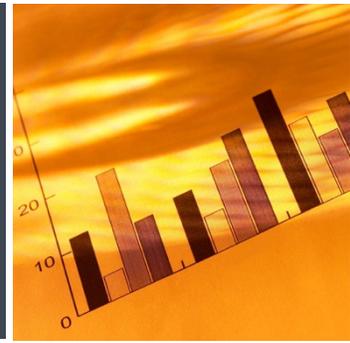


# Deportation, Circular Migration and Organized Crime: Jamaica



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BUILDING A SAFE AND RESILIENT CANADA

Since the 1990s, Jamaicans have been the most deported group of Caribbean nationals from the United States, United Kingdom and Canada

## BACKGROUND

The report reviews the impact of forced deportations, criminal and otherwise, on public security and organized crime in Canada and Jamaica, with a focus on transnational connections between deportees, organized crime and Canada. Recent law enforcement operations in Canada have revealed long-standing connections between organized crime groups in both countries. The report discusses the findings of two large-scale law enforcement operations, Project Fusion and Project Corral, which revealed that the Shower Posse, a prominent Jamaican organized crime group, was heavily involved in Toronto's drug trade through its connections with local gangs.

From Canada's perspective, the removal of foreign nationals who have committed serious crimes has a number of important protective impacts. The physical removal of former offenders greatly reduces the likelihood that they will reoffend in Canada. When organized crime is involved, there may be the additional benefits of disrupting criminal networks by removing key actors. With non-criminal deportations, the impact on Canadian security is less clear, and deportation has become a symbolic and highly politicized issue for the Jamaican-Canadian community, which has been subject to forced deportation in particularly large numbers.

Throughout the Caribbean, there is a widespread belief that criminal deportees from the United States (U.S.), Canada and the United Kingdom (UK) are responsible for a surge in drugs, organized crime and murder in the Caribbean. Indeed, few topics in Caribbean criminal justice and security are more contentious than the matter of criminal deportations. This belief has resulted in a difficult path—characterized by stigmatization and

rejection—for all deported nationals seeking paths to redemption and reintegration back into their home societies, even those deported for non-criminal reasons.

## METHOD

The report's findings are based on an extensive review of the existing literature on the impact of deportation on crime in Jamaica and the Caribbean, the experience and limited reintegration opportunities of deportees in Jamaica, the connections between organized crime groups in Jamaica and Canada, and the social and economic costs faced by the families of deportees. This literature review was augmented by data provided by the Canada Border Services Agency on the scale of deportation from Canada to Jamaica, the reasons for removal and the number of deportations involving organized crime. The authors also conducted 11 interviews with researchers, academics, reintegration program staff, policymakers and law enforcement officials in Canada and Jamaica.

## FINDINGS

Project Fusion and Project Corral revealed a complex relationship involving Shower Posse groups in Canada, the U.S. and Jamaica, and local gangs being supplied with drugs and weapons. A 2014 study by Leuprecht and Aulhouse found that weapons were trafficked across the U.S.-Canada border and subsequently either supplied to affiliated gangs or sent back to Jamaica as partial payment for narcotics shipments. However, there was no evidence that the deportation of Jamaican nationals from Canada contributed to the genesis of these transnational organized crime links, which have existed since the 1970s.

Any assessment of the effects of deportation on public safety in Canada must begin with its impact on

Canada's Jamaican community, where deportations may fuel feelings of alienation from Canadian society and ultimately stoke delinquency and criminality. The Toronto Deportation Pilot Project, which conducted 107 interviews with the families of criminal deportees, highlighted the psychological, social and financial costs of deportation. Seventy percent of respondents stated that the deportation of their loved one had damaged their connection or commitment to Canadian society. When serious criminality is not the cause for deportation, these challenges may negate the intended impact of removals on Canadian public safety.

In Jamaica, criminal deportations from Canada, the U.S. and the UK have had a profound impact on public security. The flow of deported persons has been so large and long standing that as much as two percent of the island's current population consists of deportees. There is evidence that this influx of both criminal and non-criminal deportees to Jamaica has stretched the country's scarce social and law enforcement resources and contributed to the country's worsening crime picture. A study by Barnes, Chevannes and McCalla (2006) found that 53 percent of the deported criminal offenders who were interviewed admitted to engaging in further criminal activities after their return to Jamaica. Another study by Madjd-Sadjadi and Alleyne (2007) found that five percent of murders and rapes in Jamaica could be directly attributed to criminal deportees. Even non-criminal deportees, by virtue of the challenging reintegration circumstances they face, have come to be associated with petty property crime, drug addiction and homelessness.

The Jamaican government and non-governmental organizations in the field struggle to provide effective reintegration services to the thousands of deportees arriving each year. Experts in Canada and Jamaica were adamant that the ability of deportees to access jobs, housing, education and healthcare was the key factor in their successful reintegration and thus largely determined whether they would continue to engage in criminal activity on returning to Jamaica.

## IMPLICATIONS

The report suggests several potential policy options for the Canadian government to consider, including:

- raising awareness of citizenship and deportation in the Jamaican-Canadian community;
- supporting a research agenda on deportation;
- expanding information sharing with Jamaican authorities; and
- providing reintegration assistance for deportees.

## SOURCE

Burt, Geoff, Mark Sedra, Bernard Headley, Camille Hernandez-Ramdwar, Randy Seepersad and Scot Wortley. (2016). "Deportation, Circular Migration and Organized Crime: Jamaica Case Study," Public Safety Canada.

## ADDITIONAL SOURCES

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Leuprecht, Christian and Andrew Aulthouse. "Guns for Hire: North America's Intra-continental Gun Trafficking Networks," *Criminology, Criminal Justice, Law & Society*, 15(3), (2014): 57-74.

Madjd-Sadjadi, Z., and Alleyne, D. "The Potential Jamaican Impact of Criminal Deportees from the U.S.," *Journal of Ethnicity in Criminal Justice*, 5(2/3), (2007): 29-52.

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