UNODC
Global overview on NPS, synthetic opioids and emerging issues
Content

• New psychoactive substances globally and in Latin America and the Caribbean
• Synthetic opioids
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Global emergence of NPS

The boundaries and names shown and the designations in this document do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dashed lines represent undetermined boundaries. The dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. The final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).
Number of NPS reported annually, 2009-2020

Over 1000 individual NPS reported by 126 member States and territories

Source: UNODC Early Warning Advisory on NPS
NPS reported in the region, 2016-2020*

Source: UNODC, Early Warning Advisory on NPS, 2021. *Note: Data collected for 2020 are preliminary.
NPS reported in the region, by psychoactive effect group, 2009-2020*

Source: UNODC, Early Warning Advisory on NPS, 2021.
*Note: Data collected for 2020 are preliminary.
NPS reported in the region, by psychoactive effect group, 2018-2020*

Source: UNODC, Early Warning Advisory on NPS, 2021.

*Note: Data collected for 2020 are preliminary.
Hallucinogenic NPS Trends: NBOMe – vs - 2C compounds

Source: UNODC, Early Warning Advisory on NPS, 2021.
Opioid Crisis

- Non-medical use of fentanyl and its analogues in North America
- Non-medical use of tramadol in West, Central and North Africa
- Insufficient access to internationally controlled opioids for medical use
- Rapid emergence of NPS with opioid effects
Number of different synthetic NPS with opioid effects, by chemical structural class, 2009–2019

Source: UNODC Early Warning Advisory on NPS, 2020
Chemical structural classes of NPS with opioid effects reported to UNODC EWA, 2009-2019

- **CYCLOHEXYLPHENOLS** e.g. O-desmethyltramadol
- **PHENYLPIPERIDINES** e.g. desmethylprodine
- **PHENETHYLPIPERIDINES** e.g. isobutyrfentanyl
- **DIPHENETHYLPIPERZINES** e.g. MT-45
- **CYCLOHEXYLBENZAMIDES** e.g. U-47700, AH-7921
- **NITROBENZIMIDAZOLES** e.g. isotonitazene
- **THIAMBUTENES** e.g. piperidylthiambutene
- **CINNAMYLPIPERAZINES** e.g. 2-methyl AP-237, para-AP-237
68 substances and 7 chemical precursors included in the International Lists of Scheduled Substances between 2014-2021*. 

International Scheduling Decisions 2014 – 2020

[Bar chart showing the distribution of scheduling decisions for different categories of substances between 2014 and 2021*]
Emerging synthetic drug issues in Latin America and the Caribbean

- Fentanyl and its analogues have become trafficking problem in Central America and parts of the Caribbean
- Ecstasy shipments from Europe detected in the mail more frequently by more countries, frequently with high MDMA doses per pill (role of EWS!)
- Ecstasy manufacture, possibly with helional as a precursor in Brazil
- Localized increased adulteration of drugs during COVID-19?
- New/renewed popularity of 2C-B ("tusi") products often containing NPS (2C-compounds, ketamine, …) while NBOMe compounds are reported by fewer countries
- Involvement of Mexican cartels in Europe and South-Asia in cocaine and methamphetamine trafficking – role of Brazil?
United Nations Toolkit on Synthetic Drugs

https://syntheticdrugs.unodc.org/
Recent publications of the Global SMART Programme
Thank you!

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