

How Does the Lucrative Drug Trafficking Trade Fuel Crime & Corruption in 21st Century Mexico?



Among the most troubling signs of instability in Mexico today is a significant jump in Mexico's crime rate due to the drug wars between rival narcotic trafficking rings. Between 2005 & 2013, more than 70,000 people have been murdered in Mexico. The vast majority of these murders are linked to drug trafficking in some way. The majority of the murders are committed in major drug growing or drug smuggling regions such as the U.S. border cities of Tijuana & Juarez. Throughout the country, the murder of many journalists, public officials & innocent bystanders alongside the people participating in the drug trade has created a widespread climate of public fear and significant political, economic and social instability.

Since the late 1980s, drug trafficking in Mexico has become a major industry. Mexican drug bosses now work closely with their counterparts in Colombia to smuggle cocaine into the United States. Many have set up their own distribution networks in the U.S. market. The United States contends that as much as 70

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Forensic workers remove one of nine bodies found at a plot on the outskirts of the border city of Ciudad Juarez on March 14, 2009. (Alejandro Bringas/Reuters) www.theatlantic.com

percent of the cocaine reaching the United States comes through Mexico. In addition, Mexican drug traffickers supply most of the heroin consumed in the western states of the United States and have expanded their trade in marijuana and synthetic drugs, such as methamphetamines. In all, Mexican drug traffickers bring in \$7-10 billion a year.

The Mexican government has warned that the drug trade poses a threat to Mexico's security and stability. The spike in crimes such as kidnapping, robbery and murder in Mexico has been extremely difficult to combat because of the highly organized nature of the drug cartels. Drug profits have allowed major traffickers to buy off police, military, and local political officials. Drug bosses have successfully infiltrated the Mexican government and law enforcement agencies through bribery and intimidation. Many Mexicans believe that drug money has penetrated the top ranks of the government.