DRUG - RELATED DEATH

Lithuania

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Background:

Since 2010 data on drug-induced deaths have been submitted by the **General Mortality Register (GMR)** of the **Institute of Hygiene**. **Special drug related death registry do not exist in Lithuania**

Drug-induced deaths are those lethal cases where the direct cause of death recorded on the death certificate is the use of narcotic and psychotropic substances

The national focal point receives full data from the GMR and is able to extract and report data according to EMCDDA definitions and recommendations

**Toxicology Laboratory of the State Forensic Medicine Service** under the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania provides toxicological information on drug related death cases
DRD in Lithuania 2007-2015

GMR data, Institute of Hygiene
The drug-induced mortality rate among adults (aged 15–64) was **58.5 deaths per million** in 2015.

In 2015 information to General mortality register on DRD cases were reported:
- 112 cases by State Forensic Medicine Service under the Ministry of Justice
- 1 case by hospital
- 2 cases (death certificates) were received from Great Britain on Lithuania citizen’s deaths
Most of the DRD cases in 2015 were male (105 cases)

Average age in the time of death being

- Men – 35
- Woman – 34.7

The youngest was 19 years old
The oldest – 53 years old
Age distribution 2015

According to age distribution, in 2015, the biggest number of deaths was in the young subgroup aged from 25 to 39 (83 individuals)
Break down by ICD Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance Class</th>
<th>Total number of cases where the substances has been found</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opiate/opiod</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin/morphine</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methadone</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamine type stimulant</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis/THC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volatile substances</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Number of cases with known toxicology

Toxicological analyses were reported for 114 cases in 2015 (Male- 104, Female -10)

- Opioids: mostly heroin / morphine (or metabolites), 1 of them fentanyl and in 8 cases methadone
- Other drugs, non-opiates (2 cases amphetamine type substances, 1 THC/cannabis and 1 - volatile substances involved)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number with opiates (+any drug)</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other drugs, non-opiates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed or unknown substances</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 79 DRD cases (69 percent of death cases with known toxicological analysis) showed also Alcohol inclusion
The possible reasons of DRD cases increase in 2014-2015 compare with previous years could be:

Increased number of post-mortal analysis for drugs cases done by State Forensic Medicine Service under the Ministry of Justice. In 2015, the Toxicology Laboratory of the State Forensic Medicine Service under the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania executed 6104 tests of dead bodies (in 2014 – 6329 cases in 2013-6766 cases, in 2012 – 6946 cases), of them 3757 cases were analyzed for narcotic or psychotropic substances detection (in 2014 – 3507 cases, in 2013 – 2764, 2012-2503 cases).

State Forensic Medicine Service under the Ministry of Justice improved toxicological analysis methods and tools – in 2014 and 2015 it was widely used in high performance liquid chromatography with flight time (LC/TOF) and triple quadruple (LC/MSMS) methods.
The possible reasons of DRD cases increase in 2014-2015 compare with previous years could be:

Also one of the reasons could be related with drugs (opioids) content and purity suddenly and unexpectedly for drug users change. Media published an article about 11 drug overdoses deaths registered in Vilnius Roma community area (so called “open drug use scene/ drugs distribution point”) in 2 weeks’ period. The Police explained this deaths, that it was related with sudden increase of sold heroin liquid purity/concentration – typical heroin concentration was 7-10 percent, but during the deaths period sold heroin purity was much higher – 30-50 percent.
Thank you for your attention

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