

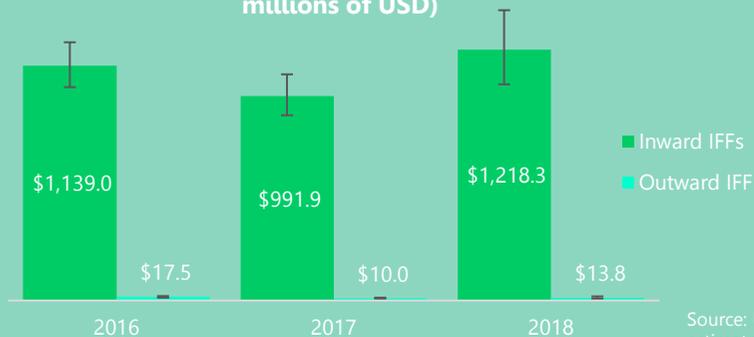
Country: Mexico Illicit financial flows from the smuggling of migrants

Mexico is affected by significant flows, both as a country of origin and of transit, of migrants seeking better work and living conditions in the United States of America and Canada. The country's long border with the United States, combined with increasingly restrictive measures implemented by the Governments of the United States and Mexico aimed at limiting migration flows and combating irregular migration, have presented a major opportunity for migrant smugglers. Indeed, evidence suggests that an increasing number of irregular migrants along this route are seeking assistance from migrant smugglers.

For the measurement of **illicit financial flows** (IFFs) associated with the smuggling of migrants in **Mexico**, two cases were considered:

- foreign irregular (temporary) migration involving Mexican resident smugglers who generate **inward IFFs** by exporting migrant smuggling services.
- irregular migration of Mexicans, which generates **outward IFFs** whenever irregular migrants pay non-resident smugglers (who "import" migrant smuggling services) to cross the border between Mexico and the United States.

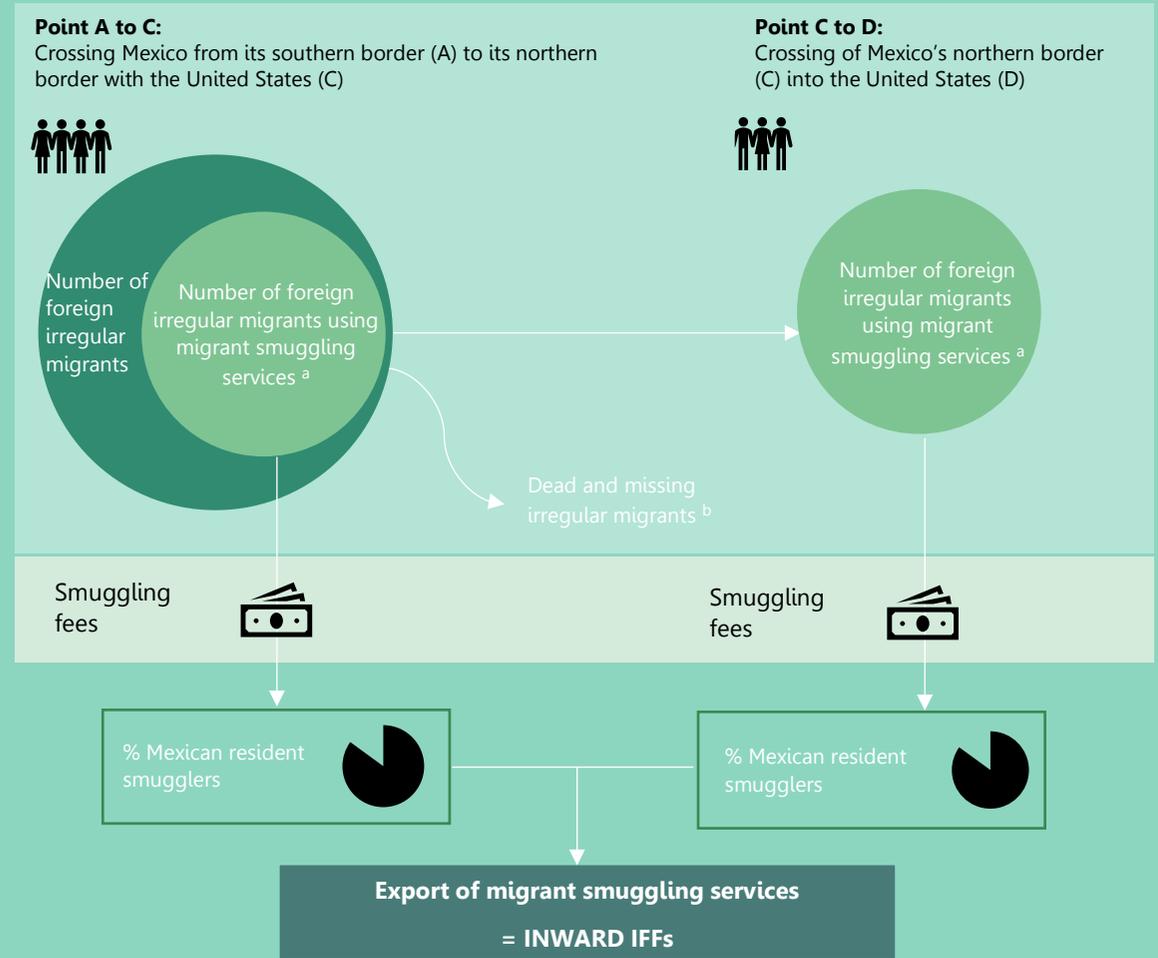
IFFs from the smuggling of migrants in Mexico (in millions of USD)



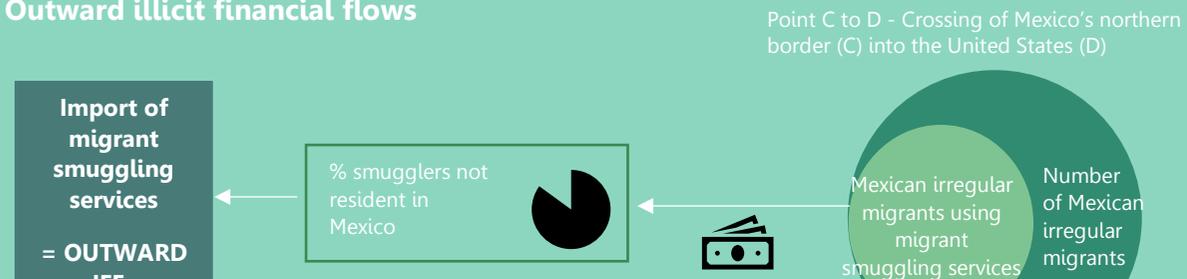
Estimating IFFs from the smuggling of migrants required the monetary value associated with exports and imports from the provision of such services to be quantified. In order to do so, first the number of irregular migrants was estimated at four different points on the route, namely the southern border of Mexico (point A), the centre of Mexico (point B), the northern border of Mexico (point C) and the United States (point D). Subsequently, using data collected through two migration surveys (EMIF Sur and EMIF Norte), the share of migrants using migrant smuggling services was determined. The same sources enabled the nationality of migrants to be determined and the average fees paid for each service at each point on the route to be estimated. Data on actors and modus operandi collected from academic and institutional sources were essential for assessing the role of

Methodology

Inward illicit financial flows



Outward illicit financial flows



Inward illicit financial flows

Inward IFFs from the smuggling of migrants -> are generated whenever there is a cross-border exchange of value related to services offered by Mexican (resident) smugglers that help foreign irregular migrants to enter and cross Mexico and eventually cross the Mexico-United States border into the United States

	Non-Mexican irregular migrants Point A to D		
	2016	2017	2018
Estimated number of irregular migrants from point A -> C	392,800	272,800	387,900
% using migrant smuggling services point A -> C	60%	60%	52%
Estimated number of irregular migrants from point C -> D	242,600	192,800	266,300
% using migrant smuggling services point C -> D	73%	72%	69%
= Number of irregular migrants paying for migrant smuggling services (A -> C)	235,700	163,700	201,700
= Number of irregular migrants paying for migrant smuggling services (C -> D)	177,100	138,900	183,700

Routes segments

- Point A to C -> all migrant smuggling services are estimated to be paid to smugglers resident in Mexico
- Point C to D -> an average of 28.1% is paid to smugglers resident in Mexico

Average fees paid by non-Mexican irregular migrants (in USD) from point A to D



Source: Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF) data.

Average fees paid by Mexican irregular migrants (in USD) from point C to D



Source: Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF) data.

Route segments

- Point C to D -> on average 3.9% paid to non-resident smugglers

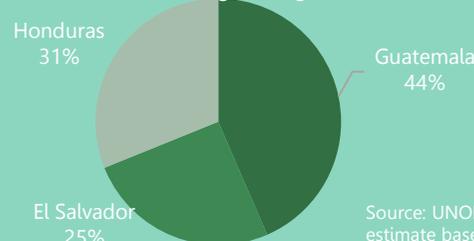
Inward IFFs

\$ million

	Average 2016-2018
Average 2016-2018	\$1,116
2016	\$1,139
2017	\$992
2018	\$1,218

Source: UNODC estimate.

Distribution on inward IFFs by country of origin of irregular migrants



Source: UNODC estimate based on COLEF data.

Outward illicit financial flows

Outward IFFs from smuggling of migrants -> are generated whenever there is a cross-border exchange of value related to services offered by smugglers not resident in Mexico that help Mexican irregular migrants to cross Mexico and enter the United States

	Mexican irregular migrants Point C to D		
	2016	2017	2018
Estimated number of irregular migrants from point A -> C	-	-	-
% using migrant smuggling services point A -> C	-	-	-
Estimated number of irregular migrants from point C -> D	232,100	151,500	181,300
% using migrant smuggling services point C -> D	47%	48%	43%
= Number of irregular migrants paying for migrant smuggling services (A -> C)	-	-	-
= Number of irregular migrants paying for migrant smuggling services (C -> D)	109,100	72,700	78,000

Sources: UNODC estimate based on Center of Migration Studies, Ministry of the Interior of Mexico, United States Border Patrol and IOM data.

	Average 2016-2018	2016	2017	2018
Total estimated revenue from smuggling of Mexican migrants to the United States (millions of USD)	\$323.4	\$426.3	\$313.9	\$317.5
* per cent earned by smugglers resident in the United States	3.9%	4.1%	3.2%	4.4%
= Outward IFFs (millions of USD)¹	13.8	17.5	10.0	13.8

Source: UNODC estimate.

¹ As the numbers were rounded, the outward IFF results do not exactly correspond to the results.