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MULTIDIMENSIONAL SECURITY AT THE BORDERS

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Application of Fundamental Concepts to Policing Part 2

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Application of Fundamental Concepts to Policing



In 2011, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime published a research that examined the magnitude of illegal funds generated by illicit activities based on technical parameters established by the International Monetary Fund. It helps us to understand the magnitude of revenues from crimes and illicit activities, which add up to approximately 3.6% of global gross domestic product, which is equivalent to 2.1 trillion US dollars.

The UNODC study estimates that the flow of drug trafficking and other organized crime activities produced revenue equivalent to 650 billion US dollars per year in the first decade of the new millennium, which is equivalent to 1.5% of the global GDP. Funds available for laundering through the financial system are equivalent to approximately 1% of the global GDP, totaling 580 billion US dollars in 2009.

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Most of the financial revenues of transnational organized crime come from illicit drugs, which represent about 20% of the profits from all crimes and approximately half of the profits of transnational organized crime, corresponding to somewhere between 0.6% and 0.9% of global GDP.

Regarding the regional market for cocaine, the main illicit commodity exported by South American countries, estimates vary widely. Some studies indicate spending on cocaine in the United States and Europe between 35 billion and 115 billion US dollars. Most of the profits were generated in North America and Central and Western Europe. The research further reveals that, of a total of 84 billion US dollars in profits and 56 billion US dollars available for laundering, approximately 20.6 billion US dollars left the jurisdictions where the profits were generated.

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As for global cannabis market estimates, they vary significantly. While some studies indicate a global consumption that is only half of the UNODC estimates, the regional cannabis market estimate is even more uncertain due to the widespread cultivation of this drug throughout the world. The Americas region, including Canada, the United States, Mexico, Paraguay, Colombia and Brazil, produces around 24% of the world's cannabis.

Firearms trafficking is another important illicit market to be addressed. It is essential to highlight that this market has an important connection with drug trafficking and affects the distribution of drugs and weapons in urban areas. Illegal weapons are often produced legally and, at some point, enter into the illegal market, which makes controlling illegal transfers a significant challenge.

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Regarding immigrant smuggling, it is estimated that more than 232 million people worldwide are international migrants, with 57.5 million of them living in the Americas. Many of these people rely on false or illegally obtained documents, which generate profits of 6.6 trillion US dollars per year globally.

Furthermore, new illicit markets, such as biopiracy and the illegal timber trade, have gained strength due to the advancement of biotechnology and the easiness of registering trademarks and patents internationally. This poses a significant threat to biodiversity and environmental sustainability.

Although estimates and data on these illicit activities may be imprecise, they provide valuable information for planning preventive and repressive actions.



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