents or by change as adults	Juvenile delinquent or adult who is a good organiser and able to sell and negotiate all kinds of deals, finds him- or herself in depth and life is miserable.	1) Legitimate employment, 2) other illegal occupation before becoming professional thief
Parents, siblings	No serious criminal history	Foster homes, orphanages, violent crimes are committed with father, brother, son, cousin	Many parents use the things or money their children steal, knowing or at least suspecting that the things have been stolen or money is earned without working.
Prison sentences	1-6 times, few<10 years	Few short sentences.	Occasional cases and sentences.
Men with a reputation and honourable criminals	1-2 in every prison, interviewed persons are highly ranked	Elite professional criminals. Man with money and power.	No recruiting policy. The person can become a professional thief if he is trained by those who are already professionals.
The time spent in liberty	New and more crimes, some free-time and hobbies, drinking, gambling, using prostitutes.	Mixture of legal work and illegal work (mostly illegal).	New and more crimes, spending extra money.
Family	6 married with children. Six divorced or never been married, but have children. Nine cohabiting or without a permanent partner at the time of interviews, no children	Married and divorced with children.	Professional thief has a wife or lives for a long time with same woman if either of them has an undissolved previous marriage which prevents them from remarrying.
Friends	The longer the career of the informant, the less he has friends who do not commit crimes or live a life that is immoral by common standards, prostitutes etc.	Family members, cousins, other criminals, no "free-time friends"	Friends are mainly persons of their own kind, but also few friends who are legitimate in their occupations and behaviour.
The use of money	Extravagant. The more you earn the more you spend. Easy come easy go	Some manage to save and start legal business in the future (news agent, pubs, caravan site, etc.)	Living, supporting family and normal living, because most of the income goes to the police, lawyers and fixers (protection, bribery). Those who earn more buy real estate or keep cash somewhere ready to be invested.
The "own" crimes and business transactions	Depend on personal characteristics (more brain=better crimes, more structured group=less own crimes)	Depend on personal characteristics (more brain=better crimes, "Crime finances their lifestyle"	When a person is a part of mob he commits crimes for the common good, but because the partnerships can be very short, the men have plenty of time to commit crimes of their own.
Plans for the future	1) why quit, this is my profession, 2) just a few more years or a certain amount of money, and then I'll retire, and 3) those who regret their choice of profession	Invest proceeds of crime to legal side and start legal business.	Get the big one and retire or go into some business. In a reality this is seldom possible and the career goes on and on. In the end of the career, when they have savings, some may open cigar store or hotel.

Committing crimes	Finland 2001	England 1995	U.S.A 1937
Planning the crimes, committing the crimes	More intelligent, better planned and less on the spur of the moment	Crimes planned, but unexpected influences are handled by violence	Every act is carefully planned, 365 days of year, special skills to commit crimes
Weapons, violence directed at group members and outsiders	Yes, at group members	When they do business they also use violence. Violence is part of business, it is a "cultural expectation"	Yes, to help commit crimes (to silence people)
Crimes	Smuggling, money laundering, procuring, handling stolen goods, debt collecting, money laundering with front companies	Craftsman, thief, drug dealer, burglaries, stolen goods, debt collection, credit card frauds, smuggling tobacco and drugs.	All kind of stealing, burglaries, robberies, handling stolen goods
Investing the proceeds of crime	1) financing new offences, 2) depositing and investing abroad, 3) domestic investments through a front, a) in real estate, b) in legal business, 4) cash or gold for daily spending 5) different kinds of loans a) to other criminals and b) to normal citizens. Under other person's name luxury consumer, good cars, stereos, wine and dining. Gold, foreign banks and currencies	To support family living and leisure time, to start some legal business.	The expenses and proceeds are divided equally, and there is no difference in the financial standing of the member.
Groups	Finland 2001	England 1995	U.S.A 1937
Structure	Hierarchical market chains, Nine semi-organised crime groups, five group criminality	In networks, within networks, cross-cutting networks and contradictory associations between networks. Configurations of acquaintances and family to ad hoc coalitions that can be adapted to the exigencies of the contemporary market with alliances and networks in a flexible frame, without rigid hierarchy.	Professional stealing is not organised crime. Groups are organised in a sense of being together as a stock company. Groups may know other groups from other cities but they are not members of national associations. Professional theft is organised crime, not in the journalistic sense, but because of the common behaviour methods, rules and protection system – how all thieves behave. It is a group's way of life.
Number of participants	Few to tens, depends on the activities	Few, depends on the activities, on the need basis	Three to four men in a mob. Occasionally more men operate together in a loose organisation, if the crime requires.
The gender of the members and the tasks of women	Male, female fronts	Male, female drug dealers who need a man to associate	Majority male, few female
The ethnicity of the groups	Only white Finns	Same ethnic background (family and relative members)	Almost all groups are ethnically structured (white, black, Jews)
The permanence of the groups	Short, around one year, then a new formation	Varies on the work opportunities basis, but same group or at least main characters are working together as long as the business goes well.	Varies, according to the work opportunities and personal interests. Some groups have not changed their men in years.
The activity and product monopolies	No regional monopolies, only price monopolies	Some very local activity monopolies, but mainly no monopolies	May work in all American cities
The professional quality of the activity	Decent, carefully planned and implemented, but short term.	The older the persons, the better the crimes are planned. Youngsters often commit crimes on the spur of the moment.	All the men are taken into the groups on the basis of their personal capability. When a new member succeeds in committing indicated task, he may develop in his profession to a higher level.
The characteristics of professional criminals, recruiting new members,	1) reliable, meaning that what is agreed and promised will also be done, 2) proven ability, will and skill to commit crimes, 3) calm and goal-driven character, good nerves and	Trustworthy, reliable in tough situations, able to avoid capture, no scapegoating,	Acquaintances, congeniality, sympathy, understandings, agreements, rules, codes of behaviour and common language.

and the rules of criminal groups	the ability to act and make decisions under pressure, 4) a healthy and regular way of life that helps him to endure the hardships of the profession and to avoid unnecessary interest on authorities part, 5) sentences and criminal merits only for honourable and planned crimes directed against the public power or business institutions, and absolutely no shameful criminal history (sex offences, crimes against women or children), 1) The central rule is that the promised and requested sums of money for merchandise and services are paid in every case, 2) matters related to work are not discussed with anybody who is not connected with the actual work, and work-related discussions are always face-to-face, 3) one's personal doings (criminal or leisure) must not jeopardise the smuggling or the marketing of substances or persons, 4) informing is sanctioned at least with serious violence, or even death, 5) matters that have been agreed upon are done as promised, and if this cannot be done, as well as possible.	Trouble, toughness, smartness, excitement and autonomy. Committing crimes based on team spirit and individual expression. Groups are heavily coded with working-class culture and images of masculinity, flair, egocentrism, use of muscles etc. that maintain internal hierarchy.	Professional thieves have nothing in common with amateur thieves, or other offenders (like sex crimes, emotional crimes). Sympathy and congeniality with professional burglars and stickups. Render assistance to professional burglars in fixing cases, securing bond, or escaping from a jailhouse. Codes of ethics are binding. No informing Rules (ethical codes): a) do not hold out property on fellow-criminals, b) do not for any reason fall down on a job, c) do not inform, pay your debts to the other criminals, d) don't be a bad loser.
The relationships between groups, leaving the group or joining another group	Interaction between Finnish groups is infrequent and all of them like to work alone, from higher levels no and from lower levels maybe, yes, when the old group has disbanded	All groups do their own business, and as long as there are no conflicts of interest or price-cutting, situation is calm.	Attitudes toward other groups and other professional thieves friendly, unless there is an enemy relationship. Persons may drift from group to group when they are not involved in one's work, and because the working period can be very short (just a few days) the same person can be active in the actions of several groups over the year. No formality in joining or leaving a group, but when a vacancy opens, it may be filled by someone who is suggested by the boss or by one of the other members.
The relationships between members, and causes of conflicts	Horizontal good, vertical subjection, money (payment and quality of products), stress	Good, because all members are trusted friends or relatives. If someone starts to sabotage business (drinks too much or is in other way not capable of handling things) friendship ends.	Good when a group makes enough money. In some mobs the members do not speak to each other socially, but since they make money together their social relations are secondary. Thieves may be on unfriendly terms and still work together, this shows that these professional relations are commercial and not based on sentiment or friendship.
Getting caught, informing, and taking care of members in prison	Generally no, but most of them have been scapegoated, some groups take care of members in prison and their families, but normally only when own safety is threatened	---	Much assistance is given to other thieves who are in trouble, broke or in jail, money, hints to commit crimes, but they do not get money unless they commit crimes.
Contacts with foreigners	As salesmen, limited co-operation	As salesmen in smuggling	Sometimes