

How corruption helps drug traffickers adapt to strengthened border enforcement

Working Paper 58:

**Corruption as a facilitator of drug trafficking in the port of Rotterdam:
Drivers, strategies and implications**



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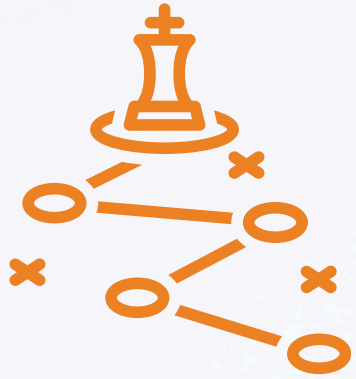
Corruption at border points remains a pressing global issue

- ❗ It threatens border integrity.
- ❗ It puts the health, safety and security of our societies at risk.
- ❗ It enables illicit trafficking and facilitates organised crime.
- ❗ It undermines trust in public institutions.

**How does corruption
facilitate drug trafficking
through the port of
Rotterdam?**

**And what happens when
enforcement is stepped up
at the borders?**





Corruption is used strategically...



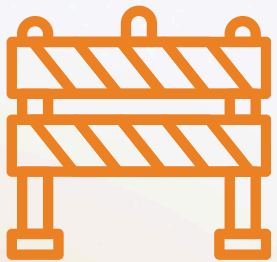
to ensure drugs get past container screening and security...



and out of the port without detection.



Increased enforcement efforts and strengthened detection



Traffickers face **more obstacles** to operating effectively



The **need for inside help** increases



Corruption becomes even **more essential** for organised crime



With unchanged demand for drugs and the high profitability of the crime, drug trafficking will not disappear.

Instead, corruption and crime strategies are adapting.

**High demand
for drugs and
increased
barriers to
trafficking**

**Corruption
risks increase**

**Stronger
anti-corruption
measures are
developed**

**Corruption
aims and
targets shift**

**Corrupt
behaviours
morph (from
collusion to
coercion and
infiltration)**

**Corruption adapts
in the face of
strengthened
enforcement**



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graph TD; A((High demand for drugs and increased barriers to drug trafficking)) --> B(("Risk" of drug trafficking being detected increases); B --> C((Trafficking concealment strategies change)); C --> D((Modes of transport and trafficking routes shift)); D --> A;
```

**High demand
for drugs and
increased
barriers to drug
trafficking**

**"Risk" of drug
trafficking
being detected
increases**

**Trafficking
strategies also
change**

**Trafficking
concealment
strategies
change**

**Modes of
transport and
trafficking
routes shift**

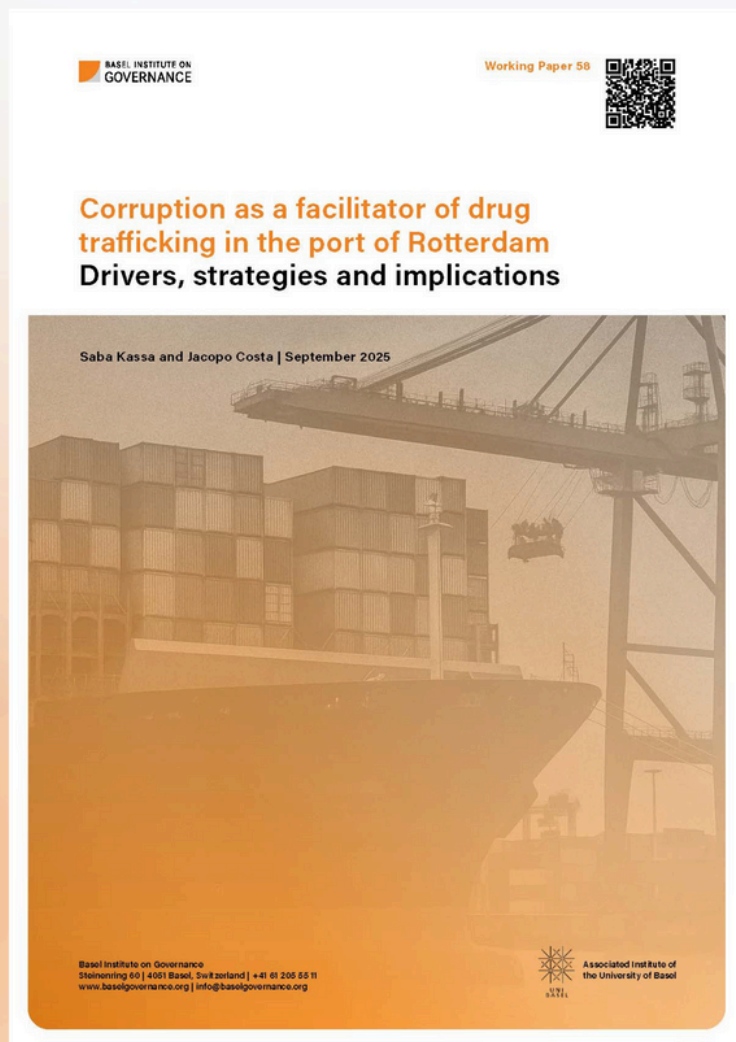
“ Trafficking and corruption are typically measured by detection.

Increasingly sophisticated criminal strategies make detection more difficult and can hide what is really happening.”

How to deal with the evolving nature of crime?

- Continuously strengthen the ability to **recognise “red flags”**
- Develop **data-driven tools** and refined **risk indicators**
- Improve **foresight and scenario-building** capacities

Learn more:



Corruption as a facilitator of drug trafficking in the port of Rotterdam Drivers, strategies and implications

by Saba Kassa and Jacopo Costa



baselgovernance.org/wp-58