



World Drug Report 2020

Vienna, 26 June 2020



How harmful are NPS?

Are they more or less harmful than before?



**Few have
established a
global market**

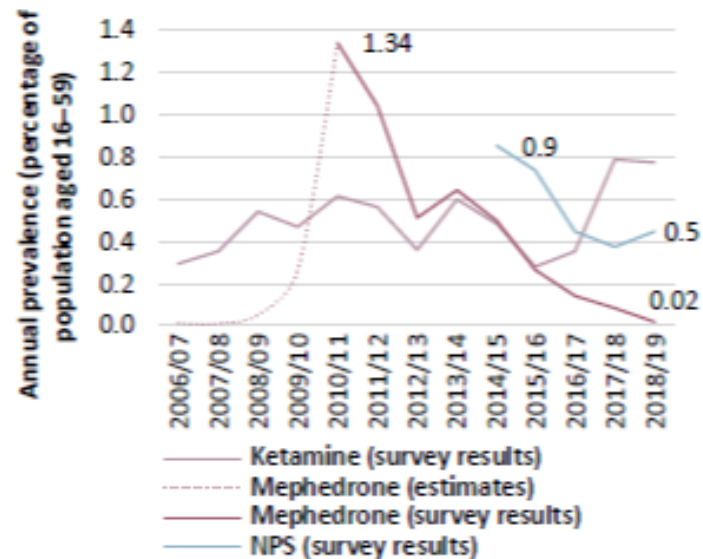
***Tramadol
Ketamine***

**What about the
others?**



National/international control and users choice have reduced the number of NPS users in some countries

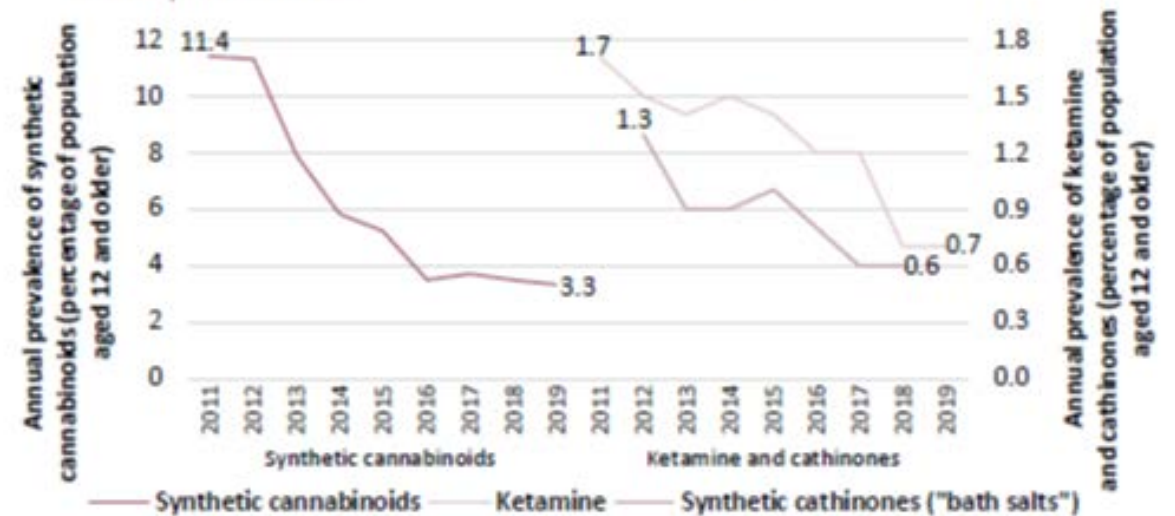
FIG. 58 Use of new psychoactive substances in England and Wales, United Kingdom, 2006–2019



United Kingdom, Home Office, *Drug Misuse: Findings from the 2018 to 2019 Crime Survey for England and Wales*, Statistical Bulletin 21/19 (London, September 2019).

^a Estimates derived from the British Crime Survey, conducted in 2010/11, and seizure statistics from the Forensic Science Service.

FIG. 59 Use of new psychoactive substances among twelfth-grade students in United States high schools, 2011–2019

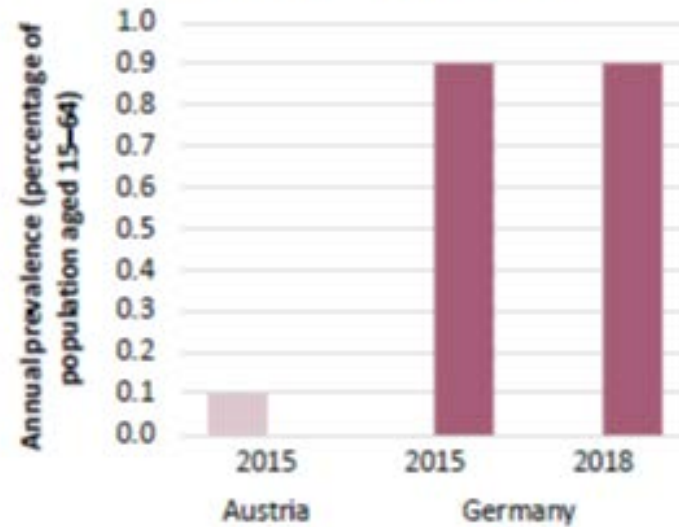


Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Monitoring the Future* survey.



Control may take some time to have an impact?

FIG. 60 Use of new psychoactive substances in Austria and Germany, 2015–2018

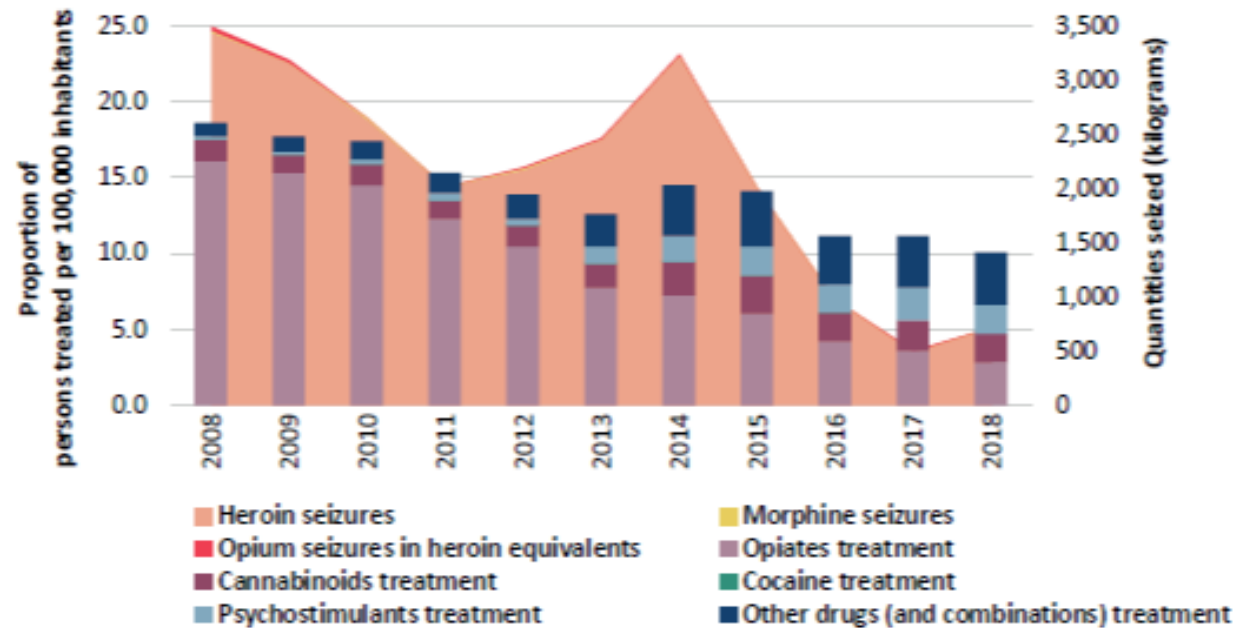


Sources: Julian Strizek and Alfred Uhl, *Bevölkerungserhebung zu Substanzgebrauch 2015* (Vienna, Gesundheit Österreich GmbH, 2016); German Ministry of Health / SUCHT, *Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Praxis*, vol. 62, October 2016; t, N.-N. Seitz, K. Lochbühler, J. Atzendorf, C. Rauschert, T. Pfeiffer-Gerschel, L. Kraus, "Trends des Substanzkonsums und substanzbezogener Störungen. Auswertung des Epidemiologischen Suchtsurveys von 1995 bis 2018", *Deutsches Ärzteblatt International*, vol. 116, Nos. 35–36; and UNODC, responses to the annual report questionnaire.



Countries are at a different stage of the global NPS “epidemic”

FIG. 26 First-time drug treatment per 100,000 inhabitants and quantities of opiates seized in the Russian Federation, 2007–2018



Will they have the same declining trends observed in the earlier countries?

Sources: UNODC, responses to the annual report questionnaire; and Russian Federation, “Basic functioning indicators of the Narcological Service of the Russian Federation”, a set of statistical handbooks for 2008–2017, released by the National Research Centre on Addictions, branch of V. Serbsky NMRCFN.



Conclusions

- **At “macro” level:** the harm in terms of number of users, hospital admissions or deaths remain lower than “traditional” drugs
- **At “micro” level:** Single NPS can be very potent and more harmful than “traditional” drugs
- **Marginalized populations:** such as homeless and prisoners more affected



Important questions

What is the global harm caused by NPS used in combination or instead of other drugs?

Is the harm caused by NPS increasing or decreasing?