

Individual Drug Seizures- guidelines

- 1. Individual Drug Seizures data collection-summary and mandates**
- 2. Important definitions**
- 3. A guide to filling in the template**
- 4. Data collected (variables) –instructions and definitions**

1. Individual Drug Seizures data collection-summary and mandates

The **Individual Drug Seizures data collection** is an exercise mandated by the Drug Conventions (1961,1971,1988) ¹, which starts with a yearly call, on the occasion of the Data Day between May and June, to Member States to submit data on significant cases of drug seizures reported in the country. This data is to be submitted to the Data Development and Dissemination Section (DDDS), Research and Research and Trend Analysis Branch, Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs (DDDS/RAB/DPA) via email (unodc-ids@un.org). The IDS data collection template gathers data on individual drug seizure cases taking place within the national territory of Member States and it is reported to UNODC on a continuous basis throughout the year (preferably quarterly), as soon as the data is finalized at the country level. Prompt availability of IDS data will allow UNODC to inform the international community on significant trafficking cases in real-time and this information can be used as a tool for rapid policy responses targeted at combating the world drug problem in each Member State as well as globally.

It is important to note that individual drug seizures differ from annual drug seizures reported to UNODC as part of the Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ), which reflect aggregate seizure data (yearly) rather than case by case data.

This document is aimed at assisting reporting countries in filling in the questionnaire as well as providing a standard framework for collecting individual drug seizure data. If further clarifications are necessary, please contact us by email at unodc-ids@un.org or by calling us at + (43) (1) 26060 83241.

¹ Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

2. Important definitions

For the purpose of this questionnaire, an **Individual Drug Seizure** (IDS) is defined as a singular interception or apprehension of drugs and/or New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), as defined below, by a Law Enforcement Agency, taking into account the specific place and point in time of the event. IDS can take place anywhere within the national territory of the reporting country. IDS can cover one or more drugs seized at a specific place and point in time.

Similarly, an **Operation** refers to several individual drug seizure cases that are interlinked, often via intelligence information, and may covers seizures that took place in different places and/or points in time. An example of an operation is a raid targeting several homes spanning several hours to months. An operation also includes the seizure of drugs from an individual at several locations (e.g., their car on the highway and in follow up their home), and may involve multiple agencies. Most operations have a specific name/label/code.

For the purposes of the IDS template, a raid to a specific location at a specific point in time is defined as IDS and this data should be reported. At the same time, if more than one law enforcement agencies are involved in a seizure that takes place at a specific place and point in time, this is also identified as an IDS and is to be reported.

Given that IDs or names of operations can be sensitive for sharing, it is sufficient to report a random ID for cases that belong to operations. UNODC will not publish this data, the purpose of this is solely to identify IDS which are part of a specific operation.

Finally, **Drug** refers to any of the substances, natural or synthetic, in Schedules I and II of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961 (as amended by the 1972 Protocol Amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961) or any substance, natural or synthetic, or any natural material in Schedules I, II, III and IV of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971². On the other hand, **NPS** refers to substances of abuse, either in a pure form or a preparation, that are not controlled under the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 or the 1971 Convention, but that may pose a public health threat. In this context, the term “new” does not necessarily refer to new inventions but to substances that have recently become available.

² See also UNODC 2016. Terminology and Information on Drugs, 3rd edition:
www.unodc.org/documents/scientific/Terminology_and_Information_on_DrugsE_3rd_edition.pdf

3. A guide to filling in the template

The IDS template aims to capture data on cases of drug seizures taking place in Member States as part of national and/or international efforts. For this purpose, data on seizures on a “case by case” basis is collected.

The following sheets are included in the template:

1. *Information on contributors*: name and affiliation details of the people responsible for filling in this template are to be entered here
2. *IDS data*: case by case data on drug seizures is to be entered here
3. *Drug lists and units*: this sheet provides the UNODC standard list of drug classes/groups (column A) and drug names/types (column B). It is preferable that specific drug names are reported. If the specific drug names are not in line with the UNODC list available, drug groups can be identified.

It is desirable that data providers follow as much as possible to the standardized responses provided as drop-down menus in the sheet “IDS data”, and the date format: DD.MM.YYYY. When data is uploaded in bulk, data providers are kindly asked to aim, within their possibilities, to adjust their data collection mechanisms to adhere to the standardized lists to maximize global comparability of individual drug seizure data.

Note on duplicates: It is preferable, when data from several agencies is centralized for the purpose of submitting IDS data and that duplicate entries (double entries across or within agencies that refer to the same seizure event) are not included. If this is not possible, countries are asked to inform UNODC about the possibility of duplicates so that this is addressed at UNODC and that this is in line with the criteria applied in your country.

Note that confidential data such as residence of traffickers, names, passport details and other confidential information are anonymized before dissemination by UNODC.

4. Data collected (variables)

The IDS template is a tool to collect data on variables related to individual drug seizure cases, in particular:

- 4.1 Information on operations
- 4.2 Date and geographical location of seizures, and seizing agency
- 4.3 Drugs and other items seized
- 4.4 Trafficking route, site specifics and concealment
- 4.5 Traffickers and criminal charges

Respondents can use drop-down menus available in the template to choose from standardized lists of response options. When none of the listed responses are applicable, there is an option to add an additional response in free text where relevant. It is always preferable that when a response belongs to any of the listed items, one of these are selected and reported. Additional information can always be added to the variable “*Additional details (narrative)*”-column AV of the template. The long-term goal is that countries use the same standard to allow for comparability of data globally.

In cases where the information is not available or is unknown, please select the response “Data not available” if possible. For those cases where the response does not properly fit into one of the standardized categories provided in the drop-down menu and “Other, specify” is one of the categories provided, please write the details directly on the corresponding cell.

In an event where multiple drugs are seized, please use the Drug 1, Drug 2 and Drug 3 columns to report. Similarly, if multiple traffickers are identified in one seizure event, please use the Trafficker 1, Trafficker 2 and Trafficker 3 variables. For further details, please see sections 4.3 and 4.5 below. If more than three (3) different drug types are seized or more than three (3) traffickers are identified, please provide the additional information under the “*Additional details (narrative)*” variable (column AV).

4.1 INFORMATION ON OPERATIONS: these variables indicate whether the reported seizure belongs to an operation, as defined in section 2. These data can be used to group different individual seizures as part of a larger operation. If no information is available on the individual seizures that comprise an operation, but data on the operation itself is available, please report this information in one line, indicating that the seizure is part of a larger operation as well as the name of such operation. For such cases, please specify several dates/and or locations related to the operation under the variables “*Date (DD.MM.YYYY)*” and/or “*Site/type of location of seizure*”. When possible, it is preferable to report the data at seizure event level.

Is this seizure part of a larger operation?: if the seizure is part of a larger operation, select ‘Yes’. Otherwise, select ‘No’. As mentioned before, if data at the operation level is being reported in this line because no event-level disaggregation of the data are available, select ‘Yes’. Please do not leave blank.

Name of the operation: the name of the operation the seizure was part of. If no name is available for the operation, please create a fictional name for it or ID number for it (e.g., 0001) that is unique to all seizure events belonging to that operation.

Example: if within the context of “Operation Guard” two IDS were made; one on 15 April 2021 and the other one on 17 April 2021. On the first one 5 kgs of cocaine salts were seized while on the second one 10 kg of marijuana were seized. This should be reported as follows (see section 4.3 below for details on how to report drugs and quantities):

Is this part of an operation?	Name of operation	Date	Drug 1	Drug 1-quantity	Drug 1 - unit	Drug 2	Drug 2-quantity	Drug 2-unit
Yes	Operation Guard	15.04.2021	Cocaine salts	5	Kg			
Yes	Operation Guard	17.04.2021	Cannabis herb	10	kg			

However, if for some reason there are not data available on the IDS within this operation, but only aggregated data for the whole operation, it could be reported as follows:

Is this part of an operation?	Name of operation	Date	Drug 1	Drug 1-quantity	Drug 1 - unit	Drug 2	Drug 2-quantity	Drug 2-unit
Yes	Operation Guard	15.04.2021; 17.04.2021	Cocaine salts	5	Kg	Cannabis herb	10	kg

The first option, with data disaggregated by IDS, is always preferred to the second option when possible.

4.2 DATE AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF SEIZURES, SEIZING AGENCY

Date: the date when the seizure took place in the format DD.MM.YYYY. If a different format is applied, it is preferable that all the responses have the same standard format. It is optimal to have full dates (i.e., day, month and year) but it is preferable that seizures with no specific dates are also reported. When a specific day capturing the day of the seizure is not available, the date is to capture this as follows (in an example of a seizure in January 2020): “*DD.01.2020*”.

Country of seizure: the country submitting the report, where the seizure took place. In exceptional cases the reporting country may differ from the country of seizure. Country is to be selected from a drop-down menu.

Administrative region/province/state: the region, province or district where the drug seizure takes place. This variable is not meant to capture the law enforcement agency administrative division that was involved in seizing the drugs (even though the law enforcement administrative division may coincide with the administrative division where the seizure took place).

Specific place: specific name of the place (city, town, village, exact address) where the seizure took place. When feasible, it is preferable to obtain data at the city/village/town level rather than an imprecise/unidentifiable address.

Latitude and Longitude: these variables are to be filled in to identify the geo-location of the seizure in cases when a specific place cannot be identified (e.g., places in the desert, forests, etc.). If this data is available, it should be reported in any case. Geolocation is to be reported only in cases when the country does not have information on the specific place where a seizure took place so that UNODC can locate the seizure to the nearest town/city/village. Coordinates of locations and/or addresses will not be published.

Address: When the information on the administrative region/province/state and Latitude and Longitude are not available, but the address is, this information is to be entered. Given confidentiality considerations the address will only be used to identify the specific place (city, town, village) and it will not be shared/published.

Type of domestic seizing agency: the type of institution that was responsible for the seizure.

Available options are:

- Central (drug) control board/institution/directorate
- Customs
- Financial and Economic Crime/Tax Administration-excl. customs
- Gendarmerie
- Maritime patrol
- Military
- Police
- Other, specify
- Data not available

Name of Domestic seizing agency: exact name of the seizing agency

International cooperation: this variable is aimed to capture cases which were part of a joint international cooperation with other countries and/or agencies. The response options for this variable are:

- Not an international operation
- Yes, with other countries
- Yes, with international agencies (e.g., Europol, Interpol, Ameripol)
- Yes, with other countries and international agencies (e.g., Europol, Interpol, Ameripol)
- Other, specify

- Data not available

4.3 DRUGS AND OTHER ITEMS SEIZED

Drug: the specific name of the drugs seized, as described in sheet *Drug lists and units*. It is preferable that the specific drug name/type (column B in the specified sheet) is provided and if this is not available, the drug group (column A). If data on the specific name of the drug or drug type is not available, data on the drug group is to be reported (e.g., it is ideal that Amphetamine sulphate is reported rather than *Amphetamine* and Amphetamine rather than *Amphetamine-type stimulants* (excluding ecstasy)-type stimulants-using the standard names from the list if possible).

Drug quantity: the volume/weight of each drug seized, standardized number formats without a separator for 1000s and a point to define decimals are preferable for processing (e.g., 4.2 kg or 1,236.2 kg should be reported as 4.2 and 1236.2 under this variable, and “kg” should be selected under “Drug unit” below).

Drug unit: standardized units that correspond to the reported the quantity/ volume of drugs seized. Preferable responses are:

- kg
- g
- lt
- tablet/pill
- unit
- plant
- other, specify

If the drug unit is different and cannot be converted to the standardized responses, kindly specify the unit (e.g., bricks, blotters, etc.).

Note: The same data is to be repeated for additional drugs seized (Drug2, Drug3). Details (quantity, unit) on two additional drugs are to be reported. If more drugs were seized, this can be specified in the field for additional remarks- “*Additional details (narrative)*”-column AV.

Additional items seized (excluding drugs): this variable should capture any other trafficked goods seized as part of a specific seizure event. The response options are:

- No other items seized
- Cultural Property
- Explosives
- Firearms (including components)

- Other weapons
- Weapons ammunition
- Money
- Natural resources
- Substandard and falsified medical products
- Wildlife items
- Other, specify
- Multiple items, specify
- Data not available

Specific item/s seized: information on the specific items other than drugs are to be entered here (e.g., for firearms the specific type of firearm/s seized, such as revolvers, pistols, etc).

Quantity/ies of additional items seized: the quantities of additional items seized are to be entered here. When more than one additional item was seized, the quantities are to be separated with a semicolon “;” in order of the items specified in the previous columns.

Unit/s of additional items seized: same rationale as quantities, data entered with semicolon “;” in cases of more than one additional item seized.

For example, if 3 pistols and 30,000 USD are seized with the reported drugs, the reported value for “Quantity/ies of additional items seized” would be “3; 30000”, and the value for “Unit/s of additional items seized” could be “units/pieces; USD”.

4.4 TRAFFICKING ROUTE, SITE SPECIFICS and CONCEALMENT

Type of drug route: this variable aims to identify the seizure trafficking path in terms of whether the seizure is entering or leaving the country and the role of the country of seizure in that path. The response options for this variable are:

- Seizure not en route
- Entering country
- Leaving country
- Trafficked within national territory only
- Data not available

Note: Seizure not en route depicts seizures that are not being trafficked (e.g., a seizure at a home raid).

Site/type of location of seizure: type of facility where the drugs are found or seized. The provided standardized list of categories (in the template drop-down menu) is to be recorded

when feasible, otherwise nationally used categories are to be entered in free text. Response options are:

- Airport
- Commercial premises
- Gas station
- Healthcare facilities/Pharmacies
- Hotel
- International waters
- Post office
- Prisons and other detention centers
- Private dwelling/Residence/Home/Private Garage
- Railway/bus station
- Road/ Street/highway
- Schools, universities and libraries
- Seaport/Riverport station/Harbour
- Territorial waters (seas, lakes, rivers, etc.)
- Warehouses
- Other outdoor/open air sites/facilities
- Data not available

Note: When multiple responses are applicable, please specify the most granular option possible. For example, for a seizure which took place at a post office of an airport, “post office” should be recorded; the same applies to a post office at a prison. However, if no granular information is available, for the identified examples “Airport” and “Prisons and other detention centers” should be reported.

Role in drug supply chain: this variable captures the role of the site/type of location where the seizure took place in terms of the drug supply chain. The response options are:

- Drug production site/laboratory
- Drug storage
- Drug sales location (e.g., residence, hotel, gas station, club, street)
- Other/multiple, specify
- Not applicable
- Data not available

Note: laboratories that are also storage and/or sales sites should be recorded under “Other, multiple, specify”.

Means of transportation: vehicles and other means of transport used in the process of transporting the seized drugs to the place of seizure. These include:

- Airplane
- Animals
- Bicycle/on foot/walking
- Car/motorcycle
- Metro (subway), tram
- Postal/Mail/Express Parcel
- Train/Bus
- Truck/lorry/van
- Vessel/boat
- Other, specify
- Not applicable/not transported
- Data not available

Concealment/hiding place: the place where the seized drug has been hidden by the traffickers when the seizure took place, if applicable. When possible, the data provider is to refer to the standardized list of common hiding places available as a drop-down menu in the template:

- Inside the human body
- Clothing/shoes/taped to the body
- Vehicle
- Carry-on bag (luggage/baggage, rucksack, purse)
- Container (air, railway, vessel, road)-bananas/banana boxes
- Container (air, railway, vessel, road)-other food
- Container (air, railway, vessel, road)-clothes
- Container (air, railway, vessel, road)-electronics
- Container (air, railway, vessel, road)-other, specify
- Other freight (air, railway, vessel, road)
- Food-not in a shipment container
- Small bags, sacks, containers (not carry-on)
- Other, specify
- Data not available

Kindly add additional details of hiding place in the column AV-“*Additional details (narrative)*.”

Note-vehicle identifies a machine, usually with wheels and an engine, used for transporting people or goods, especially on land, for the purpose of the questionnaire it does not depict vessels/boats.:

Producing/Manufacturing country: the country where the drug/s seized was/were produced/manufactured. This may coincide with the Departure country. Producing country, is to be selected from a drop-down menu to use standard UNODC names. If multiple drugs that were produced in different countries are seized in the same IDS, please specify the Producing/Manufacturing Country for Drug 1 under this variable, and provide information on the remaining drugs in the column AV-“*Additional details (narrative)*”.

Departure Country/Country Obtained: Country that was the point of departure of the drug shipment reaching the country. The drugs may or may not have been produced/manufactured in the departure country. For consignments carried by an individual, please consider the country where the individual acquired the drug or the point of departure in that individual’s itinerary. This location identifies the last departure country for the drug shipment. The rationale is to see the change of hands in terms of organized crime groups and the departure of the last shipment. Departure country is to be selected from a drop-down menu to use standard UNODC names. In the case of domestic seizures of drugs that were obtained locally, “Country obtained” would be the same as the Country of seizure.

Transit Country: The country through which the drugs are transited before reaching the destination country. There could be more than one transit country between departure and destination. In this case, please separate the countries with ";"; e.g., Iran; Azerbaijan.

Destination Country: intended destination of the drug (destination of the drug trafficking route). It may coincide with the Country of seizure. Destination country is to be selected from a drop-down menu to use standard UNODC names.

4.5 TRAFFICKERS and ARRESTS

Number of individuals brought into formal contact with the law enforcement (suspected/arrested/cautioned): the number of people who came into contact with the police, customs and other law enforcement agencies at the time when the seizure took place. Please select from the drop-down menu.

Nationality/ies of traffickers (Nationality1; Nationality2; Nationality3): the country of nationality is to be selected from a drop-down menu to use standard UNODC country

names/nationalities. If more than 3 traffickers were brought into formal contact with law enforcement, please provide the information under the “*Additional details (narrative)*” variable in column AV.

Age (Age1; Age2, Age3): age of trafficker(s) (please choose from dropdown menu). If more than 3 traffickers were brought into formal contact with law enforcement, please provide the information under the “*Additional details (narrative)*” variable in column AV. If data is not available on the exact age of the traffickers, a range (e.g., 18-24) can be provided.

Sex (Sex1; Sex2; Sex3): sex of trafficker (please choose from dropdown menu). If more than 3 traffickers were brought into formal contact with law enforcement, please provide the information under the “*Additional details (narrative)*” variable in column AV.

Type of charge (Type of charge1; Type of charge2; Type of charge3): the type of legal accusation that the trafficker(s) is(are) charged for. The responses include:

- Trafficking
- Possession/consumption
- Other / Multiple charges, specify
- Data not available

The following definitions apply to the possible responses to this question:

Trafficking refers to unlawful offering, offering for sale, distribution, sale, delivery, brokerage, dispatch, dispatch in transit, transport, importation, exportation, cultivation, production, manufacture, extraction or preparation of controlled drugs or precursors not in connection with the use or possession of drugs for personal consumption.

Possession/consumption refers to unlawful handling, possession or use drugs for personal consumption and for non-personal consumption.

Other refers to unlawful handling, possession or use of controlled drugs or precursors for personal consumption and for non-personal consumption not described or classified above.

Source: [International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes \(ICCS\)](#)

Additional details (narrative): this column collects, in text format, a full narrative about each seizure case with further specific information, including hiding place details, further details on transportation, details on national and international cooperation, information on the monetary value of the drugs seized, etc. No confidential data such as names and other confidential details of traffickers, specific details or addresses are required. If these data are provided, it will be anonymized before publication of seizure case data.