

Policy Brief

International Law Enforcement Cooperation Funding

Issue

The increase of globalization in recent years has led to a significant increase in transnational crime and the development of criminal organizations that operate throughout the world. Thus, a significant global and national security threat has emerged and is only growing as our world becomes figuratively smaller. While funding for international law enforcement operations under the budgets of the United States Department of Justice and Interpol Washington are in the millions of dollars, further analysis of the current transnational criminal state of affairs would indicate a necessity for continued and increasing monetary funding for law enforcement operations abroad. Crimes such as fraud, money-laundering, drug, human, and arms trafficking, and terrorism are at the forefront of the fight against transnational criminality. Ultimately, the goal of Federal law enforcement agencies is to reduce, to any degree possible, the negative impact of transnational criminal activity as it threatens the democratic institutionalization and legal fabric of the United States and other nations across the globe. Continued and increased funding of agencies under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Justice and Interpol Washington is imperative in helping them achieve their mandate.



Budget

Interpol Washington:

According to the United States Department of Justice FY 2018 Budget and Performance Summary, the General Legal Activities Interpol Washington (USNCB) has requested 34.5 million dollars for 2018. The increase would allow for the funding of 72 job positions and 2 attorneys. The 2017 budget was recorded as 33.4 million dollars.

FY 2018 Budget Request At A Glance

FY 2017 Continuing Resolution:	\$33.4 million (77 positions; 2 attorneys)
Current Services Adjustments:	+\$1.2 million
Program Changes:	+\$0
FY 2018 Budget Request:	\$34.5 million (72 positions; 2 attorneys)
Change From FY 2017 Continuing Resolution:	+\$1.2 million (+3.4%) (-5 positions)

(DOJ) GENERAL LEGAL ACTIVITIES INTERPOL Washington (USNCB)

The requested budget increase from Interpol Washington should be considered miniscule at most comparatively speaking and should be granted without hesitation. Funding not only goes to support job positions, but also for new tools, training, and communication networks, especially as it relates to information technology (IT) related functions (USNCB, 2018, p.2). The main job of Interpol is to facilitate open, timely, and effective communication networks for Federal, State, and Local law enforcement agencies to utilize during investigations. Without that function, transnational criminal investigations can be a cumbersome and time-consuming endeavor. Furthermore, USNCB not only provides communication services, but also aids in investigations, provides crime related data, as well as criminal intelligence. By the end of the 2015 year, USNCB processed around 466 million queries from law enforcement agencies (USNCB, 2018, p.2). This is an incredible number of queries indicating the usefulness and importance of Interpol Washington as a tool for law enforcement agencies to fulfill their mission.

Federal Bureau of Investigation:

The budget of the U.S. Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is far larger than Interpol Washington, but many of those funds are aimed at domestic criminal activities, terrorism, Cybercrime, and counter intelligence. Upon further assessment, the amount of funds that go directly to the FBI’s Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) program is a small percentage of the overall budget (FBI, 2018, p.2). In comparison to other programs such as the Cybercrime program, which receives nearly 42 million dollars, the TOC budget is quite low (FBI, 2018, p.2). It should be noted that the Cybersecurity program would inevitably deal with international criminal actors in some capacity, but increased funding into transnational crime directly could be increased by a significant degree.

FY 2018 Budget Request At A Glance	
FY 2017 Continuing Resolution:	\$8,473.8 million S&E (35,158 pos; 236 atty; 13,084 agt) \$308.4 million Construction
Current Services Adjustments:	+\$131.2 million S&E -\$240.0 million Construction
Program Changes:	+\$117.6 million S&E -\$16.5 million Construction
FY 2018 Budget Request:	\$8,722.6 million S&E (33,533 pos; 220 atty; 12,484 agt) \$51.9 million Construction
Change From FY 2017 Continuing Resolution:	+248.8 million S&E (+2.9%) (-1,625 pos; -16 atty; -600 agt) -\$256.5 million Construction (-83.2%)

(DOJ) FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Part of the FBI’s TOC program aims at combating transnational criminal actors both located domestically as well as those operating on foreign soil. Included among the FBI’s mission priorities is to, “Combat domestic and transnational criminal organizations and enterprises”, (FBI, 2018, p.1). With a mandate such as this, increased budget allotment focally related to transnational crime is essential. Again, while funding for foreign counter-intelligence is a top priority, that budget program vastly aims at combating foreign governments or states rather than criminal entities. Continued application of funds toward the FBI’s TOC program is the suggested course of action in order to quell developing threats.

Application

The FBI has been quite successful in achieving its objectives relating to transnational crime. Most recently, the FBI along with several other nations to include Poland, completed Operation WireWire which aimed at disrupting an international wire-transfer fraud network. According to the FBI,

“BEC, also known as cyber-enabled financial fraud, is a sophisticated scam that often targets employees with access to company finances and trick them—using a variety of methods like social engineering and computer intrusions—into making wire transfers to bank accounts thought to belong to trusted partners but instead belong to accounts controlled by the criminals themselves.” (2018)

Overall, law enforcement from the BEC task force arrested 74 individuals and recovered millions of dollars of fraudulently obtained money (FBI, 2018). Furthermore, the cooperation between the FBI and other agencies was strengthened as tasks were accomplished and objectives were met. This case according to FBI director Christopher Wray, “demonstrates the FBI's commitment to disrupt and dismantle criminal enterprises that target American citizens and their businesses,” (2018).

During May of 2018, the Polish Centralne Biuro Śledcze Policji (CBSP) or the Central Investigation Bureau, arrested a Nigerian individual for a 7 million dollar fraud scheme. The man was wanted by both the FBI and Interpol for extradition to the United States (Gowans, 2018). In 2017, according to the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU), in cooperation with the FBI, arrested 7 individuals connected with illegal lobbying of a foreign company. The FBI works closely with NABU to combat transnational criminal threats and to conduct training exercises aimed at developing both policing and investigative skills (NABU, 2017). Aside from operations and training, the FBI also participates in delegations with law enforcement of other countries. According to the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus In the United States of America, both FBI and Belarusian Investigative officials met to discuss transnational crime, in particular cybercrime. While geo-political interests may pose problems between the states, common criminal justice objectives have brought the FBI and Belarusian agencies together in hopes of developing international operations and cyber security divisions.

Whatever the case may be, the FBI's role in fighting transnational crime is second to none. What is evident based on the cases mentioned above, is the FBI's effectiveness in accomplishing its objectives, not only from an enforcement perspective, but also a training and diplomatic perspective. From a financial standpoint, the allotment of funds to task forces like the previous examples and to the resources needed to accomplish objectives on an international level are fundamentally compulsory. If not for continued monetary support, programs like the FBI's TOC program and the Interpol Washington office would be unable to function effectively.

Importance

As is evident from the FBI and Interpol's fundamental role in combating transnational crime, it should also be evident that increased financial support or at the very least a willingness to agree to the allotment of additionally requested funds is necessary for the continuation of success in achieving strategic objectives. Criminal threats are increasing and the methods that

criminals use are adapting and becoming more complex in response. With that being said, it is imperative to give our law enforcement entities in the United States and our allies abroad the financial support that they need in order to fulfill their mandate and to be the frontline against criminal contingencies that aim to victimize innocent people. The advocacy of increased funding to the FBI's TOC and Interpol Washington should be a priority for our national security.



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