

Study Shows Illicit Drug Use Costs U.S. Economy More Than \$193 Billion

Illicit drug use in the United States is estimated to have cost the U.S. economy more than \$193 billion in 2007, according to a new study by the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC).

The Economic Impact of Illicit Drug Use on American Society, released May 26, estimates the economic impact of illicit drugs for 2007, the most recent year for which data are available.

“The study’s finding that the economic cost of illicit drug abuse totaled \$193 billion reveals that this Nation’s drug problem is on par with other health problems,” said NDIC Director Michael F. Walther.

A 2008 study by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases found that diabetes costs the United States more than \$174 billion each year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that from 1995 to 1999, smoking accounted for at least \$157 billion annually in health-related economic costs.

The NDIC study is the first comprehensive assessment of costs associated with drug use in almost a decade. The statistical findings presented in the study integrate economic costs in three principal areas:

- ❖ **Crime:** Criminal justice costs, crime victim costs, and other Federal costs for activities including intelligence production, interdiction, source nation assistance, and research and development.
- ❖ **Health:** Specialty treatment costs, hospital and emergency room costs for non-homicide and homicide cases, insurance administration costs, and other health costs.
- ❖ **Productivity:** Labor participation costs (for those who are employed but are not as productive as they might be due to illicit drug use) and incapacitation costs attributable to specialty treatment, hospitalization, incarceration, premature mortality (non-homicide-related), and premature mortality (homicide related).

The National Drug Intelligence Center’s mission is to provide strategic drug-related intelligence, document and computer exploitation support, and training assistance to the drug control, public health, law enforcement, and intelligence communities of the United States in order to reduce the adverse effects of drug trafficking, drug abuse, and other drug-related criminal activity.

A complete copy of the NDIC study is available online at: <http://www.justice.gov/ndic/pubs44/44731/44731p.pdf>