



**EXPERT REPORT**  
**UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME**

**AGENDA: «HUMAN RIGHTS' PROTECTION IN THE CONTEXT OF  
DRUG TRAFFICKING»**



ПРИ ПОДДЕРЖКЕ  
ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОГО КОМИТЕТА  
МОЛОДЕЖНОЙ ПОЛИТИКИ  
РЕСПУБЛИКИ КРЫМ

**MODEL UN IN CRIMEA (21-23 October 2022)**

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## 1. THE HISTORY OF THE POISON THAT EMPOISONS THE WHOLE WORLD

Drug use has a long history, spanning different stages of humanity development. At each of these stages there is a different understanding of a drug's role and impact, from the glorification of its role as a medicine to the most severe prohibition of its use and abuse. Initially, drugs were used solely as a medicinal drug and were of herbal origin and had limited distribution areas, but today drugs are distributed all over the world, there are thousands of types of drugs, there are various ways of their creation and use, and the drug itself is already perceived as something negative, having a significant harmful effect on the human body<sup>1</sup>.

A drug is a substance that acts on the human psyche, which dulls pain and/or brings pleasure to the drug user, forming a physical and/or mental dependence<sup>2</sup>.

The history of these substances goes back to a civilisation that existed, 5,000 years BC. Drugs as substances effecting human consciousness were known to both the ancient Greeks and the ancient Romans. The Roman doctors of the first century AD was taking well to opium, using it to treat various ailments. In the early medieval period, during the Arab conquests, the opium poppy penetrated the Orient. During the Crusades to Palestine, opium as a medicine was gradually penetrating Europe.

For example, Charlemagne's Capitulations order the cultivation of poppies in each peasant's garden and the payment of taxes from each household to be accompanied by 26.2 liters of poppy seeds<sup>3</sup>. The intensification of conquest and trade relations between peoples and cultures also led to drug-using traditions' penetration new territories. Thus, as a result of the crusades and travels of Marco Polo, Europeans learned opium and hashish, widespread in the East. Later, the era of great

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<sup>1</sup> Zolotov A.Y. Drugs: A Historical Retrospective// The Economics of Education. №1. 2013. P. 175.

<sup>2</sup> Encyclopedia «Krugosvet». // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.krugosvet.ru/enc/medicina/NARKOTIK.html>

<sup>3</sup> Zolotov A.Y. Op. cit. 175.



geographical discoveries and the development of new continents by Europeans introduced the civilized world to new psychoactive substances. Cocaine, various hallucinogens and tobacco widespread post discovery the Americas.

The widespread use of drugs in Europe is attributed to the anti-alcohol laws passed in England in 1840. The first mass outbreak of drug addiction in Europe dates from this period. It was then, due to restrictions on the sale of alcohol, the working classes in England started using opium pills as a substitute for alcohol, so the production and sale of these pills began to prosper. The annual consumption of opium in England in 1859 was 61,000 pounds which is about 27 and a half tones<sup>1</sup>.

At this time an epidemic of etheromania began in Ireland, which led to the discovery of the phenomenon of general anaesthesia. In France, however, the parallel use of cannabis products (hashish) was developing. The main users were literary men who, in the 1830s-1840s, even formed a hashish club. At the same time absinthe, invented by the French emigrant doctor Pierre Ordiner, who was hiding from the French Revolution in western Switzerland, was rapidly gaining popularity. The drink gained popularity and was used as a stimulant by the French colonial army during the wars in North Africa that began in 1830. However, public attitudes towards absinthe began to change dramatically soon, and in 1905 absinthe was banned in Belgium and later in other European countries and the United States.

In the early nineteenth century, scientific attempts were made to improve and enhance the «use properties» of drugs. For example, scientists discovered a way to isolate pure alkaloids, highly potent narcotic active ingredients from plant material. In particular, morphine was invented. The invention of the injection syringe in 1853 by Charles-Gabriel Pravaz opened the next stage in the modern history of drugs. The effects of substances that entered directly into the bloodstream were multiplied. In 1859- 1860, Albert Niemann isolated the drugs. Albert Niemann isolated the alkaloid

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<sup>1</sup> Zolotov A.Y. Op. cit. 175.



cocaine from the coca leaf and defined its structure.

In the end of the nineteenth century, various forms of drug addiction became a very prominent social phenomenon in Europe, so many prominent writers described vividly in their works this side of those times civilized society's life.

The next burst of mass drug use in affluent countries of Europe and America dates back to the 1960s. In the mid-1960s, the prevalent hobby of young British people was cannabis, and subsequently the new synthetic drug «LSD».

From 1962 onwards, the use of LSD was subject to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval and was effectively outlawed. The substance was officially banned in the USA from 1966. Europe followed the USA's lead soon. In 1968, the sale of LSD became a crime and its possession an offence. In late 1967-1968, a new extremely toxic drug methylamphetamine (Methedrine) got widespread among intravenous drug addicts. In 1967, foreseeingly legislation amendments, a doctor from the London borough of Soho began substituting it for cocaine, which heroin addicts used as a stimulant. A dangerous stage was the shift from peroral to intravenous use of amphetamines. In 2006, the sale of smoking blends based on the synthetic cannabinoid JWH018 began. "Spice" blends have been sold in the European countries since 2006 (according to some sources since 2004) under the guise of incense, mostly through internet shops. In 2008, it was established that the active ingredients in the blends were not plant-based substances but synthetic analogues of tetrahydrocannabinol, the main active ingredient in marijuana.



## 2. DRUG USE IS A GLOBAL PROBLEM OF OUR TIME

Drug addiction is a chronically relapsing disorder characterised by compulsive use of addictive substances, despite adverse consequences for the individual and society. Addiction to drugs and alcohol is increasingly becoming a global lifestyle trend that is prevalent in rich and poor countries both. Addiction to alcohol, drugs and smoking is now considered a serious public health problem. According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) World Drug Report 2022, around 284 million people around the world used drugs in the past year while over 36 million suffered from drug use disorders. These figures are taken from official statistics, but there are also people who hide their addiction, so the figure given by the UNODC does not show how many people actually use drugs.

Most countries reported an increase in cannabis use during the pandemic. In a survey of health professionals in 77 countries, 42% of respondents stated that cannabis use increased. During the same period, there was an increase in the non-medical use of pharmaceutical preparations<sup>1</sup>.

Despite an increase in drug use, drug treatment based on scientific evidence is becoming more accessible.

According to the latest global estimates, about 5.5 per cent of people aged 15-64 have used drugs at least once in the past year, and 36.3 million people, or 13 per cent of all drug users, have a drug use disorder<sup>2</sup>.

Adolescents and young adults, high school and college students, face many unique stresses in their lives. Combined with an underdeveloped frontal lobe, the area of the brain responsible for impulse control, decision-making and mood regulation, these age groups may be prone to substance abuse. The burden of disease associated

<sup>1</sup> UNODC world drug report 2022 booklet 1. // [Electronic resource] URL: [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/wdr-2021\\_booklet-1.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/wdr-2021_booklet-1.html)

<sup>2</sup> UNODC world drug report 2022 booklet 2. // [Electronic resource] URL: [https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2022/MS/WDR22\\_Booklet\\_2.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2022/MS/WDR22_Booklet_2.pdf)



with drug use continues to grow, manifesting itself in both early mortality and the loss of years of healthy life through disability. The greatest harms from drugs are associated with opioid use, particularly because of the risk of contracting HIV or hepatitis C from failing to take precautions when injecting drugs. Approximately 42 million years of 'healthy' life have been lost as a result of drug use (through premature death and disability). This was also mainly due to drug use disorders, especially opioids<sup>1</sup>.

Over the past decade, deaths from drug use disorders have almost doubled, far outstripping increases in the number of users, so it can be assumed that drug use has become more harmful.

Half a million deaths were associated to drug use in 2019. Liver cancer, cirrhosis and other chronic liver diseases caused by hepatitis C were responsible for more than half of the deaths. However, this increase also partly reflects an increase in overdose deaths related to opioids such as fentanyl. This is especially the case of poverty-stricken countries. On a more positive note, there has been a decline in HIV and AIDS-related deaths among people who use drugs over the last decade<sup>2</sup>.

Globally, there are about 284 million people who have used drugs in the past year, up from 226 million in 2010. This increase is partly due to a 10% increase in the global population. Health systems are facing an increasing challenge, with an estimated 36 million people suffering from drug use disorders in 2019, up from 27 million in 2010<sup>3</sup>.

The non-medical use of cannabis and sedatives increased during the pandemic. During the pandemic most countries experienced increases in cannabis use and non-medical use of narcotic medicines, including benzodiazepines. According to a survey

<sup>1</sup> UNODC world drug report 2019. // [Electronic resource] URL: [https://wdr.unodc.org/wdr2019/prelaunch/WDR2019\\_B1\\_R.pdf](https://wdr.unodc.org/wdr2019/prelaunch/WDR2019_B1_R.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> UNODC world drug report 2021. // [Electronic resource] URL: [https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/V2104297\\_russian.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/V2104297_russian.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> UNODC world drug report 2010. // [Electronic resource] URL: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr/WDR\\_2010/World\\_Drug\\_Report\\_2010\\_rus\\_web.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr/WDR_2010/World_Drug_Report_2010_rus_web.pdf)



of health-care providers conducted in 77 countries, an increase in non-medical use of sedatives was reported in 64 per cent of countries, and an increase in cannabis use in 42 per cent. Changes in the consumption patterns of other substances were less pronounced, although the use of drugs such as "ecstasy" and cocaine, commonly used at acid parties, was reported less frequently.

The rise of the internet could completely transform the way drugs are distributed and consumed around the world. Drug marketplaces appeared on the Darknet only around ten years ago, but today the largest of them, at a conservative estimate, have an annual turnover of \$315 million. Though this is only one ounce of total drug trafficking, the trend is upwards: between the early 2010s (2011 to mid-2017) and recent years (mid-2017 to 2020), annual sales have quadrupled. The penetration of drug trafficking on social media and popular e-commerce platforms suggests that the availability of drugs is increasing. While cannabis accounts for the bulk of drug trafficking on the Darknet, the visible segment of the Internet is often used to trade NPS and substances used in the manufacture of synthetic drugs, including precursor chemicals. Vendors play cat and mouse with law enforcement agencies by selling their products as "chemical reagents" or by offering "custom synthesis services" allowing customers to order substances not listed in a catalogue. Although this practice is legitimate in the pharmaceutical industry, it can also be used by traffickers to distribute controlled substances.





### 3. INTERNATIONAL LAW IS FIGHTING DRUGS

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is responsible for the international drug problem. It was established in 1997 as a merger of the UN Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention. UNODC operates throughout the world and is represented by a network of regional offices.

UNODC's budget consists of 90% voluntary contributions from member states' governments. The organization provides support to member states in the combating drugs, crime prevention and counterterrorism. In the UN Millennium Declaration, member states committed to strengthening the fight against transnational crime on all fronts and to countering the world's drug problems, and agreed to participate jointly in combating international terrorism. UNODC collects, analyses and reports data on drug trafficking trends, including arrests, seizures, prices and purity of illicit drugs, provided by Member States through Annual Reports Questionnaires (ARQs). Through the same mechanism, UNODC also collects and reports data on the illicit manufacture of controlled substances, including data on clandestine laboratories. In addition, it also collects and reports data on significant individual drug seizures reported by Member States.

The work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is guided by a number of different international legal instruments, such as the three drug control conventions, the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the United Nations standards and norms of crime prevention and criminal justice, and the 19 universal legal documents on combating terrorism. (see the appendix p.16).

The rule of law, human rights and development issues are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Working with its network of field offices, consisting of 8



regional offices and 10 country offices, UNODC ensures the integration of international norms and standards into regional and national agendas and implements regional and country programmes in close consultation with regional entities, partner countries, United Nations partners and civil society.

UNODC functions as the secretariat for the United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice, which are held every five years and bring together a wide range of stakeholders from government, civil society and academia to discuss best practices and approaches to crime prevention and criminal justice issues at the national, regional and global levels.

Drawing on its normative, analytical and operational work, UNODC will continue to work through partnerships both within and outside the United Nations system to help Member States provide effective and accountable security and justice services to citizens that can overcome violence and lack of rights, opening the way to equitable and sustainable development.

An important instrument in the war on drugs is the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, which was adopted in 1961 (amended 1972) at a UN conference. Now 186 countries have signed it. It requires participating countries to take domestic measures to coordinate preventive and repressive measures against illicit drug trafficking; help each other in the campaign against illicit trafficking; cooperate closely with each other and with the competent international organizations of which they are members to mount a concerted campaign against illicit trafficking; ensure prompt international cooperation between the relevant authorities; ensure the speedy transmission of international legal documents to designated authorities when required for prosecution; this requirement does not prejudice the right of Parties to request official documents to be communicated to them through diplomatic channels; to submit to the Board, if considered appropriate, through the Secretary General, in addition to the information required under article 18, information on illicit activities



related to narcotic drugs within their borders, including information on illicit cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking in and use of narcotic drugs; and provide the information referred to in the preceding paragraph as far as possible in such a way and within such a period as the Committee request<sup>1</sup>.

Also important are the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, namely Article 33, which requires Member States to take all appropriate measures to protect children from drug use and «prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances». This is the only article in all the UN human rights treaties that specifically addresses drug use. Article 6 states that if a child dies as a result of an overdose, an infection or as a direct result of state abuse, and the cause of death can be attributed to state action or inaction, then this may be a violation of the child's right to life. Article 6 makes clear that Member States are obliged to «ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and normal development of the child».

Under Article 24, States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and equipment for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. THUS, through the efforts of the UN, Member States strive to ensure there is no deprivation of any child of his or her access right to such healthcare services.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights also guarantees the right of everyone to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Article 12(c) obliges states to take all necessary measures to «prevent, treat and combat epidemic .... diseases». The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the monitoring body for the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, has interpreted this article as follows: «[These measures] *involve the preparation of outreach and prevention programmes on diseases*

<sup>1</sup> Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. // [Electronic resource] URL: [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/convention\\_1961\\_ru.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/convention_1961_ru.pdf)





#### 4. INTERNATIONAL-LEGAL ANTIDRUG EFFORT

UNODC has a strategy for 2021-2025 and to address the drug problem, the organization has set the following targets under the three international drug control conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988<sup>1</sup>:

1. Explore the links between the drug problem and various aspects of sustainable development, peace and security of human rights.
2. Support Member States in the implementation of international obligations in the field of drug policy.
3. Increase access to drug use disorder treatment, rehabilitation, recovery and social reintegration, and HIV/AIDS and hepatitis prevention, treatment and care.
4. Assert related human rights and gender considerations, especially among vulnerable groups.
5. Focus on understanding the relationship between the drug problem and transnational organized crime, including cybercrime, corruption, trafficking, financial flows and terrorism.
6. Expand the role and capacity of the UNODC laboratory to support Member States' programmatic and policy responses to illicit drug trafficking and related healthcare services.
7. Strengthen national law enforcement capacity to address drug problems in a sustainable manner.

Prevention has been and continues to be the best primary method of reducing drug use and associated morbidity. The most effective prevention methods include those that help the young generation build positive relationships with family, teachers and peers in school and other members of society and promote an inclusive and safe living space. private association and civil society organizations, including

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<sup>1</sup> UNODC Strategy 2021-2025. // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.unodc.org/documents/Advocacy-Section/UNODC-Strategy-WEB.pdf>



organizations and associations of people who use drugs, are undergoing treatment and rehabilitation or are otherwise affected by the drug problem, can provide important support for drug prevention and treatment efforts. The principles of protecting and promoting the rights of people who use drugs, guaranteeing them dignified treatment, protection from stigmatisation and equal access to health care and social assistance, should underpin any drug prevention and treatment interventions.

Strengthening law enforcement capacity remains a priority for countering drug trafficking on the Darknet, while innovative solutions and strengthened international cooperation are needed to counter the increasing use of the visible segment of the Internet.

Public-private partnerships have become very important in the fight against drug trafficking on the Internet. Internet service providers, technology and transport companies and postal services are now involved in the drug distribution chain. The issue of countering drug trafficking using the internet is a key item in the International Narcotics Control Board's report to the UN General Assembly at its 20th session. In combating the illicit manufacture, trafficking and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants and their precursors, the General Assembly recognized that the use of the Internet presented an additional barrier to addressing drug abuse<sup>1</sup>.

Without the involvement of all these parties, governments' responses will have no effect. In order to identify illicit proceeds and financial flows that drive drug trafficking, strict regulation and oversight of cryptocurrency markets and monitoring of electronic payments must be introduced to detect suspicious transactions and notify competent authorities. Such approaches will only be effective if uniform legal and regulatory frameworks are adopted and enforced in all jurisdictions, and if governments set the same rules of the game for all.

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<sup>1</sup> Tsirina M. A. Dissemination of pro-drug information on the Internet: countermeasures / M. A. Tsirina. // Journal of Russian Law. № 4. 2012. P. 46.



UNODC focuses on interventions for children, adolescents and families. The UNODC Children's Project was developed to promote a worldwide coordinated response to children and adolescents at risk of drug use, and young people dependent on drugs. The objectives of the project include:

- Addressing the health and social impact on children;
- Drug prevention;
- Treatment for drug addiction;
- Promoting reintegration and contribution to the wider community.

The project provides a specific model within proven strategies that can be used to support Member States. The focus is on public health approaches to drug control as a basis for existing good practice. The UNODC Children's Project was successfully launched in Afghanistan and continues to support children, adolescents and families in Afghanistan, funding permitting. In addition, the project has recently expanded to other parts of the world, including Bangladesh, India, Liberia, Pakistan and West Africa.



## 5. INTERNATIONAL LEGAL ACTS

1. Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. (New York, March 30, 1961). // Bulletin of International Treaties, August 2000, №8.

2. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. (New York, December 19, 1966, Adopted by General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), December 16, 1966). // Collection of existing treaties, agreements and conventions concluded with foreign states, M., 1978, no. XXXII, p. 36. // [Electronic resource] URL: [https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl\\_conv/conventions/pactecon.shtml](https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/conventions/pactecon.shtml)

3. Convention on Psychotropic Substances. (Vienna, February 21, 1971). // Collection of valid treaties, agreements and conventions concluded by the USSR with foreign states, M., 1981, no. XXXV, p. 416.

4. UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of December 20, 1988. // Collection of international treaties of the USSR and the Russian Federation, issue XLVII. M., 1994, p. 133.

5. Convention on the Rights of the Child. (Adopted by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of November 20, 1989). // Collection of international treaties of the USSR, M., 1993, Issue XLVI. // [Electronic resource] URL: [https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl\\_conv/conventions/childcon.shtml](https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/conventions/childcon.shtml)

6. UN Millennium Declaration. (approved by General Assembly resolution 55/2 of September 8, 2000). // [Electronic resource] URL: [https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl\\_conv/declarations/summitdecl.shtml](https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/declarations/summitdecl.shtml)

7. Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms ETS №005 (Rome, November 4, 1950). // Collection of Legislation of the Russian Federation, May 18, 1998, №20, art. 2143<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Russian Federation ceases to be a High Contracting Party to the Convention on September 16, 2022. Judgments of the ECtHR that entered into force after March 15, 2022 will not be enforced in the Russian Federation).





## 6. RECOMMENDED ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

4. UN. // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.un.org/en/>

3. UN Office on Drugs and Crime. // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/index.html>

6. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs. // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/index.html>

1. UN Office on Drugs and Crime Report 2022. // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/world-drug-report-2022.html>

2. UN Office on Drugs and Crime Strategy. // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/strategy/index.html>

5. UNODC Strategic Vision for Africa 2030. // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/ru/strategy/africa-vision.html>



## **7. RECOMMENDED QUESTIONS FOR DRAFTING THE COUNTRY'S POSITION**

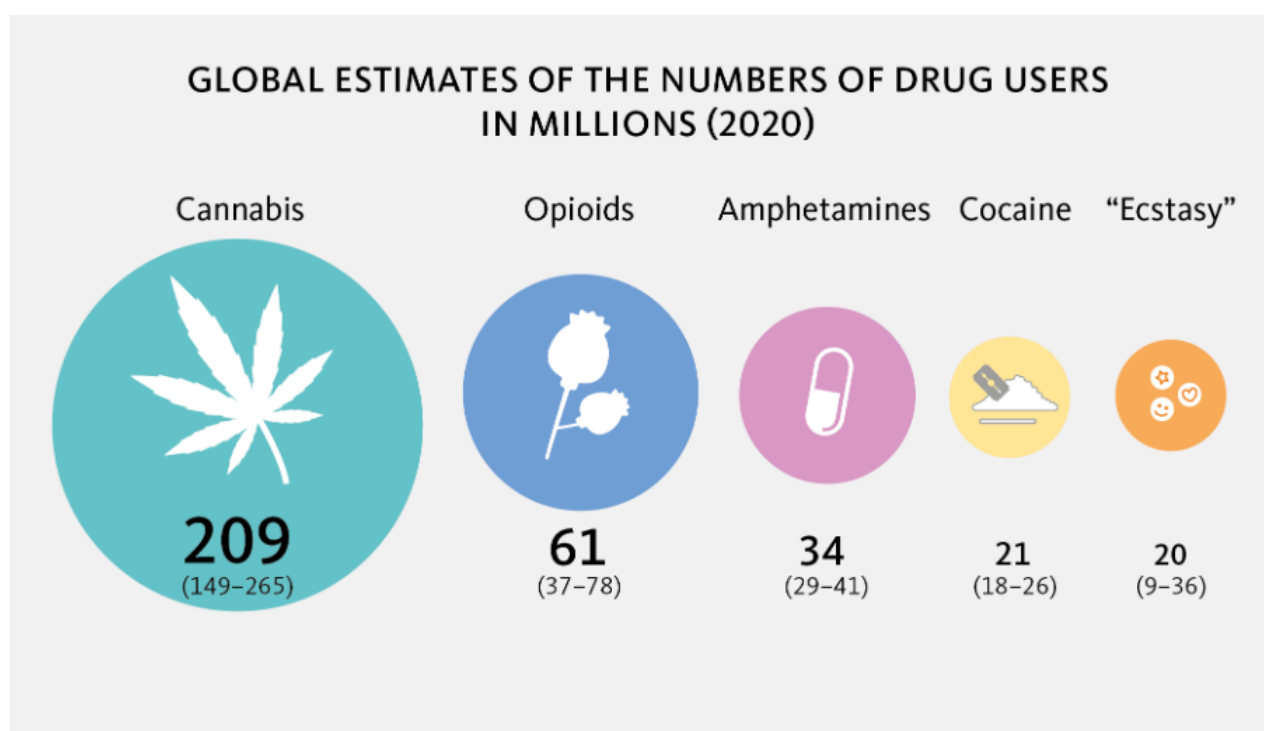
1. The country and its drug problem.
2. The legal acts on combating drugs passed by the country.
3. The country's positive experience at combating drugs.
4. The country's participation in the international campaign to combat drugs.
5. Amendments to the resolution<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Draft Resolution is sent to the participants by the organizing committee additionally after consideration of the application for participation.

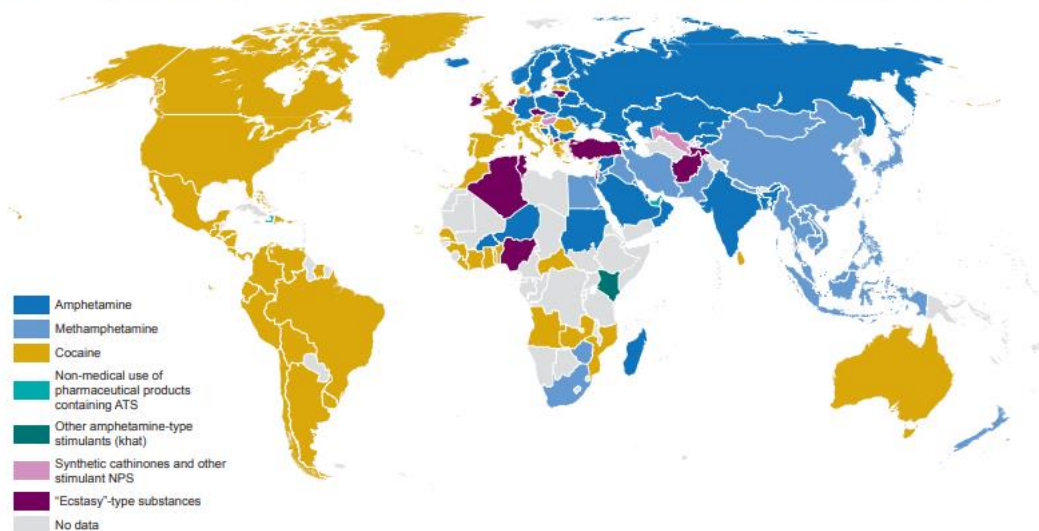


## 8. STATISTICS



Rice. №1. World drug use statistics.

MAP 1 Most used stimulant drug, by country, in terms of number of users (2020 or most recent year for which data are available)



Rice. №2. The most abused drug in a single country.



Rice. №3. The five areas of activities of the UNODC.

## 9. LIST OF RECOMMENDED STATES

Australia	Latvia
Afghanistan	Libya
Bangladesh	Morocco
Belarus	Mexico
Brazil	Netherlands
Great Britain	Norway
Venezuela	Pakistan
Germany	Peru
Denmark	Russian Federation
Iran	USA
Iceland	Thailand
Kazakhstan	Finland
Canada	France
People's Republic of China	Sweden
Columbia	Estonia

