World Drug Report 2021

Presentation of main findings
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Cannabis more potent but fewer young people see its regular use as harmful

Sources: University of Mississippi, National Center for Natural Products Research, Research Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Quarterly Report No. 140, Potency Monitoring Program (June 2019); EMCDDA, Statistical Bulletin 2000; UNODC, annual report questionnaire; EMCDDA and European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs, ESPAD Report 2019: Results from the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs, EMCDDA Joint Publications Series (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2020); and United States, National Institute on Drug Abuse, Monitoring the Future, “2020 data from in-school surveys of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students” (December 2020).
Dark web markets come and go, but sales of drugs are rising

Source: UNODC analysis and estimates, based on data from Hikari Labs.
Online sales of drugs on the clear web, the deep web and the dark web

The Internet: Clear Web, Deep Web and Dark Web

**Internet**
Infrastructure consisting of a standardized set of data transfer protocols for digital information exchange.

**Clear web (surface web)**
Content indexed by standard web-search engines, accessible to anyone using the Internet.
- Social networks
- Public pages/profiles

**Dark web (darknets)**
Darknets, or overlay networks within the Internet that can only be accessed with specific software, configurations, or authorization, and often use a unique customized communication protocol. Two typical darknet types are social networks (usually used for file hosting with a peer-to-peer connection), and anonymity proxy networks such as Tor via an anonymized series of connections.

**Deep web**
Content not indexed by standard web-search engines; content can be located and accessed by a direct URL or IP address but may require a password or other security access to get past public-website pages; includes many very common uses such as web mail, online banking, private or otherwise restricted access content and profiles.
- Online banking
- Social networks
- Restricted pages/profiles
Projection: 11% increase in global number of drug users by 2030 due to population growth alone.
Impact of COVID-19 resilience and adaptation of drug traffickers

COVID HAS ACCELERATED SOME DRUG TRAFFICKING PATTERNS

- Larger shipment size
- Increased use of private aircraft
- Increased use of waterway routes
- Contactless methods to deliver drugs to end-consumers

DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC THERE HAS BEEN A CLEAR CHANGE IN THE MODE OF TRANSPORTATION OF SMALL-SCALE DRUG SEIZURES

Source: UNODC, Drugs Monitoring Platform.
Impact of COVID-19 increase in non-medical use of cannabis, pharm. drugs

Addiction medicine professionals perceived in most countries an increase in the use of cannabis and non-medical use of pharmaceutical drugs during the early stages of the pandemic.

Impact of COVID-19 innovation in drug use prevention and treatment services

MANY COUNTRIES EXPERIENCED DISRUPTIONS TO DRUG USE SERVICES DURING THE EARLY STAGES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Critical services for the prevention of adverse health consequences</th>
<th>Overdose prevention and management</th>
<th>Opioid agonist treatment programmes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of countries (percentage)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Impact of COVID-19 likely to be felt in drug markets for years to come

POST-COVID ECONOMIC CRISIS
WILL HAVE GREATEST IMPACT ON DRUG MARKETS

Expanding drug cultivation and trafficking
food insecurity may intensify illicit drug cultivation and production

+ +

More drug use
a protracted economic crisis may accelerate progression to drug use disorders

ECONOMIC CRISIS predicted

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS EXACERBATED THE FACTORS THAT FUEL THE VIOLENT CYCLE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY AND DRUG USE DISORDERS

Vicious Circle

Poverty
in 2020 between 119 and 124 million people pushed into extreme poverty

Conflict

Limited education
in 2020 1.6 billion learners were affected by school closure

Drug use disorder

Limited employment
in 2020 255 million full-time jobs lost

UNODC Research
Number of people using drugs rising 22% in last decade to 275 million
Burden of disease remains high among people who use drugs

Global burden of disease due to drug use increasing

- 494,000 deaths
- 31 million years of healthy life lost

Mostly attributed to opioid use disorders

- 11.2 million people inject drugs
- 5.6 million people who inject drugs are living with hepatitis C
- 1.4 million people who inject drugs are living with HIV
- 1.2 million people who inject drugs are living with HIV and hepatitis C
While cannabis trafficking and use affect all regions worldwide, other drug issues pose additional threats in different geographical locations.
Thank you for your listening!

https://wdr.unodc.org/