

Mexico, the allure of greater profits over the border is too strong for much cocaine to be left behind.

Destination USA

Unfortunately, the US government has so far not submitted the individual seizures information. Given the decentralised nature of US law enforcement, there may be administrative reasons for this omission. The US reports seizing 176 mt of cocaine in 2005, but the details of these seizures are not available. It is known that only 31 mt of this total were seized at the US arrival zones,⁴⁷ so the balance must have been apprehended internally or on international waters.

The USA does submit detailed information on the nationality of federal drug trafficking arrestees however. In 2004, there were 11,787 people arrested for cocaine trafficking in the USA by the federal authorities. Of these, 8,814 (75 %) were US citizens. Of the foreigners whose nationality was known, 1,410 (56 %) were Mexican nationals, 378 (15 %) were Colombian, and 286 (11 %) were from the Dominican Republic. Dominican cocaine and heroin wholesalers and retailers have long been an integral part of the distribution network of the Colombian drug trafficking organizations, so these two can arguably be combined. In essence, the two major groups of rival syndicates (Colombian and Mexican) comprise 82 per cent of the arrests of foreigners for cocaine trafficking. Only five Venezuelans were arrested, and the seven Central American countries combined make up 96 arrests (4 %).

If cocaine were sold and re-sold in transit countries, Venezuelans and Central Americans would be expected to play a greater role in delivering the drugs to their destinations. While their direct role in US markets has been diminished, the fact that Colombian nationals continue to comprise a significant portion of drug trafficking arrestees in the USA reinforces the idea that the flow of cocaine is controlled by multi-national groups with the capacity to source, transport, and market the drug. All this supports the notion that the bulk of the cocaine traffic to the USA is controlled by large organizations, not small networks or the invisible hand of the market.

In summary, while cocaine trafficking to the USA is not as centralised as it was in the days of the big cartels, it appears that the bulk of the flow remains in the hands of large and well-organized syndicates because:

- Multi-ton seizures, worth hundreds of millions of dollars on arrival in the USA, are found at all points in the trafficking chain, often comprising a large share of national annual seizures.
- The trafficking chain appears to be divided between Colombian and Mexican syndicates, with

an unknown share controlled entirely by Colombian groups.

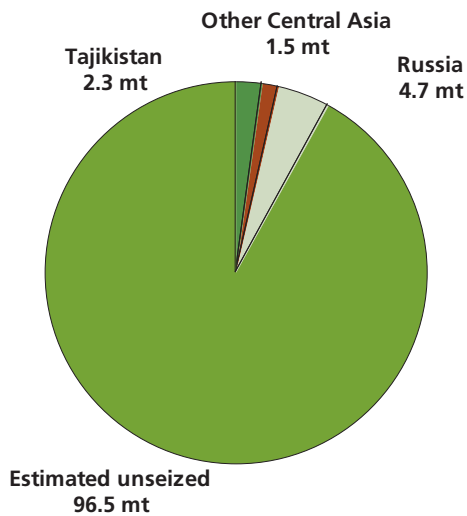
- While transit country nationals are arrested with small amounts of drugs all over the world, they do not appear to be taking control of a significant share of the drug flow.
- Cocaine use prevalence is low in transit countries, indicating that most of the drugs (less seizures) are reaching their highest-value destination.

2.4 Heroin via Central Asia to the Russian Federation

In contrast to the trafficking of cocaine to the USA, the flow of heroin from Afghanistan through Central Asia to the Russian Federation appears to be less organised. There are several possible reasons for this. The flow is more recent, with the use of heroin in Russia only starting in the 1980s and picking up after the collapse of the former Soviet Union in 1991. The recurrent conflicts and poverty in Afghanistan have provided an opportunity for illicit production to become widespread. Poverty and conflicts in Central Asia have also hindered the development of defences against trafficking. But these factors may also have retarded the consolidation of the market – it is difficult to transport large shipments of drugs when scores of feuding warlords block the way and roads are in poor repair. As a result, it is only in recent years that there has been sufficient order for larger scale groups to coalesce.

Today, Afghanistan is the source of upwards of 90 per cent of the world's heroin, but most of this is produced in the southern and eastern parts of the country. This is known with some certainty because UNODC does comprehensive opium crop surveys in each of the major heroin producing countries. Although estimating trafficking flows is more complicated, there is a strong basis to believe that most of the heroin produced in Afghanistan moves out via Iran and Pakistan toward Europe on what is known as the Balkan Route. This is based not only on drug seizures but also cultivation patterns and interviews with drug market actors in Afghanistan. But while the exact amounts are subject to debate, about a fifth of the Afghan heroin produced, estimated to be about 100 mt in 2005, leaves the country to the North through Central Asia toward the Russian Federation. It would appear that only a small share of this flow is seized – around 10 per cent. If this were true, the seizure figures would be a less reliable gauge of the underlying undetected flows in this region than they are in the Americas. In particular, this lower interdiction ratio leaves open the possibility that large shipments are occurring under the protection of corruption, and that

Fig. 11: Heroin seizures in Afghanistan/Russia transit zone in 2005



Source: UNODC Delta database

seizures merely reflect the small-fry who attempt to operate without this protection. However, there are other indicators, such as local heroin use levels, that suggest the trafficking of the drugs through Central Asia is still highly disorganized.

The destination of most of these drugs is the Russian Federation, which has one of the highest rates of opiate use in the world. An estimated 2 per cent of the adult population annually use either heroin or one of the many homemade opiate concoctions. The best estimates place the heroin user population in Russia at about 1.6 million, consuming up to 80 mt of heroin each year,⁴⁸ worth some US\$1.5 billion at wholesale level in Russia. This is about a tenth of the wholesale value of the US cocaine market.

The Afghan source

The internal market in Afghanistan appears to be comprised of at least four distinct levels:

- A market-driven population of 2.9 million farmers in 2006;
- A semi-regulated stratum of about a quarter of a million small-scale local traders.
- A small number of large-scale traders, moving large shipments to the border and, in some cases, beyond.
- A large number of small-scale cross-border traffickers.

As in Colombia, the cultivation of drug crops in Afghanistan is diffuse. Cultivation occurred in 28 of 34

provinces in 2006, involving 2.9 million of Afghanistan's 23 million people, or 13 per cent of the entire population.⁴⁹ It would be implausible to suggest that 13 per cent of the Afghan population are employed by, or even directed by, organized crime groups. Most farmers are not involved in refining the drug, and do not necessarily have direct contact with those who do.

Rather, widespread cultivation of opium is largely a product of the fact that fertile land is scarce in Afghanistan and alternative livelihoods are in short supply. A large share of the population subsists on small-scale agriculture. While opium poppy is more labour-intensive than other crops, labour is cheap in Afghanistan, and poppy yields eight times the income of a comparable area of wheat, the other main crop in the region. Some 448,000 households farmed 165,000 hectares of poppy in 2006, or just over a third of a hectare per household, producing an income of US\$1,700 a year per family.⁵⁰ This is one-seventh the income earned by coca cultivating households in Colombia.⁵¹

As is the case everywhere, farmers require credit in order to survive, and one of the primary sources of these micro-loans appears to be opium traders. Landless farmers must lease the land they wish to till, and are even more credit dependent. Credit is extended by opium traders – including shopkeepers, bazaar traders, and itinerant traders – to be repaid in opium. Opium has become a kind of currency, with high value per weight, a means of storing value. While credit is not the only or even the dominant reason farmers cultivate opium, the credit dynamic is a key mechanism by which the market is ordered.

There are a lot of these creditors/opium traders, an estimated one for every thirteen farmers, or perhaps 225,000 traders in the country.⁵² Research indicates that this group is not directed by organized crime, and there appears to be a lot of competition among them.⁵³ This is not to say the market is open to just anyone, however. Regional warlords sanctioned and taxed opium dealings in the past, and many of these men have assumed positions of local authority today. It is likely that only those authorised to deal and willing to pay for the privilege are allowed to operate.

The opium outputs consolidated by the small-scale traders are sold at one of many well-known bazaars to large-scale traders. These consolidated loads are moved to the border areas, where the drugs are either smuggled as opium or processed to become heroin in one of a number of laboratories.⁵⁴ In the first eight months of 2006, 248 heroin labs were dismantled in Afghanistan.⁵⁵ The “cooks” who convert the opium to heroin are largely Pashtun. In the north, they are often Shinwaris

originating near the Pakistan border, who were among the first to be exposed to the manufacture of heroin. They sell their skills to the highest bidder and thus operate as independent contractors. Most traders appear to leave the cross-border trafficking to specialist groups, who may also be of distinct ethnic groups (e.g. Baluchis in the South of Afghanistan; Uzbeks or Tajiks in the North).

In the North, in 2006, heroin prices varied by 50 per cent or more between the province of Balkh, located on the border with Uzbekistan (US\$2,194/kg in March 2007), and the province of Badakhshan, located on the border with Tajikistan (US\$3,500). This is despite the fact that a major road connects the two regions and they are a few hundred kilometres apart. It is unlikely that the real costs of transport between these two locations would justify a price differential of US\$1,300/kg, particularly given that the quality of opium from Badakhshan is known to be better, and notwithstanding the threat of law enforcement in Kunduz.⁵⁶ This suggests that different stretches of border comprise distinct markets and that there is scant trading between them, or prices would quickly approach equilibrium. The lack of trading between nearby markets suggests high levels of regional control of supply, likely due to the domination of strong criminal actors. On the other hand, it could also be related to superior law enforcement in Balkh, which is not known to contain heroin labs, and the proximity of the higher value market of Iran.

It remains something of a puzzle that these large-scale traders appear to sell their stocks off in relatively small amounts to cross border traffickers. While some Afghan nationals do carry the drug across the border to Tajikistan, they do not appear to be involved in trafficking much further north than that. Afghanis of Tajik ethnicity lack the Russian language skills of their co-ethnics further north, which may inhibit their movement toward higher value markets. It may well be that no single organized crime group has sufficient international connections to consistently navigate all the local power structures that stand between Afghanistan and Russia, but the rewards will be great for the first groups to manage this feat. At present, however, it appears that once the drug leaves Afghanistan, the trafficking networks are small and market driven.

The Central Asian link

Seizures in Russia and Central Asia show that multi-ethnic trafficking groups do exist. But at least at the initial stages, cross-border ethnicity is key. Tajik or Uzbek Afghans smuggle the drugs almost exclusively to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan respectively. From there, the heroin may change hands to Kyrgyz or Kazakh nationals until reaching Kazakhstan, and thereafter Kazakh or

Russian groups transport it to Russia. Russian nationals have been arrested in connection with large seizures as far south as Tajikistan, however. It would appear that Kyrgyz and Kazakh nationals are reliant on the Tajik and Uzbek groups to provide the drugs for further trafficking. In general, transport through the transit zone appears to be controlled by the nationals of the transit zone, with border crossings involving groups of both states.

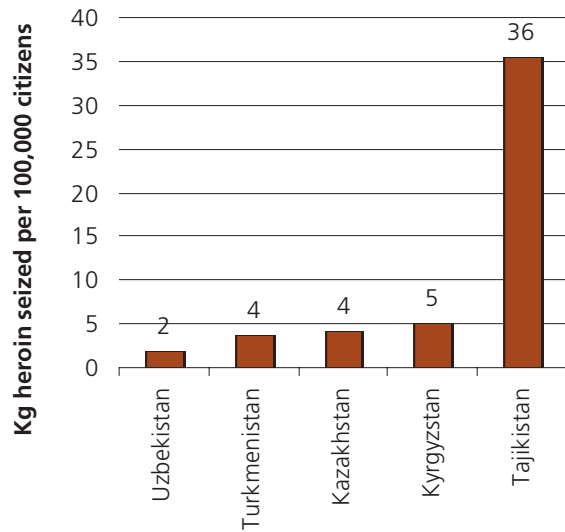
In addition, it appears that heroin is bought and sold multiple times before it reaches its destination in the Russian Federation. In other words, the movement of heroin toward Russia is largely a product of independent national agents pursuing the profits gained by transporting the drugs over a series of borders, not the grand design of a single organization orchestrating transport from Afghanistan to Russia.

Exiting Afghanistan to the North, the trafficker is presented with three countries to choose from: Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. Based solely on seizure figures, it would appear that only Tajikistan is heavily utilized by traffickers, but there remains very little information on the situation in Turkmenistan.

It is not surprising that Tajikistan would provide an attractive target, due to the weakness of the state following its recent civil war (1992-1997) and the fact that it suffers from the lowest levels of human development in Central Asia, according to UNDP's 2006 Human Development Report. In addition, those who dominate the heroin producing areas of northern Afghanistan are primarily Tajik in ethnicity, and many Tajik villages in other parts of Afghanistan grow poppy. In 2005, Tajikistan seized 78 per cent of the heroin among the three border countries, and 60 per cent of that seized in Central Asia as a whole. These figures are all the more remarkable given that Tajikistan has only 6.5 million people, about 12 per cent of the regional population, so its per capita seizures are seven times higher than any other Central Asian country. While this suggests that the country is the preferred trafficking route, it also reflects a substantial achievement of Tajik law enforcement.

Further, Tajikistan still commands the bulk of regional drug seizures after two years of precipitous drops in the amount of drugs intercepted: in 2003, seizures were twice as high. Declines in seizures in Tajikistan after 2003 can be partly attributed to declines in opium production in northeastern Afghanistan: in neighbouring Badakhshan, production declined by 53 per cent in 2005. But it is also tied to the withdrawal of the Russian border troops, resulting in decreased interdiction efficiency. The Tajik Government cannot afford to fully replace these troops, which cost the Russian Govern-

Fig. 12: Kilograms of heroin seized per 100,000 citizens in 2005



Source: UNODC Delta database

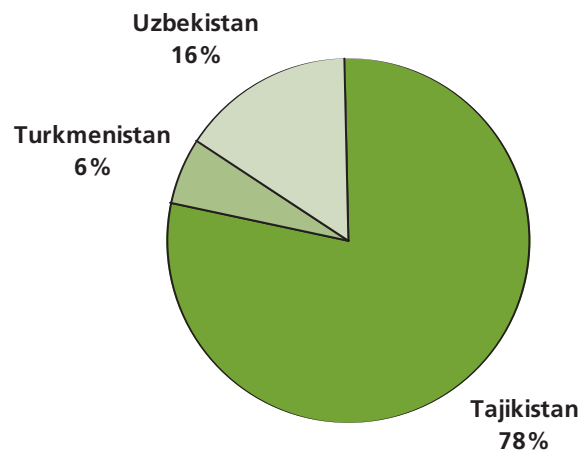
ment some US\$30 million per annum to maintain, and this is likely to increase the attractiveness of the country as a drug transshipment route even further.

Turkmenistan offers a second likely routing, as it is the only Central Asian country bordering both Afghanistan and Iran. It lies just across the Caspian Sea, and it has historically enjoyed political relations with both the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. There have also been recent increases in production in northwestern Afghanistan, and it would be odd if production in Faryab, for example, were headed anywhere but directly over the border to Turkmenistan. Given these facts, it was not surprising when 78 per cent of heroin seized in Central Asia in 1997 was seized in Turkmenistan, or that some 4.6 mt of opium were seized in 1999,⁵⁷ or that during 1995-2000, more than 198 mt of precursor chemicals, mostly acetic anhydride,⁵⁸ were also seized. But in recent years, there has been little recorded activity, aside from sporadic opium seizures.

Turkmenistan is perceived to suffer from high levels of corruption,⁵⁹ and this is one possible explanation for the lack of seizures. But there is no reason to believe that this alleged corruption is a recent development in the country,⁶⁰ so it does not explain why seizures suddenly stopped. In addition, as will be discussed below, very few Turkmen have been arrested by the Russian authorities for trafficking into Russia. In the absence of other compelling data, it cannot be assumed that Turkmenistan is a major conduit for northern-bound heroin.

Uzbekistan, in contrast, has a stronger state, and shares

Fig. 13: Breakdown of seizures among Central Asian countries bordering Afghanistan in 2005

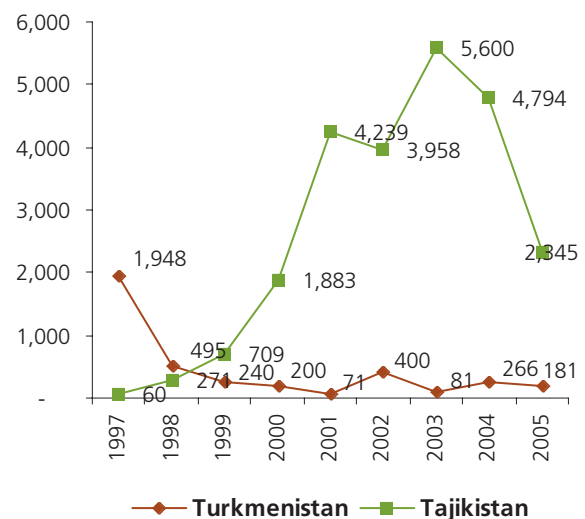


Source: UNODC Delta database

a relatively short border with Afghanistan (137 km). Instead of entering the country directly, the drugs that do enter Uzbekistan seem to transit Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.⁶¹ Low seizure levels have been reported in recent years, not much better than Turkmenistan, but more Uzbeks have been arrested in Russia.

From Tajikistan it appears that a large share of the drugs also transit Kyrgyzstan, a country almost as poor and also encountering instability. From Kyrgyzstan, the heroin must transit Kazakhstan, which also receives some traffic from Uzbekistan and, presumably, Turkmenistan.

Fig. 14: Heroin seizures in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, 1997-2005



Source: UNODC Annual Reports Questionnaire Data/Delta

Map 2: Possible drug trafficking routes in Central Asia toward the Russian Federation



Source: UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia

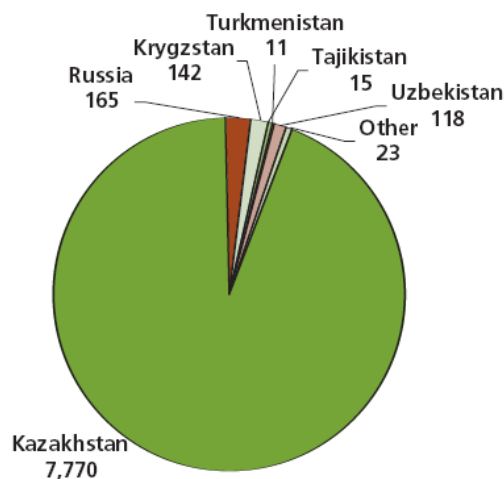
Kazakhstan is a member of a customs union with the Russian Federation, the Ukraine and Belarus. Consequently, any cargo entering these countries is considered domestic and is not subject to inspection so long as it remains sealed. The vast majority of those arrested for drug crimes in Kazakhstan are Kazakh, but these figures include possession and petty dealing offences. A large number of Russians, Kyrgyz, and Uzbeks are involved, highlighting the role of national groups in cross border operations. Importantly, few Tajik nationals are arrested there. Absent any other explanation, this opens the possibility that the Tajiks who dominate the early parts of the trafficking chain are not the same people that are arrested in large numbers in Russia.

As in Colombia, the involvement of insurgent groups in the drug trade is a recurrent issue for much of the region, but the groups involved are not so well organised and have repeatedly been repressed. Historically, the best-known group in this regard is the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a group largely destroyed during the overthrow of the Taliban. The IMU was centred on the Ferghana Valley, a fertile and densely populated region encompassing parts of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, which is both a well-known drug transshipment area and a font of political dissent. The timing and nature of this group's attacks suggested

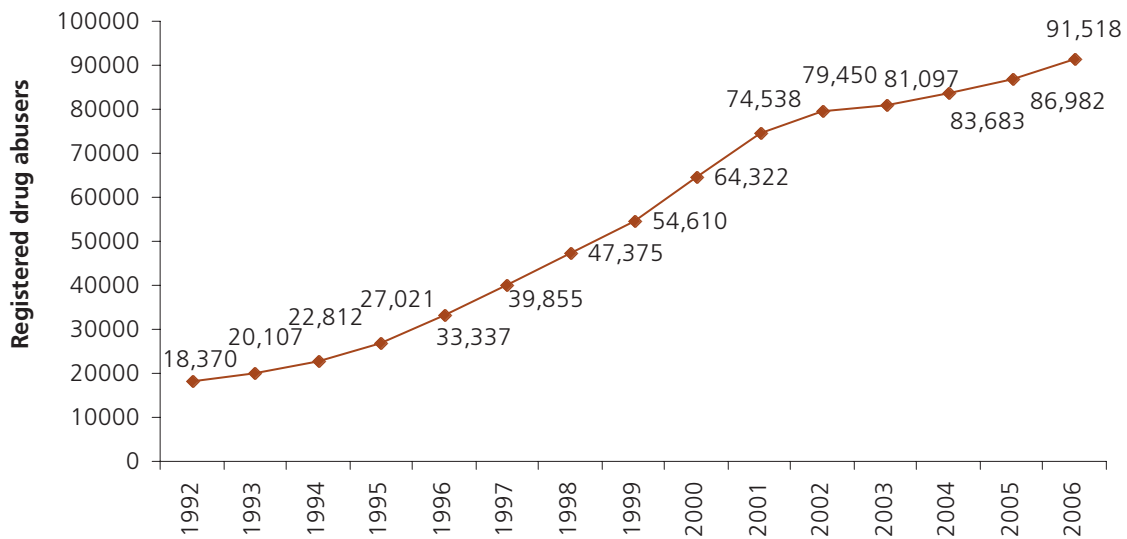
close linkages with the drug trade, but even at the peak of its power, it did not appear to control trafficking north of Osh in Kyrgyzstan.⁶² It is unlikely that such militant groups are a driving force behind the drug trade today.

The disorganization of the trade is reflected in the rapidly growing number of drug users in the

Fig. 15: Nationalities of those arrested for drug crimes in Kazakhstan in 2006



Source: UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia

Fig. 16: Registered drug users in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan

Source: UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia

Tajik/Kyrgyz/Kazakh corridor. Estimations of prevalence in Central Asia are based on the number of registered addicts or treatment patients. Known drug users are asked if they have been registered and this figure is used as a multiplier. However, given the uncertainties inherent in this technique, it is probably safest simply to rely on the raw registration figures themselves for trend analysis.

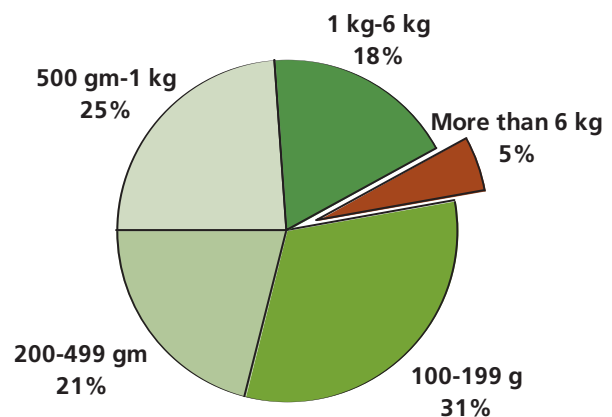
What registration data do show is a growing problem, indicating that, despite its lower sales value, some of the heroin headed toward the Russian Federation has been diverted to local markets. The number of registered users increased rapidly throughout the 1990s, though growing at a slower rate in the first years of this century.⁶³ Such a rise is to be expected when trafficking is conducted by a large number of independent actors utilising couriers who may be paid in kind rather than in cash, and reinforces the contention that trafficking in this region is relatively disorganized.

Destination Russia

The Russian government reported seizing 3,897 kg of heroin in 2004, and 4,674 kg in 2005. Of this, almost two-thirds (5.6 mt) were made in some 1,870 individual heroin seizures above 100 grams reported by the government of the Russian Federation over the two years. Only eight involved more than 100 kg. Almost 95 per cent involved amounts of less than 6 kg, the wholesale value of which was about US\$10,000 in Afghanistan. In other words, these consignments were within the reach of relatively small criminal networks. Similarly, most of the seizures made in the Central Asian countries were minor.

The large (over 100 kg) seizures show no clear pattern, and thus were probably not the product of a single organization. Three were made in Moscow, but some were made in quite remote locations. The site of the largest, Tynda district, is deep in Siberia, north of the Chinese border – the town of Tynda has a population of about 40,000. Very few large seizures have been reported in the Central Asian countries in recent years.

Many of the traffickers arrested in the Russian Federation are citizens of Central Asian countries, particularly Tajik nationals, who are not necessarily ethnically Tajik. The Russian government reported 954 heroin seizures of over 100 grams to the UNODC between 1999 and

Fig. 17: Breakdown of quantities of heroin seized in 1870 large (100 g +) seizures in the Russian Federation, 2004-2005

Source: UNODC Individual Seizures Database

Table 2: Eight seizures of above 100 kg of heroin in the Russian Federation 2004-2005

Date	Location	Nationality	Quantity	Details
3 March 2004	Moscow	Russian Fed	178 kg	Sourced in Tajikistan
6 April 2004	Zubovo-Polyana	1 Russian Fed 2 Tajikistan 1 Ukraine 1 Uzbekistan	103 kg	Sourced in Tajikistan
26 April 2004	Tynda District	Czech Rep	536 kg	Concealed in clothing
21 June 2004	Ekaterinburg	—	150 kg	In freight from Uzbekistan
17 July 2004	Novosibirsk Region	—	237 kg	In beverages on train from Tajikistan
26 August 2005	Moscow	—	165 kg	—
29 August 2005	Moscow	—	156 kg	—
14 October 2005	Orenburg	—	362 kg	—

2004 in which the nationalities of the traffickers were specified. Of these, 586 cases (62 %) involved Russian nationals exclusively. A remarkable 252 involved Tajik nationals (26 %), operating either alone or in concert with traffickers of other nationalities. Smaller numbers of seizures involved nationals of Kazakhstan (16), Uzbekistan (29), the Kyrgyz Republic (31), and other national groups (40). No nationals of Turkmenistan were arrested in these records. Of seizures involving foreigners, Tajik nationals were present in more than two thirds of the cases. However, recall that few Tajik nationals were arrested in Kazakhstan. So while Tajik groups are important in both cross-border operations with Afghanistan and trafficking within Russia, it is possible that they do not control the heroin during the intermediate trafficking period.

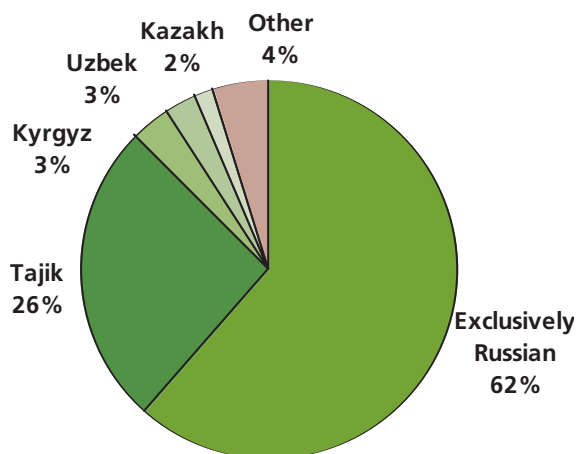
Tajikistan is quite a distance from Russia, but a 2003 International Organization for Migration survey found that over a quarter of Tajik households have a member working abroad, an estimated 84 per cent of whom are

in Russia, representing perhaps half a million people.⁶⁴ Many are employed as poorly paid labourers and some of them may serve as couriers to supplement their incomes. Though the poverty of ethnic Tajiks along the border with Afghanistan and in Russia seems to favour their involvement in drug trafficking, it does not appear that large Tajik groups control the entire drug trafficking chain, due the lack of Tajik nationals arrested in Kazakhstan.

Of course, given the relatively small share of the total drug flow seized (probably less than 10 %) and the small size of the seizures, it is possible that these seizures and arrests comprise only those portions of the market that are not shielded by corruption. The prominence of Tajik nationals in the arrest figures could be a product of the targeting of this vulnerable group by law enforcement. Past research on drug markets in the Russian Federation has emphasised high levels of corruption, but has also demonstrated the essential disorganization of this market.⁶⁵ The Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs estimates that there are 450 criminal organizations in the country with about 12,000 members. This suggests an average group size of 26 members, and a national rate of eight organized crime members per 100,000 population. Only nine of these groups are said to have international links.⁶⁶ In 2005, the Russian Federal Drug Control Service attributed 14,415 out of 110,310 drug distribution cases to criminal groups (13 %), a share unchanged from the previous two years.⁶⁷ These estimates by Russian law enforcement authorities also support the notion that most of the market remains disorganized.

In summary, once heroin leaves Afghanistan for Russia, the international trafficking of the drug appears to be conducted by small groups, because:

- Most heroin seizures above 100 grams, both en route and in Russia, are small (less than 6 kg),

Fig. 18: Non-Russian involvement in large Russian heroin seizures, 1999-2004

Source: UNODC Individual Seizures Database

- within the reach of small groups.
- The drugs appear to be sold and re-sold *en route*, with national groups controlling each link of the supply chain and very little Afghan presence in Russian markets.
- Arrest figures do not exclude the possibility that the drugs pass from Tajik hands to those of other groups and back to Tajik groups again, with Tajik nationals present in 26 per cent of major heroin seizures in Russia in 2004/2005.
- Heroin use rose steeply in Central Asia in the 1990s, indicating much of the drugs did not reach their highest value destination.

2.5 Tracking trafficking

The two examples discussed above highlight two extremes of a spectrum: on the one hand, the highly organized groups active in shipping multi-million dollar consignments of cocaine from Colombia to the USA; on the other, the many, uncoordinated players who, responding to market incentives, move heroin from Afghanistan to Russia. It appears that the two regions are vaguely converging, however – cocaine trafficking has become less organized since the days of the Medellin and Cali cartels, and the heroin trade, at least in the North of Afghanistan, is growing increasingly and is getting more organized. The potential for large organized crime groups emerging in Central Asia appears to be great, given the profits involved.

Similar analyses could be done for the movement of cocaine from Colombia to Europe, or the movement of heroin via the Balkan route, or any of a number of other trafficking patterns. The key limitation is the lack of standardised data. UNODC needs greater input from Member States to its individual seizures database, including detailed information on the nationalities of traffickers and the techniques employed. On this basis, important analysis of the world drug trafficking situation could be completed for the benefit of all.

Indeed, such an analysis need not be limited to drugs. Similar databases can be developed for trafficked persons, or firearms, or any other smuggled commodity to produce a standardised and quantified barometer of transnational criminal activity as a supplement to existing intelligence-based assessments. Issues for which there are currently no accurate global figures, such as human trafficking, are difficult to discuss without this basic data.

Determining the degree of organization is important in formulating policy. Despite the claim that there may be as many as 400 “baby cartels” operating in Colombia today, they are clearly not all of the same importance. If all were equal, each would be responsible for moving just 1.25 mt of cocaine every year, but individual seizures are made that are more than ten times that

amount. There are clearly some major players running the cocaine market, and their removal from the scene could represent a pivotal setback for cocaine trafficking. Further, the process of combining the produce of nearly 70,000 farm families distributed among 23 provinces is highly reliant on the organization skills and field presence of the insurgent and paramilitary groups. If this link in the supply chain were disrupted, it could also be devastating for the cocaine market.

On the other hand, it would be difficult to imagine a similar scenario working in the de-centralised markets of Afghanistan and Central Asia. Here, the consolidation process from farmers to traffickers works by a sophisticated market network of traders and bazaars. While the drugs appear to come under the control of a limited number of players at the top of the Afghan market, this concentration does not appear to be fully exploited today, and consolidated loads appear to be broken down again in order to accommodate the realities of disorganized trafficking. Even removing the top Afghan drug lords may not prevent the decentralised traders from carrying on the cross-border trade with their equally decentralised trafficker counterparts. Drugs percolate through Central Asia, changing hands several times, indicating the flow is not centrally planned. There is no “head” of Central Asian trafficking to decapitate. Rather, detailed information is required about the market mechanisms that siphon heroin from Afghanistan to Russia. The incentives and deterrents informing this market must be studied and interventions created on this basis.

Much more could be done with this data if it were more complete. As with any international undertaking of this scale, the international efforts to combat drug trafficking need to be monitored in an objective, standardised way if lessons are to be learned from successes and failures. The myriad individual interdiction experiences of law enforcement agencies around the world need to be pooled for centralised analysis. This can be teamed with data on issues like prices and drug usage, existing but under-developed data sources, to create powerful models for probing the world of illicit markets.

One example of transnational information sharing and a coordinated approach to drug issues is the efforts being undertaken under the aegis of the “Paris Pact”.⁶⁸ West and Central Asian and European countries affected by heroin trafficking from Afghanistan are now working together, with the support of UNODC, to coordinate their efforts to improve the quality of data and information, standardize data collection methods, and strengthen their respective analytical capacities in the field of counternarcotics. Efforts of this sort are essential to ensure a better understanding of drug trafficking flows, as well as to develop effective responses to transnational drug markets.