Benzodiazepines use among clients entering drug treatment in Europe

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25 September 2014

“Continuity and change”, High risk drug use and drug treatment in Europe 2014
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Methodological information

http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/activities/tdi
## Item list

1. Treatment centre type
2. Year of treatment
3. Ever previously treated (First in the year)
4. Source of referral
5. Sex
6. Age at treatment start
7. Living status (with whom)
8. Drug clients with children
9. Living status (where)
10. Nationality
11. Labour status
12. Highest educational level completed
13. **Primary drug**
14. Usual route of administration
15. Frequency of use of primary drug
16. Age at first use of primary drug
17. **Secondary drug**
18. Polydrug use problem
19. Opioid substitution treatment
20. Age at first opioid substitution treatment
21. Ever injected or currently injecting any drug
22. Age at first injection
23. HIV testing
24. HCV testing
25. Needle/syringe sharing
# List of drugs

1. Opioids (total)
   - 11 heroin
   - 12 methadone misused
   - 13 buprenorphine misused
   - 14 fentanyl illicit/misused
   - 15 other opioids (please specify)

2. Cocaine (total)
   - 21 powder cocaine HCl
   - 22 crack cocaine
   - 23 others (please specify)

3. Stimulants other than cocaine (total)
   - 31 amphetamines
   - 32 methamphetamines
   - 33 MDMA and derivatives
   - 34 synthetic cathinones
   - 35 other stimulants (please specify)

4. Hypnotics and sedatives (total)
   - 41 barbiturates misused
   - **42 benzodiazepines misused**
   - 43 GHB/GBL
   - 44 other hypnotics and sedatives misused (please specify)

5. Hallucinogens (total)
   - 51 LSD
   - 52 ketamine
   - 53 other hallucinogens (please specify)

6. Volatile inhalants

7. Cannabis (total)

8. Other substances (total) (please specify which substance)

*Classification not only based on pharmaceutical criteria but on pragmatic criteria (experience of the drug professionals, treatment monitoring system)*
Benzodiazepines: included in the group of Hypnotics and Sedatives

Misused: use outside the medical practice (drugs excluded are drugs used for medical purpose under medical prescription)

Primary/
Secondary drug: drugs that cause the most problems for the client (primary) or creates problems (secondary)
Main data from TDI
All clients entering treatment by primary drug in 2012 in 22 EU countries

Total all clients: 396174

- Heroin: 159319 (28%)
- Cocaine: 37688 (10%)
- Stimulants: 109399 (40%)
- Cannabis: 28526 (7%)
- Benzodiazepines: 54970 (14%)
- Other: 6272 (2%)

Source: 2014 Data and statistics
DK, ES, UK: data 2011
New clients entering treatment by primary drug in 2012 in 27 EU countries

- **Benzodiazepines**: 3292 (2%)
- **Other substances**: 10861 (8%)
- **Stimulants other than cocaine**: 11846 (8%)
- **Cocaine**: 26164 (18%)
- **Heroin**: 30825 (22%)
- **Cannabis**: 60486 (42%)

Total new clients: 143 474

Source: 2014 Data and statistics
DK, ES, UK: data 2011
Benzodiazepines as secondary drug in 2012 in 27 EU countries
(total citations=326 976)

Source: 2013 Statistical Bulletin
Most common combinations of benzodiazepines with other drugs

Benzodiazepines as primary drug

Benzodiazepines as secondary drug
Benzodiazepines as primary drug by country in 2012 (% out of all drugs)

Source: 2014 Data and statistics
DK, SP, UK: data 2011
Trends
Trend of all clients entering treatment with benzodiazepines as primary drug in 22 EU countries, 2006 to 2012

Source: 2014 Data and statistics
DK, SP, UK: data 2011
Trend in citations of benzodiazepines as secondary drug in 20 EU countries, 2006 to 2012 (outpatient treatment centres)

Source: 2014 Data and statistics
DK, SP, UK: data 2011
Profile of clients
### Profile of clients entering treatment for benzodiazepines as primary drug

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Benzodiazepines clients</th>
<th>All drug clients</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender ratio (M/F)</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age at treatment entry</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>31.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean age at first use</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>20.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily users</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<td>Injection</td>
<td>3% (94% oral)</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current injection of any drug</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2014 Data and statistics
DK, ES, UK: data 2011
Age distribution of clients with primary benzodiazepines use (10 years period)

- <15: 0%
- 15-24: 17%
- 25-34: 30%
- 35-44: 26%
- 45-54: 16%
- 55-64: 8%
- >=65: 3%

Source: 2014 Data and statistics
DK, SP, UK: data 2011
Proportion of female among drug clients with primary benzodiazepines use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EUTOTAL</td>
<td>39%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
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<td>Slovakia</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
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<td>Cyprus</td>
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<td>Luxembourg</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
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Conclusions and issues
Conclusions

- Few primary users of benzodiazepines, more often secondary drug
- Women and older clients play an important role
- Trend data indicate a slight increase, but the numbers are low
- Country differences are relevant
- Patterns of drug use: daily use, orally, few injectors, but 30% for of any other drug
- Mainly polydrug users, involving heroin, alcohol, other drugs
- Now some indications of combinations with NPS
- Misuse among patients in opioid substitution treatment
Issues

- TDI data only reflect some a group of HRDU

- Not just one group of clients:
  - Benzodiazpines + opioids including methadone
  - Heroin + Benzodizapines
  - Benzodizapines + cannabis and alcohol

- People entering treatment in prison only reported in few countries

- Clients IN continuous treatment not included in the TDI (most OST excluded)
Issues....

- Treatment access

- Data limitations: no analysis possible on secondary drug, aggregated data

- Country differences in recording:
  - types and number of benzodiazepines
  - secondary drugs (citations, individuals, etc.); polydrug use (type, n. substances, combinations)

- Important issues not considered: psychiatric comorbidity, prescription practices and guidelines, doses, etc.