

Title: Curing the Global Illegal Drug Trade and Human Trafficking

Author: GMandell, 05/28/17

Institutions, INGO's: GLOBAL APPROACH

US White House, United Nations, UNODC, Kaiser Family Foundation, NORML, Drug Policy Alliance, The Freedom Fund, Anti-Slavery International, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The Carter Center, OECD, US DOJ, US FBI, US CIA, US Homeland Security, US DEA

Abstract

This paper tries to focus on the global illicit drug trade, human bondage, corruption and greed, and solutions. Global issues of this nature might be viewed in the same perspective as chronic and complex diseases, those that affect many and will not yield without considerable force of effort and resources, and intelligent design in approach. The global illicit drug trade is a significant variable linked with many others (human trafficking, poverty, corruption, violence, unsafe and unhealthy living conditions, environmental issues, political disputes and active war zones) that work against the sustenance and progress of peoples and nations. As a resident of the United States and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, obviously my views and perceptions are colored by my environment, education and life-experience here.

Executive Summary

It seems that many in the global community have already embraced the idea that battling drug use from the supply-side has not delivered effective and humane outcomes that were the policy's objective. Instead, massive side-effects of profiteering and racketeering based on the resultant "black market" has simply exacerbated the global illicit drug trade problem. Fantastic profits and wealth fuel criminal exploits of new and staggering proportions every day. It seems that to those who genuinely care about human rights and health care issues, the time has come to think the unthinkable and plan for a transition to legal use of Schedule One and Two drugs, in the hopes that this policy will fare better in the short and long-run.

It is my view that the "U.S. War on Drugs, started in the 1970's" has failed, and instead has fostered an underground global economy or black market in the billions of dollars annually. And when both the human costs of the lack of treatment and detrimental effects of incarceration for drug users are added in the balance, the price becomes much higher. Additional costs are the resources of nations and local law enforcement agencies dedicated to try to interdict drug flows, control and break-up very powerful and well-funded criminal organizations, and combat the corruption, greed and violence that this illicit trade generates. Then the price becomes even higher, and one has to wonder, "Is there not a better approach we can apply, test and measure?"

In the study of public administration we analyze the effects of government policies, both intended and unintended. We think of "side-effects" where well-intentioned policies have instead produced damaging consequences that exceed the beneficial effects proposed. And the US as a principal-driver of the international illicit drug policy holds

much of the responsibility, and can and should act to reduce the “dangerous side-effects” of this well-intentioned policy to reduce the supply-side of drugs. The “Why to do it?” seems much more clear than the “How to do it?”.

If a way can be found to transition to government regulation and taxation of the illicit drug trade, it should reduce the astronomical price-enhancements that fuel large criminal activities. And, if drug use can be viewed with the lens of health care, more humane and effective outcomes are likely based on what we have seen from experiments and pilot-programs so far.

- Health care, tax revenues, prevention and treatment of drug abuse. Regulating the illegal drug market could (in theory) reduce costs and improve safety of the drugs now obtained illegally. If it was possible to tax the industry (like tobacco or alcohol), then the taxes could help to fund health care, drug treatment and prevention programs, and even perhaps to raise revenues to offset the mounting US federal deficit.
- Linking the drug trade with human trafficking, and efforts to reduce or eliminate the illegal drug market with lower-rates of human trafficking
- Conservative political actors in the US often claim that “government regulations strangle businesses”. This is an argument FOR regulation and decriminalization of the illegal drug trade.

The reasons for me to undertake this research and paper is that it may help me perform better in my larger-role in life – to find ways to improve the human condition, on a global-scale.

Thank you,

GMandell

The global situation now is tenuous at many levels. Basic natural environments are threatened and in turn the ability for local environments to sustain human populations is questionable. Political disagreements and warfare add to the human toll and cause flights of refugees. Into all of this we mix the demand for illicit drugs and the true costs to human sustainability and progress. The demand for illicit drugs and the human costs that “the War on Drugs” imposes on the global community are but one piece of the larger puzzle. But it is a very important piece, and innovative techniques need to be employed, tested and outcomes measured.

On the larger issue of global poverty, western nations have invested about \$2.3 trillion dollars to-date, and about \$538 billion to Africa alone, yet about 1 billion people live in poverty today, most subsisting on less than \$1 per day. There is a need for broader recognition that our global environment is inextricably linked, and that poverty breeds violence and warfare, as well as death and reduced opportunities for peoples of the world. And if that recognition is nascent, then there is the stronger need for coordinated and effective actions to solve global problems, including the illicit drug trade and consequences for human trafficking related to the drug trade. Global efforts have been underway for more than a century, but in keeping with the US posture have concentrated on reducing the supply-side of illicit drugs, rather than reducing effectively demand for illicit drugs or coupling medical treatments with drug-abusers to mediate and reduce drug use.

The illicit drug trade is a global problem, and can be described also as a South/North economic and political issue. This global-issue can be described at several levels: a health-issue for users; an economic destabilizing force for countries and regions; and a

human-cost where coercion, murder and human trafficking are routine elements for the drug-cartels that reap tremendous profits. This is a global-phenomenon, yet particular countries bear some of the heaviest “costs”: Mexico as the major transit corridor for all illicit drugs to the US, Afghanistan as the major producer of opium used to produce heroin and other opiates, and Columbia, Bolivia and Peru as the major producers of the coca plant used to produce cocaine.ⁱ **(Figures 1- 6).**

Some of the questions to be explored are:

- What are the roots of the war on drugs, and where has it led?
- What are recent trends in the battle over illicit drugs?
- How do we measure the illicit drug trade?
- Are there innovative approaches, and what have the outcomes been?
- What does the solution-set include?

According to the UNODC 2010 Drug Report, “Drug control has been on the global agenda for more than a century. As documented in the World Drug Report 2008, the Chinese opium epidemic in the early twentieth century spurred concerted international action, chiefly in the form of a series of treaties passed over several decades. These treaties, in particular the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and the 1988 Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, continue to define the international drug control system. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the guardian of these treaties and the United Nations lead agency on drug control.”ⁱⁱ

In the US, “The War on Drugs” is associated with President Nixon in 1971. Different viewpoints exist as to Nixon’s reasons for “the drug war”, and for including cannabis on Schedule One of controlled substances, overriding recommendations of the committee

he had tasked with review of drug policy. The commission recommended decriminalizing possession and personal use. Dan Baum, in an article for Harper's magazine revealed that in 1994 John Ehrlichman told him that the reasons for including cannabis on Schedule One was to target Nixon enemies: the antiwar left, and black people. Three Nixon aides rose to deny Ehrlichman's quote, Jeffrey Donfeld, Jerome H. Jaffe and Robert DuPont, and sent in a joint statement to The Huffington Post. But this article and the conflicting views of Nixon's agenda serve to "muddy the waters" regarding US drug policies enacted in the 1970's under Nixon, and then carried forward in slightly different approaches from Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan and on to Barack Obama.ⁱⁱⁱ

In the UNODC 2010 report, the Foreword goes on to say that drug control has matured, and that the focus has become broader. Within the imbalance of the North/South global equation, the illicit drug trade has visited higher costs on the poorer countries which are the main locations of supply and trafficking vs. the richer countries which are the biggest consumers. Drug control is now taking a more balanced view, focusing on economic development, security, justice, human rights and health to reduce supply and demand. There is the realization that under-development makes countries more vulnerable to drug trafficking and organized crime. Most importantly, health care is at the core of drug policy. Drug addicts should be sent to treatment, not to jail. The UNODC is working with the World Health Organization (WHO) to advocate for universal access to drug therapy. Also realizing that drug-use is a chronic disease and is linked with other diseases like AIDS/HIV and mental health issues.^{iv}

In the UNDOC 2015 Drug Report, the Executive Summary notes that "according to

the most recent data available that there has been little change in the overall global situation regarding the production, use and health consequences of illicit drugs.” Opium poppy cultivation and opium production is now at record levels. “This raises concerns about the size of challenges to law enforcement of increasingly sophisticated and versatile organized criminal groups”. “It is estimated that 246 million people, or 1 out of 20 people between the ages of 15 and 64 years, used an illicit drug in 2013. That is an increase of 3 million over the previous year, but because of the increase in the global population, illicit drug use has in fact remained stable.”^v So despite herculean global efforts to reduce the supply-side, drug-use has remained stable through-out the globe. Both the UNODC 2010 and 2015 Drug Reports note that Opiates and Cocaine are the biggest problems, Cannabis is the most-used illicit drug in the world and also poses lower risks for addiction, and that prescription-abuse of opiates and illicit Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS) is on the rise and may replace other illicit drugs in some markets.

The measurement of the global illicit drug trade is made over several dimensions: estimated annual value in \$US Billions; opium poppy and coca plant cultivation; volumes of drugs intercepted by law enforcement agencies; statistics on intermediate drugs and materials used to manufacture heroin and cocaine; health care statistics on drug-users and problem drug-users; deaths from drug-use; crime statistics and most recently, tax-revenues from states like Colorado for cannabis sales. Because there are problems measuring illegal trade in all dimensions, it is common to provide estimate-ranges for statistics.

- In the 2010 UNODC Drug Report, estimates of annual value were: cocaine, \$88 billion; Opiates, \$65 billion; trafficking in persons, \$32 billion; firearms, \$1 billion. **(Figure 7).**
- In the UNODC 2015 Report, total monthly revenues for cannabis in Colorado were estimated to be about \$8.50 million. **(Figure 8).**
- In the UNODC 2010 Report, 2008 global heroin consumption was estimated to be 340 metric tons (mt), and cocaine production at about 865 metric tons (mt). **(Figures 9-11).**
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) estimated past-month illicit drug use among persons aged 12 or older in the US in a 2013 study. **(Figure 11).**
 - All illicit drugs, 24.6 million; Cannabis, 19.8 million; psychotherapeutics, 6.5 million; cocaine, 1.5 million; hallucinogens, 1.3 million; inhalants, .50 million; heroin, .30 million.
- UNODC 2015 Report estimates global users of illicit drugs, showing cannabis at the top. **(Figure 12).**
- UNODC 2015 Report estimates number of illicit drug-users in 2013 at 246 million, and the number of problem drug-users as 27.4 million. **(Figure 13-15).**
- SASHSA 2013 report shows drug abuse and drug dependency along with alcohol. The findings show that alcohol is a larger problem of dependency than illicit drugs, and that it is common for the two to occur at the same time.^{vi} **(Figure 16).**
- UNODC 2013 Study on Global Homicide estimates that almost a half million people are killed annually due illicit drug-related activities. **(Figure 17).**
- In a CNN report, despite sensational and grisly details of drug killings often reported in the media, Mexico actually is rated in the middle of the pack when it comes to drug-related homicides, and after Mexico is the US. **(Figures 18-21).**

In a 2001 report, Peter Reuter and Victoria Greenfield (R&G) analyzed estimates of the illicit drug trade at the time, and concluded that UNDCP estimates of \$300-\$500 billion annually grossly over-estimated the value, and that a more accurate estimate was \$20-\$25 billion. R&G also estimate that roughly three quarters of heroin is consumed in poor countries in Asia, and that is indeed where most opiate addicts are found. The UNODC 2010, 2015 reports seem to adjust annual value figures down as estimates became better, evidence that R&G were on the right track. R&G note that estimating global cannabis production and sales is more difficult than opium and cocaine, for a variety of reasons (production is more diffuse) and some countries like

the US do not provide good estimates of domestic production (the CIA cannot spy on citizens, and the DEA has not filled the void).^{vii}

R&G also did interesting estimates of agricultural export-import products to compare traditional products with heroin and cocaine. R&G determined that where a traditional mark-up was about 6-12% export-import, the Pakistani-US heroin shipment export-import change is about 2700% and the Columbian-US cocaine shipments export-import change is about 2100%. Such export-import “mark-ups” indicate the extreme motivation for criminal enterprise, competition, corruption and violence.^{viii} **(Figure 22).**

So the scope of the measurements of the components of the global illicit drug trade is truly staggering. It is easy to get lost in all the numbers and data. So what of innovative approaches, and outcomes?

- In the US, eight states have voted to legalize cannabis, and others may follow. 23 states had already allowed medical use of cannabis.
- Vancouver, Canada has the only site in North America, where addicts may inject drugs under safer and humane conditions. This is a pilot-program where pharmaceutical quality heroin can be prescribed by physicians to addicts. Switzerland has a similar program.^{ix}
- Portugal has decriminalized personal use of all drugs. Drug use is treated as a health issue, not a crime. Drug users are referred for mandatory treatment, not to jails. Drug dealers are still sent to jail. Results are positive, but mixed. Drug use has declined, and jail populations have declined as well. Crime is down. But the drug market is not legalized and regulated, so prices still remain high and drug quality can vary a lot.^x

- In 2012, The Latin Leaders at the Summit of the America's in Cartagena, Columbia openly discussed whether legalizing and regulating drugs should be the hemisphere's new approach. In this meeting, the leaders embraced the concept that "The War on Drugs" has failed, and that new ideas are needed to solve this global problem.

Conclusion.

It seems that many in the global community have already embraced the idea that battling drug use from the supply-side has not delivered effective and humane outcomes that were the policy's objective. Instead, massive side-effects of profiteering and racketeering based on the resultant "black market" has simply exacerbated the global illicit drug trade problem. Fantastic profits and wealth fuel criminal exploits of new and staggering proportions every day. It seems that to those who genuinely care about human rights and health care issues, the time has come to think the unthinkable and plan for a transition to legal use of Schedule One and Two drugs, in the hopes that this policy will fare better in the short and long-run.

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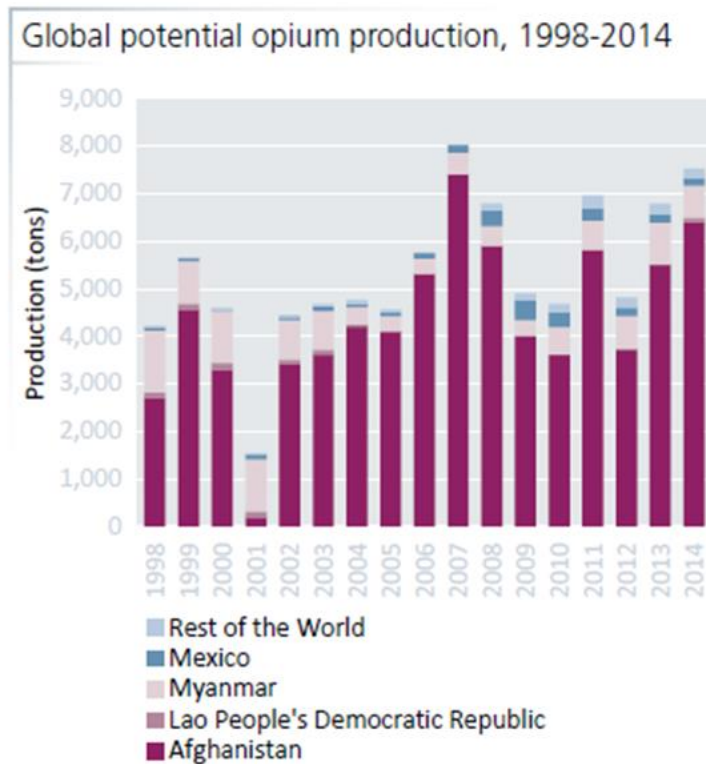
- Health care, tax revenues, prevention and treatment of drug abuse. Regulating the illegal drug market could (in theory) reduce costs and improve safety of the drugs now obtained illegally. If it was possible to tax the industry (like tobacco or alcohol), then the taxes could help to fund health care, drug treatment and prevention programs, and even perhaps to raise revenues to offset the mounting US federal deficit.
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FIGURES

Figure 1



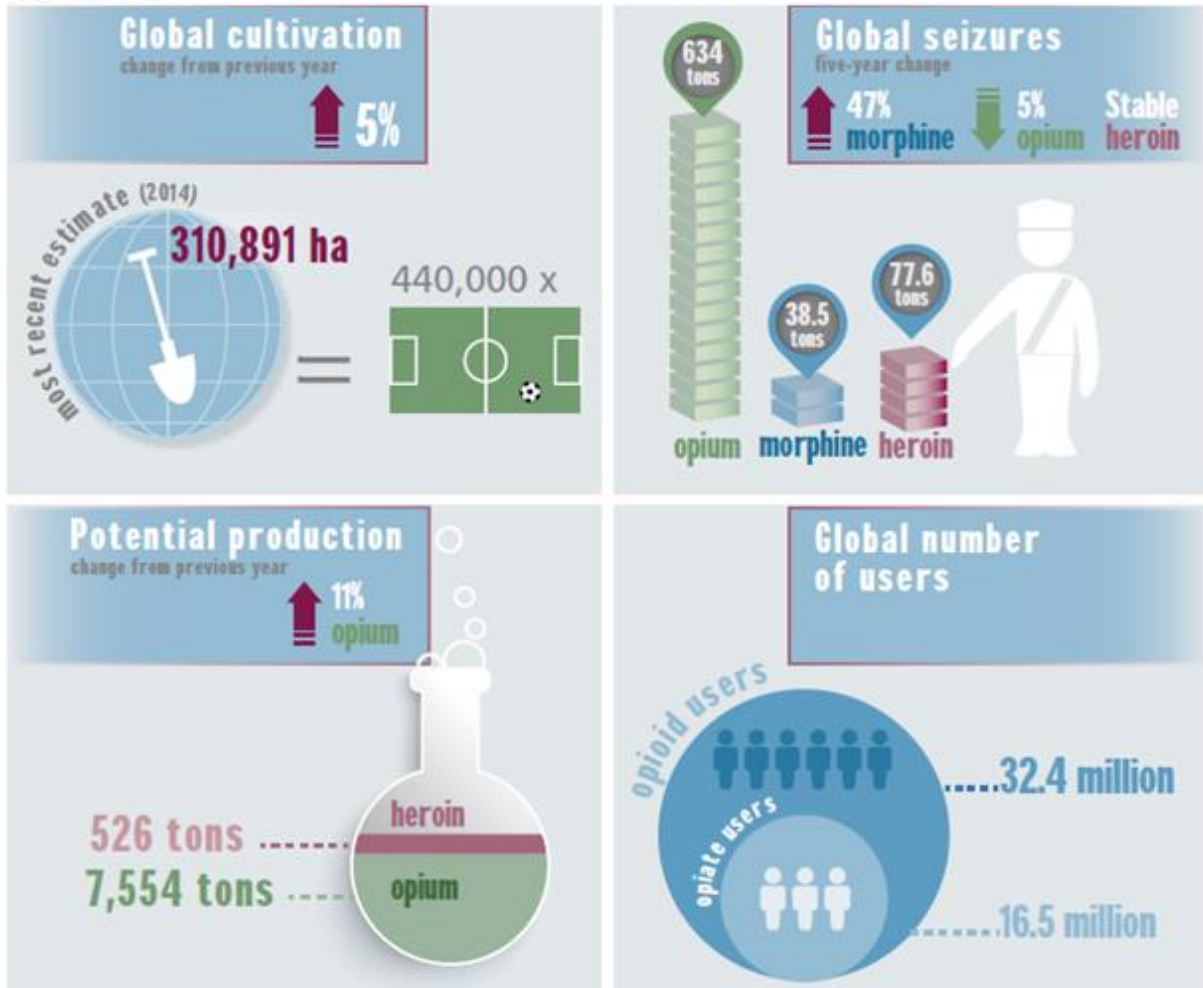
Source: Period 1997-2002: UNODC; since 2003: national illicit crop monitoring system supported by UNODC.

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Figure 2

OPIATES

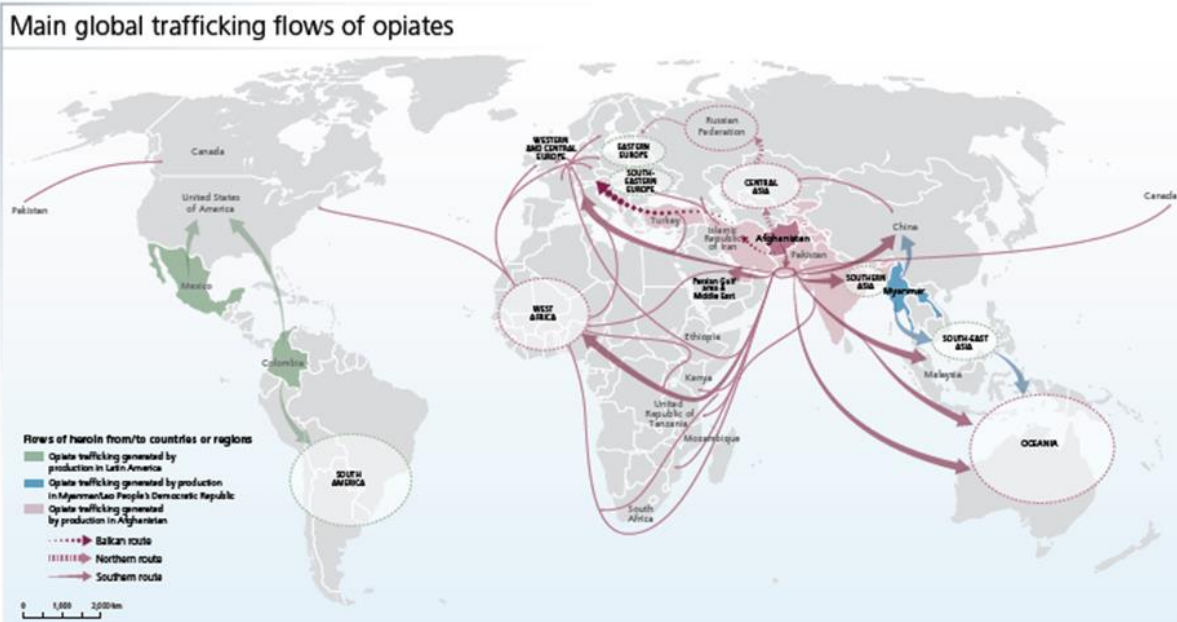
Key figures



Note: Data for seizures and number of users are from 2013. Data for cultivation and production are from 2014. Opioids include prescription opioids and opiates (opiates include opium and heroin). The global potential heroin production in 2014 is not comparable with previous years because the conversion ratios were updated in 2014.

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Figure 3



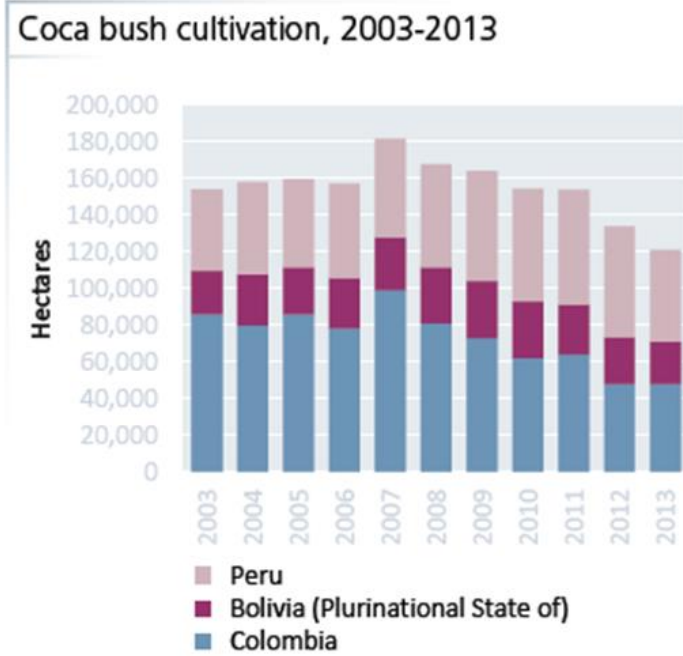
Sources: UNODC, responses to annual report questionnaire and individual drug seizure database.

Notes: The trafficking routes represented on this map should be considered broadly indicative and based on data analyses rather than definitive route outlines. Such analyses are based on data related to official drug seizures along the trafficking route as well as official country reports and responses to annual report questionnaires. Routes may deviate to other countries that lie along the routes and there are numerous secondary flows that may not be reflected.

The boundaries shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dashed lines represent undetermined boundaries. The dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. The final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined.

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Figure 4



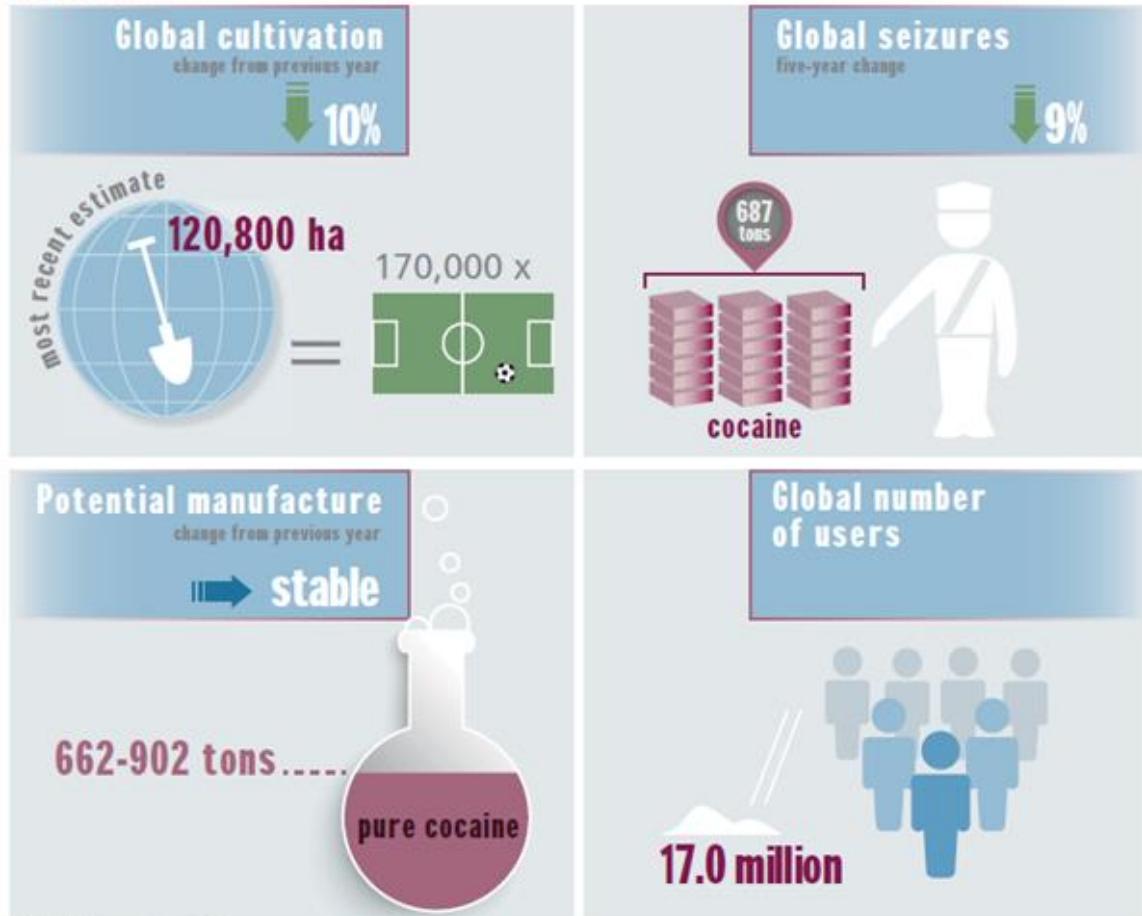
Source: UNODC, responses to annual report questionnaire and other official sources.

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Figure 5

COCAINE

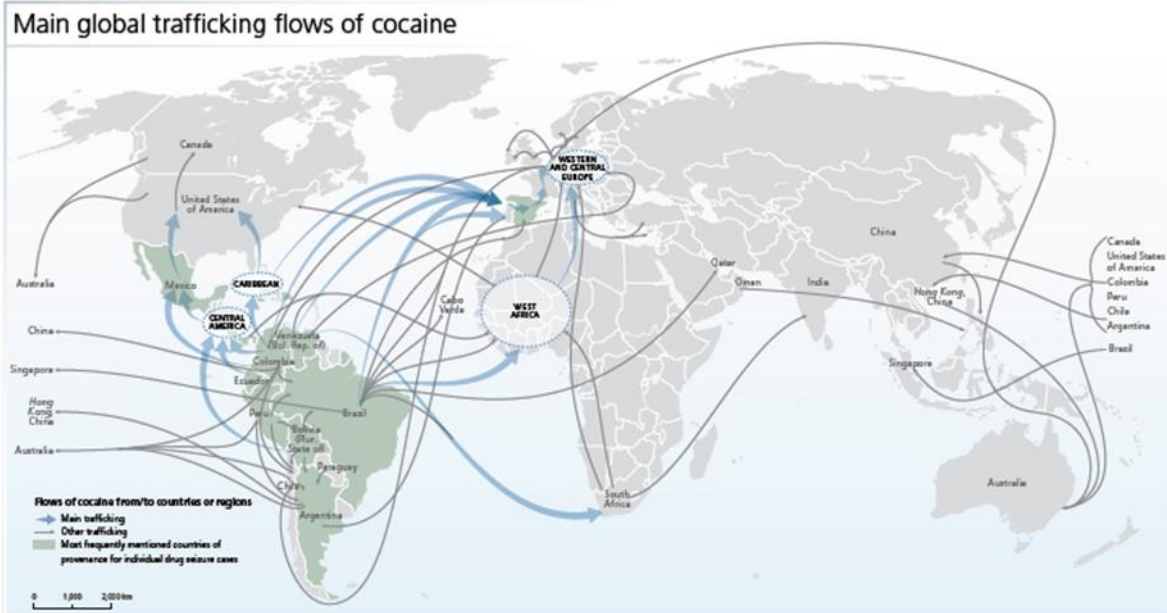
Key figures



Note: All data are from 2013.

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Figure 6



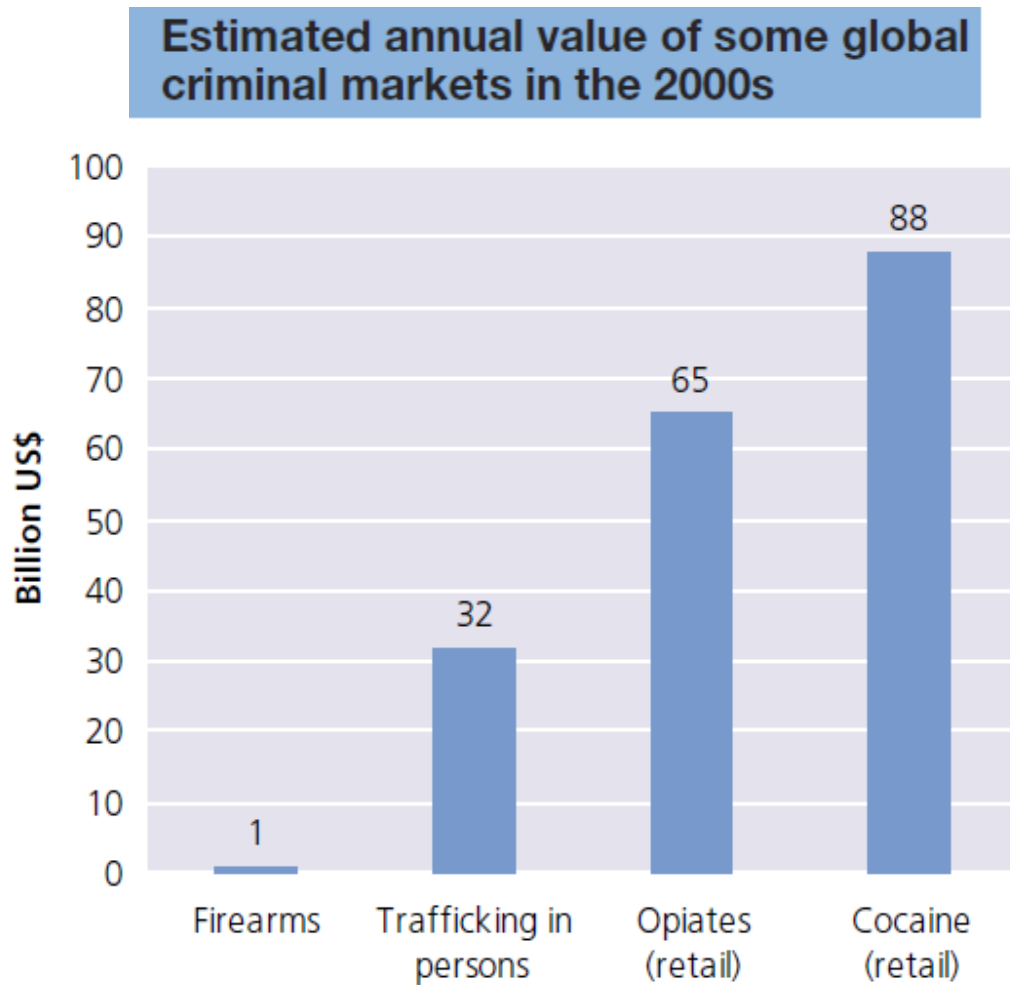
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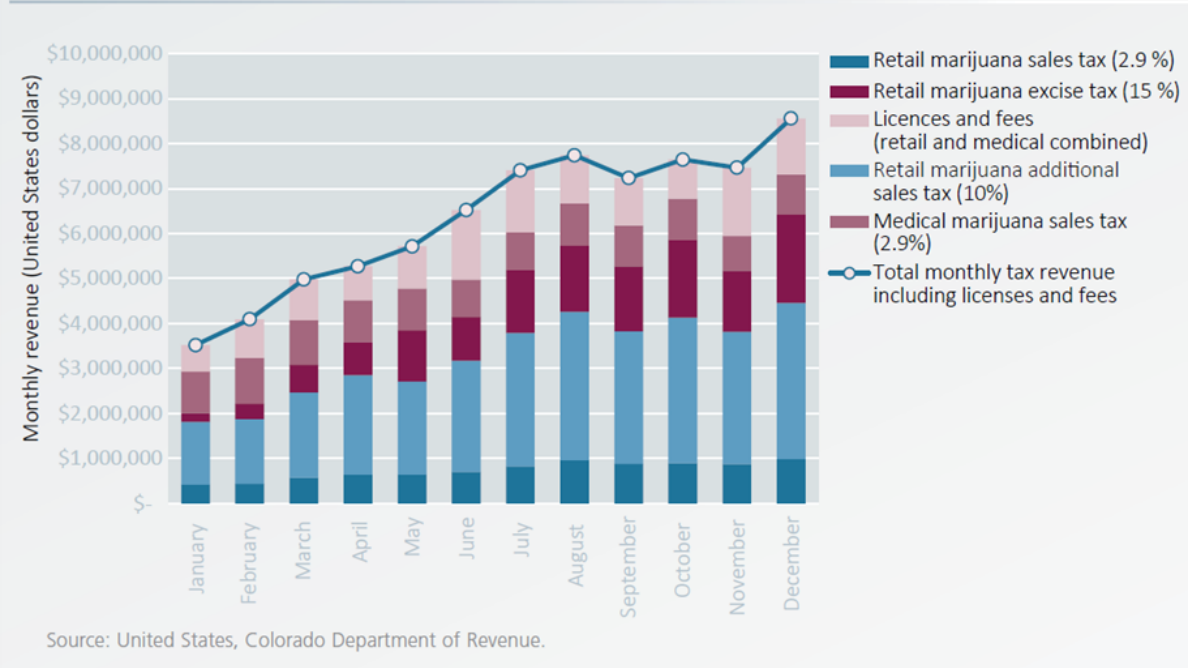
Figure 7



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Figure 8

Monthly revenue (United States dollars) from sales tax, excise tax, licences and fees for retail and medical marijuana, and total monthly tax revenue, United States, state of Colorado, 2014

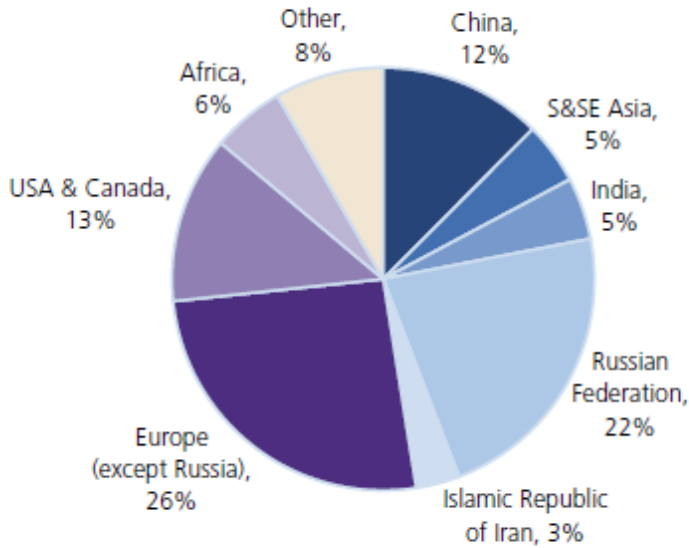


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Figure 9

Fig. 8: Global heroin/opium market distribution (US\$ 65 billion) in 2008

Source: UNODC



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Fig. 6: Estimated global opium consumption in 2008

Source: UNODC

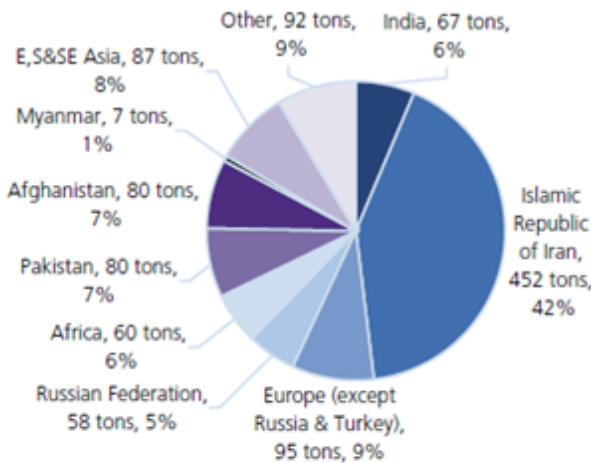
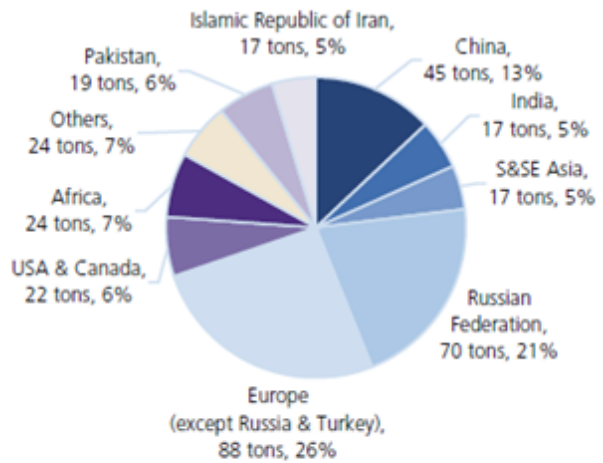


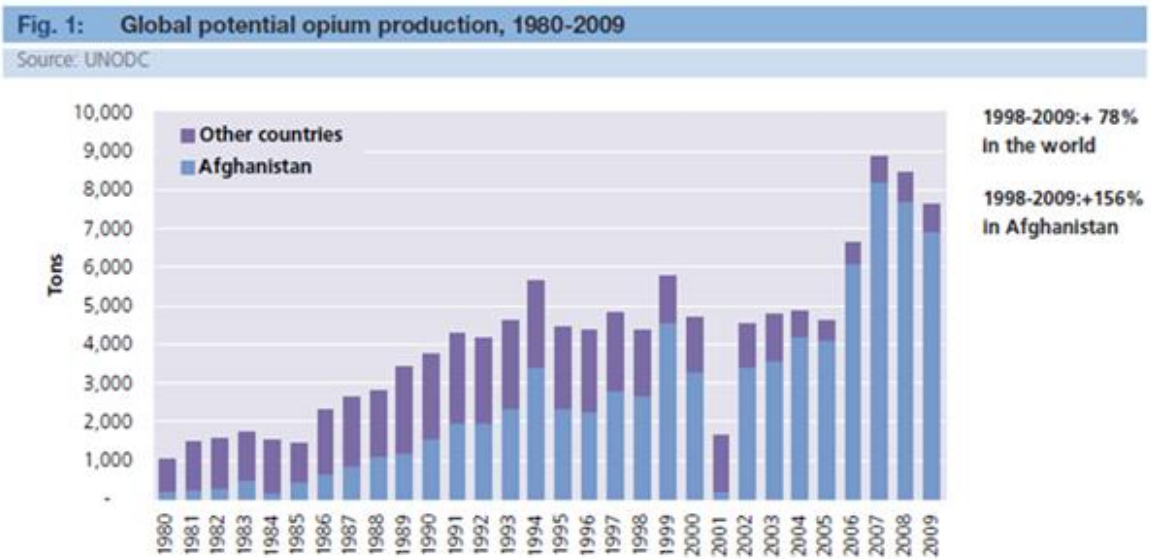
Fig. 7: Global heroin consumption (340 mt), 2008

Source: UNODC



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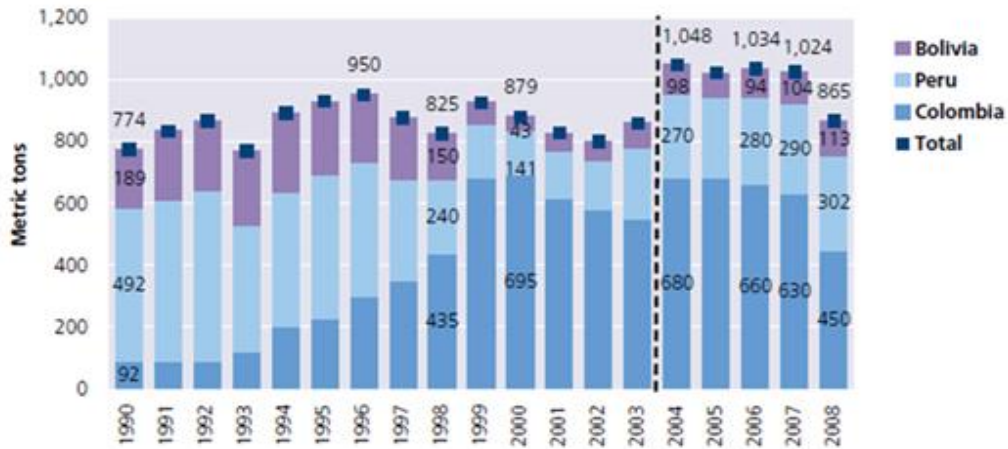
Figure 10



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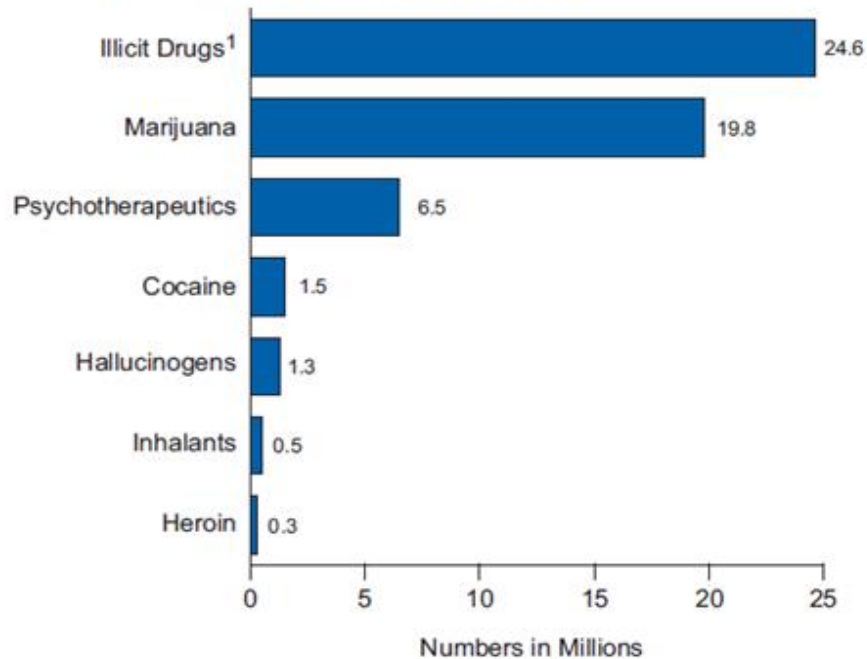
Figure 11

Fig. 2: Global potential cocaine production (mt), 1990-2008
 Source: UNODC



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Figure 2.1 Past Month Illicit Drug Use among Persons Aged 12 or Older: 2013



¹ Illicit Drugs include marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, or prescription-type psychotherapeutics used nonmedically.

Results from the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings, SAMHSA,
<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUHresultsPDFWHTML2013/Web/NSDUHresults2013.pdf>

Figure 12

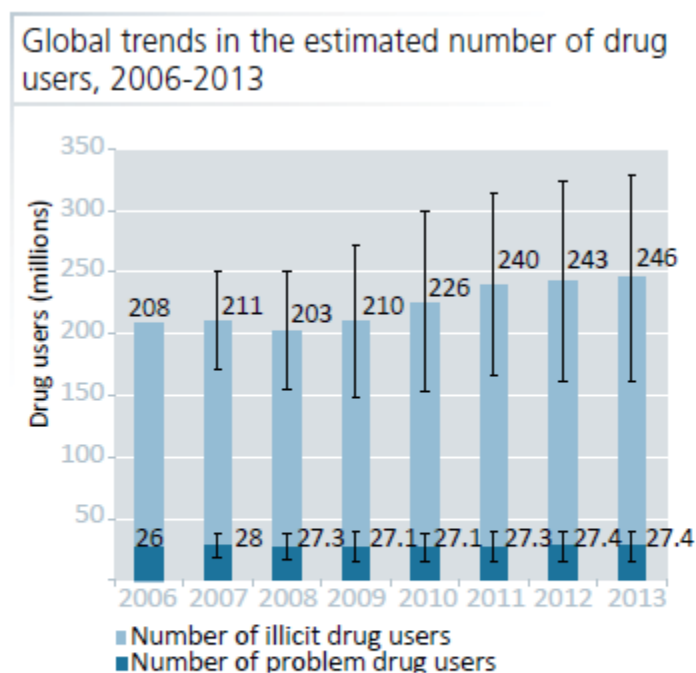
TABLE 1. Global estimates of the use of various drugs, 2013

	Percentage of population that has used the drug		Number of users (thousands)	
	low	high	low	high
Cannabis	2.7	4.9	128,480	232,070
Opioids	0.6	0.8	27,990	37,560
Opiates	0.3	0.4	12,920	20,460
Cocaine	0.3	0.4	13,800	20,730
Amphetamines	0.3	1.1	13,870	53,870
“Ecstasy”	0.2	0.6	9,340	28,390
All illicit drug use	3.4	7.0	162,000	329,000

Source: UNODC, responses to annual report questionnaire.
 Note: Estimates for adults aged 15-64, based on past-year use.

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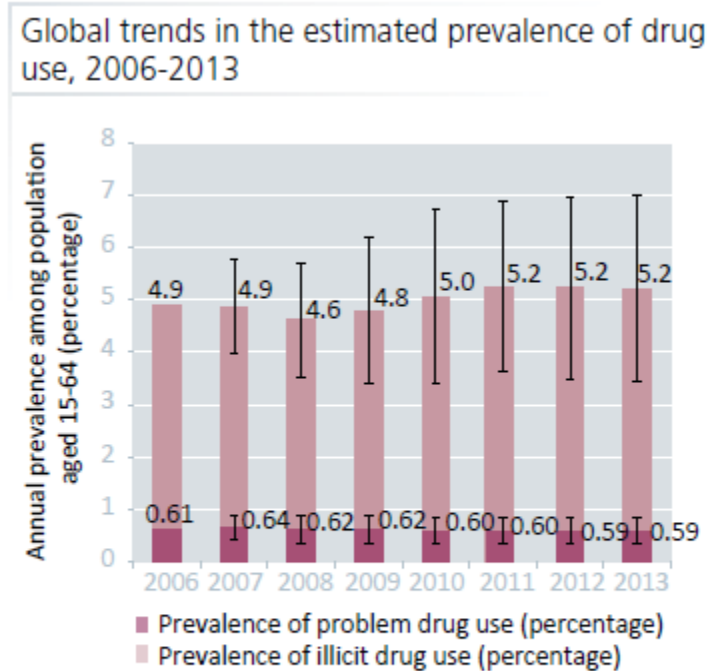
Figure 13



Source: UNODC, responses to annual report questionnaire.
 Note: Estimated percentage of adults (aged 15-64) who have used drugs in the past year.

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Figure 14

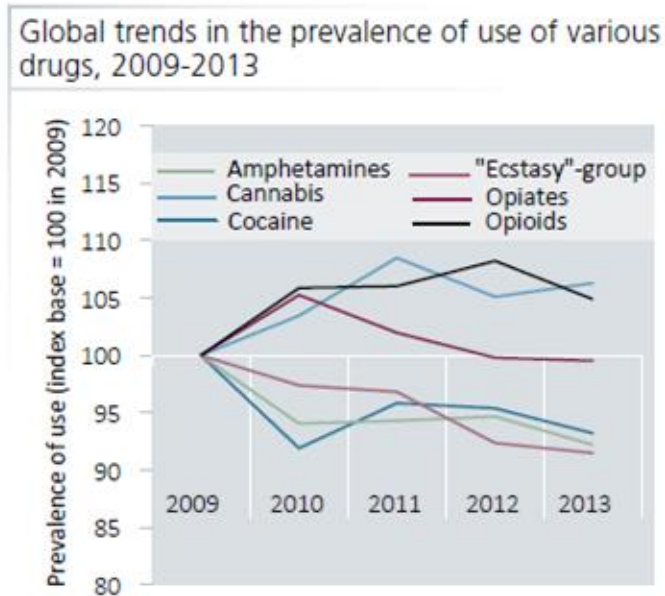


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Figure 15



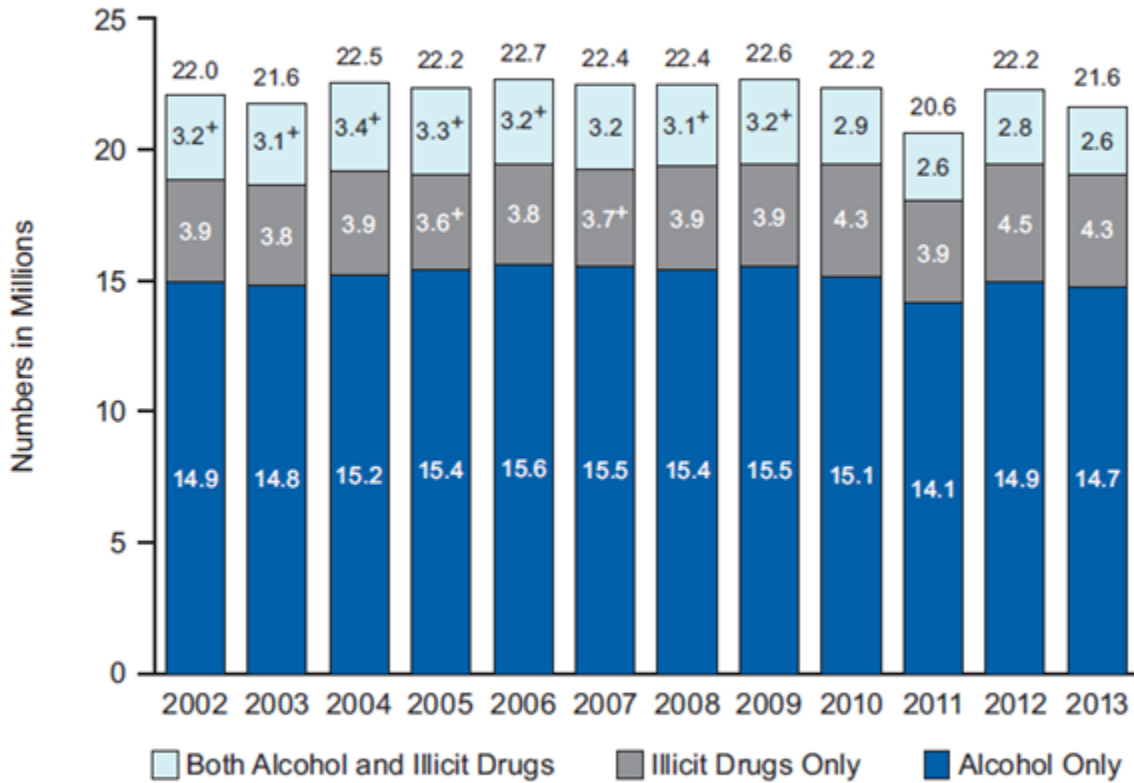
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UNODC, World Drug Report 2015 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.15.XI.6). ISBN: 978-92-1-148282-9, eISBN: 978-92-1-057300-9. https://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr2015/World_Drug_Report_2015.pdf

Figure 16

Figure 7.1 Substance Dependence or Abuse in the Past Year among Persons Aged 12 or Older: 2002-2013



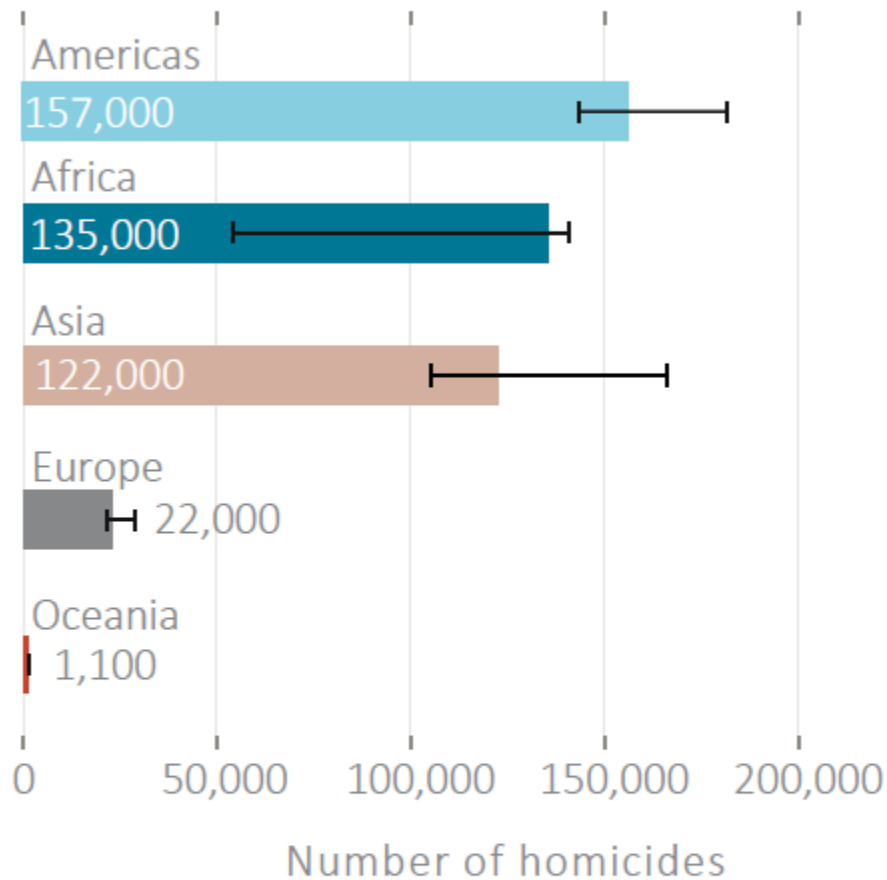
⁺ Difference between this estimate and the 2013 estimate is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Note: Due to rounding, the stacked bar totals may not add to the overall total.

Results from the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings, SAMHSA, <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUHresultsPDFWHTML2013/Web/NSDUHresults2013.pdf>

Figure 17

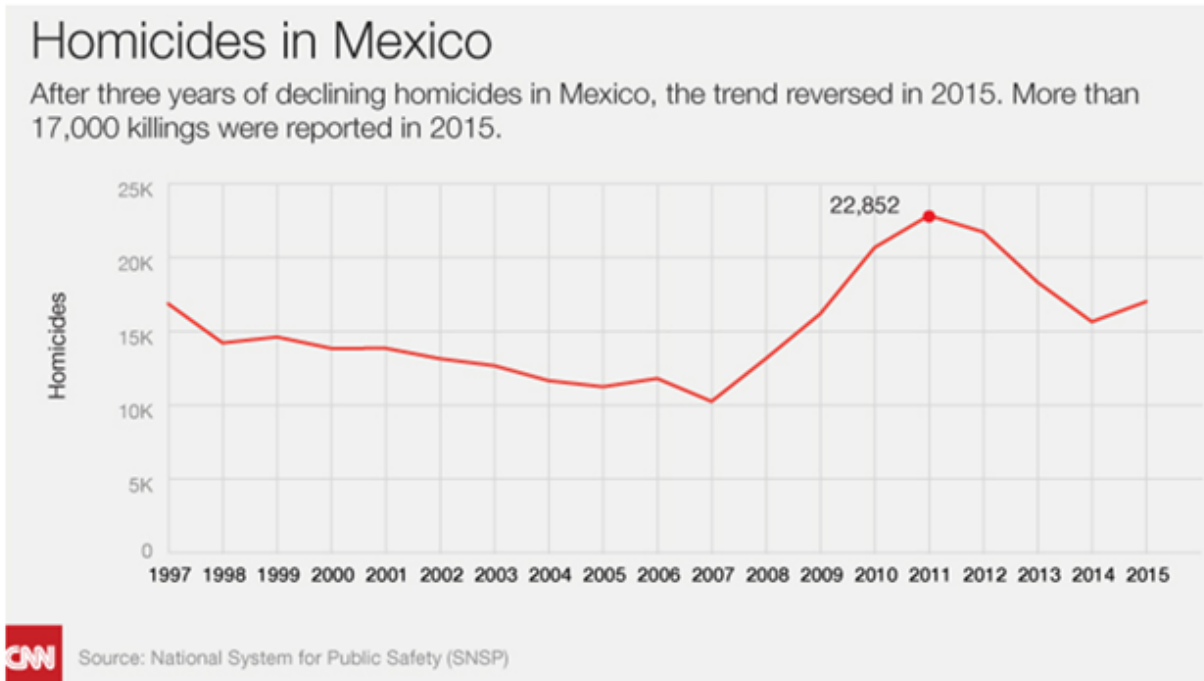
Fig. 1.1: Total number of homicides, by region (2012 or latest year)



Source: UNODC Homicide Statistics (2013). The bars represent total homicide counts based on the source selected at the country level, with low and high estimates derived from total counts based on additional sources existing at the country level.

UNODC Global Study on Homicide 2013
(United Nations publication, Sales No. 14.IV.1), eISBN: 978-92-1-054205-0
https://www.unodc.org/documents/qsh/pdfs/2014_GLOBAL_HOMICIDE_BOOK_web.pdf

Figure 18



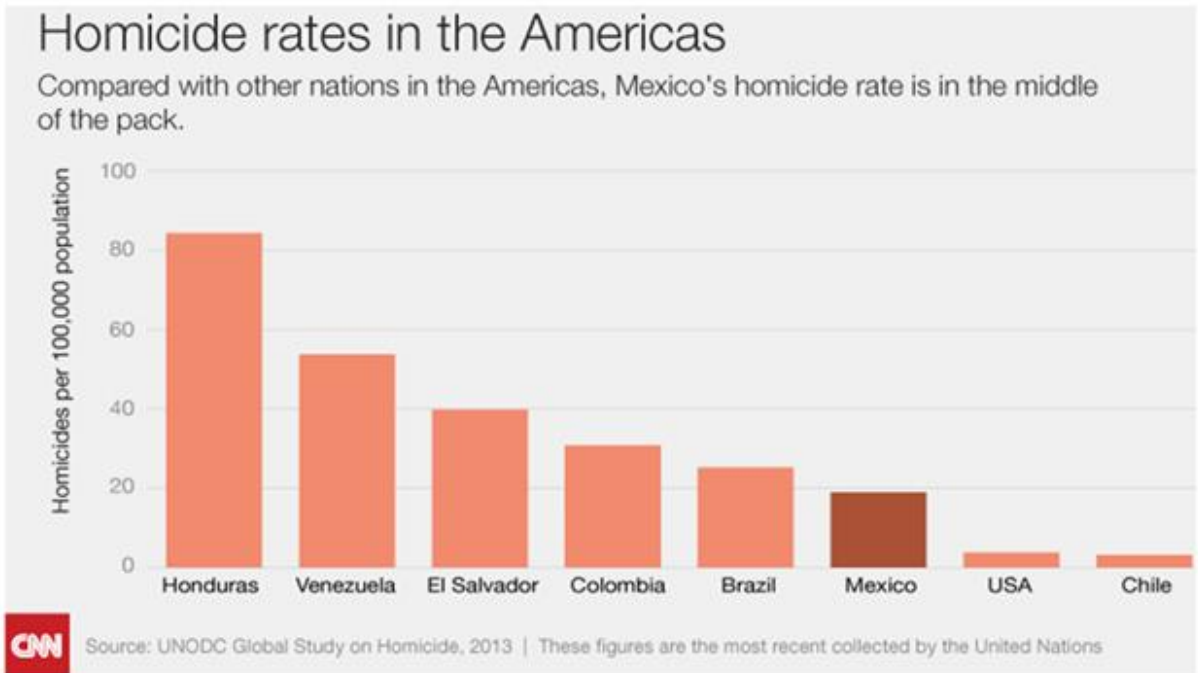
Mexico is NOT the deadliest country in the Americas

The grisliness of some of the drug cartel violence in Mexico -- beheadings, mass killings, torture -- gets a lot of attention. While there are some hot spots of violent activity, Mexico's homicide rate is actually closer to the middle of the pack than the top, compared with other nations in the hemisphere.

Mariano Castillo, "Drugs, Money and Violence: The toll in Mexico", CNN 03/27/17.

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/15/world/mexico-drug-graphics/>

Figure 19



Many kingpins have fallen, but the smuggling industry survives

The Mexican government points to evidence of its successes in the war on drugs: The leadership of the biggest cartels has been captured or killed (or recaptured, as in the case of serial escapee [Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman](#)). Critics of the so-called "kingpin strategy" say the focus on the bosses has only created more factions of traffickers.

Mariano Castillo, "Drugs, Money and Violence: The toll in Mexico", CNN 03/27/17.
<http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/15/world/mexico-drug-graphics/>

Figure 20

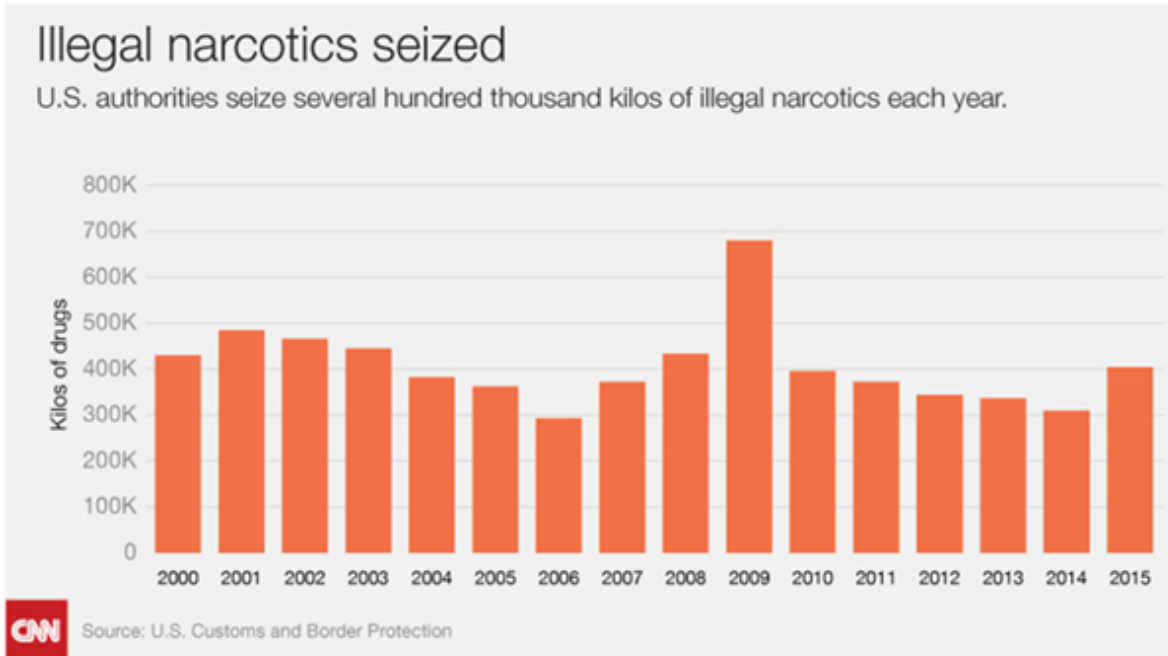


U.S. demand for drugs changes little

The United States is the biggest market for Mexican drug cartels. The conversation on drugs has evolved in the past 15 years to include legalization of marijuana, the toll of innocent victims in Mexico, and the amount of money earmarked for fighting the drug war. But while the demand for drugs fluctuates (one indicator is how many drugs are seized at U.S. ports of entry), it hasn't changed too much.

Mariano Castillo, "Drugs, Money and Violence: The toll in Mexico", CNN 03/27/17.
<http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/15/world/mexico-drug-graphics/>

Figure 21



Drug trafficking brings billions into Mexico

U.S. authorities estimate that the Mexican drug cartels send between \$19 billion and \$29 billion back to Mexico from the United States, [according to the Department of Justice](#). Authorities successfully seize millions of dollars each year that are being smuggled back south to Mexico from the United States. Still, it is a fraction of the estimated profits for the cartels.

Mariano Castillo, "Drugs, Money and Violence: The toll in Mexico", CNN 03/27/17.
<http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/15/world/mexico-drug-graphics/>

Figure 22

Table 3: Prices of Cocaine through the distribution system: 1997
(Prices per pure kilogram equivalent)

Leaf (Peru)	\$650
Export (Colombia)	\$1,050
Import (Miami)	\$23,000
Wholesale-Kilo	\$33,000
Wholesale-Oz	\$52,000
Retail (100 mg. Pure)	\$188,000

Source: U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

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Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA), <https://www.samhsa.gov/>

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The Freedom Fund, <http://freedomfund.org/>

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