



European Monitoring Centre
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

BULGARIA
NFP

НАЦИОНАЛЕН ФОКУСЕН ЦЕНТЪР
ЗА НАРКОТИЦИ И НАРКОМАНИИ

**2008 NATIONAL REPORT (2007 data) TO THE EMCDDA
by the Reitox National Focal Point**

“BULGARIA”

**New Development, Trends and in-depth information on
selected issues**

REITOX

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Summary

In 2007 amendments were made to the Drugs and Precursors Control Act (State Gazette, issue 55 from 6th July 2007). With them Regulation /EC/ № 111 / 2005 about the rules to control the trade with drug precursors between the community and third parties and Regulation /EC/ № 1277 / 2005 for applying the procedures introduced by Regulation /EC/ № 273 / 2004 and /EC/ № 111 / 2005 are completely enacted in the national legislation. The Act to Amend the Drugs and Precursors Control Act (DPCA, promulgated in the State Gazette, issue 55/6th July 2007) is in compliance with the Regulations of the EC, governing the drugs and precursors control.

In order to improve the accessibility to treatment for the drug dependent patients, at the third regular session of the National Council for Drugs on 27th July 2006 a Concept was adopted for the development of a system of substitution and maintenance methadone treatment programs in Bulgaria and for the improvement of the access to them. In relation to this and according to an order of the Minister of Health a project has been prepared to amend Regulation № 24.

At the Second Regular Session of the NCD which took place on 27th June 2007 a decision was made to elect two drug coordinators- one from the Ministry of Health (MH) and one from the Ministry of the Interior (MI). The representative of the MH is responsible for the sphere "Reduction of drug demand" and the representative of the MI would be responsible for the sphere "Reduction of drug supply".

26 Regional Councils for Drugs have been established to implement the policy on drugs at local level. By the end of 2007 22 Prevention and Information Centers have been established.

Slightly over a third of the respondent students (35,4 %) have used some kind of illicit narcotic substance at least once in their lives, which is down from the 2004 level (37,3 %) and slightly up from the 2006 level (33,5 %). The data from the two latest surveys seem to outline a trend of onsetting decline or at least stabilization of the number of students experimenting with narcotic substances. Marijuana is the most extensively used illicit narcotic substance (31,4 %), followed by the group of stimulants - amphetamines (10,9 %), ecstasy (9,7 %), cocaine (8,3 %), hallucinogenic mushrooms (6,9 %), and others.

To provide options of access to health education in the system of the secondary education is among the main trends of work at national level. Within the frames of the general education the integrated approach to health education is stipulated in the State Educational Requirements for educational content and in the curricula. Basic knowledge, skills and attitudes are described there which are to be developed by the students. They include a large variety of competences- from knowing one's own body and the changes that occur in it during the specific periods of growth, to understanding the meaning of belonging to specific groups and communities of people and acquiring a complex of psychological and social skills which everyone needs for his/her personal social and professional realization of full value. Most of the health educational programs which are implemented at school level combine the approaches of **life skills** and **peer education**. These skills are at the basis of developing active and positive personality capable of making decisions, resisting pressure and building up positive relationship with the others. This in turn is also the basis of prevention of the use of psychoactive substances.

The programs for work with parents are aimed at supporting the family in their attempt to overcome the difficulties in the communication of the dependent individual with his/her relatives. The world practice has shown that the inclusion of the dependent individual in such programs increases multi-fold the possibility for the dependent member of the family to start drug - free life.

23 prevention and Information Centers have been established by the end of 2007 in the towns of Blagoevgrad, Bourgass, Varna, Veliko Turnovo, Vidin, Vratsa, Gabrovo, Dobrich, Kurdjali,

Kyustendil, Pazardzik, Pernik, Pleven, Plovdiv, Razgrad, Rousse, Silistra, Sliven, Smolyan, Sofia, Haskovo, Shumen and Jambol.

The general estimation that can be made on the basis of the available data is that the number of problem heroin users has remained relatively constant and stable in the recent few years and that there are even slight indications of on-setting decline. The estimated total number of problem heroin users in Bulgaria remains between 20 000 and 30 000. This estimation was made in the period 2004-2005 by employing the Multiplier Method Using Treatment Data and due to its "obsolescence" the National Focal Point has planned to launch, in the autumn of 2008, the preparation for performing two independent estimations of the prevalence of problem drug use on national level by using the Capture-Recapture Method and the Multiplier Method Using Treatment Data. It is expected that the first results will be yielded in September-October 2009.

In 2007 the monitoring system of treatment demand covered 1398 persons, whose therapy began that year at 5 hospital and 12 out-of-hospital units and centres in 5 of the most significant (in terms of treatment capacity) Bulgarian cities.

For a number of reasons and mostly due to the relatively "favourable" effect/availability relation heroin continues to be the most popular drug among the problem users. In each of the last 5 years between 95 % and 98 % of the persons seeking treatment at the specialized centers in connection with a drug addiction problem had used heroin and/or other opiates.

The majority of the problem heroin users apply the injection pattern of intake. There are continuous signs of gradual reduction of the sharing of used needles and syringes by injecting users, which is a good prerequisite for diminishing the health damage of drug use.

According to the data of the National Police Service in 2007 the number of the registered narcotic substance users was 2654. In 2006 their number was 2883, i.e. there was a decline of about 9 %.

The system of treatment is developed within the frames of the concept of an integrated approach to the treatment of addictions. The treatment of patients with addictions is of two main types; drug-free treatment and medically assisted treatment.

The drug-free treatment and the resocialization of drug addicted persons is done in 7 rehabilitation programs with a total capacity of 125 positions situated on the territory of Sofia-city, Sofia-district and in Varna. The day centers represent an effective form of organizing the outpatient treatment of addicted persons. In the country function 5 programs of the type "Day Center for Rehabilitation", 4 of which are in Sofia, and 1 program is in Varna. In Sofia an evening program functions for employed patients and for patients - students.

By 31st December 2007 in the country are operative 17 substitution and maintenance programs with a total number of positions 2,910 in them, of which 2,405 are for treatment with methdone hydrochloride and 505 for treatment with morphin sulfate pentahydrate (substitol).

In 2007, the persons who died as a result of use of narcotics (according to the above set definition) are 52. Since the beginning of the period under observation (1990) until now, in 2007 there were most death cases of causes specified in the definition for such, related to the use of narcotics. For the whole 18-year period, there were less cases 1992 and 1994 – 8 cases a year.

As of 31.12.2007 in Bulgaria 815 HIV-positive persons are registered officially by the Ministry of Health. The number of the newly registered HIV-positive persons in 2007 is 126, 105 of which are male and 21 female. The rate of the HIV infection continues to be low, compared to the rate of the prevalence in the other countries from the region, but over the last three years there is a tendency of increasing this rate among the number of the injecting drug users. The rate of Hepatitis B infection remains around 5% (5.64%), which has been constant for 10 years now and it is comparable to the general Hepatitis B morbidity for the country. It can be noted that there is a tendency for the rate of the infected persons to remain the same, which may be due to the better work of the programs for exchange of needles and syringes. The rate of the individuals infected with Hepatittis C virus for all the IDUs tested at the NCA is 57.10 %.

Despite the on-going studies of drug-related deaths even in 2007, sufficiently accurate and reliable information about the deaths caused by an overdose or because of drug use is still not

available. A large number of deaths among the drug users remain unregistered. Exitus lethalis of deceased under circumstances which are not clarified is often caused by an over dose, or is related to drug use, but still there is no forensic practice for these deceased to be obligatorily subjected to additional tests.

The prevention of the infectious diseases related to drug use is an integral part of both the basic documents adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria- the National Program of Prophylaxis and Control of AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases 2001-2007 and the National Strategy to Combat Drugs and Drug Addictions (2003 – 2008).

The total number of the children at the specialized institutions in 2006 was 8, 653. In comparison to 2001 the number of the children institutionalized is reduced by 31,4 % (3,956). According to the results of the survey conducted by the State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) the number of the children institutionalized who come from single parent families - 46 %, or 3,958 children is the greatest. The parents of 40 % (3,460) of the children are jobless, of a very low social status and they cannot cope with rearing their children.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) has approved of a National Program for employment of people with permanent disability as a continuation of the National Program "Independent Again." In this program jobless people have also been included who have successfully completed a course of treatment for drug dependence.

The problem of the production, distribution, trafficking and use of drugs has acquired global dimensions and is considered one of the most serious threats for the global security in 21 century.

The traffic of cocaine is still done mainly by *couriers* – "mules" (Bulgarian citizens) recruited for couriers for trafficking cocaine from South America to Europe from amongst the common criminals and socially disadvantaged Bulgarian citizens. For the heroin trafficking the trend still continues for Bulgaria not to be a preferred transit country along the route of the heroin traffic. More and more often the drug traffickers use the so called "North Route" from Afghanistan via the ex Soviet Asiatic republics, Ukraine and Russia to Europe. The trafficking of small quantities of heroin from Turkey to Western Europe *by couriers traveling by train still continues*. The trafficking of larger quantities of heroin from Turkey to Western Europe is done by hiding the drug in specially built for the purpose *secret places in the wagons of the international trains or in the vehicles*. More and more often *heroin is smuggled in small quantities*, so that the loss in case the shipment is seized by the police would be minimal. Some of the transporters are *citizens with double citizenship*-Bulgarian and Turkish, who smuggle heroin in vehicles of Turkish registration.

On the data of the Chief Directorate for Counteraction of Criminality, Public Order Preservation and Prevention and of the Regional Police Departments for 2007 no change in the prices of heroin, cocaine and amphetamines was registered. An exception to this is the maximal price of a tablet of ecstasy which rose by 10 € in 2007 (5 € in 2006 and 15 € in 2007), the minimal price has not changed - 2.5 €. The minimal and the maximal prices for a gram of cannabis grass for the preceding year were as follows: 2.5 € minimal price and 15 € maximal.

Part A: New Developments and Trends

1. National Policies and Context

Within the frames of this section the following main topics will be reviewed:

- Legal framework;
- Institutional framework, strategies and policy;
- Budget and public expenditure;
- Social and cultural context.

Legal framework

Acts, regulations, directives or guidelines in the sphere of addictions and drugs (supply and demand)

The analysis of the Bulgarian criminal law in regard to the minimal regulations representing elements of criminal deeds and penalties in the sphere of the illegal drug trafficking, formulated in the framework Decision № 2004/757/PVR of the Council of the EU was done in 2006 when the measures under the Action Plan within the National Strategy to Combat Drugs were reported on. The conclusion from this analysis, which is topical even at present, is that no following amendments are necessary in the internal legislation.

In 2007 no amendments to the Criminal Code were made, to the Penalties Enforcement Act nor to the Criminal Procedure Code referring to drug-related crime.

In 2007 amendments were made to the Drugs and Precursors Control Act (State Gazette, issue 55 from 6th July 2007). With them Regulation /EC/ № 111 / 2005 about the rules to control the trade with drug precursors between the community and third parties and Regulation /EC/ № 1277 / 2005 for applying the procedures introduced by Regulation /EC/ № 273 / 2004 and /EC/ № 111 / 2005 are completely enacted in the national legislation.

● **The Act to Amend** the Drugs and Precursors Control Act (DPCA, promulgated in the State Gazette, issue 55/6th July 2007) is in compliance with the Regulations of the EC, governing the drugs and precursors control.

The Act to Amend the DPCA has been effective since 6th October 2007. By the Act to Amend the DPCA the requirements to harmonize the national legislation with the European in the sphere of the drug precursors control have been met. In the part concerning the drug precursors, of direct enforcement are Regulation № 273/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of Europe, concerning drug precursors, Regulation № 111/2005 of the Council, concerning the establishing of rules to monitor the trade between the Community and third parties in the sphere of precursors and Regulation of the Committee № 1277/2005, providing for the rules to enforce Regulation № 273/2004 concerning drug precursors and of Regulation № 111/2005, about establishing the rules to monitor the trade with precursors and drugs between the Community and countries outside the Community. The regulations are an integral part of the legislation in the sphere of precursors in the Republic of Bulgaria as a member country of the European Union.

● **A Regulation to Amend Regulation № 24/2000** was passed about the order and the terms to implement substitution and maintenance programs in order to reduce the harm for the persons dependent on drugs, promulgated in the State Gazette, 70/28th August 2007 .

In order to improve the accessibility to treatment for the drug dependent patients, at the third regular session of the National Council for Drugs on 27th July 2006 a Concept was adopted for the

development of a system of substitution and maintenance methadone treatment programs in Bulgaria and for the improvement of the access to them. In relation to this and according to an order of the Minister of Health a project has been prepared to amend Regulation № 24. The following amendments and supplements have been made:

- The leader of the substitution and maintenance program with opiates (opioid agonists and agonists-antagonists) to reduce the harm for the health of persons addicted to drugs, may be a doctor with a recognized speciality in psychiatry, toxicology or internal diseases. The leader of the substitution and maintenance program may lead only one program.
- A new section has been written in which the terms and the order for providing opioid agonists and agonists-antagonists purchased with funds from the republican budget as well as with funds from the funding for the programs have been indicated.
- The substitution and maintenance programs at the health establishments with state or municipal partnership should be supplied with medical products purchased with funds from the budget of the Ministry of Health. According to the order laid down by this regulation substitution and maintenance programs from health establishment with no municipal or state partnership may also apply for "central" supply provided they offer a minimal package of services (Annex 3 to the Regulation) and the persons included in these programs shall pay a monthly tax amounting to no more than one third of the minimal salary for the country.
- The programs are given the option to purchase the substances they use for substitution and maintenance treatment individually, by signing a contract with a wholesale trader of medical products holding a license for activities with narcotics when the annual and monthly orders have been coordinated with the "Narcotics" Directorate at the Ministry of Health in advance.
- For the implementation of the National Program for the methadone maintenance treatment systems in the Republic of Bulgaria 2006-2008 (adopted by Protocol № 1 of the Council of Ministers on 5th January 2006), the health establishments with state and/or municipal partnership which have established substitution or substitution and maintenance programs are given the option pursuant to Art. 3, Para. 1 from the Regulation to be funded for doing this activity by funds from the state budget pursuant to Art. 106 of the Health Establishments Act.
- For the substitution and maintenance programs only narcotic substances and their products can be used (opioid agonists and agonists-antagonists), pursuant to Annex 1.

Institutional framework, strategies and policy

Coordination

The **National Council for Drugs**, established in 2001, is a body under the Council of the Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria, which implements the national policy against drug abuse and for combating drug trafficking. It is a collective body, consisting of a chairperson (the Minister of Health), of two deputy chairpersons (the Chief Secretary of the Minister of the Interior and the Deputy Minister of Justice), a secretary and members. The members of the council are representatives of the ministries concerned, of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria and of the Supreme Court of Cassation, of the Supreme Administrative Court, of the National Investigation Department and of other offices. The council shapes and coordinates the national policy in the sphere of drugs and precursors and adopts the national strategy for combating drug abuse and the illegal traffic of drugs. It is authorized to suggest the draft budget for implementing the national policy in this sphere, and the bills of normative acts referring to drugs and precursors, to voice opinion on bills to conclude and access international treaties and programs, to name and approve the national coordinators for international programs and projects. For implementing its functions and policy it establishes councils for drugs at local level.

In 2006 a Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria was passed, (DCM № 136 dated 5th June 2006) to amend the Statute of the organization and the activity of the National Council for Drugs. The amendment to the Statute has been prepared in compliance with the Act to Amend the Drugs and Precursors Control Act (promulgated in the State Gazette, issue 79 from 4th

October 2005). By this Act Art.15 was amended and a new Art.15a was passed, To provide options of access to health education in the system of the secondary education is among the main trends of work at national level. Within the frames of the general education the integrated approach to health education is stipulated in the State Educational Requirements for educational content and in the curricula. Basic knowledge, skills and attitudes are described there which are to be developed by the students. They include a large variety of competences- from knowing one's own body and the changes that occur in it during the specific periods of growth, to understanding the meaning of belonging to specific groups and communities of people and acquiring a complex of psychological and social skills which everyone needs for his/her personal social and professional realization of full value. Most of the health educational programs which are implemented at school level combine the approaches of life skills and peer education. These skills are at the basis of developing active and positive personality capable of making decisions, resisting pressure and building up positive relationship with the others. This in turn is also the basis of prevention of the use of psychoactive substances. There is an appropria to provide options of access to health education in the system of the secondary education is among the main trends of work at national level. Within the frames of the general education the integrated approach to health education is stipulated in the State Educational Requirements for educational content and in the curricula. Basic knowledge, skills and attitudes are described there which are to be developed by the students. They include a large variety of competences - from knowing one's own body and the changes that occur in it during the specific periods of growth, to understanding the meaning of belonging to specific groups and communities of people and acquiring a complex of psychological and social skills which everyone needs for his/her personal social and professional realization of full value. Most of the health educational programs which are implemented at school level combine the approaches of life skills and peer education. These skills are at the basis of developing active and positive personality capable of making decisions, resisting pressure and building up positive relationship with the others. This in turn is also the basis of prevention of the use of psychoactive substances. te financial resource available is also regulated.

In order to achieve a better thoroughness and precision in the organization of the Regional Councils for Drugs, in the Decree to amend the Statute of the organizations and the activity of the National Council for Drugs, the structure, the way of approval, the organization of their activity and their function and interaction with other bodies of the local and state authorities have been indicated.¹

The National Center for Addictions /NCA/ has been established by implementing a Decree of the Council of Ministers № 14/1st February 1994 on the basis of the existing at that time "Prostor" clinic for addictions at the State Faculty Hospital. Under the Decree of the Council of Ministers № 69/19th March 2001 the NCA has been transformed under the same name and a new Statute of its functions, tasks and structure has been adopted. By a Decree of the Council of Ministers № 363/29th December 2004 on the structural changes in the system of healthcare, the the National Center was again restructured, and from it the activities of realizing the prophylaxis, diagnostics, treatment and rehabilitation of the drug abusers and drug addicts were set apart.

Nowadays the National Center for Addictions implements mainly the functions of a body to coordinate and methodologically guide the problems arising from drug abuse and drug addiction (including the activities related to drug abuse prevention, treatment, harm reduction and the rehabilitation of drug abusing persons or of persons addicted to drugs), it is a body of specialized control of the treatment activity in respect to drug abusing persons or persons addicted to drugs, and in a more general sense it is an expert body in the sphere of drug addictions.²

The National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions is a group established by a Decision of the National Council for Drugs and by an Order of the Minister of Health, as part of the implementation the National Strategy to Combat Drugs 2003 - 2008.

The NFP has been based on the National Center for Drug Addictions. The group carries out informational, analytical, science and research, expert and consulting and publishing activity and

¹ For more details see the Annual report on the problems related to drugs and drug addictions in Bulgaria – 2007, National Council on Drugs and the NFP, 2007, as well as the website of the NCD at:

<http://www.ndc.government.bg/?l=bg&pid=sekretariat>

² For more details see the website of the NFP at: <http://www.ncn-bg.org>

is the formal partner of the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addictions (EMCDDA) on the part of the Republic of Bulgaria. It is a participant in the European network of information in the sphere of drug addictions (REITOX).³

In October 2004 was established and has already been functioning for a few years the **National Informational and Analytical Group for Narcotic Substances (NIAGNS)**. In it all the institutions involved in detecting and preventing crimes related to drug and precursors trafficking and dealing, including the competent services of the Ministry of the Interior- Chief Directorate for Combating Organized Crime/CDCOC/, Chief Directorate for Antisocial Deeds and Public Order Preservation and Prevention/CDASDPOPP/, the National Investigation Service/NIS/, National Service Border Police /NSBP/, as well as the Customs Agency and the Agency for Financial Intelligence at the Ministry of Finance are represented. 8 employees from the respective services and agencies have been commissioned to NIAGNS, and their manager has been appointed by an order of the Minister of the Interior. The national group has been introduced to the participants in the mini-Dublin group, and to the officers for contact from the member countries of the EU. Rules for the work of the national Group have been worked out.

National strategy

In 2006 the **Updated Action Plan for the period 2006-2008** was adopted for the implementation of the tasks set by the National Strategy to Combat Drugs 2003-2008 . It has been prepared in compliance with an Official Decision of the Council of Ministers from 20th October 2005 and refers to A List of Measures under Chapter 24 “Justice and Internal Affairs”- “Combating Drugs” section Volume 13 /item 30/.

For the activities provided by the Updated Action Plan the strategic goals and tasks, provided by the National Strategy to Combat Drugs 2003-2008 have been taken in consideration. The main priorities of the EU Drug Strategy (2005-2012) and the Action Plan under it have also been taken in consideration. The updated Action Plan for the period 2006 - 2008 provides tasks which are a continuation and expansion of concrete activities already started in the sphere of reducing drug demand and supply, and for these activities there are deadlines set, responsible institutions named and partners selected for implementing the strategic tasks. ⁴

Employing the policy and strategy

• National Council for Drugs (NCD)

At the Second Regular Session of the NCD which took place on 27th June 2007 a decision was made to elect two drug coordinators- one from the Ministry of Health (MH) and one from the Ministry of the Interior (MI). The representative of the MH is responsible for the sphere “Reduction of drug demand” and the representative of the MI would be responsible for the sphere “Reduction of drug supply”. At the Third Session of the NCD Dr Valeri Tzekov- Deputy Minister of Health from the MH was elected a national coordinator on drugs, and at the Fourth Session Evgeni Kostov head of the “Drugs” Department CDCOC, MI was elected.

At a third regular session of the NCD the functions of the national drug coordinators were adopted. The National Coordinator:

1. Coordinates the state initiatives in the sphere of drugs and acts as a state spokesman at national and international level.
2. As a representative of the higher public administration he/she reports at political level and represents the connection between the government and the legislature.
3. Coordinates the implementation of obligations ensuing from international contracts and agreements, for which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party.
4. Coordinates the activity of the state institutions and of the NGOs at national and regional level.

³ For more details see the website of the NFP at: <http://www.nfp-drugs.bg>

⁴ For more details see the Annual report on the problems related to drugs and addictions in Bulgaria– 2007, national Council on Drugs and the NFP, 2007

5. Coordinates the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs.

5.1. The National Coordinator on Drugs from the Ministry of Health coordinates the implementation of the activities in the sphere of reducing drug demand.

5.2. The National Coordinator on Drugs from the Ministry of the Interior coordinates the implementation of the activities in the sphere of reducing drug supply.

6. Coordinates the implementation of the national and international programs in the sphere of drugs.

7. Reports his/her activity to the Rational Council for Drugs.

At a second regular session of the NCD, which took place on 27th June 2007 a decision was made to establish an expert committee pursuant to Art. 14, Para. 2 from the Drugs and Precursors Control Act /DPCA/. The members of the expert committee are representatives of the Ministry of Health – “Drugs” Directorate, NCD, MI – Institute of Forensic Science, Bulgarian Drug Agency, University of Medicine– Pharmaceutical Faculty and Medical Faculty.

By an order of the Minister of Health ПД 09-382/19th October 2007 an expert committee has been established. The expert committee prepares scientific and medical evaluation about each suggestion to include new plants and substances in the Annexes to the DPCA, to erase them or to include new plants and substances in the Annexes to the DPCA, or to transfer them from one Annex to another.

• **Regional Councils for Drugs (RCD) and Prevention and Information Centers (PIC) at the RCD**

26 Regional Councils for Drugs have been established to implement the policy on drugs at local level.

The Regional Councils for Drugs shall establish the Prevention and Information Centers which are a functional element of the councils, to implement preventive activities, to gather and disseminate information at local level, to carry out and coordinate municipal programs to combat drugs at local level.

By the end of 2007 22 Prevention and Information Centers have been established- in the towns of Sofia, Varna, Veliko Turnovo, Bourgas, Vratsa, Sliven, Pernik, Blagoevgrad, Vidin, Pleven, Plovdiv, Dobrich, Kyustendil, Silistra, Rousse, Haskovo, Gabrovo, Kurdzali, Shumen, Pazardzik, Razgrad and Jambol.

At all the RCD Annual Reports on drug and drug addictions on the territory of the municipalities have been presented. Reports have been submitted on the activity of the RCD and of the PIC.

The work of the RCD and of the PIC can be summarized in the following areas:

- Implementation of the programs and strategies on prevention that have been adopted;
- Expanding the possibilities for effective health education, including prevention of drug use;
- Prevention activities among students, parents and teachers;
- Issuing different types of prevention, information and health educational materials;
- Presenting to the public the activity of the PIC;
- Working out and applying alternative forms of involvement of the young people and encouraging their creative potential;
- Cooperation with the media, to ensure adequate and competent coverage of the drug problems;
- Expanding the cooperation between the bodies of the local authorities, the state institutions and the NGOs;
- Establishing multidisciplinary teams.

At all the municipalities there were enterprises conducted on the occasion of the 26th June- the World Day to Combat Drugs. Most of the Prevention and Information Centers have created their website addresses.

On 29th September – the national day of prevention, at the stall of the Ministry of Health information and health education materials were exhibited, issued by the Prevention and Information Centers.

Consultative programs and surgeries have been established and function, referring the addicted persons for treatment on the territory of the country and abroad.

Close cooperation with the non-government sector is maintained, as well as comparatively good coordination among all the municipal structures when activities to combat drugs and drug addictions are undertaken.

The Youth Councils for Drugs also participate actively in the activity.

The RCD also work actively with the media for the competent coverage of the drug problems.

Last but not least we have to mention the activity of the RCD in respect to conducting inquiries about the attitude of the students, parents and teachers and doing studies to assess the treatment demand and whether treatment is accessible, in coordination with the National Center for Addictions.

Pursuant to Art. 15a, Para. 2 of the DPCA at the third regular session the National Council for Drugs the report on the activity of the Regional Councils for Drugs and of the Prevention and Information Centers for 2006 was presented.

- The established **Section for Coordination and Analysis** also functions effectively (at the “Coordination and Information and Analytical Activity” Directorate –Ministry of the Interior), which is involved with the monitoring and coordination of the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs 2003-2008 .

Budget and public expenditure

In the sphere of law enforcement, social care and healthcare, studies, international activity, coordination, national strategy

For the program „Reducing drug demand” of the MH for 2006 from the state budget 1,208,000 BGN were funded.⁵

The completed activities from the program are:

- Measures have been undertaken for limiting the number of people being dragged into drug abuse
- Measures have been undertaken to reduce drug abuse, to reduce the harm for the health and for the socium caused by drug abuse
- Establishing and development of a national public information system on the problems of drug abuse- a functioning national system (National Focal Point) as a directorate at the National Center for Addictions with a strengthened administrative capacity

In 2008 for the funding of the activities to implement the strategic task „REDUCING THE ABUSE WITH DRUGS AND WITH THEIR PRODUCTS USED FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES” from the **Action Plan under the National Strategy to Combat Drugs (2003-2008)**, ...BGN were provided by the Ministry of Health. To the total sum of the state funding for the activities of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of addictions the annual budget of the National Center for Addictions should also be added which, on the basis of the report for 2008 amounted to...BGN.

The substitution and maintenance treatment under Regulation № 24 from 2000 was done in 2007 with the medical products methadone and substitol. For this purpose the MH has provided funding from the state budget for 2007 amounting to ...BGN.

The funds that are released from the state budget, as well as the funds for the prevention activities under the National Program for the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs (2003-2008) are rather insufficient for the implementation of prevention activities.

⁵ Source of the information: National Institute of Statistics /NIS/

The funds provided for 2007 are the salaries for 27 permanently appointed as chair persons, and 27 permanently appointed as secretaries of the RCD and 70 regular employees of the teams of the PIC, as well as funds for upkeep.

The grants in aid for the prevention activities under the National Program for the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs (2003-2008) amounted to 1,600 BGN for each of the 26 Regional Councils for Drugs and the Prevention and Information centers.

In 2006 for the funding of the tasks for the implementation of the Action Plan under the National Strategy to Combat Drugs (2003-2008), the Ministry of Health provided 350,000 BGN.

In relation to the implementation of the **strategic task „PREVENTION OF MORE PEOPLE BEING DRAGGED INTO DRUG ABUSE” from the Action Plan of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs in 2007** the National Program “The school- a territory for the students” has been implemented. Through this program for the development of extra-curriculum activities from the state budget a total sum amounting to 9,751,000 BGN has been provided. Within the frames of the program 1,360 school projects have been approved. The minimal number of children, included in them, was 67,800.⁶

For the implementation of the tasks under the National Strategy to Combat Drugs in 2007 for sports activities funds from the state budget amounting to 1,034,249 BGN were provided to the State Agency for the Youth and Sport /SAYS/.⁷ They were distributed for the separate programs as follows:

1. School games – 353,000 BGN
2. „Holidays and Sport” – 271,585 BGN
3. „Learn to swim” – 190,010 BGN
4. School games – 38,444 BGN (for disabled children)
5. Competitions for children with impaired hearing – 32,256 BGN
6. Educational schools – 15,790 BGN
7. OCDPC – 34,442 BGN
8. Institutionalized children– 98,722 BGN

On the data of the sector “Medical” of the “Penalty Enforcement” Chief Directorate in the prisons there are 1,113 individuals deprived of freedom who suffer from drug addictions. In order to carry out the activities of organizing therapeutic modules at the places for deprivation of freedom, with the aim of preventing drug addiction in 2007 the funding for the following 2 years was provided amounting to 18,440 € under the Phare Program, which will be jointly implemented with the British Prison Service⁸. The extra funding of the activities of the “Penalty Enforcement” Chief Directorate for the following 2 years amounting to 124,000 BGN in relation to overcoming the drug addiction of the persons deprived of freedom was provided through the “Prevention and Educational Programs for persons addicted to drugs in the practice with the persons on remand in prison”.

Providing the funding

The Regional Councils for Drugs and the Prevention and Information Centers are funded by the state budget (Art. 15, Para. 3 from the Drugs and Precursors Control Act) through the municipal budgets, as activity delegated by the state.

Grants in aid are provided for the prevention activities under the National Program for the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs (2003-2008).

Social and cultural context

⁶ Source of information: “Coordination and Information and Analytical Activity” Directorate, Ministry of the Interior

⁷ Source of information: The Annual Report of the SAYS for 2007

⁸ Source of the information: Chief directorate “Penalty enforcement”, Ministry of Justice

Public opinion related to drug issues

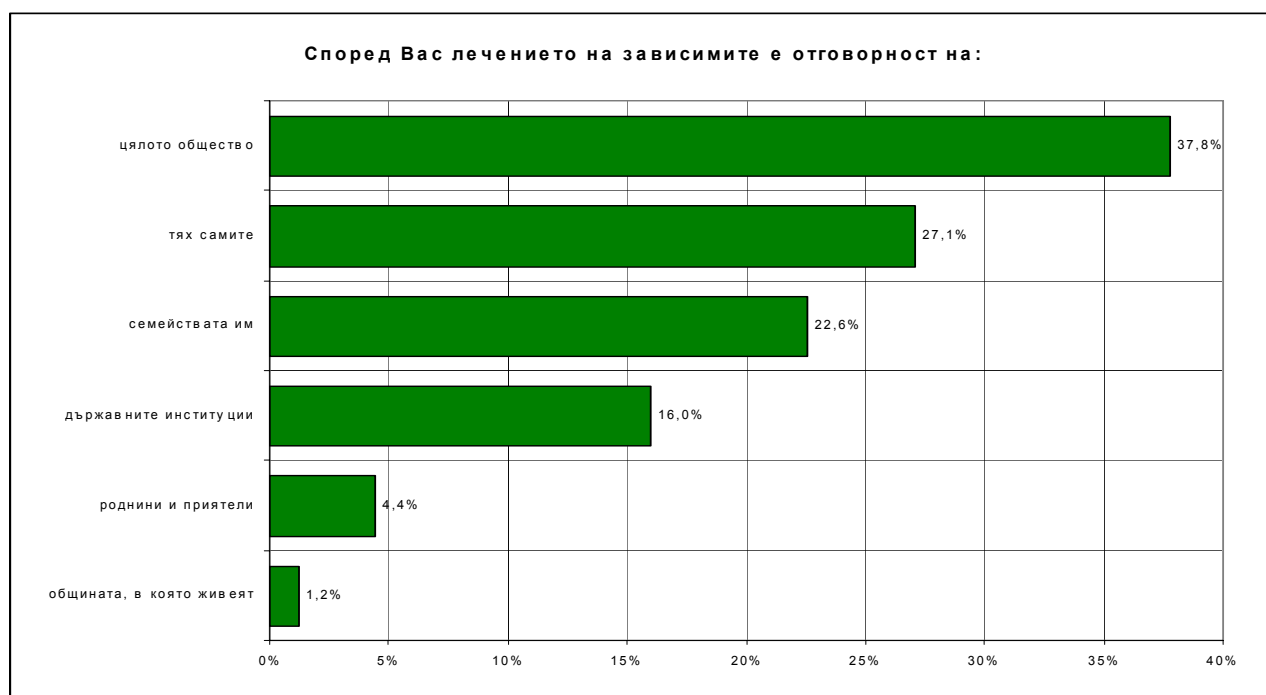
According to the Bulgarian public opinion after unemployment the alcohol and drug addiction is the second most serious problem for the young people. A total of 79 percent of those polled above 16 years of age have pointed this.⁹ Moreover, the younger the age, the greater the number of those who have pointed this. Every third citizen of a district town states that he/she personally knows a youth using drugs on a regular basis or addicted to drugs. The respective rate for the youngest age group reaches 40 percent.

Having in mind the social significance of the “drugs” problem and its manifestation in our immediate everyday encirclement, the question of how the citizens see the ways, the forms, and the means to cope with this problem is logically posed. Because it is an illusion to think that a world problem of such magnitude and character can be limited only and solely by the efforts of the relatives and of the specialized professional communities (such as specialized services, police, doctors, psychologists) without public involvement, commitment and pressure.

When reviewing more closely the public reaction to the “drugs and drug-addicted persons” problem, and the ideas of the citizens of how to cope with it, two important trends are outlined.

Firstly, 38%, i.e. the most important part of the polled consider that the treatment and the care for drug addicted persons is the responsibility of the whole society, 27% - of the addicted persons themselves, 23% - of their families, 16 percent – of the state institutions, 4% - of relatives and friends (see *Figure 1-1*).

Figure 1-1



{According to you the treatment of the addicted persons is the responsibility of:
the whole society
the addicted persons themselves
their families
the state institutions
relatives and friends
the municipality where they live}

Source: Alpha Research sociological agency

⁹ Public attitude to drug addiction and to the therapeutic communities, commissioned by the Free and Democratic Bulgaria Foundation, 4th – 11th October 2006, 810 persons polled above 16 years of age, living in the regional towns, by a direct standardized interview at their homes.

A more active role in the treatment at the therapeutic communities, communes, is approved by 87%, and only 13 are against. Quite similar are the answers to the question- "Do you approve of the funding of the communes from the state budget- – 78% yes vs 21% no. In a ratio of 79 against 17 percent the more active role of the municipality where the polled persons live is approved, regarding the treatment at the therapeutic communities.

Attitudes to drugs and to drug users

No new data available.

2. Drug Use in the General Population and Specific Subgroups

The following major topics will be considered under this section:

- Drug use among the general population;
- Drug use among schoolchildren and youths;
- Drug use among specific subgroups of the population.

The discussion of the first two major topics focuses on the drug use prevalence among the general and young population. Epidemiologic surveys on national and local level have been used as sources of information.

The third topic covers current data from routine sources regarding drug use among the representatives of a specific group of the population – that of the military.

Drug use among the general population

There are no new available data on the drug use among the general population.

Drug use among students and youths

Drug use prevalence

Among young people

On national level

The data yielded by a survey of the young population in Bulgaria¹⁰ indicate some interesting facts and tendencies:

- It can be assumed (on the bases of the testimonies of the young people), that **16 %** of the youths aged 15 to 35 have used “grass” (Marijuana) at least once in their lives.
- The use of “hard” drugs (cocaine, heroin, morphine) at least once in a lifetime is at the level of 1,5 % of the youths, but the values go up to 2,1 % in the youngest group.¹¹

The survey of the *Mediana* Agency provides values for Bulgaria as of 2008 in the order of 18 % regarding the use of cannabis among the persons aged 15-19, which marks an increase of 1 point over one year (see *Table 2-1*).

¹⁰ “Youth in the Country – Condition, Issues, Changes, Tendencies, Possible Parameters and Youth Policy Guidelines”, National representative survey of the population of Bulgaria aged 15–35, “MEDIANA” Agency, which covered 1197 persons aged 15-35, March - April 2008

¹¹ Regarding the survey data, for greater detail see: “Youth in the Country – Condition, Issues, Changes, Tendencies, Possible Parameters and Youth Policy Guidelines”, Report, “MEDIANA” Agency, April 2008.

Table 2-1

PERSONS WHO HAVE USED “GRASS” AT LEAST ONCE IN THEIR LIFE

	2007	2008
	YES	YES
% of those aged 15 – 19	17,2	18,2

Source: “Youth in the Country – Condition, Issues, Changes, Tendencies, Possible Parameters and Youth Policy Guidelines”, National representative survey of the population of Bulgaria aged 15–35, “MEDIANA” Agency

The cross-section by age group indicates that the relative share of those who have tried Marijuana is the largest in the 20–26 age bracket (23,9 %), followed by that of the 15–19 year-olds (18,2 %). (see Table 2-2).

Table 2-2

PERSONS WHO HAVE USED “GRASS” AT LEAST ONCE IN THEIR LIVES

	<i>% of the respective age group</i>	
	YES	NO
% of those aged 15 – 19	18,2	81,8
% of those aged 20 – 26	23,9	76,1
% of those aged 27 – 35	9,4	90,6
% of those aged 36 – 50	4,8	95,2

Source: “Youth in the Country – Condition, Issues, Changes, Tendencies, Possible Parameters and Youth Policy Guidelines”, National representative survey of the population of Bulgaria aged 15–35, “MEDIANA” Agency

Table 2-3

PERSONS WHO HAVE USED “HARD” DRUGS ¹² AT LEAST ONCE IN THEIR LIVES

	<i>% of youths</i>	
	YES	NO
% of those aged 15 – 35	1,5	98,5

Source: “Youth in the Country – Condition, Issues, Changes, Tendencies, Possible Parameters and Youth Policy Guidelines”, National representative survey of the population of Bulgaria aged 15–35, “MEDIANA” Agency

¹² Here “hard” drugs refers to heroin, other opioids (for example morphine) and cocaine

Table 2-4

PERSONS WHO HAVE USED “HARD” DRUGS ¹³ AT LEAST ONCE IN THEIR LIVES

	<i>% of the respective age group</i>	
	YES	NO
% of those aged 15 – 19	2,1	97,9
% of those aged 20 – 26	1,4	98,6
% of those aged 27 – 35	0,9	99,1
% of those aged 36 – 50	0,9	99,1

Source: “*Youth in the Country – Condition, Issues, Changes, Tendencies, Possible Parameters and Youth Policy Guidelines*”, National representative survey of the population of Bulgaria aged 15–35, “*MEDIANA*” Agency

The authors of the survey point out that there is growing tolerance for drug use – a growing “it is not dangerous” feeling both among the youngest and among the higher-age strata (see *Table 2-5*).

Table 2-5

**TOPLERANCE FOR DRUG USE
“IF ONE USES DRUGS ONLY OCCASIONALLY, HE RUNS NO RISK OF BECOMING A DRUG
ADDICT (DEPENDENT)”**

	2007	2008
	NOT DANGEROUS	NOT DANGEROUS
% of those aged 15 – 35	24,5	26,1
% of those aged 15 – 19	33,1	40,2
% of those aged 20 – 26	24,2	23,7
% of those aged 27 – 35	18,0	22,1
% of those aged 36 – 50	16,1	24,6

Source: “*Youth in the Country – Condition, Issues, Changes, Tendencies, Possible Parameters and Youth Policy Guidelines*”, National representative survey of the population of Bulgaria aged 15–35, “*MEDIANA*” Agency

While *Table 2-5* reflects a question about drugs in general and makes no distinction between “soft” and “hard” ones, it would be interesting to identify tolerance for “hard” drugs only – cocaine, heroin, morphine, etc. (see *Table 2-6*)

¹³ Here “hard” drugs refers to heroin, other opioids (for example morphine) and cocaine

TOLERANCE FOR THE USE OF “HARD” DRUGS
“EVEN IF YOU USE HARD DRUGS, YOU RUN NO DANGER OF BECOMING A DRUG ADDICT,
IF YOU ARE CAREFUL AND DO NOT OVERDO IT” (2008 DATA)

	NOT DANGEROUS	DANGEROUS
% of those aged 15 – 35	20,6	79,4
% of those aged 15 – 19	22,8	77,2
% of those aged 20 – 26	18,1	81,9
% of those aged 27 – 35	19,1	80,9

Source: “Youth in the Country – Condition, Issues, Changes, Tendencies, Possible Parameters and Youth Policy Guidelines”, National representative survey of the population of Bulgaria aged 15–35, “MEDIANA” Agency

According to the authors of the survey once again high tolerance is identified for the use of even these drugs. In their opinion the cause lies mostly in the common propaganda talk about “drugs” in general. Young people allegedly received proof on a daily basis that the use of drugs (meaning “grass”) does not entail addiction and one’s transformation into a drug addict. To put it in a nut-shell: „Propaganda lies!”.

Among schoolchildren

On local level

Sofia

A sociological survey was conducted in the period 13 May -13 June 2008 on the attitudes and use of psychoactive substances among schoolchildren in grades 7 to 12 in the capital city. It was commissioned by Sofia Municipality and the District Narcotic Substances Council and conducted by MBMD Consulting with the methodological support of the National Focal Point on Drugs and Drug Addictions and the logistic assistance of the Prevention and Information Centre on the Problems of Addictions, Sofia.¹⁴

It is one of a series of surveys regularly conducted among schoolchildren in the city of Sofia over a certain number of years – the previous ones were carried out in 1993, 1995, 2000, 2004 and 2006.

SOME MAJOR REGISTERED TRENDS¹⁵

Smoking

Some two-thirds of the Sofia schoolchildren (64,7 %) ¹⁶ have smoked cigarettes at least once in their lives, which is some 10 points down from the level registered in 2000, 2004 and 2006.

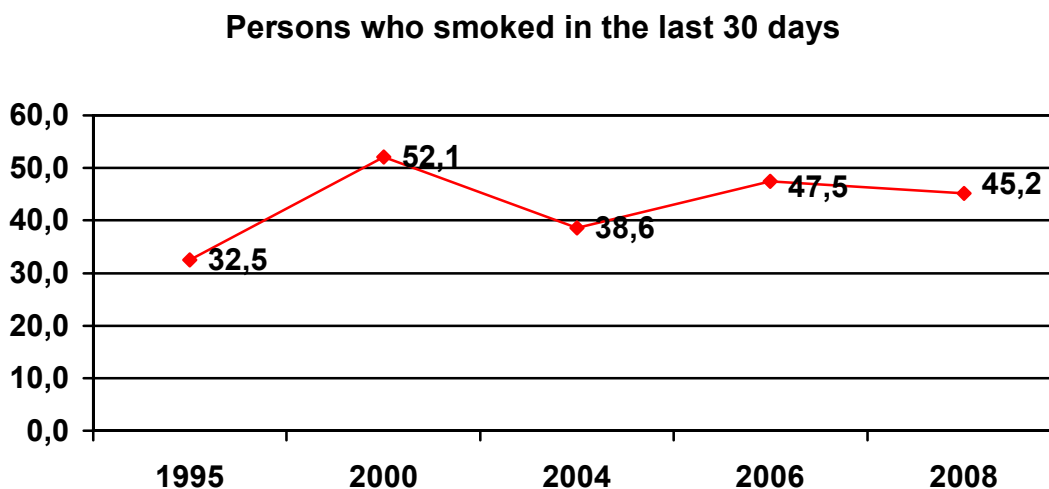
¹⁴ “Attitudes and Use of Psychoactive Substances among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools – 2008”, Sociological survey, May-June 2008, MBMD Consulting, commissioned by Sofia Municipality and the District Narcotic Substances Council, Sofia, with the methodological support of the National Focal Point on Drugs and Drug Addictions, covering 2200 students in grades 7 to 12 in secondary schools and vocational high schools in Sofia.

¹⁵ Vasilev M., ¹⁵ “Attitudes and Use of Psychoactive Substances among the Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools – 2008”, Sociological survey, Press release and media presentation, Sofia 2008; MBMD Consulting, “The Use of Psychoactive Substances among the Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools (My – June 2008)”, Analysis and survey

¹⁶ The data on the students in grades 9 to 12 (1851 persons) have been used for the purposes of comparative analysis

Approximately half of the students (45,2 %) had smoked in the previous 30 days, which is lower than the levels in 2000 and 2006, but higher than that in 2004 (see *Figure 2-1*)

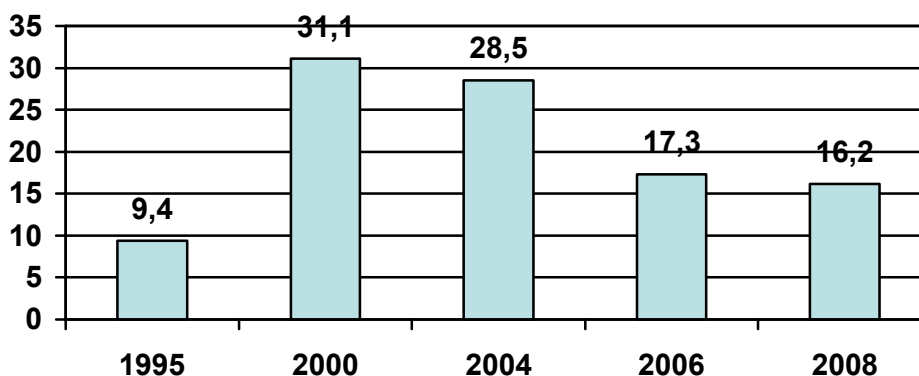
Figure 2-1



Source: "Attitudes and Use of Psychoactive Substances among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools – 2008", Sociological survey, May-June 2008, MBMD Consulting (data on grades 9 to 12)

One of every three students (33,8 % or 20 000 students) was a smoker at the time of the survey (smoking at least one cigarette a day), which is approximately the same level as that of the previous years (34-36 %), but it could be the beginning of a downtrend. About half of them (16,2 %, or one of every six students) smoked an average of over 10 cigarettes a day, which is a lower level compared to those in 2000, 2004 and 2006. (see *Figure 2-2*). These data provide grounds for the estimate that as of 2008 there were some 10 000 advanced smokers among the students in grades 9 to 12 in Sofia.

Persons smoking over 10 cigarettes a day



Source: "Attitudes and Use of Psychoactive Substances among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools – 2008", Sociological survey, May-June 2008, MBMD Consulting (data on grades 9 to 12)

Approximately one of every five (20,9 %) respondent students smoked for the first time at an age up to and including 12, which is more or less the same level as those identified during the previous surveys (20-22 %).

Alcohol use

One of every six students (17,6 %) drinks alcohol on a daily basis or at least every other day, which is approximately the level of 2006 (20,0 %) and definitely up from the 2000 and 2004 levels (10-11 %) (see *Figure 2-3*). This implies that in 2008 there were some 10 000 daily drinkers among the schoolchildren in Sofia.

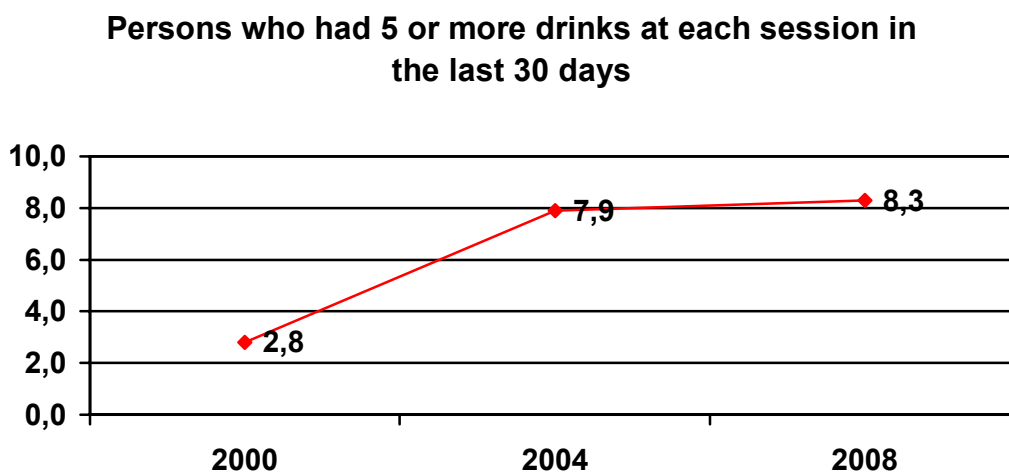
Figure 2-3



Source: "Attitudes and Use of Psychoactive Substances among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools – 2008", Sociological survey, May-June 2008, MBMD Consulting (data on grades 9 to 12)

There is an upward trend in the share of the students, who usually had 5 or more standard drinks on the days on which they drank alcohol over the previous 30 days. Compared to the level of 2000, this share has gone up from 2,8 % to 8,3 % (see *Figure 2-4*). This implies that there is an increase in the intoxicating drinking among students, which was also registered in the Bulgarian part of the international ESPAD survey, which is representative for the students in the whole country. On the basis of the data from the latest survey it can be expected that some 5 000 students in Sofia exhibit signs of intoxicating drinking.

Figure 2-4



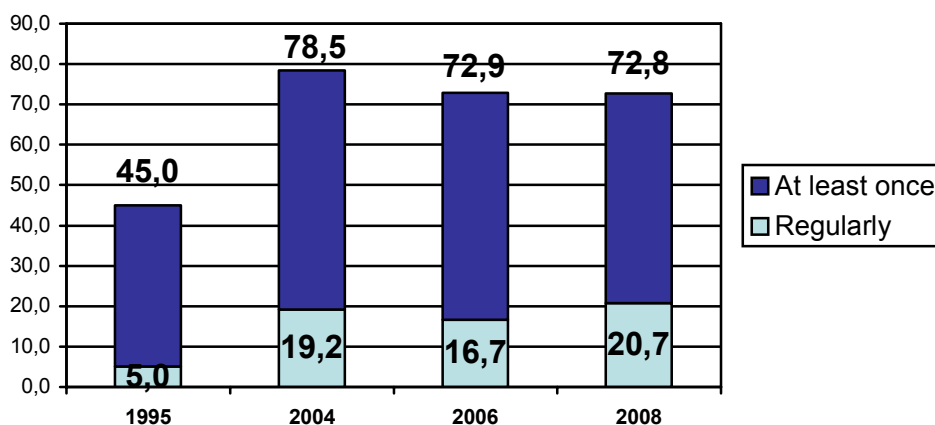
Source: "Attitudes and Use of Psychoactive Substances among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools – 2008", Sociological survey, May-June 2008, MBMD Consulting (data on grades 9 to 12)

Approximately one of every five students (20,7 %) gets regularly drunk, as they themselves admit, and there is a tendency of gradual increase in this share (19,2 % in 2004 and 16,7 % in

2006). It can be assumed that some 12 000 students in Sofia get regularly drunk. About three quarters of them (72,8 %) have been intoxicated at least once in their lives, which is approximately the level of the later surveys in 2004 and 2006 (72-78 %) (see *Figure 2-5*).

Figure 2-5

Share of the persons who have got drunk



Source: “Attitudes and Use of Psychoactive Substances among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools – 2008”, Sociological survey, May-June 2008, MBMD Consulting (data on grades 9 to 12)

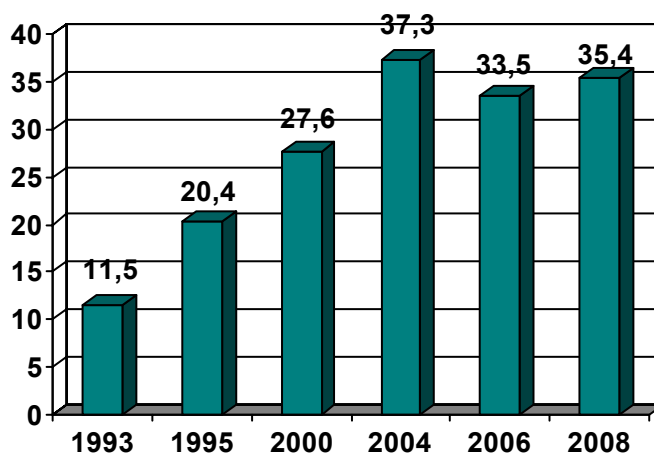
Slightly over a quarter of the respondent students (28,4 %) had their first drink on their own at an age up to and including 12, which outlines a downtrend in this share (40,6 % in 2004 and 33,9 % in 2006).

Use of illicit narcotic substances

Slightly over a third of the respondent students (35,4 %) have used some kind of illicit narcotic substance at least once in their lives, which is down from the 2004 level (37,3 %) and slightly up from the 2006 level (33,5 %) (see *Figure 2-6*). The data from the two latest surveys seem to outline a trend of onsetting decline or at least stabilization of the number of students experimenting with narcotic substances.

Figure 2-6

USE OF SOME ILLICIT NARCOTIC SBSTANCE AT LEAST ONCE IN THE LIVE OF THE RESPONDENT OVER THE PERIOD 1993-2008

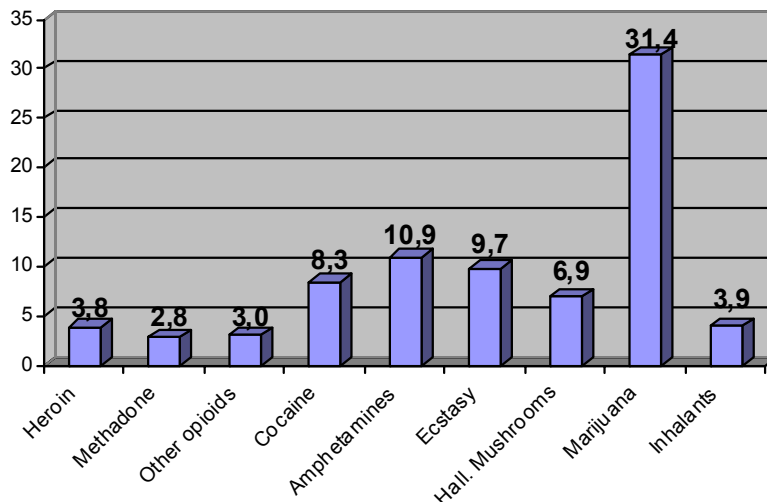


Source: “Attitudes and Use of Psychoactive Substances among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools – 2008”, Sociological survey, May-June 2008, MBMD Consulting (data on grades 9 to 12)

Marijuana is the most extensively used illicit narcotic substance (31,4 %), followed by the group of stimulants - amphetamines (10,9 %), ecstasy (9,7 %), cocaine (8,3 %), hallucinogenic mushrooms (6,9 %), and others. (see Figure 2-7)

Figure 2-7

USE OF VARIOUS ILLICIT SUBSTANCES AT LEAST ONCE IN ONE'S LIFE AS OF 2008

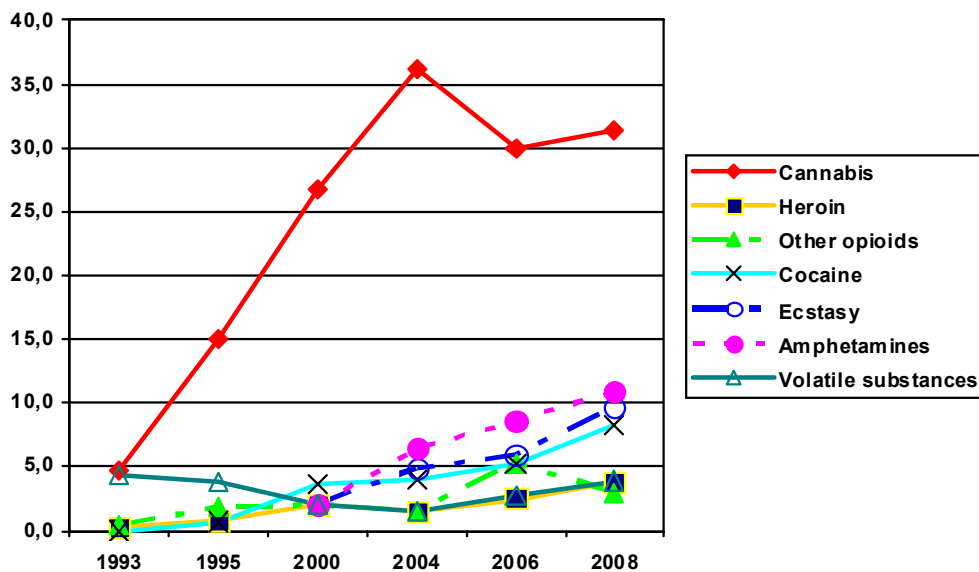


Source: "Attitudes and Use of Psychoactive Substances among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools – 2008", Sociological survey, May-June 2008, MBMD Consulting (data on grades 9 to 12)

An increased use is noticed in virtually all primary illicit narcotic substances in the last four years (with certain vacillations in the case of cannabis and the other opioids except heroin). (see Figure 2-8)

Figure 2-8

USE OF VARIOUS ILLICIT SUBSTANCES AT LEAST ONCE IN ONE'S LIFE ACCORDING TO SURVEYS IN THE PERIOD 1993-2008



Source: "Attitudes and Use of Psychoactive Substances among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in Sofia City Schools – 2008", Sociological survey, May-June 2008, MBMD Consulting (data on grades 9 to 12)

Drug use among specific groups of the population

The military

There are 30 registered cases of use of narcotic substances in the Bulgarian army in 2007¹⁷. 16 of them were in the Construction Troops (CT), followed by the military training bases and the higher military schools subordinated to the General Staff (GS) – 13. Unlike the previous year, there was a slump in the registered cases in the Air Force (AF) - 11 cases for 2006 and only one for 2007. The same trend is observed in the Navy – there were 4 cases in 2006 and none in 2007. There were no incidents registered in the divisions directly subordinated to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) either (see *Table 2-7*).

Table 2-7

DISTRIBUTION OF THE CASES OF NARCOTIC SUBSTANCE USE BY TYPE OF MILITARY FORCE

Indicator	AF	Navy	CT	GS	MoD
Registered cases of drug use	1	-	16	13	-

Source: Centre of Military Psychology and Psychological Prevention at the Ministry of Defence

Use of narcotic substances when performing official duties

Out of the 30 cases of drug use in the Bulgarian Army in 2007 26 occurred at the working place. Conscripts constitute the largest group (23 persons) among those who used drugs when performing their official duties. Three cases were registered with full-time soldiers. There is no registered case among the civilians (see *Table 2-8*).

Table 2-8

DRUG USE WHEN PERFORMING OFFICIAL DUTIES

Indicator	Conscripts	Full-time soldiers	Civilians	Total
Registered cases of drug use	23	3	-	26

Source: Centre of Military Psychology and Psychological Prevention at the Ministry of Defence

The peak of drug use in the barracks was registered in February.

The first position in terms of frequent use is held by substances from the Cannabinoid group, the most popular of them being Marijuana, followed by other forms of cannabis and one case of hashish (the so-called soft drugs). There are three cases of. There is no proved heroin or cocaine use.

Compared to 2006 (21 cases), 2007 marks a slight increase in the total number of the registered cases (26 cases) with a drop in the group of the full-time soldiers at the expense of the conscripts.

Drug use at places other than that of work

Four persons used narcotic substances at spots different from their place of work: two of the cases involved conscripts and the other two full-time soldiers. Once again there were no cases involving civilians (see *Table 2-9*).

The registered narcotic substances belong to the Cannabinoid group.

¹⁷ See lieutenant-colonel Dr. Iliya Marinov, Report-Analysis by the Head of the Centre of Military Psychology and Psychological Prevention of the preventive and treatment activities and the abuse of drugs in the Bulgarian Army in 2007.

On the whole, the cases were registered in the early half of 2007.

There is a decline in the registered cases from the 2006 level.

Table 2-9

DRUG USE AT PLACES OTHER THAN THAT OF WORK

Indicator	Concripts	Full-time soldiers	Civilians	Total
Registered cases of drug use	2	2	-	4

Source: Centre of Military Psychology and Psychological Prevention at the Ministry of Defence

3. Prevention

In this chapter a review will be made of the activities related to the prevention of the use and abuse of psychoactive substances. It includes mainly:

- General prevention: at school, at local level /municipality and in the family
- Selective prevention- of the groups at risk
- Prevention on indications

Different projects were have described, which were implemented in 2007 in the sphere of prevention.

The work to prevent the use and abuse of drugs among the young people in Bulgaria is regarded as part of the more general approach to health promotion. In this paradigm it is clear that each system by itself cannot create alone sufficiently effective independent conditions to guarantee the altering of specific hazardous behaviour or the improvement of health. That is why it is necessary to regard the problem from the position of systemic interrelation and partnership among all the participants in the process of reducing the demand and more particularly of doing preventive work. In view of the exposition the description of the activities in the sphere of prevention includes the information presenting on the one hand the initiatives at national and local level according to types of prevention and on the other hand- initiatives aimed at recognition of healthy life style, at restricting the hazardous behaviour and at providing options to support the young people-drug users.

General prevention

School

Extending the possibilities to introduce systemic health education in the sphere of the secondary education

To provide options of access to health education in the system of the secondary education is among the main trends of work at national level. Within the frames of the general education the integrated approach to health education is stipulated in the State Educational Requirements for educational content and in the curricula. Basic knowledge, skills and attitudes are described there which are to be developed by the students. They include a large variety of competences- from knowing one's own body and the changes that occur in it during the specific periods of growth, to understanding the meaning of belonging to specific groups and communities of people and acquiring a complex of psychological and social skills which everyone needs for his/her personal social and professional realization of full value. Most of the health educational programs which are implemented at school level combine the approaches of **life skills** and **peer education**. These skills are at the basis of developing active and positive personality capable of making decisions, resisting pressure and building up positive relationship with the others. This in turn is also the basis of prevention of the use of psychoactive substances.

One of the main priorities of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs (2003-2008) is to limit the prevalence of drug use among the young people and to raise the awareness of the population about the harm and about the social and psychological aftermaths related to drug use and abuse. Among the most important tasks at national level is to work out prevention activities and to provide options to access the health education within the system of secondary education. In this respect the following **activities** have been done:

- Within the frames of Component 7 „Prevention of HIV prevalence among the young people at and outside school under the program “Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS” implemented by the Ministry of Health **an educational manual of health education for students from 9-12 class at the secondary schools in the country has been written** which is to be published and included in the curricula. Educational modules for the prevention of drug use are planned;
- „**A Social Program for the prevention of drug use at school and for the recognition of healthy lifestyle among the young people from 8-12 class**” is successfully being applied. It has been developed by the “Public Program for the Prevention of Drug Use at School” Foundation within the frames of an international project under the methodical guidance of the “Trimbos Institute” – a Dutch institute of psychic health and addictions;
- The Regional Council for Drugs- Blagoevgrad held a round table on topic: **“Drugs and Violence in the Internet Games – risk factor or knowledge bearer of entertainment importance for the adolescent”**;
- The National Center for Addictions held a number of **training seminars for professionals working with children**, aimed at improving their professional preparation in the sphere of drug prevention:
 - ✓ A training seminar on topic: “Basic prevention approaches in the work with minors and underage abusing psychoactive substances (PAS)” addressed to secretaries of regional and local committees for fighting antisocial deeds of minors and underage at the Central Committee for fighting the antisocial deeds of minors and underage (number of participants: 20).
 - ✓ A training seminar on topic “Basic prevention approaches in the work with children” addressed to the members of the work group on “Addiction Prevention” at the Central Agency for Child Protection
 - ✓ A training seminar on topic “Assessment of the effectiveness of the prevention programs” addressed to the members of the work group on “Addiction Prevention” at the State Agency for Child Protection.
- Implementing the initiative **“All together for a safer future” of the Ministry of the Interior – The National Day of Prevention.**
- A round table on topic: **“Analysis of the policies of the prevalence of the HIV infection and providing services among the young people in Bulgaria”.**

The greater number of tasks which are the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science /MES/ are standing. The materials published in the official printed editions of the MES or provided in the normative education regulation, are principal and of general validity for every school year. They are planned at the beginning of every school year and continue over two calendar years. This is especially valid for the following **7 basic trends of work**:

1. Applying the state education requirements to the education content of the new curricula.

Within the frames of the general education the integrated approach to health education has been at the basis of the state education requirements for the educational content of the new curricula. The requirements determine the competences which the students must acquire by the end of each stage and the level of education by the end of each school year of their training in a specific subject. From 1st to 6th class this is achieved by integrated school subjects. After the 6th class the problems are separately reviewed in different school subjects, mainly in “Biology and Health Education”, „Philosophy” and „World and Personality”. The integration in this case is done through relations among the specific subjects which are part of the curricula. The new curricula have been introduced for the 1st to the 6th class and for 9th to 12th class. With each new school year the introduction of the new curricula for the 7th and the 8th class is forthcoming.

In the mandatory preparation the emphasis for the health education and upbringing has been put on the school subjects “Native Country” in the 1st class, “Surrounding World” in the 2nd class, “Man and Nature” in the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class, “Biology and Health Education” in the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th class, “Psychology” in the 9th class and “Philosophy” and “World and Personality” in the 10th, 11th and 12th class. The new curricula have been introduced for 1st to 6th class and for 9th to 12th class.

Of special importance is also the fact that new methods of teaching are introduced, which develop the social and personal skills of the children and are at the basis of updating the process of education at school level. These skills are at the basis of building up an active and positive personality, capable of making decision, resisting pressure and developing positive relationships with the others. These skills are at the basis of the prevention of psychoactive substance use.

2. Around ¼ of the lessons of the classes during each school year are about health education and upbringing. This means around 6-8 lessons for each class per school year. The topics are planned by the class teachers, and the age specifics and the needs of the children are taken in consideration.

3. Developing curricula for health education, in which the specifics and the resources are taken in consideration and which approve school health-related norms in all the spheres of the school life.

Over the last school year more than 400 schools were included in different projects and developed programs for health education within the frames of freely selected preparation.

With the participation of the Ministry of Education and Science /MES/ projects are also implemented within the frames of which the schools develop long term programs for health promotion and health risk prevention for the students in which the main priorities and the necessary approaches for their implementation are taken in consideration. The programs are developed on the basis of the needs, the resources and the requirements of the school community in conformity with the social and cultural norms and values of the members of the school community.

4. Implementing Regulation № 14/07.10.2003 for the organizing of extra-curriculum training and competition activity.

5. The open and the sheltered sports bases of the MES and of the schools are given up to the students to organize their sports competitions during the school holidays.

6. Extending the activities to stimulate and develop the scientific, creative and sports gifts of the children, which are planned in the extra-curriculum activities regarding science, technology, art and sport.

The implementation of these activities is assigned to the National Children's Palace as a section of the MES. The Calendar includes national contests, competitions and festivals, which will be hosted by different towns in the country. Foundations and associations actively participate in the implementation of these activities, they search for and develop the children's talents. The structures of the local authorities – the municipalities and the municipal councils also participate in these activities.

In 2007 "The school – a territory for the students" National Program was implemented. Through this program funds amounting to 9,751,000 BGN were granted for the development of the extra-curriculum and extra-school activities. Within the frames of the program 1,360 school projects have been approved. The minimal number of children involved in these projects was 67,800.

In standing or temporary groups in the sphere of the extra-curriculum activities a minimum of 60,000 children have been included.

A total of 666 projects that have been applied for the program "Let's make the school an attractive place for the young people" within the frames of the "Development of Human Resources" Operative Program have been assessed and 256 of them have been selected.

7. Organizing trainings for the teachers and pedagogic councilors for work under health education programs aimed at preventing hazardous behaviour, including drug use.

These topics are included in the National Plan to qualify the pedagogic cadres which is guided by The National Pedagogic Center.

In 2007 at local level **The Prevention and Information Center at the Metropolitan Municipality – the city of Sofia**, worked after its unique **Multi-Module Program to prevent the use of drugs and psychoactive substances at municipal level – primary prevention and early intervention through health promotion and development of skills for healthy lifestyle.** The program is applied as a whole or as specific modules and depending on the request. It includes:

1. Education and information module for adults (school specialists and parents)

- ✓ A group for the parents of teenagers (aged 14-20) who experiment with or abuse psychoactive substances (PAS) and have different manifestations of deviant behaviour. 10 group sessions have been held, once a week, each of 2 hours' duration.
- ✓ A debate on the topic: "The parents' role for the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of addictions", organized by the Prevention and Information Center on the Problems of Addictions /PIC on PA/, with the support of the Regional Council on Drugs /RCD/ – Sofia, and the secretaries-coordinators at the RCD – Sofia.

2. Health education module for students:

- ✓ In February 2007 - prevention session with students from the 12th class of the French lyceum in Sofia. 15 students aged 15 to 17 years participated in it, and also a tutor and a teacher in Biology. Topic: Addictions to PAS and aftermaths of the use, informed choice.
- ✓ 16th May 2007 - A training seminar for 17 students aged 14-19 years at the Center of Jewish Culture.
- ✓ In December 2007 - 3 prevention sessions with students from the 6th class of the National School Complex of Culture in Gorna Banya. 69 students from three classes participated in it, aged 11-12. Topic: „Legal and illicit psychoactive substances”.

3. "Prevention of Hazardous Behaviour under the Method "Peer Education" Program

In 2007 the activities for this program were part of the prevention activity under the international project "The Youth in Europe- Drug Use Prevention Program".

4. The work of young tutors at school level – the goal of the program for 2007

In the months of January through June - 2007 - The school teams trained in 2006 from 7 metropolitan schools - 96th "L.N. Tolstoy" Secondary Comprehensive School (SCS), 74th "Gotse Delchev" SCS, 7th "Sveti Sedmochislenitsi" SCS, 2nd "Academician Emilian Stanev" SCS, 29th "Kuzman Shapkarev" SCS, 8th "Vasil Levski" SCS and 26th "Yordan Yovkov" SCS – worked with their peers at school:

- ✓ Teams of young tutors held a total of **78** sessions with peers on the following topics: "Legal psychoactive substances", "Illicit psychoactive substances", "Aftermaths of the psychoactive substance use", "Alternative behaviour", "Sexually transmitted diseases", "Early pregnancy", "Contraception", "HIV/AIDS - general information and hazardous situations";
- ✓ A total of **1,529 students from 6th-10th class have been contacted**;
- ✓ At the site, at school, **34 sessions have been supervised** by the team of the PIC on PA;
- ✓ At the PIC on PA **26 consultations** have been held with the school teams.

Within the frames of the cooperation with the schools under the Program "Hazardous Behaviour Prevention under the Method "Peer Education" the following meetings were held:

- A meeting with the members of the school board of 26th "Yordan Yovkov" SCS was held in March 2007. 40 parents and teachers were present. The activity of the Center for work with parents in the sphere of universal prevention was presented.
- The Program "Hazardous Behaviour Prevention under the Method "Peer Education" was presented within the frames of the program of the Jubilee Pedagogic Conference "Let us together make the school a desired and demanded place for the children", organized on the occasion of the anniversary of the establishment of the 26 "Yordan Yovkov" SCS in which the 26th school has participated since the start of the program – in April 2007.
- On 27th June 2007 in the Southern Park the final meeting with the teams from the schools was held for the 2006/2007 school year. 17 students were present, 7 pedagogic councilors and 4 secretaries-coordinators at the RCD-Sofia. Through different painting and artistic techniques the young tutors expressed the experience of their participation in the program.

The activities at regional and local level in 2007 carried out by the Regional Councils for Drugs (RCD) and the Prevention and Information Centers established at them, were directed to organizing different training forms for improving the competence of the students, of the pedagogic

councilors, the school psychologists, the teachers and other professionals how to develop and apply programs in the sphere of drug use prevention. Above all this is about:

- a) Holding trainings, work meetings, lectures, round tables, conferences and debates at school, at municipal and local level;
- b) Assisting the school teams for the implementation of programs in the sphere of health education at school.

Family

Developing and applying programs to help the parents

The programs for work with parents are aimed at supporting the family in their attempt to overcome the difficulties in the communication of the dependent individual with his/her relatives. The world practice has shown that the inclusion of the dependent individual in such programs increases multi-fold the possibility for the dependent member of the family to start drug - free life.

In 2007 continued the work of applying the programs in help of the parents which started in 2006 and were funded by the National Program for the implementation of the Action Plan of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs, namely:

- The “Parents” service under the project “Ambassadors of hope- strategic support for the informational and basic activities of the “Solidarity” Day Center of the “Fighting the Epidemic Diseases and Addictions” Association. The activities of this service are within the frames of the Information and Consultative Center:

- ✓ Consultations on the telephone for the parents and the friends and relatives of the drug users, related to the issues of prevention;
 - ✓ Individual consultations of the parents and relatives and friends of youths at risk or of youths-drug users; it is usually related to issues of how to converse with the child about drugs, how to show him/her that we suspect they are using drugs;
 - ✓ Seminars for parents;
 - ✓ Outreach work of a member of the team together with “Initiative for Health”;
 - ✓ Publishing a book written by the parent of an ex-drug addict who has completed the “Solidarity” program: “How I helped my child to stop taking drugs. My experience in groups”. Author - Lili Stoyanova;
 - ✓ Dissemination of information materials- mainly of the PIC – Sofia, and of “Initiative for Health”;
 - ✓ Preparing the educational initiative for parents “Knowledge saves. Get ahead of the street lessons!” – preparing website and communication strategy of the campaign.
- Structured program for work with parents, friends and relatives and guardians and program for work with the siblings of individuals with addictions under the project “A Center for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of People with Addictions – supporting program Sofia – work with the families, parents, friends and relatives and guardians of persons with drug addiction” of the “Butterfly Project – Sofia”.
 - A group for work with parents under the Project “Intensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Program for Persons with Drug Addictions” at the Outpatient Group Practice for Specialized Medical Healthcare – Center of Psychic Health – Varna” Ltd.;
 - A group for parents under the Project “Psychic and Social Rehabilitation in the Community of Persons with Addictions included in the Model Therapeutic Community” at the Institute of Ecology of Thinking.

In relation to the prevention of PAS use and abuse addressed to the family activities may be pointed implemented by the Regional Council for Drugs and by the Information and Prevention Centers structured at them. They are not numerous and are mainly aimed at establishing consultative programs or surgeries whose tasks include also:

- Providing consultations for parents and their children – Sofia, Rousse, Plovdiv, Gabrovo, Blagoevgrad, Veliko Turnovo, Pleven, Pazardzik, Sliven, Smolyan;
- Developing individual and family programs in and out of the therapeutic communities – Sofia, Veliko Turnovo;

- A group for parents of teenagers – aged 14-20 years - who experiment with or abuse psychoactive substances (PAS) and have different manifestations of deviant behaviour – the PIC on the problems related to addictions, the city of Sofia.
- At the PIC in the town of Sliven work has been done to include the parents' groups in seminars, contests, school seminars, school enterprises with the aim of involving the parents in the school activities and cementing the family relationships and the relationship family-school.

The predominating number of the local committees for combating the antisocial deeds of minors and underage, especially in the regional and larger towns, develop and implement on their own or together with other bodies and NGOs local prevention programs. At many places in the country as supporting bodies of the local committees prevention surgeries /Blagoevgrad, Pernik, Plovdiv, Pazardzik, Bourgas, etc./, prevention centers for work with children and consultative surgeries also function. "Schools" for parents have been organized.

On the website of the State Agency for Child Protection /SACP/ you will find detailed information about the telephone numbers and the addresses of establishments offering assistance-treatment and rehabilitation of persons addicted to psychoactive substances - as well as of NGOs working on projects for the prevention of drug use.

Information materials for parents:

- The PIC - Sliven has prepared and printed brochure for parents (circulation 25,000 pieces), whose aim is to prevent drug use. Discourses have been held at schools on a regular basis, as well as discussions at the teachers' and parents' meeting, on the issues of drug and alcohol use and abuse ;
 - Parents' manual has been prepared by the NFP ;
 - « A Parents' and Teachers' Guide-Book » has been published by the PIC – the city of Sofia, in co-operation with the « Free and Democratic Bulgaria » Foundation ;
 - A lot of information materials have been disseminated by the PIC and by the Regional Councils for Drugs in the country about the types of PAS.

The programs for work with parents are aimed at improving the communications within the family and reducing the possibility of relapse, caused by difficulties in the relationship. There is still not sufficient coverage within the general prevention at national and local level with prevention programs for work with the families, for work at school, nor with programs for work with the parents and with the relatives and friends of the drug addicts.

Municipality/Community

Consolidation of the Regional Councils for Drugs (RCD) and of the Prevention and Information Centers (PIC) at them

23 prevention and Information Centers have been established by the end of 2007 in the towns of Blagoevgrad, Bourgass, Varna, Veliko Turnovo, Vidin, Vratsa, Gabrovo, Dobrich, Kurdjali, Kyustendil, Pazardzik, Pernik, Pleven, Plovdiv, Razgrad, Rousse, Silistra, Sliven, Smolyan, Sofia, Haskovo, Shumen and Jambol.

All the Regional Councils for Drugs have prepared and submitted annual reports on the problems of drugs and drug addictions on the territories of the municipalities. Reports on the activities of the RCD and of the PIC have also been prepared and submitted.

The work of the RCD and of the PIC can be summarized in the several following trends:

- Implementation of the prevention programs and strategies adopted;
- Prevention activities among students, parents, teachers and pedagogic councilors. Active work is going on following the method "Peer education";

- Holding contests, showing exhibitions, delivering lectures, holding round tables, campaigns, happenings, informing the public about drugs and drug addictions - all this in co-operation with the other municipal structures;
- Running awareness and media campaigns in the municipalities, these including:
 - ✓ Publishing materials in monthly printed editions, TV and radio reports on the local media on the problems of drugs;
 - ✓ Maintaining website;
 - ✓ Holding press conferences;
 - ✓ Conducting studies on the problems of drug use;
 - ✓ Establishing and maintaining data base on the problems of drug addictions at local level.
- Issuing different types of prevention, information and health education materials, incl.:
 - ✓ Manuals with policies and positive practices for the prevention of drug addictions, addressed to institutions, organizations and professionals;
 - ✓ Studies;
 - ✓ Information bulletins with information about the activities of preventing drug addictions implemented by specific municipalities or with the addresses of offices and services;
 - ✓ Translations in Bulgarian of specialized literature on drugs;
 - ✓ Fliers for students and parents;
 - ✓ Brochures for students and parents;
 - ✓ Posters;
 - ✓ Stickers.
- Organizing alternative occupations for the spare time;
- Holding trainings whose target groups in the specific municipalities are different- from students and pedagogic councilors to professionals.
- Establishing networks of multidisciplinary teams locally, including maintaining youth networks.
- Informing the community about the activity of the PIC;

The efforts of the professionals working at the Prevention and Information Centers are aimed at overcoming the apathy of part of the society in regard to the problem of drug use.

In all the municipalities there were activities done on the occasion of 26th June - the world day to combat addictions. Most of the Prevention and Information Centers have created their websites. For the competent coverage of the drug issue the Regional Councils for Drugs have worked actively with the media.

Last but not least we have to mention the activity of the RCD regarding the holding of enquiries and of polls of opinions among students, parents and teachers and the conducting studies to evaluate the treatment demand prevalence in co-ordination with the National Center for Addictions. At the end of February 2007 to all the Prevention and Information Centers questionnaires were sent with the aim of optimizing their cooperation with the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions. In connection with the teams' training at the PIC in the standards of the sphere of prevention and information on 2nd November 2007 the team of the NFP held an educational and organization seminar with representatives of the PIC and of the RCD on topic: "Organizing studies at municipal level". With the methodical help of the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions and in conformity with the standards of the EMCDDA, in the spring of 2007 the next local representative studies were carried out.

In 2007 in Bulgaria a new trend could be defined in regard to the tendencies and good practices related to the sustainability of the network of prevention services in the country.

In December 2007 the secretariat of the National Council for Drugs and the National Center for Addictions organized and held A National Meeting on the problems of drug prevention in which 52 participants from the Regional Councils for Drugs and from the Prevention and Information Centers took part. At the meeting examples were presented of the good practices of the prevention

activities in Bulgaria. The principles and standards in the sphere of prevention prepared by a work group under the NFP were discussed and activities were planned at national level in the sphere of drug use prevention for 2008. At the national meeting on prevention, the first of its kind initiative in the country, were clearly defined the problems and difficulties in the work of the RCD and of the PIC locally, as well as the goals and the future activities and the suggestions to improve their work in cooperation and coordination with the NFP and the other institutions related to the work on the problem.

The activity of the Regional Councils for Drugs and of the Prevention and Information Centers in the country was supported by their participation in a competition to fund the projects on prevention. A team of specialists from the NFP, from the Ministry of Health and from the National Council for Drugs reviewed and gave opinion about the motions submitted till the 31st October 2007 made by the PIC and by the RCD in the country for the prevention activities planned by them with which they apply for funding by the National Strategy to Combat Drugs 2003 – 2008. 26 projects were reviewed and discussed, and they were finally funded.

In 2007 a new **tendency was marked of new development to ensure the quality of the prevention activities in the country (standards, tendencies, assessments)** which **up to that moment were practically missing in Bulgaria**. By implementing the activities from the National Program for the implementation of the Action Plan under the National Strategy to Combat Drugs, the National Focal Point developed “Principles and standards of the good practice in the sphere of prevention” which included:

- “Guidelines and basic principles for standards of the good practice in the sphere of prevention in the Republic of Bulgaria”;
- “Basic approaches, principles and standards of prevention work in the school milieu”;
- “Guidelines for good practices in the sphere of the selective and indicative prevention”;
- “Evaluation of the effectiveness of the prevention programs”.

In this way the first step was made towards the strengthening of the professionalism in the sphere of prevention activities.

Development of programs for drug use prevention through sport and tourism

The main emphasis of the prevention activities at national and local level is the working out of programs for sport and tourism for the young people. This approach is implemented through approved programs of the State Agency of Youth and Sport /SAYS/, which are aimed at involving the children and the young people in active sports occupations, at creating alternatives for making use of the spare time and at popularizing the healthy lifestyle.

The tasks in regard to these programs are implemented through activities aimed at creating favourable conditions for practicing physical education and sport by the students. Enterprises are organized presenting the opportunity for practicing sport, for sufficient rest and social integration of the students, including those socially disadvantaged and of the students from the specific ethnic groups.

The programs are carried out and funded by the SAYS in partnership with the municipal administrations, the regional inspectorates on education, the sports organizations and the school boards.

- **“Holidays and Sport” Program**

In 2007 259 projects were carried out under the program in 176 settlements and 67 types of sport were included in them. The total number of the children included in the program was around 70,000, with around 138,000 participations.

As a result of the increased interest of the children conditions and possibilities for sports activities of the children in their spare time, at weekends and during their holidays had to be opened up. This is the main goal of the new “Sport for the Children in Their Spare Time” Program which has been developed.

- **“Learn to Swim” Program**

The 20 approved projects have been carried out in 17 municipalities – centers of administrative districts in the country, including 4 projects in the city of Sofia funded by the SAYS.

The total number of the children who have completed the course of initial training in swimming is 3,920, and the number planned was 3,000. In comparison to 2006 the children who were trained

numbered 2,500 from 11 settlements. The training in swimming was done by 71 sports specialists who had the necessary qualification, at 24 swimming pools.

- **Students' games for the comprehensive schools**

SAYS has funded the organizing and the carrying out of the competitions which were part of the students' games. In the competitions at all the stages of the students' games 110,000 students participated.

- **A Program for youth activities 2006–2007 – “Everybody is a Personality” subprogram**

The subprogram is aimed at making an optimal use of the methods of non-formal education, sport and art for the opening up of possibilities for the children and youths to develop sufficiently and to acquire extra-curriculum and extra-school social, creative and professional skills.

Till the end of December 2007 under the Program “Everybody is a Personality” a total of 145 projects have been submitted. 51 projects from the towns of Blagoevgrad, Bourgas, Zlatograd, Kurdzali, Pazardzik, Pernik, Pleven, Plovdiv, Silistra, Smiadovo, Sofia, Stara Zagora, Shumen and Jambol have been approved.

Within the frame of the Program for Youth Activities 2006 - 2007 a campaign “Love yourself, so that the others may love you, too” was announced and carried out under the fourth subprogram “National initiatives and campaigns”. The campaign encourages the participation of the young people in the prevention activities for not using alcohol, not smoking and not using psychoactive drugs, for non-formal health education and for activities to make the most of the spare time.

For the campaign a total of 62 project proposals have been submitted. 15 of them were funded from the towns of Blagoevgrad, Gabrovo, Kyustendil, Kurdzali, Pleven, Plovdiv, Razgrad, Sofia, Haskovo, Shumen and Jambol.

Projects carried out in 2007 at local level:

- Prevention and Information Center- Sofia, The National Center for Addictions and The National Focal Point are taking part in the **Project “The Youth in Europe-Program for the Prevention of Drug Use”**. The project will be implemented in the course of 5 years, and it has been initiated by the organization European Towns against Drugs. The aim is to make a comparison between the preventive strategies, which are being applied in the specific European capitals, and to look for the best practices of prevention of drug use.
- **PIC- the town of Jambol**, jointly with an NGO from the town, participated in the conductance of the following projects:
 - ✓ **”Establishing a center for family consultation and support” of families at risk**
 - ✓ **”Do not kill yourself, help the others by saying “Stop” to the drug” – peer education.**
 - ✓ **„Violence is a symptom of impotence” , “Aggression among the adolescents”**
- **Pazardzik- Training of youths- leaders for participation in future prevention campaigns.** 12 persons - representatives of the “Aksakov” Secondary Vocational School and of “Zdrave” Club from the Secondary School of Mathematics participated in the training. The trained youths-volunteers actively participated in the prevention activities.
- **Pleven - in 2006 started the Project “Prevention and Anti-Aggression from 1st-5th Class” of the “Index” Foundation**, in partnership with the PIC for developing personal and social skills to cope with problems. The program was introduced in two primary schools and it was completed in May 2007.
- **Rousse - the “Personal and Social Competence” Program** has been realized:

At the beginning of the school year 2006/2007 a 3-year prevention program started in the sphere of addictions with “Bratya Miladinovi” comprehensive school as a pilot school. For the aim of the training 2 classes from the 5th class were classified into 4 smaller groups. Over the school year 10 studies have been conducted with each group separately. The studies combined appropriate for the age group forms of performance- lectures, discussions, games (simulation, behavioral, didactic) as well as practicing skills through

experience. During the current school year 2007/2008 in the program 3 classes from the 5th class were included, which at present have scheduled lessons from the first module and the present-day 6th class students are continuing the next cycle of trainings. The training of group of people from the pedagogic team of the school in the form of presentations and following discussions is also a basic element of the program.

- **Silistra – “I love you, and you love yourself” Project** together with the Regional Council for Drugs, the “Consultative Club of Civil Education”, and the “Center for Students’ Technological and Scientific Creativity”. The project was funded by the SAYS. The main goal was through uniting the efforts of NGOs, institutions and media to limit the use of alcohol, cigarettes and psychoactive drugs among children and youths. The immediate goal was through methods and techniques of non-formal education 30 youths to be motivated and trained to do prevention work for the non-proliferation of the use of alcohol and psychoactive drugs and of smoking. These youths within the frame of the project conducted training of younger children and of their peers, including of socially disadvantaged youths (from different ethnicity and of different social status) on the hazards of addictions and on the ways to prevent them in an interactive method.
- **Vidin** - In 2007 by a decision of the Board of Managers of the “Social Assistance” Foundation funding was provided to implement the **“No to Drugs” Project of the “East West” not-for-profit association, the town of Vidin**. The aim of the project was to limit the spread of and the abuse of drugs and the unfavourable health and social aftermaths for the adolescents in the region by preparing a program for the prevention of psychoactive drug abuse and on the basis of the active cooperation and interaction among the state authorities, local authorities, private businesses, NGOs and the civil society. The target group of the project was composed by students from the 12th class in the districts of Vidin, Montana and Vratsa.

Selective prevention

Groups at risk

The target of the selective prevention strategies are the subgroups of the total population considered to be at risk in relation to psychoactive drug abuse because of their belonging to a specific segment of society.

One such subgroup is the subgroup of the children and adolescents. That is why a key trend of work at national and local level is providing the possibility to inform, consult and support them. In this sphere the activity of the State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) in 2007 was related to:

1. Cooperation and coordination among the institutions

The efforts of the SACP were aimed at establishing professional contacts with the institutions involved with the problems of addictions and at more effective cooperation in the sphere of the prevention of psychoactive drug abuse among children. An agreement was concluded for cooperation with the Metropolitan Prevention and Information Center for the problems of drug addictions (2007).

2. Website of the SACP

On the website of SACP there is useful information about the telephones and addresses of the institutions which offer assistance- treatment and rehabilitation of persons addicted to psychoactive drugs, as well as information about the NGOs working for the prevention of drug abuse.

The emphasis for 2007 was the complete re-innovation of the heading “Addiction prevention” on the SACP website and the separation into two specialized modules. The setting up of the modules “Information for parents” and “Information for teenagers” as well as the publishing of the brochure of the UN Drug Service “The Drugs under International Control” was done in close cooperation and interaction with the Metropolitan Prevention and Information Center for Addictions and the regional office of the UN Drug Service.

3. A training program, carried out in 2007

At the beginning of 2007 experts from the SACP on their part conducted a 1-day training module, where the system of child protection in Bulgaria was presented and also the principles of the UN Convention related to the right of the child to be protected from the use of drugs and psychoactive substances as well as for the prevention of using children for the illicit production and trafficking of such drugs. The training was addressed to 25 representatives of the Prevention and Information Center at the National Center for Addictions and of the Regional Councils for Drug in the country.

In March 2007 the work group of the SACP initiated and organized jointly with the Metropolitan Information and Prevention Center on the problems of addictions a 1-day training for social workers from the 9 departments for child protection at the metropolitan municipality.

4. Collecting information about cases of children using drugs

The SACP for the first time introduced the indices "children with drug addictions" and "children use alcohol on a regular basis" in the information cards in which the departments for child protection periodically fill in their activity and which the SACP collects and summarizes. From the summary of the data for 2007 it is obvious that in the preceding year employees from the Departments of Child Protection (DCP) had worked on 8 cases of children with drug addiction and on 25 cases of children using alcohol. The data from the information cards of the RDC for the first 6 months of 2007 show that social workers have worked on 5 cases of children with addictions and on 5 cases of children using alcohol. The information is illustrative not so much of the extent of the phenomenon as of the extent of notifying about these problems and how they are treated by the social workers from the DCP in the country.

5. The information activities related to 26th June – the international day to combat drugs.

In 2007 the SACP organized at the Cinema Center a film-show of the documentary "A Missed Life" made under the project of "Spasenie" Foundation.

In the country through the departments of the SACP 300 copies of the "Manual- what should we know about drugs"- an edition of the "Free and Democratic Bulgaria" Foundation were disseminated, as well as 8 types of information materials provided by the regional office of the UN Service to Combat Drugs.

The SACP and the Metropolitan Prevention and Information Center prepared and issued information material addressed to teenagers.

6. Regional evaluation of the activities of the SACP to prevent addictions.

The SACP together with "Spasenie" Foundation organized in February 2007 r. a film show of "A Missed Life" and discussion for the students from the 9th and 10th class from a school in Vratsa from which there had been a notification for a child using drugs.

A charity exhibition-bazaar was organized of the works of children from the "Otets Paisii" SCS in Vratsa. On the occasion of the International Day to Combat Drugs the "Vratsa" Department in cooperation with the Regional Council for Drugs, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Regional Inspection of Preserving and Control of Public Health /RIPCPH/, the Youth Center, the Regional Red Cross, the Prevention and Information Center on the Problems of Addictions with the participation of children from 4 specialized institutions for children from the district of Vratsa conducted an artistic and competition program. In the competitive games a total of 86 children participated aged 11-18 years.

The experts from the SACP organized on 19.06.2007 a training for 20 social workers-representatives of all the "Social Assistance" Directorates, and "Social Protection" Departments from the region of Varna in cooperation with the "Prevention" Department in cooperation with "Youth Activities and Sport" Directorate at the municipality of Varna on the topic "Psychoactive substances- terminology, definitions and evaluation of their use".

The "Rousse" Department together with the "Roussensko Rozdestvo" Association and with the Municipal Youth Center in Rousse organized a concert under the motto "Let us be free, not addicted".

The experts from the "Bourgas" department held a meeting with the representatives of the "Dose of Love" association at which an arrangement was settled for joint training of the social workers from the RDC as well as with the participation of the PIC – Bourgas.

The "Plovdiv" Department also held a meeting with the "Mothers against Drugs" Association at which the experience the organization had for work with parents and the recommendations for initiatives addressed to this target group were discussed. The "Plovdiv" Department was involved

in the dissemination of the book "Do Not Surrender" – a digest of translations and original texts with advice from specialists, the questions most often asked with the answers to them, personal stories, addresses of sites for treatment, articles on other people's experience in the treatment of addictions, useful coordinates for parents of children using and abusing drugs.

7. Cooperation with NGOs and implementing projects

In the second half of 2007 the work group for addiction prevention initiated 4 competitions – 3 of them for adolescents and 1 for children aged 12 to 18 years. This activity was carried out as an implementation of the commitments of the SACP in relation to the National Strategy to Combat Drugs. In the National Program for Child Protection /2007 r./ within the frame of priority sphere 2 "Enhancing the effectiveness of the measures to protect the children from violence, abuse and other forms of exploitation" in item 4 and 5 activities are planned for addiction prevention, prevention of HIV/AIDS and of sexually transmitted diseases.

The "Spasenie" Foundation is implementing a project on the prevention of addictions among children at the Orphanages for Upbringing and Education of Children Deprived of Parental Care /OUECDPC/. For the territorial range of the pilot project the departments of chief directorates in the country have been taken in consideration – Bourgas, Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Rousse, Vratsa and the OUECDPC in these towns. The project includes:

- ✓ Analysis of the problem and of the specific particularities of addiction prevention addressed to the children from the OUECDPC
- ✓ Specifying methods for work with children from the OUECDPC for addiction prevention
- ✓ Visits to the specialized institutions for children in Varna, Vratsa, Plovdiv, Rousse, Sofia, Bourgas by teams of experts for work on addiction prevention
- ✓ Holding discussions with the children from the OUECDPC in the towns indicated as well as with their teachers and supervisors
- ✓ Establishing networks of partner organizations and inter-institutional cooperation at local level.

The "Culture Animi" Foundation is working on the project of making two educational films- for the prevention of addictions, alcoholism and tobacco smoking, and of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. The target group of the project are children aged 12-18 years. Positive messages are envisaged in the project, disproving the wide - spread fallacy about drugs, alcohol and cigarettes. Information will also be presented about the sites and the specialists who the children could contact in case additional information is needed.

The members of the Bulgarian Association of Art Therapy are writing a manual for the social workers from the department for Child protection and the Department for Social protection on the prevention and work with children and parents using drugs and alcohol.

The SACP declared a competition for posters among children aged 12-18 years on topic: "No to Drugs, Yes to Health".

Another group at risk because of psychoactive substance use and abuse is that of the military men in the country. In regard to this the Center of Military Psychology and Psychoprophylaxis and the services for psychic health of the armed forces in the Republic of Bulgaria do psychological preventive work when cases of alcohol drinking and of drug abuse by the military men from the armed forces of the Republic of Bulgaria are detected in the following main trends:

1. Functioning and optimizing of the standing system for research and analysis of the phenomenon in the army.
2. Social and psychological tests and analysis of the risk factors and of the hazardous behaviour within the Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria.
3. Running educational and information training programs and modules for detecting, influencing and prognostication of hazardous behaviour related to drug and alcohol use (lectures, discussions, seminars, trainings) for the following target groups:
 - a) cadets;
 - b) military men, including in their missions abroad;
 - c) medical services;
 - d) specialists in psychic health;

4. Holding crisis interventions and organizational consultations at the military establishments on indications and/or on request.
5. Conducting individual consultations and psychotherapy on indications and/or on request as well as follow up of the participants in the multi-national missions.
6. Optimization of the system of control and expertise.
7. Optimization of the functioning of the information network among the structures taking part in the program.
8. Working up and publishing information and educational (printed, audio- and video-) materials.

The psychological work done for cases of alcohol and drug abuse includes the following activities done by the specialists in psychic health at the military establishments of the Bulgarian Army, the headquarters of the different types of the armed forces and the structures directly subordinate to General Headquarters and to the Ministry of Defense:

- ✓ Individual psychological work- it is done once a week for every detected case and includes crisis consultations and interventions. It is done by specialists in psychic health at the military units of the Bulgarian Army;
- ✓ Group psychological work – it is done in the form of discussions, role games and work on cases, by the specialists in psychic health at the respective military units of the Bulgarian Army;
- ✓ Psychological interventions at organizational level- include two basic types of activities:
 - Education, training and providing methodical assistance to the specialists in psychic health at the military establishments of the Bulgarian Army

The Center for Military Psychology and Psychoprophylaxis (CMPPP) provides methodical assistance to the specialists in psychic health at the military establishments of the Bulgarian Army /BA/ for work with the military men from the BA who have used alcohol and /or abused drugs, The activities are done in the form of specialized modules for the development of specific professional skills by the specialists in psychic health from the military establishments of the BA including making psychological diagnostics and conducting psychotherapy (if necessary) for the military men who drink alcohol and abuse drugs, individual and group psychological work and support of the processes related to undertaking organizational measures so that no such cases be allowed to happen.

- Training of the commanders and of the military men from the military establishments of the BA

It is done by the specialists in psychic health at the military establishments of the BA, at the headquarters of the different types of armed force and at the CMPPP. The psychological work includes the training activity for the commanders and for the personnel of the military establishments from the separate types of the armed forces of the Bulgarian Army for detecting, influencing and prognosticating the hazardous behaviour related to alcohol drinking and drug abuse. The training work includes theoretical preparation of the personnel, as well as practical work on cases, role games, etc. It is directed at the formation of responsible health behaviour and involvement on the part of the commanders as an element of the promotion of the psychic health of the military men.

Pursuant to Regulation № 6/2003 of the Ministry of Health part of the procedure for admission to work with classified information demands doing specialized tests so that no military men or civil persons with a history and diagnostic criteria of drug and opioid substances use and abuse can obtain a document for psychic fitness.

In relation to the improvement of the prevention, control and expertise system at the Ministry of Defense “A Regulation on the Prevention, Control and Recognition of the Fitness for Military Service in Case of Alcohol Drinking and Drug Abuse” has been worked up and is to be passed.

Programs and projects in the sphere of the selective prevention, implemented in 2007:

- **A program for the prevention of psychoactive substance use and abuse by applying interactive methods in the context of the group work with children at school aged 11-13 years/ 5th, 6th, 7th class/** - implemented on the territory of the Center for Public Support and of the “P.R. Slaveikov” Orphanage for Children Deprived of Parental Care” – the city of Sofia, under the project of the “Caritas” bishopric organization – Sofia. The work included the formation of **a small group of 10-12 children deprived of parental care, living and studying at the “P. R. Slaveikov” Orphanage in the city of Sofia.** During the 10 meetings which were held once a week in the school year 2006/2007 in the context of communication with the peers through discussions, independent work, drawings, role games and presenting information (appropriate for the age of the students) about the substances, topics were reviewed related to their self-knowledge and their relationships with the adults and with their peers. The issues of drugs, of the development of some personal skills /assertion, the courage to say “No”, the ability to set goals and to make decisions/ were also discussed.

- In 2007 a team of the Regional Council for Drugs – Pazardjik worked up a project for the prevention of HIV/AIDS and of sexually transmitted diseases. The activities were funded by the Global Fund. From December 2006 to September 2007 the **project “Youths- let’s learn to live safely” started with target groups- mentally retarded children and children not going to school – “Ivan Vazov” Orphanage for Mentally Retarded Children /OMRC/.** The project was moved and implemented by the “Assistance for Children at Risk” Association as a main executor with the respective rights, obligations and responsibilities. The partners of the project were RIPCPH – Pazardzik and the municipality of Pazardzik - experts from the “Humanitarian Policy” Directorate and the Regional Council for Drugs. The total budget of the project amounted to 15,500 BGN. The funds provided by the program amounted to 7,750 BGN. The rest of the funds equal to 7,750 BGN were given in the form other than finance. For the successful implementation and realization of the project were also involved representatives of the Youth Parliament and of the “Zdrave” Club, tutors from the Local Committee for Fighting the Anti-Social Deeds of Minors and Underage /LCFASDMU/, educators from the “Ivan Vazov” OMRC as volunteers. The target groups were:
 - ✓ Children and youths aged 15 to 19 out of school on the territory of the municipality of Pazardzik;
 - ✓ The children deprived of parental care at the orphanage;
 - ✓ Children in the street with deviant behaviour and with no control from parents;
 - ✓ Children - victims of violence;
 - ✓ Youths from easily vulnerable groups- mentally or physically disabled- the “Ivan Vazov” OMRC- Pazardzik;

- **A Program for organizing and carrying out sports and competitive activity for institutionalized children deprived of parental care /ICDPC/** The Program is implemented in 2 stages and 4 types of sport are included, in 6 towns-Montana, Veliko Turnovo, Razgrad, Sliven, Plovdiv and Kyustendil. 1,116 children participated in it. In the activities under the program participated children institutionalized at orphanages for children deprived of parental care /OCDPC/ from the whole of the country, students from 5th-8th class (aged 11-15years). It is the first year the program is being implemented.

- **School games for the students from the specialized schools**

344 students participated in the School Games for the specialized schools in 2007. SAYC has supported the implementation of a project to organize and conduct competitions for children institutionalized at the educational schools- boarding-houses and from the special schools with a total number of the participants - 675. The following projects have been financially aided and implemented:

- ✓ Projects and programs of the sports organizations for conducting competitions in tennis-table, streetball, checkmate, badminton and volleyball for the disadvantaged children from

the OCDPC for the regions of Sliven, Stara Zagora, Veliko Turnovo, Turgovishte, the town of Kavarna, the town of Zavet with a total number of the children who participated in them - 876.

- ✓ A project to organize and conduct sports and competitive activity for students practicing sport in the servicing sections of the system of the public education. 50 regional competitions were conducted in 19 types of sport and 10 national competitions in 8 types of sport with a total number of participating children around 5, 000.

In 2007 the total number of the participants in these programs was 191,931.

- In the town of Pernik started the implementation of the project **“Do not let yourself be deluded...learn the truth about HIV/AIDS”**, funded by UNICEF. The target group of the project were children and youths of Roma origin /7th and 8th class/ from 9th “Temelko Nenkov” comprehensive school 5th “P.R.Slaveikov” secondary comprehensive school /SCS/, 6th “Sv. Sv. Kiril i Metodi” SCS and the beneficiaries of the “Roma” Culture Club and of the “Rudnichar” Culture Club. The goal of the project was for the children and the youths from the target group to increase their awareness of the prevention and of the ways of transmitting HIV/AIDS and to change their attitude about the hazardous sexual behaviour.

Indicative prevention

The target group of the prevention on indications includes the individuals who have early symptoms of PAS abuse and other behavioural problems but they do not meet the criteria of DSM-IV for addictions or problem drug use and this type of prevention is addressed to them for special interventions.

The obligations of the Central and the Local Committees to Fight Juvenile Delinquency /**CLCFJD**/ in accordance with the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs are related to the working up of programs to assist children and parents, to publishing and disseminating information materials on the problems of drugs, doing prevention activities with groups at risk raising the awareness of the public about the problems of addictions through the mass media. The work of the Central and the Local Committees to Fight Juvenile Delinquency is directed to the following spheres:

- ✓ Investigation and research;
- ✓ Information and consulting activity;
- ✓ Organizing initiatives for the prevention of addictions;
- ✓ Implementing programs and projects;
- ✓ Identifying of and work with groups at risk;
- ✓ Qualification of specialists from the system to fight juvenile delinquency;
- ✓ Structuring a network of volunteers;
- ✓ Partnership with other agencies, NGOs, with the mass media;
- ✓ Working up, publishing and disseminating of information materials and presenting the specialized information on current preventive activities and programs to the mass media.

In the work programs of the local committees in 2007 were included activities on the prevention of addictions depending on the specific character of the municipalities. The factors for drug use among the adolescents have been analyzed and more specifically the high crime generating risk of their use.

In order to fulfill its coordinating function the Central Committee interacts and is in partnership in the sphere of the prevention of addictions with the Ministry of the Interior, the State Agency for Child Protection, the Ministry of Health, the National Center for Addictions, the National Council for Drugs. There is also good partnership between the Local Committees to Fight Juvenile Delinquency with the inspectors from the Children’s Pedagogic Services, with the Departments for Child Protection, with the Regional and the Municipal Councils for Drugs, with the NGOs and with the media. A variety of joint activities are also being carried out.

An important aspect of the activity of the committees in 2007 was the working up independently or with other agencies and NGOs of programs and projects aimed at reducing the demand and the use of drugs. They are related above all with the primary prevention. Thus for example in Bourgas the LCFASDMU together with the Regional Drug Council and NGOs have undertaken measures

for a stage-by-stage improvement of the municipal strategy for prevention and control of psychoactive substance use which includes a "Life Skill" program for training students through interactive methods of training. In the town of Montana a municipal program is being implemented "Youth without Risk" for developing skills on the part of the students to oppose drugs and for doing activities to stimulate a healthy lifestyle. The LCFASDMU in the town of Varna is working on a project "The young people of the ghetto" in which is also included work on preventing addictions. In the town of Byala Municipal Program to Combat Drugs has been adopted. In the town of Teteven an action plan has been worked up for the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs, and in the town of Bobov Dol – Municipal Strategy to Combat Drugs and an action plan. In the village of Chuprene the LCFASDMU is implementing a program for parents. In Sofia a Municipal Strategy for the Prevention of Addictions among the students has been adopted. In the town of Pravets a program to support the parents in coping with the drug-related problems has been adopted. In the town of Primorsko municipal programs for early prevention of addictions have been adopted. In the town of Dobrich work has been done on a program with guidelines of how to limit drug, PAS and alcohol abuse. A Public Council for limiting drug use has also been established.

The committees are aiming, through specific activities, at presenting to the adolescents knowledge about the essence of the problem, about the hazards of drug use, at developing anti-drug values and attitudes, skills to resist pressure, especially in friendly milieu, to use drugs. The main emphasis in the program is on: limiting the number of minors and underage being dragged into using drugs; developing and introducing good practices of prevention - improving the health culture of the children regarding the use of drugs and the harm from them in extra-curriculum classes with the participation of high-qualified specialists; work with parents; improving and expanding the cooperation among the institutions at municipal level; organizing and running media campaigns on the drug problems. The local committees expand their activity of publishing information materials for children and parents on the drug problems. Most various prevention activities have been done with thousands of participants: educational lectures and discussions with the members of the local committees, with pedagogic councilors and members of school boards, inspectors from the children's pedagogic service; practical classes with the students from the last years at school about the harm of addictions, discussions with the adolescents and their parents about the harm of drugs; competitions for drawings and posters, discussions, seminars on the problems of drugs/alcohol, drugs, tobacco smoking/, sexually transmitted diseases; training after the method "peer education"; discussions with target groups at risk, trainings, competition for computer game, concomitant with a film; concerts, happenings, exhibitions, quizzes, fold-outs, informing the parents about the problems related to addiction prevention and supplying free tests for drug use, brochures, school boards with information, multimedia presentations, holding tournaments, educational seminars with the members of the local committees and with the public educators, marches, crosses, etc.

An important element of the programs is the participation of the members of the local committees in evening checks in public houses and casinos, aimed at the prevention of serving alcohol to and drug dealing among minors and underage. Work is going on for identifying vagrants and uncontrolled children, as highly vulnerable group, and the appropriate measures are being undertaken for them.

The local committees expand their activity in regard to informing the public about the problems of drug dealing and drug use by improving the coordinated activities of the institutions working on the prevention of addictions and the agencies where the citizens and the children can ask for help.

The local committees conduct inquiries for clarifying the reasons and the motives for drug use.

The consultative activity done by the local committees is increasing. An important role in this respect is played by the subsidiary bodies of the local committees- the centers for social prevention and the consultative surgeries. There specialized consultations for children dependent on psychoactive substances and for their parents are done.

An effective mode of work - the referral of the children having drug problems found out during educational cases to the information and consultative centers of drug prevention as well as to the consultative surgeries of the local committees – is winning recognition in practice.

The Center of Qualification at the Central Committee regularly includes in the training programs special modules on the prevention of addictions.

4. Problem Drug Use and Treatment Demand Population

The following major topics will be considered under this section:

- Estimation of the prevalence and incidence of problem drug use;
- Treatment demand indicator;
- Problem use data from non-treatment sources;
- Patterns of intensive or frequent drug use.

Estimation of the prevalence and incidence of problem drug use

On national level

There were no new available data from estimations of the prevalence and incidence of problem drug use on national level in 2007.

A quick overview of the available data indicates that **heroin is the substance most strongly connected to problem drug use** in Bulgaria (over 90 % of the persons that demanded treatment at the specialized units indicated it as primary substance¹⁸).

The general estimation that can be made on the basis of the available data is that **the number of problem heroin users has remained relatively constant and stable in the recent few years and that there are even slight indications of on-setting decline**. The estimated total **number of problem heroin users in Bulgaria remains between 20 000 and 30 000**. This estimation was made in the period 2004-2005 by employing the Multiplier Method Using Treatment Data and due to its "obsolescence" the National Focal Point has planned to launch, in the autumn of 2008, the preparation for performing two independent estimations of the prevalence of problem drug use on national level by using the Capture-Recapture Method and the Multiplier Method Using Treatment Data. It is expected that the first results will be yielded in September-October 2009.

On local level

For the purpose of estimating the prevalence of problem drug users on regional level studies of the Capture-Recapture type were carried out in the cities of Plovdiv, Varna and Bourgas in 2007. These cities were selected as the biggest settlements in the country after the capital city of Sofia. Moreover, the geographical position of Varna and Bourgas as border, port and resort cities presupposes a relatively higher prevalence rate of drug use.

The Capture-Recapture method was chosen for the purposes of the study due to its ability to ensure, with the help of log-linear models, satisfyingly good estimation of the hidden population of problem users on regional level¹⁹.

The data required for estimating the sought hidden and general population of problem users in all three cities were provided by 3 independent sources for each of them. However, these sources differed from city to city due to the specificity of the organization of the studies and of the available

¹⁸ See Profile of the persons demanding treatment in the same chapter.

¹⁹ Information source: EMCDDA Methodology, 2004.

information systems. The estimated numbers of the problem drug users in the three cities are briefly presented below.²⁰

***Estimation of the prevalence of the problem drug users in the city of Plovdiv*²¹**

The data sources for the study in the city of Plovdiv are:

- The police
- Emergency care
- Psychiatric dispensary (a treatment centre)

The three sources of data on the drug users in Plovdiv were felicitously selected. There were certain inaccuracies in the codes ascribed to the persons and they had to be revised, which led to a loss of a part of the information. Despite that the data allowed the performance of reliable estimations of the hidden population and of the general population of problem users in the city. After the recoding of the primary data to ensure comparability, the total number of the registered persons is 547.

The estimated total number of problem users in the city of Plovdiv according to the comprehensive log-linear model is 8179 persons with a 95% confidence interval (2301 – 33701).

Estimation of the prevalence of the problem drug users in the city of Varna.

The sources used in the study of the city of Varna are:

- A psychiatric clinic;
- The Manus Vita Medical Centre;
- The police.

The sources of information were not particularly well selected. It can be assumed that there is considerable dependence between the problem users registered at the psychiatric ward of the hospital and those registered at the Manus Vita Medical Centre. It can be assumed that problem users, who are patients of the psychiatric clinic could be patients of Manus Vita as well, since the activities of the two establishments are very close.

The estimated total number of problem users in the city of Varna according to the comprehensive log-linear model is 2847 persons with a 95% confidence interval (1150 – 8463).

***Estimation of the prevalence of the problem drug substance users in the city of Bourgas*²²**

The sources of information for the study in the city of Bourgas are:

- Caritas association
- Dose of Love association
- District Dispensary for Mental Diseases with a Hospital (DDMDH)

It can be assumed that the data sources of the problem narcotic substance users employed in Bourgas are largely tied up, as the object of their activities is approximately the same. In this sense it can be assumed that the problem users, who use the services of the Caritas association, could also turn to the Dose of Love association and vice versa. Therefore, there are serious grounds to presume a significant degree of dependence of the data sources, particularly as regards the first

²⁰ The estimations have been made by experts of the National Focal Point on the basis of the data collected in the cities.

²¹ Information source: Report on the Capture-Recapture Study for the City of Plovdiv

²² Information source: Report on the Capture-Recapture Study for the City of Bourgas

two of them, which, in its turn, influences the reliability of the obtained estimates of the volume of the hidden population of drug addicts. It would be more reasonable to put together the data of the Caritas association and of the Dose of Love association on a single list.

A total of 890 problem users aged over 18 have been covered.

The estimated total number of problem users in the city of Bourgas according to the comprehensive log-linear model is 1124 persons with a 95% confidence interval (1023 – 1303).

Treatment demand indicator

In 1994 the treatment demand information system in Bulgaria was introduced in only one specialized treatment unit in Sofia (the hospital ward of the National Centre for Addictions); thirteen years later (in 2007) the coverage was by far wider: specialized treatment units and programmes in five Bulgarian cities, including the three biggest ones – Sofia, Plovdiv and Varna, were covered. There was a significant increase in the number of the treatment demand cases covered over the period: from 81 in 1994 to over 1300-1800 in the last three to four years. The number of the persons covered by the monitoring system went up at extremely high rates in the period 1994-1999. In the last five years the growth was smooth, ranging between 1300 and 1800 persons. This growth is probably due both to the increased treatment demand in connection with drug use and to the extended coverage of the monitoring system.

The data were collected by means of a questionnaire form, which was completed by persons working with patients: physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, while abiding by all the measures for protecting data confidentiality. The number of the persons covered was obtained after conducting a procedure of identification and elimination of duplications (double presence of the same individual in the data array).

Information on the treatment centres included in the indicator

In 2007 the monitoring system of treatment demand covered 1398 persons, whose therapy began that year at 5 hospital and 12 out-of-hospital units and centres in 5 of the most significant (in terms of treatment capacity) Bulgarian cities²³. Over a quarter of the country's population and approximately four-fifths of the inpatients in Bulgaria are concentrated in them.

Profile of the persons that have demanded treatment

This analysis covers all the persons, who in 2007 started treatment related to drug use (for the first time or for any other time in their lives) and who fall in the scope of the monitoring system.

The 2007 treatment demand data reveal some basic features of the group profile of a part of the problem drug users – those who sought treatment.

➤ By type of drug

In 2007 97,6 % of the registered persons used heroin as primary substance.

➤ By gender

In 2007 16,6 % of the persons who demanded treatment were women.

➤ By age

In 2007 5,6 % of the persons who demanded treatment were aged up to and including 19 years and 86,1 % were aged up to and including 29 years (total mean age 25,8 years).

²³ Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Pleven and Radnevo.

➤ By age of first use
In 2007 63,1 % of the persons who demanded treatment stated that they had started using the primary problem substance at an age of up to and including 19 years, 7,2 % at an age of up to and including 14 years; total mean age when the first use occurred: 18,9 years.

➤ By educational level
In 2007 the educational level of 24,0 % of the persons who demanded treatment was lower than secondary, while 5,4 % of them held university or college degrees.

➤ By employment
In 2007 one of every four persons who demanded treatment (28,9 %) had a permanent job.

➤ By ethnic group
In 2007 92,5 % of the persons who demanded treatment were Bulgarians, 6,9 % were Roma and the rest were representatives of other ethnic groups (in 2001 – respectively 89,7% and 9,6 %).

By characteristics of the drug use

➤ Frequency of use
In 2007 85,6 % of the persons who sought treatment used the primary problem substance on a daily basis.

➤ Pattern of use
In 2007 80,7 % of the persons who demanded treatment mostly injected the primary problem substance.

➤ Duration of use
In 2007 some two-thirds (63,0 %) of the persons who demanded treatment had over 5 years of experience in primary problem substance use.

➤ Risky behaviour
In 2007 slightly over a half of the persons who demanded treatment (51,8 %) had shared at least once in their lifetime used needles and/or syringes.

➤ Social and cultural context
In 2007 14,4 % of the persons who demanded treatment lived with a person / with persons using drugs;

Interpretation of the indicator data

The 2007 data complement in a peculiar way the profile of the persons demanding and starting treatment related to drug use, which profile has taken long to build. In many of the cases the data for the last five years reveal or hint at certain emerging tendencies – of stabilization, of decrease or increase of certain indicators. In other cases there is no distinctive tendency, so the values should be traced in the future as well by focusing on the possible emergence of such tendencies (see also Table 4-1).

Table 4-1

**COMPARATIVE DATA ON ALL THE PERSONS WHO DEMAND TREATMENT
IN THE PERIOD 2003 / 2007**

Years	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Indicators:					
Relative share of the persons demanding treatment in relation to heroin/other opiate use	96%	95%	95%	98%	98%
Relative share of the females from the persons demanding treatment	19%	17%	17%	18%	17%
Mean age of treatment seeking persons	23,1	23,3	24,2	25,5	25,8
Mean age at the time of first use of the primary drug	18,4	18,3	18,4	18,5	18,9
Relative share of the schoolchildren and university students from the persons demanding treatment	15%	14%	11%	10%	8%
Relative share of the permanently employed persons from the persons demanding treatment	16%	17%	18%	26%	29%
Relative share of the persons who do not belong to the country's major ethnicity	9%	11%	9%	8%	8%
Relative share of the daily users	83%	84%	83%	79%	86%
Relative share of the persons injecting the primary substance	76%	76%	76%	82%	81%
Relative share of the persons with experience in drug use exceeding 5 years	35%	42%	49%	68%	63%
Relative share of the persons who shared used needles and syringes at any point of their lives	60%	57%	50%	57%	52%
Relative share of the persons living with another/other drug user(s)	12%	10%	13%	14%	14%
Relative share of the persons seeking treatment for the first time	31%	33%	27%	17%	26%

Source: National Focal Point on Drugs and Drug Addictions, Study on Treatment Demand in Bulgaria

For a number of reasons and mostly due to the relatively "favourable" effect/availability relation heroin continues to be the most popular drug among the problem users. In each of the last 5 years between 95 % and 98 % of the persons seeking treatment at the specialized centers in connection with a drug addiction problem had used heroin and/or other opiates.

In the past ten years or so (not only in the recent five ones) the males/females ratio has always been sustained at approximately 4:1, but in 2007 it reached almost 5:1. There is no easy explanation of the growing relative share of the males. The causes may be multiple but it is clear that this indicator has to be traced in the years to come as well, in order to establish if it is a matter of a tendency or of a passing deviation.

A certain general increase in the overall educational level of the persons demanding treatment is observed. On the other hand, the share of the students (both in schools and in universities) dropped from 13,0 % in 2001 and 14,6 % in 2002 to 9,9 % in 2006 and 7,9 % in 2007.

In the course of seven years the relative share of the permanently employed clients went up over three times – from 9,3 % in 2001 to 25,2 % in 2006 and 28,9 % in 2007 and the data are indicative of considerable improvement of this indicator. On the one hand this is a good sign because it points to a reduction of the social damage and of the marginalization of the affected population, but, on the other hand, the expansion of the issue beyond the economically inactive population presupposes a new type of social issues.

As regards the relative share of the persons with drug use experience exceeding 5 years, the increase in comparison with 2001 is over threefold (at that time it was 20,7 %), and in comparison with 2003 the increase is almost twofold. The trend among the clients with drug use experience of over 10 years is even more indicative – their share has grown ten times (from 1,3 % to 13,1 %). This should be perceived as a sign of declining renewal of the totality of problem users in Bulgaria, or, to put it differently, this could be a sigh of a diminishing number of new problem users, at least as far as heroin is concerned.

The majority of the problem heroin users apply the **injection pattern of intake**. There are continuous signs of **gradual reduction of the sharing of used needles and syringes** by injecting users, which is a good prerequisite for diminishing the health damage of drug use. In 2007 slightly over half of the persons who sought treatment (51,8 %) had shared used needles and/or syringes in their lives. A comparative analysis of the recent years indicates that after a rise of this share, which peaked in 2003 (60,2 %), there followed a decline and a level approximating that of 2001 (when the share was 45,1 %) was reached.

In 2007 14,4 % of the persons who demanded treatment lived with a drug user or drug users. After a relative decline in this percentage share till 2005 (about 9 %) an increase was observed and in 2006 and 2007 the share was close to that of 2001, when it was 6,4 %.

Data on problem use from non-treatment sources

*Demographic, social and economic characteristics of problem drug users*²⁴

In recent years sufficient data have been gathered from nationwide surveys that allow the development of an approximate demographic and socio-economic profile of the group of problem drug users. The data from a survey conducted in 8 big and medium-sized cities largely confirm this profile but at the same time make it possible to capture some new trends.²⁵

First of all the gender-based comparison confirms the transition from the 1:4 ratio to approximately 1:5 in favour of male drug users. The development of this distribution can be clearly traced when compared to two previous consecutive surveys performed by the “Initiative for Health” Foundation in 2003 and 2005 (see *Table 4-2*). These data support the results from other surveys as well as those yielded by the information system for drug related treatment demand.

Table 4-2

DISTRIBUTION OF THE DRUG USERS BY GENDER

Gender	2003 survey	2005 survey	2007 survey
Males	80%	83%	83%
Females	20%	17%	17%

Source: Survey on the treatment demand of drug addictions and the access barriers for problem drug users in Bulgaria, 2007

²⁴ Survey on the treatment demand of drug addictions and the access barriers for problem drug users in Bulgaria, “Initiative for Health” Foundation and National Focal Point on Drugs and Drug Addictions, a survey within the European project CORRELATION *European Network for Social Inclusion and Health*, with the methodological support of RIDS, Research Institute on Drug Studies at the ELTE University, Budapest, which covered 893 problem users in eight cities, May-June 2007.

²⁵ For greater detail see: Rousseva A., *The treatment of Drug Addicts in Bulgaria: Condition and Issues*, Study Report, “Initiative for Health” Foundation, Sofia 2007.

As regards age, there is a clear trend of gradual change in the structure of the group in the direction of a growing share of the problem users of a higher age at the expense of the younger users. This tendency of aging of the group stands out even more clearly when compared to the mean age of the group in 2003, 2005 and 2007 (see *Table 4-3*). It is clearly seen that the mean age went up by three years over that period. This process was mostly related to the fact that the peak of the heroin epidemic was already history, which has long been commented by the experts in the area.

Table 4-3

MEAN AND MEDIAN AGE OF THE DRUG USERS

Indicator	2003 Study	2005 Study	2007 Study
Mean age	24	25	27
Median age	23	24	26

Source: Survey on the treatment demand of drug addictions and the access barriers for problem drug users in Bulgaria, 2007

Against the background of the aging of the drug user group certain disturbing facts and tendencies in the socio-economic status of the group can be observed, which are indicative of a growing marginalization. A review of the educational profile of the group shows that half of the group members have completed primary or lower educational level and 13 % have not completed any educational level.

Approximately half of the drug users (43%) have dropped out of school before completing their secondary education. The dropout of these people from the educational system is a prerequisite for their further social marginalization in the future, insofar as it deprives them of an important social resource, if at a certain stage of their life they decide to cope with their problem and get reintegrated in society as complete personalities.

The employment profile indicates that about 60% of the problem drug users are unemployed and that the overwhelming majority of these people are not even registered with the labour offices. Parallel with that 20% of the drug users state that they have no ID documents of any kind. The situation with the health insurance is even graver: while during the 2003 survey of the "Initiative for Health" Foundation 49% of the respondents were health insured, in 2005 the health insured ones already constituted 43%, and during the latest survey they accounted for only 39%.

Police data

According to the data of the National Police Service in 2007 the number of the registered narcotic substance users was 2654. In 2006 their number was 2883, i.e. there was a decline of about 9 %. A total of 820 (or 30.9 %) of the registered drug users in 2007 were minors. In terms of the type of the substance, 1477 (55.6 %) used cannabis, 578 (21.8 %) used heroin, 47 (1.8 %) used cocaine, and 552 (20.8 %) used synthetic drugs.

Distribution of the drug users by District Police Directorate				
District Police Directorate (DPD)	Number of the users of:			
	Cannabis	Heroin	Cocaine	Synthetic drugs
Blagoevgrad	5	7	2	1
Bourgas	24	17	0	19
Varna	60	29	4	19
Veliko Tanovo	107	16	1	17
Vidin	3	8	0	2
Vratsa	7	3	1	4
Gabrovo	6	4	0	3
Dobrich	43	8	0	16
Kardzhali	11	0	0	0
Kyustendil	10	16	1	3
Lovech	35	3	0	17
Montana	3	4	0	0
Pazardzhik	7	10	2	0
Pernik	18	20	0	5
Pleven	50	20	0	15
Plovdiv	58	31	6	64
Razgrad	10	1	0	6
Rousse	13	10	0	0
Silistra	80	34	0	0
Sliven	7	5	0	4
Smolyan	16	0	0	0
Sofia Police Directorate	630	263	13	259
Sofia DPD	79	18	2	12
Stara Zagora	36	21	12	27
Targovishte	25	1	0	2
Haskovo	26	1	0	4
Shoumen	21	1	0	17
Yambol	85	23	3	36
Traffic Police Department - Combating Crime, Protection of Public Order, and Crime Prevention (TPD-CCPPOCP)	2	4	0	0
Total	1477	578	47	552

Source: National Report on the Drug Operations of the National Police Service for the period from 1 January 2007 till 31 December 2007

The largest number of cannabis user cases was registered at the Sofia Police Directorate – 630. The Sofia Police Directorate also accounts for the largest share of the heroin users (263), cocaine users (13) and synthetic drug users (259).

The number of the cannabis users registered at certain district police directorates is also relatively high: Veliko Tarnovo (107), Yambol (85), Silistra (80) and Sofia District (79). The smallest numbers have been registered at the TPD-CCPPOCP (2), as well as at DPD Vidin and Montana (3).

As regards heroin users, their number is relatively higher at DPD Silistra (34), Plovdiv (31) and Varna (29). There are no registered heroin users at DPD Kardzhali and Smolyan.

Cases of cocaine users have also been registered at DPD Stara Zagora (12), Plovdiv (6), Varna (4), Yambol (3), Blagoevgrad, Pazardzhik and Sofia (2), as well as at DPD Veliko Tarnovo and Kyustendil (1 each).

Synthetic drug users have been registered at DPD Plovdiv (64), Yambol (36) and others. There have been no such cases at DPD Kardzhali, Montana, Pazardzhik, Rousse, Silistra and Smolyan.

Patterns of intensive or frequent drug use

There are no available new data on the patterns of intensive or frequent drug use.

5. Drug Related Treatment

Within the frames of this section the following main topics will be reviewed:

- System of treatment - review;
- Drug-free treatment
- Medically assisted treatment.

Treatment system - review

Basic characteristics

The system of treatment is developed within the frames of the concept of an integrated approach to the treatment of addictions. The treatment of patients with addictions is of two main types; drug-free treatment and medically assisted treatment. The basic characteristics of the system of treatment are as follows:

- ✚ Extensive development of the substitution treatment as number of positions for treatment (around a 4-fold increase in 4 years) and territorial accessibility- substitution maintenance programs are now conducted already in 9 towns in the country in comparison to only 3 towns before that.
- ✚ Inadequate development of the drug - free treatment. The positions in the programs for drug-free treatment do not correspond to the patients' needs and substantial funding is necessary for the development of this approach.
- ✚ Inadequate development of programs for consultations and treatment of adolescents.
- ✚ The system of treatment is addressed mainly to the needs of the patients with addictions to opiates.

Structure and funding of the system of treatment

The diagnosis Drug and Alcohol Addiction is made according to the criteria of the International Classification of Diseases, 10th revision (ICD - 10) and in this sense the ICD-10 addictions are a part of the psychic health.

The medically assisted treatment is applied only at health establishments registered under the Health Establishments Act. The drug – free treatment can be done at medical and health establishments and by NGOs and by social service suppliers under the Social Assistance Act.

The medical activities to treat addictions of outpatients are paid for by the NHIF. Regulation № 40/24th November 2004 for specifying the main package of healthcare activities, guaranteed by the NHIF, provides that among the activities executed by the general practitioner are also the prevention and diagnosing of addictions. Since the addictions are a subject of the specialty Psychiatry, the healthcare activities, included in the package of the Psychiatrist from the outpatient healthcare concern also the patients with addictions. The treatment of the patients with addictions is carried out by specialists - Psychiatrists who work in multidisciplinary teams.

This way of payment does not provide long - term outpatient treatment for patients with addictions, but only gives the chance for short-term interventions, and because of this it is not widespread.

The long – term substitution and maintenance treatment is paid for from the budget of the regional dispensaries of psychiatric diseases, by the state psychiatric hospitals or by the patients. The medical product methadone hydrochloride for the state and the municipal health establishments is bought by the Ministry of Health with the funds of the National Program for the development of a system for methadone maintenance programs in the Republic of Bulgaria 2006-2008 .

For 2008 target funding of the programs for methadone maintenance treatment at the Regional Dispensaries of psychiatric diseases was provided within the frames of the activities delegated by the state to the municipal budgets for a total of 400 positions with specifying a definite standard for the maintenance of patient who has completed the treatment.

The funding of the inpatient psychiatric healthcare at this stage is an obligation of the republican budget, via the Ministry of Health and the municipal budgets. This is the way the inpatient detoxification is carried out, and so are short-term and medium-term inpatient rehabilitation programs.

In cases of emergency /intoxication, etc./ the emergency treatment is done at the Centers of Emergency Medical Healthcare from where the patients are referred, if necessary, to toxicology wards and intensive care units or to other hospital wards.

The funding of the drug-free treatment is not a subject of regulations, with the exception of the funding of separate small projects provided by the National Center of Addictions with funds from the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs 2003-2008.

Accessibility of the medicinal services

In order to improve the access to medicinal programs in 2007 at the National Center of Addictions and the "Dose of Love" foundation – the town of Bourgas Information and Consultative Centers have been established /ICC/ where free consultations and information for the addicted persons are provided on the possibilities for detoxification, treatment, drug-free treatment and on social reintegration. The main activities carried out at the ICC are:

- Assessment of the severity of the addiction;
- Assessment of the concomitant problems;
- Informing the patients about the programs for consultation, treatment and drug-free treatment in the country;
- Facilitating the treatment demand by the addicted persons and by their parents and relatives;
- Preparation and motivation for inclusion in long-term treatment programs;
- Involvement in the process of treatment of relatives and friends;
- Support for the building of a network among the different services, programs and teams.

In view of improving the coordination among the different treatment programs and of improving the access to treatment at the National Center of Addictions the following registries function:

1. A register of the health establishments where substitution and maintenance programs for drug addicted persons are carried out.
2. A register of the persons doing pretreatment and rehabilitation programs.
3. A general national register of the patients participating in substitution and maintenance programs for drug addicted persons.

Ensuring the quality of the services

An important achievement for 2007 was the work targeted at improving the quality of the services offered by conducting trainings for professionals, monitoring the substitution and maintenance programs and developing and popularizing the guidelines for the good practice and the protocols for conducting the treatment.

At the National Center of Addictions a number of courses, seminars, work meetings and round tables were conducted with the aim of training specialists for the treatment of addictions and of creating positive public attitude in regard to the possibilities and effectiveness of the therapeutic programs for addicted persons:

- Training "Monitoring and assessment of the effectiveness of the treatment programs";
- Public debate on the topic " The treatment of addictions in Bulgaria- possibilities and problems";
- Round table together with the World Health Organization on topic "Trends and principles of the good practice in the substitution treatment and in the reduction of harm from drug use";
- Regional seminar organized by the European Committee, the NCA, the Ministry of Health under the TAIEX program on topic "Reducing drug demand in South-Eastern Europe";
- Two training courses have been conducted to certify the leaders of substitution maintenance programs;

- The NCA started a process for the selection of specialists and people with their own experience who work in programs for drug-free treatment for training to work in the residential and outpatient programs of the Greek organization KETHEA;
 - Protocols have been established for outpatient detoxification in cases of drug addiction by a team of experts /G. Vassilev, M. Altunkova, and Zdravka Gerdjikova/;
 - In 2007 *Training program to certify the leaders of substitution programs at the institutions of detention* was prepared. This was funded by the Program for the Prevention of HIV/AIDS funded in turn by the Global Fund to Combat AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;
 - Within the frames of the Two-Year Agreement for cooperation between the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization the National Center of Addictions under the contract with the European Bureau of the World Health Organization developed manuals on the topic: "Guidelines for the good practice in the substitution and maintenance treatment" /Tz. Raicheva, Tz. Doncheva, D. Krusteva, B. Peeva and E. Grashnov, Sofia, 2008/ and „Guidelines for the good practice in the reduction of harm from drug use" /Tz. Raicheva, M. Radeva, E. Yankova, A. Pehlivanova, V. Bogdanova and A. Radeva, Sofia, 2008/, and unified approaches were introduced in the activities of the substitution and maintenance treatment and in the reduction of harm from drug use;
 - Protocols for doing outpatient detoxification were prepared and discussed at a series of meetings of experts /G. Vassilev, P. Gerdjikova and M. Altunkova/;
 - The development of Guidelines for the good practice in the psychosocial rehabilitation of addicted patients was also started.
- In 2007 a monitoring was conducted of the activity of the substitution and maintenance programs (described below in the section Substitution and Maintenance Treatment.)

Drug-free treatment

Drug-free treatment is a psycho-social therapeutic approach, aimed at full psycho-social recovery and re-integration of the addicted person, whose medicinal treatment is minimal. The main objective of those programs is to help the addicted persons in permanently changing their way of life through the traditional norms and values like mutual help, team work, honesty, care and respect for the other members, responsibility, gratefulness, etc. Of great importance for the effectiveness of these programs is the establishment of "Protected Environment" of security and safety for the participants in the program.

An important part of the whole rehabilitation program is the re-socialization program. Its main objective is for the changes achieved to be transferred and confirmed in the social context. The activities of the re-socialization programs are aimed at supporting social adaptation, helping in the process of finding work, assisting in the solution of problems.

Another important part of the programs for drug-free treatment is the work with relatives and friends. The aim of these programs is to involve the parents and friends of the addicted person in the process of rehabilitation from the very beginning.

The treatment programs based on this approach are organized under the conditions and the order of Regulation № 30 for the order to participate in pre-treatment and rehabilitation programs for persons who have been addicted or have abused drugs (promulgated in the State Gazette, issue 1 from 2nd January 2001) and are of two main types:

1. Residential - Therapeutic communities
2. Programs for outpatients - Day centers in the communities

The drug-free treatment and the resocialization of drug addicted persons is done in 7 rehabilitation programs with a total capacity of 125 positions situated on the territory of Sofia-city, Sofia-district and in Varna. The day centers represent an effective form of organizing the outpatient treatment of addicted persons. In the country function 5 programs of the type "Day Center for Rehabilitation", 4 of which are in Sofia, and 1 program is in Varna. In Sofia an evening program functions for employed patients and for patients - students.

The therapeutic communities are a form of long – term residential treatment and drug – free treatment. By the end of 2007 in the country are also operative 2 long-term rehabilitation

programs of the type “therapeutic community” / with a total capacity of 50 positions on the territory of Sofia-district/.

Medically Assisted Treatment

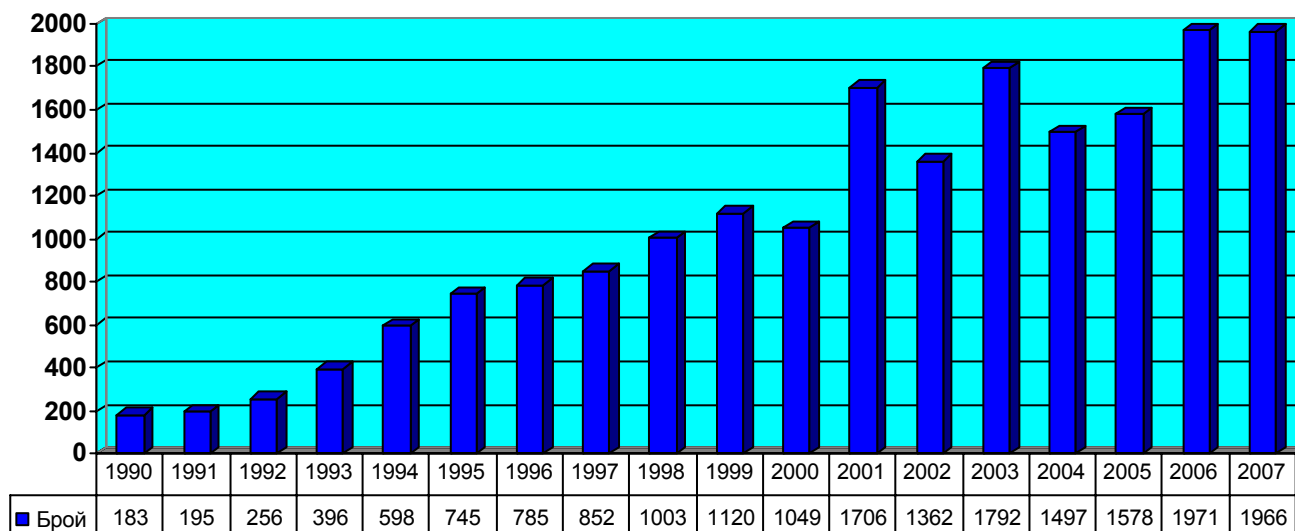
Abstinence Treatment

Abstinence treatment is the main form of treatment provided to the patients from the country. There is a setting for outpatients and for inpatients. The abstinence treatment of outpatients is done at the Regional Dispensaries of Psychiatric Diseases with Clinics (on the data from the inquiry in 8 out of the 12 RDPDC) and the different outpatient services for specialized psychiatric aid. Detoxification of inpatients is done at the state psychiatric hospitals at the departments of Psychiatry at the Multi-Profile Hospitals for Active Treatment (on the data from the inquiry, carried out in 7 MHATs) and at the Military Medical Academy.

In 2007 1966 patients diagnosed with “Psychic and behavioral disorders caused by the use of other psychoactive substances” (See Fig. 5-1) have been to the specialized hospitals. The trend has been preserved of increasing the number of hospitalized persons. The most of the admitted patients were at the Regional Dispensaries of Psychiatric Diseases with Clinics - 812, followed by the clinics of Psychiatry and the state psychiatric hospitals. 851 patients diagnosed with “Psychic and behavioral disorders caused by the use of other psychoactive substances” are under dispensary observation²⁶.

Fig. 5-1

NUMBER OF THE PATIENTS WITH PSYCHIC AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS CAUSED BY THE USE OF OTHER PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES (ICD 10 - CODE F11- F19) AT THE PSYCHIATRIC CLINICS IN THE COUNTRY OVER THE PERIOD 1990-2007



Source: *The National Center of Health Information*

The total number of beds in the health establishments for psychiatric aid is 5,179, of which 170 beds are structured for patients with addictions.

At some of the Regional Dispensaries of Psychiatric Diseases with Clinics programs for maintenance treatment with naltrexone have been set up.

²⁶ National Center of Health Information, “*Bed fund and activity of the hospitals and inpatient health establishments and of the dispensaries*” *Bulletin*

Substitution and Maintenance Treatment

By adopting the Program of Methadone Maintenance Treatment in 2003 a system of programs for substitution treatment was started. At the beginning of 2006 a National Program for the Development of a System of Methadone Maintenance Programs in the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2006-2008 was adopted by the Council of Ministers. The program is based on the experience of the European countries and it is in compliance with the main priorities of the European strategy on drugs for the period 2005-2012. The strategic goal of the program is: reducing drug use and the related health and social risks via the development of a system of effective and accessible programs for methadone maintenance treatment.

In Bulgaria the substitution treatment is regulated by the Control of Drugs and Precursors Act and by Regulation № 24 from 31st October 2000 and by the conditions for and the order of conducting substitution and maintenance programs for reducing the harm to the health of the persons addicted to drugs. /Promulgated in the State Gazette, issue 91 from 7th November 2000 , amendment in the State Gazette issue 70 from 28th August 2007/

The substitution and maintenance programs in which opioids are used (opium agonists and agonists-antagonists) can be carried out at health establishments where a doctor works with a recognized speciality of Psychiatry, Toxicology or Internal Diseases.

The conductance of the substitution and maintenance programs is aimed at reducing the harm for the health which is caused by the use of opioid substances and the aim is to remedy the somatic, psychic and behavioral disorders as well as to prevent the health and social harm caused by the chronic opioid abuse (opium agonists and agonists-antagonists).

The realization of the substitution and the maintenance programs is done with the authorization of the Minister of Health.

For the substitution and the maintenance treatment only opioid substances can be used and the patent medicines from them (opium agonists and agonists-antagonists) from a list approved by the Minister of Health. Pursuant to the last amendments of Regulation № 24 / 31st October 2000 the substitution and maintenance treatment can be applied with the medicines methadone and subtitol. To be included in the list are the medicinal products suboxone (containing buprenorphine hydrochloride and naloxone hydrochloride dehydrate) and subutex (buprenorphine hydrochloride).

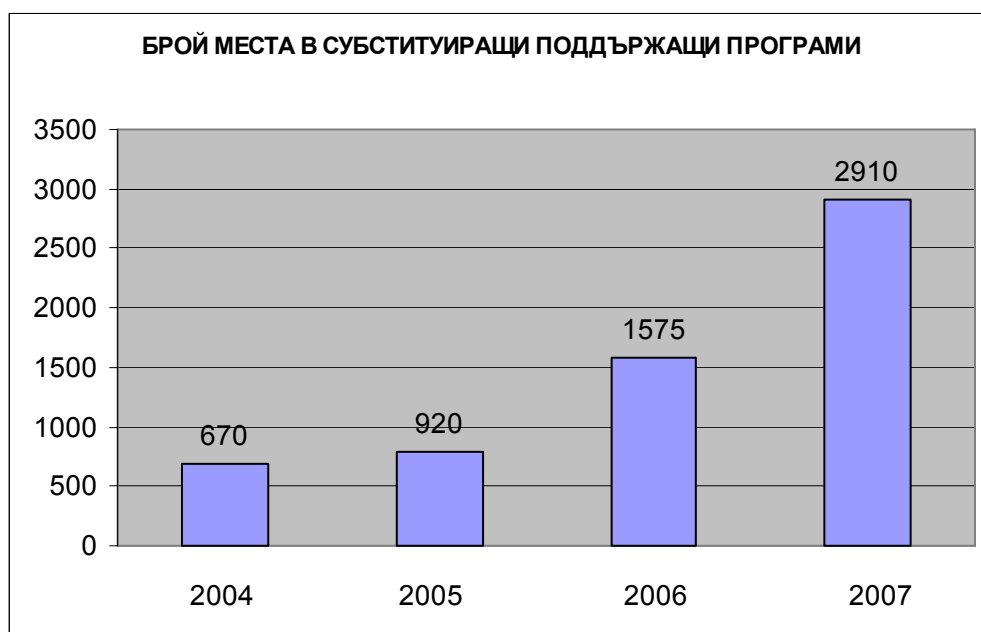
By 31st December 2007 in the country are operative 17 substitution and maintenance programs with a total number of positions 2,910 in them, of which 2,405 are for treatment with methadone hydrochloride and 505 for treatment with morphin sulfate pentahydrate (subtitol).

In comparison to 2006 in 2007 the number of the positions for treatment in the substitution and maintenance programs has increased nearly twofold, and over the period the Program has been operative /4 years/ - more than 4 - fold (see *Fig. 5-2*).

The programs are of 2 types:

1. State and municipal programs – a total number of positions for treatment - 825 for treatment with methadone:
2. Programs without state and/or municipal participation with a total number of 2,085 treatment positions, of which 1,580 are for treatment with methadone and 505 are for treatment with subtitol.

NUMBER OF POSITIONS IN THE SUBSTITUTION AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS IN THE COUNTRY OVER THE PERIOD 2004-2007



Source: The National Center of Addictions

In 2007 the effectiveness and the activity of 7 substitution and maintenance programs (SMP) was monitored. The monitoring was done and the following groups of criteria were found:

1. Administrative.
2. Organization of the treatment program: team, objectives of the program, structure of the program, working hours, criteria for admission and discharge of patients, keeping registers, informing the client, rules for prescribing methadone and substitol "for home", duration of the treatment, psychosocial interventions, accessibility of the program, urine tests, etc.
3. Social and demographic profile of the patients.
4. Information about the therapeutic process: services provided to the patients, a change in the client in the course of the treatment and satisfaction of the patients.

When analyzing the attitude of the patients towards the programs the following elements were used: semi-standardized inquiries for the participants in the medically assisted treatment, a questionnaire about the satisfaction of the client (SCQ-8), as well as tete-a-tete interview.

The results of the monitoring show:

➤ The programs function on the basis of the Minister of Health's authorization for the implementation of activity under Regulation № 24 from 2000 for the conditions and the order for the conductance of substitution and maintenance programs to reduce the health harm for the persons addicted to drugs.

➤ The programs are long-term, high-threshold and high-structured. They are intended at affecting all the spheres of the personality and include modules for individual and group consultative and more intense and systematic psychotherapeutic work, including work with the families of the patients. The average rate of the patients included in systemic and lasting psychotherapeutic process varies from 10 – 30 %. The organization of the treatment process is based on the model "phases of the treatment" structured and described by Moolchan and Hoffman /1994/. Its essence is the understanding that the addiction is a chronic-relapsing disease and the patients with opiate addiction need a long-term treatment structured in the respective phases:

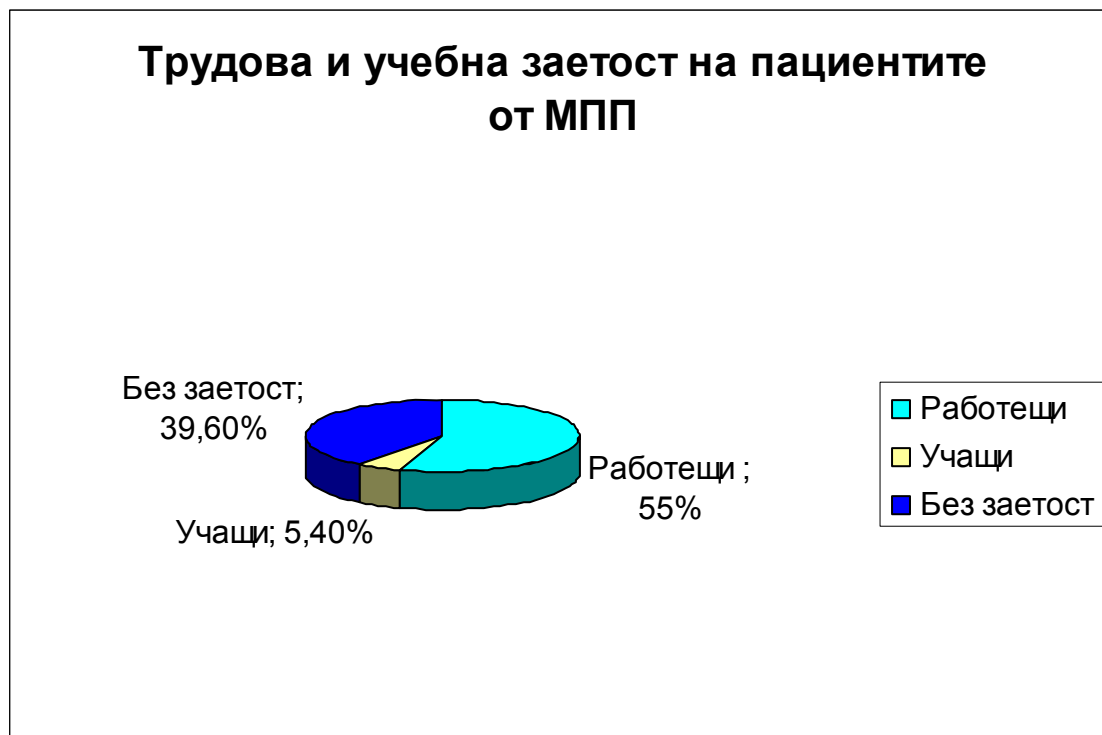
1. A phase of intensive stabilization.
2. A phase of involvement and rehabilitation.
3. A phase of medical maintenance.

4. A phase of methadone detoxification.
5. A phase of zero dose.

- Regular control tests are done within the frames of the program for unregulated use of illicit substances.
- In all the programs psychotherapeutic interventions are made, and their scope depends on the number of persons in the team and the ratio team/client.
- Good social functioning of the clients is observed - for example 55.5 % have health insurance, 55 % are employed, and 5.40% are students (see Fig. 5-3).

Fig. 5-3

PATIENTS FROM THE METHADONE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS WHO ARE EMPLOYED OR WHO STUDY FOR THE PERIOD OF 2007



Source: the National Center of Addictions

As part of one of the programs („АГПСМП-Center of Psychic Health- Varnsa” Ltd.) a day center functions which provides different types of services to patients in their stage of emotional and behavioral stabilization. A biopsychological model of drug-free treatment is used for the drug addicts and their re-socialization. This model provides supporting environment and an independent way of life. The therapeutic setting provides the option to test the skills and techniques acquired in the usual socium. The main objective is to permanently change the behavior of the addicted person.

6. Health Correlates and Consequences

The following main topics will be reviewed within this chapter:

- Drug related death and mortality among drug users;
- Infectious disease related to use of narcotics;
- Psychiatric and somatic co-morbidity;
- Other interrelations and consequences related to the use of narcotics;

Drug related death and mortality among drug users

Information from the official national statistics ²⁷

The statistical research of the deaths by causes is based on medical death certificates filled in by the doctor who has established the death. Since the beginning of 2005, the Tenth revision of the International Statistics Classification of Diseases and Health-Related Problems (IDC) of the World Health Organization has been implemented in Bulgaria.

Drawing up of Death Report

According to the Law of Civil Registration (LCR), the acts of civil status are official written documents. Of them, the death report, the death certificate and the birth certificate are related to the deaths by causes.

The death Report is formulated in:

- The health institution which established the death;
- The municipality or the town council (the district) after drawing up a death certificate following a court order for establishment of the death as well as after producing a death certificate under Art. 65(2), 67(3), 72(3) of LCR.

The medical person who has established the death draws up the report by filling in its section "medical certificate of death". The doctor writes the direct cause for the death, the preceding and the accompanying conditions or diseases and the main (the initial) cause of death. The quality and the reliability of the information about deaths by causes depend to a great extent on the precise and exact formulation of the causes of death.

Coding of the cause of death

The coding of the causes of death is done in compliance with the International Statistics Classification of Diseases and Health-Related Problems, 10th revision.

When only one cause of death is mentioned in the death certificate, the coding is relatively easy and trouble-free. In most cases, however, two or more affections contribute to the death. In compliance with the requirements of the World Health Organization and the directions for composing statistical charts for deaths by causes, the so called *initial death cause* is coded. It is defined as "the disease or the trauma which starts the chain of affections lead directly to the death, or the circumstances of the accident or violence that caused the lethal trauma". It is assumed that the doctor filling in the medical death certificate is in more favourable situation than anyone else to decide which disease or affection has directly caused the death and to specify which preceding conditions, if there were such, lead to this disease or to this condition.

The Ministry of Health issues instructions for coding the causes of death in compliance with IDC. The coding of the causes of death is done by doctors working in the Regional Health Centres

²⁷ Source: National Statistics Institute

(RHC) and dully trained to meet the requirements of IDC. The doctor uses the medical certificate of death to code the causes of death.

The three-digit code for the causes is used when coding the causes of death. This, in turn, limits the possibilities for analysis of the information regarding the poisoning with narcotic and psychodisleptic (hallucinogenic) or psychotropic medicines.

Definition

In compliance with the requirements of EMCDDA (The DRD-Standard, version 3.0) the codes of IDC–10, which should be taken into consideration regarding poisoning (accidental, premeditated or of indefinite intentions) are combined with the T-codes to characterize the type of substance. According to the recommendations of the WHO for producing information about the deaths by causes, since such combination cannot be done, the use of only one code from the two classes imposes the preference of the code from class XX External causes of sick rate and morbidity, namely – X and Y codes are preferred.

According to „The DRD-Standard, version 3.0” when a combination of X– and Y- codes with the T-codes is not possible, the alternative procedure is to include the ones died of some of the additional causes, including in class «External causes of sick rate and morbidity». The analysis of the information, however, shows that the evaluation of the morbidity related to the use of narcotics, if all these causes are taken into consideration, is significantly overrated. Given the total number of persons died of Poisoning with narcotic and psychodisleptic (hallucinogenic) substances (T40) and Poisoning with psychotropic medicines unclassified elsewhere (T43), which does not differ considerably from the number of persons died of causes X41, X42, X61, X62, Y11, Y12, we assumed that the assessment done in that way would not vary considerably from the one which would be there if a combination with the T-codes were possible.

After the performed analyses, we accepted the information of the persons who died of the following causes to be used in the tables attached to the report and this paper to analyze the narcotic-related morbidity:

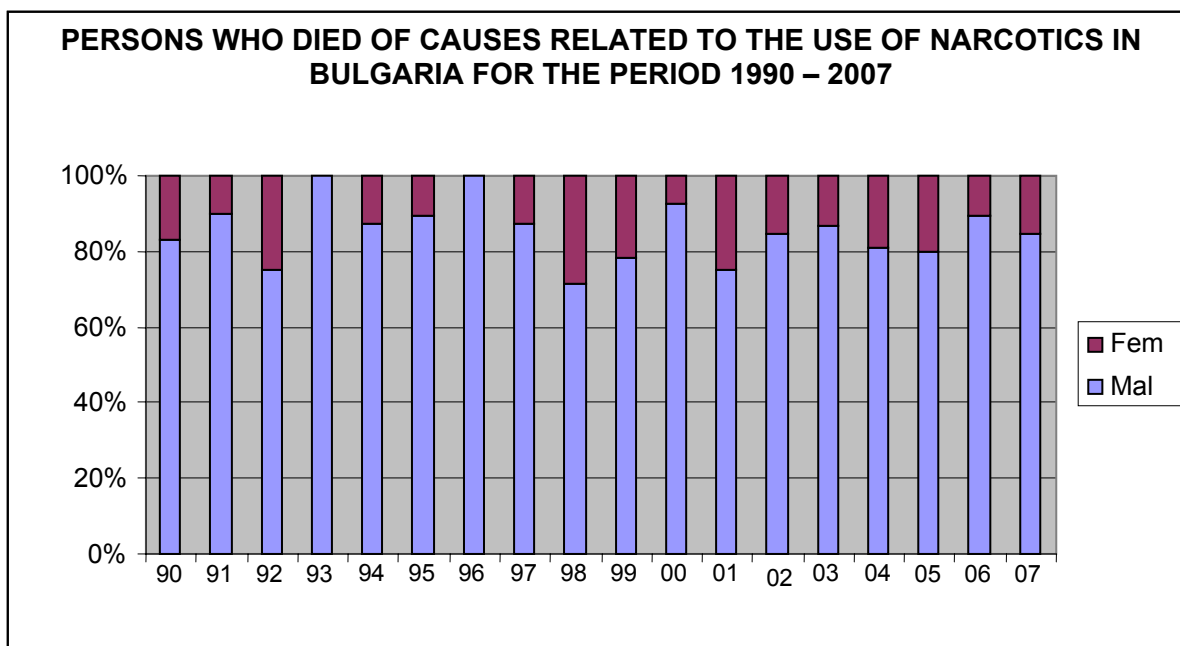
F11-F12, F14- Mental and behavioral disorders F16, F19

X41	Accidental poisoning and impact of anticonvulsive, sedative, soporific, antiparkinson and psychotropic substances un-classified elsewhere
X42	Accidental poisoning and impact of narcotics and psychodisleptics (hallucinogenic) un-classified elsewhere
X61	Premeditated self-poisoning and impact of anticonvulsive, sedative, soporific, antiparkinson and psychotropic substances un-classified elsewhere
X62	Premeditated self-poisoning and impact of narcotics and psychodisleptics (hallucinogenic) un-classified elsewhere
Y11	Poisoning and impact of anticonvulsive, sedative, soporific, antiparkinson and psychotropic substances un-classified elsewhere, with indefinite intentions
Y12	Poisoning and impact of narcotics and psychodisleptics (hallucinogenic) un-classified elsewhere, with indefinite intentions

Deaths by causes in 2007

In 2007, the persons who died as a result of use of narcotics (according to the above set definition) are 52.

Since the beginning of the period under observation (1990) until now, in 2007 there were most death cases of causes specified in the definition for such, related to the use of narcotics. For the whole 18-year period, there were less cases 1992 and 1994 – 8 cases a year. The proportion dead male : female is in favour of the men and in two of the years under observation, in 1993 and 1996, all persons who died of these causes were male (see Figure 6-1). In 2007 the men who died as a result of use of narcotics were 44 or 84.6%. The women dead of these causes were 8 or 15.4%.



Source: National Statistics Institute

The intensity of the deaths of causes related to the use of narcotics in 2007 is 0,68 of 100 000 totally for the country. For men the value of the index is 1,19 of 100 000 and for women – 0,20 of 100 000 of the respective population. Not only as absolute values, but comparing the morbidity coefficients in the period under observation, 2007 is the year with the highest value of the index.

The decrease of the cases of deaths of causes related to the use of narcotics, characteristic of the most European countries, in the transition from the Ninth to the Tenth revision of IDC was not observed in Bulgaria. So far, the highest value of this index was exactly in the year after which X revision of the International Statistics Classification of Diseases and Health-Related Problems is implemented. In 2005 the morbidity coefficient of causes related to the use of narcotics is 0.52 of 100 000 and the lowest value of the index is in 1993 – 0.11 of 100 000 per capita of the population.

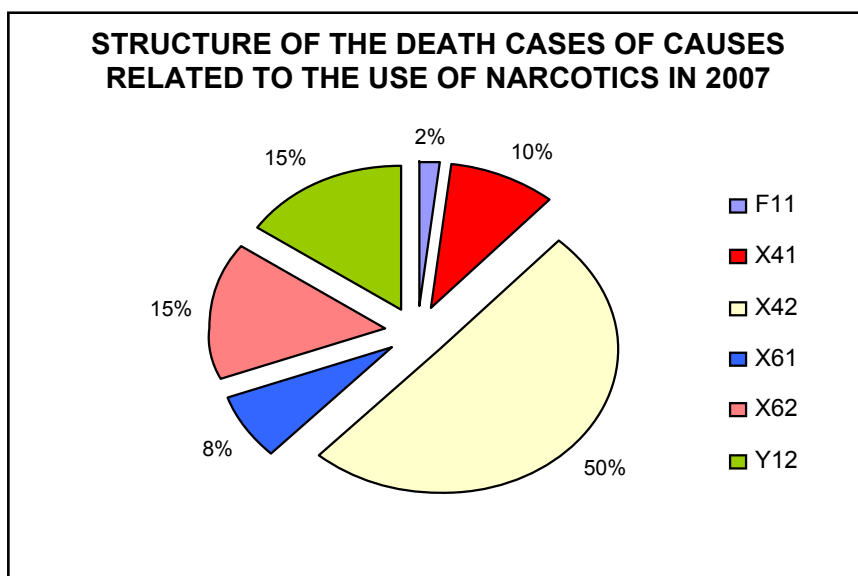
The average age of all persons who died as a result of use of narcotics keeps growing, from 27,7 years in 2004, in 2007 it is 30.1 years. For men, it is 27.4, and for women – 45.0 years. The distinction, however, is considerable if the median age²⁸ of the persons who died of these causes is calculated. Totally for the country, it is 21.5 years, i. e. half of the persons who died of causes related to the use of narcotics are at the age of 21.5. This great difference is due mainly to the distinction registered with men. The median age of men is 20.0 years and for women – 43.5 years.

The number of dead persons is greatest for 22 and 27 years of age – six persons for the two ages. In general, 71,2% of all dead persons as a result of use of narcotics are up to 29 years of age. The lowest age at which there is a fatal outcome is 14 years – one dead girl. The highest age is above 65 years.

Of all the dead persons, only one man has died as a result of „mental and behavioral disorders due to the use of opioids” (F11), all other cases are of dead persons of causes of class XX „External causes of disease and morbidity”. The greatest share belongs to the dead ones as a result of „Accidental poisoning and impact of narcotics and psychodisleptics (hallucinogenics) un-classified elsewhere” (X42) – 26 cases or half of all dead (see figure 6-2). Of them, men are 24. The second place is occupied by two causes with an equal number of cases – „Premeditated self-poisoning and impact of narcotics and psychodisleptics (hallucinogenic) un-classified elsewhere” (X62) and „Poisoning and impact of narcotics and psychodisleptics (hallucinogenic) un-classified elsewhere, with indefinite intentions” (Y12). 8 persons died of each of these two causes, the men again being the prevailing part – 14 of the 16 dead persons.

²⁸ Median (median value) is the value of the quantity which is situated in the middle of the ranged line of values.

Figure 6-2



Source: National Statistics Institute

The cause of death of five of all the dead as a result of use of narcotics is defined as „Accidental poisoning and impact of anticonvulsive, sedative, soporific, antiparkinson and psychotropic substances un-classified elsewhere” (X41). Of them, men are 4 and one is a woman. Premeditated self-poisoning and impact of anticonvulsive, sedative, soporific, antiparkinson and psychotropic substances un-classified elsewhere (X61) is the cause for the death of 4 persons in 2007. This is the only cause in which the number of dead women – 3 – is prevailing.

The analysis of the information in a regional aspect shows that there are cases of death related to the use of narcotics in half of the regions of the country (14). The deadliest persons of such causes are in Plovdiv – 14 cases out of all 52 or 26.9%. Sofia (capital) has the second place among the regions with 13 cases (25.0%). Varna comes next with 7 cases of death related to the use of narcotics (13.5%). Two-thirds of the cases of death related to the use of narcotics are concentrated in these three large regions (65.4%). The rest of the regions in which there are cases are Pleven– 4, Pazardzhik – 3, Gabrovo – 2, Stara Zagora – 2, Blagoevgrad, Burgas, Veliko Tarnovo, Vratsa, Kardzhali, Kyustendil and Yambol – 1 each.

Data from Alternative Sources

At the request of the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions the Center of Forensic Medicine and Deontology – Sofia has implemented a Project on Assessment of the Number and Profile of Drug-Related Deaths in Sofia and Sofia-District.

In 2006 the total number of the autopsies performed in the CFMD at “Alaxandrovska” UMBAL on cases originating from Sofia and Sofia District comes to 1116. The collected data and results contain information on sex, age, preliminary indications about drug addiction, reason for death, type of death and data of the chemical analysis from the biological material testing aiming at establishing the presence of drugs and intoxicating substances, as well as alcohol, in the body.

The total number of the autopsies performed in the Center on death cases on the territory of Sofia – City and Sofia - District, which proved the presence of drugs and intoxicating substances in the body come to **48**²⁹ in 2006. In comparison we should remind that according to the official statistics in line with the accepted national definition (including codes F11-F12, F14-F16, F19, X41,

²⁹ Project on Assessment of the Number and Profile of Drug-Related Deaths in Sofia and Sofia-District, Center of Forensic Medicine and Deontology – Sofia, at the request of the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions, financed through the National Anti-Drug Strategy (2003-2008), September-December 2007.

X42, X61, X62, Y11 and Y12 as per ICD-10) in 2006 **29** people ³⁰ in Bulgaria died because of reasons related to drug taking. The difference between these two values is not insignificant and has appeared in spite of the professionalism, serious approach and high qualification of both institutions, which have presented this information. To a high extent its presence is due to details, the general discussion, analyzing and practical solution of which appears to be urgent, so that it will be possible to reach, if not one common, unique and concrete value, but at least a combination of sources, which may be used according to a specific methodology and thus they may result in producing more reliable and authoritative assessment.

The more detailed examination of the results of the assessment made by the Center of Forensic Medicine and Deontology with respect to the number and profile of the drug-related deaths in Sofia and Sofia – District show that the share of male deaths in 2006 on the territory of Sofia – City and Sofia – District with proven presence of drugs and intoxicating substances in the body is considerably higher than that of the female deaths – respectively 83.3 % and 16.7 % (see *Table 6-1*).

Table 6-1

DRUG RELATED DEATHS IN SOFIA AND SOFIA – DISTRICT, DISTRIBUTED BY SEX

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	40	83,3
Female	8	16,7
Total	48	100,0

Source: Project on Assessment of the Number and Profile of Drug-Related Deaths in Sofia and Sofia-District, Center of Forensic Medicine and Deontology – Sofia

The most common reason for death is intoxication – it is registered at 78.3 % of them (see *Table 6-2*). There are single cases of acute hemorrhage, infectious pneumonia, falling from a height, road accidents, mechanical asphyxia, gunshot wounds or frostbite, registered as the reason for death with the said cases.

Table 6-2

DRUG RELATED DEATHS IN SOFIA AND SOFIA – DISTRICT, DISTRIBUTED BY REASON FOR DEATH

Reason for death	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Intoxication	36	78,3
Acute hemorrhage	2	4,3
Pneumonia	2	4,3
Falling from a height	2	4,3
Road accident	1	2,2
Mechanical asphyxia	1	2,2
Gunshot wound	1	2,2
Frostbite	1	2,2
Total	46	100,0

Source: Project on Assessment of the Number and Profile of Drug-Related Deaths in Sofia and Sofia-District, Center of Forensic Medicine and Deontology – Sofia

Among the registered death cases related to drug taking in the city of Sofia and Sofia - District the largest share belongs to heroin addicts (42.9%), followed by unknown drug addicts (26.5%) and those who have not been identified as addicts (24.5%). Only one death case of a patient being

³⁰ Source: National Statistical Institute; see Chapter „Health correlations and consequences” in the Annual Report on the State of Drug Related Problems in Bulgaria - 2007

under the treatment of substitution program was registered for 2006 on the territory of the city and district of Sofia during this project (see *Table 6-3*).

Table 6-3

DRUG RELATED DEATHS IN SOFIA AND SOFIA – DISTRICT IN 2006, DISTRIBUTED BY ANAMNESIS

Anamnesis	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not drug addicts	12	24,5
Heroin addicts	21	42,9
Drug addict	13	26,5
Under the treatment of substitution program	1	2,0
Alcohol addict	1	2,0
Suffering from depression	1	2,0
Total	48	100,0

Source: Project on Assessment of the Number and Profile of Drug-Related Deaths in Sofia and Sofia-District, Center of Forensic Medicine and Deontology – Sofia

More than 80% of the death cases result from accidents (see *Table 6-4*).

Table 6-4

DRUG RELATED DEATHS IN SOFIA AND SOFIA – DISTRICT, DISTRIBUTED BY TYPE OF DEATH

Type of death	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Accident	38	80,9
Disease	2	4,3
Suicide	7	14,9
Total	47	100,0

Source: Project on Assessment of the Number and Profile of Drug-Related Deaths in Sofia and Sofia-District, Center of Forensic Medicine and Deontology – Sofia

With respect to the age limit the biggest share of death cases belongs to the age group of 26 to 30 (see *Table 6-5*). More than a half of the death cases are with people at the age of 23 to 30, and it can be definitely stated that the death rate is clearly expressed after the age of 22.

Table 6-5

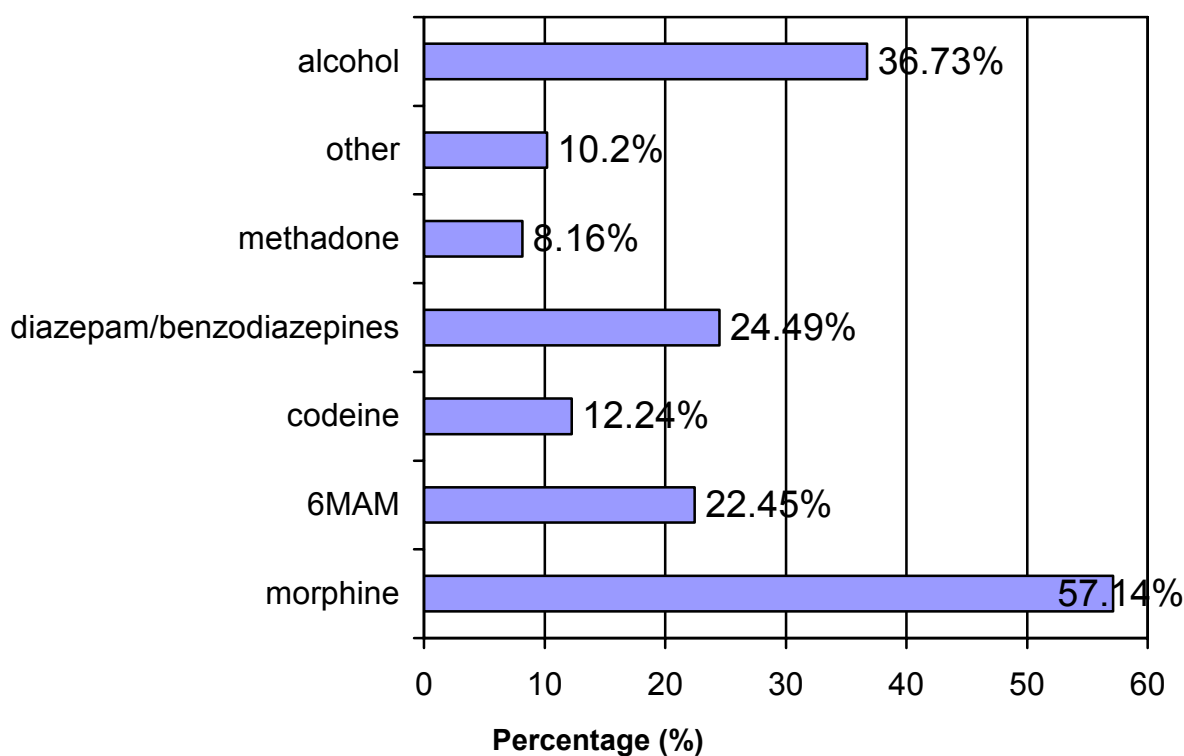
DRUG RELATED DEATHS IN SOFIA AND SOFIA – DISTRICT, DISTRIBUTED BY AGE

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Up to 19	1	2,1
From 19 to 22	4	8,3
From 23 to 25	12	25,0
From 26 to 30	15	31,3
From 31 to 40	8	16,7
Over 40	8	16,7
Total	48	100,0

Source: Project on Assessment of the Number and Profile of Drug-Related Deaths in Sofia and Sofia-District, Center of Forensic Medicine and Deontology – Sofia

The results of the chemical analysis from the biological material testing aiming at establishing the presence of drugs and intoxicating substances, as well as alcohol, in the body show that with the biggest share of death cases there is presence of morphine in the body (57.14 %), followed by the presence of alcohol (36.73 %) and diazepam/benzodiazepines (24.49 %) (See *Figure 6-3*). The smallest is the share of death cases with the presence of methadone in the organism.

DEATH CASES IN 2006 IN THE CITY OF SOFIA AND SOFIA – DISTRICT WITH ESTABLISHED PRESENCE OF DRUGS AND INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES, METHADONE, ALCOHOL AND ETC. IN THE ORGANISM.



Source: Project on Assessment of the Number and Profile of Drug-Related Deaths in Sofia and Sofia-District, Center of Forensic Medicine and Deontology – Sofia

The chemical analysis established that the highest quantity of morphine in the biological material was found in the urine of the deceased, then in the blood and the stomach. The highest doses of the 6MAM substance were found in the blood of the deceased. Diazepam and benzodiazepines were found mostly in the stomach of the deceased, but also in the urine and the liver. Methadone was found to a certain extent in the urine and partially in the stomach of the deceased.

The biggest part of the intoxication related deaths are drug addicts and especially such that are addicted to heroine. The main reasons for death with the heroin addicts also include acute hemorrhage and infectious pneumonia. With the drug addicts, including heroine addicts, the death results mainly from accident. Only about 10 % of the heroin addicts die because of disease or committing suicide.

Infectious diseases related to drug taking

HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted diseases and tuberculosis

The data presented for 2007 for the country come from the Report of the National Committee on AIDS and STD Prevention at the Ministry of Health. The data about the city of Sofia come from the Laboratory specialized for work with drug addicts at the National Center for Addictions and the Ministry of Health. Data refers to patients of the NCA and customers of programs, working on the territories of the city of Sofia.

Brief updated information on the spread of HIV/AIDS in Bulgaria for the period 1986 to 2007

As of 31.12.2007 in Bulgaria 815 HIV-positive persons are registered officially by the Ministry of Health.

The number of the newly registered HIV-positive persons in 2007 is 126, 105 of which are male and 21 female. The data analysis shows that 83 % of the newly found are male, 17% - female. Compared to the data of 2006 (67% male and 33% female) there is a trend to considerable increasing of the number of HIV-positive males. 70 % of the newly found HIV-positive persons come from Sofia (40 patients) and the region of Plovdiv (44 patients).

During the monitored period the registered HIV-positive patients belong to a wide age range – from the age of 16 to 76. The average age with males is 37 and with females is 35. All age groups are involved, and a critical decrease of the lower limit has been noticed to the age of 16. 9 % of the newly registered belong to the age range of 15-19 and 38 % - the age range of 25-29.

The trend among the people involved by means of infection is the same as that of 2005 and 2006 and **two extremely vulnerable groups clearly stand out**: 33% of the newly registered patients are people, taking drugs intravenously, and 18% of all newly found HIV-positive patients are men, who have declared to have sexual contacts with men. The alarming trend of establishing new HIV-positive intravenous drug addicts has been preserved. From 1986 to December 31st 2007 their total number comes to 109 people.

Data of the tests among the drug addicts in Sofia

In the Laboratory at the National Center for Addictions the addicts have been tested for the following markers:

- Antibodies against HIV ½ - for diagnostics of HIV infection;
- Antibodies against HCV - for diagnostics of viral hepatitis C;
- HBsAg - for diagnostics of viral hepatitis B;
- TPHA - for diagnostics of syphilis.

In 2007 testing was initiated concerning finding the cases positive to antibodies against HCV for PCR and genotype determination. Diagnostics of tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases is not conducted because of the lack of available tests.

Tests and positive results for 2007

Table 6-6 presents the total number of the tests conducted in the city of Sofia in 2007 and the results obtained in the Laboratory at the NCA.

Table 6-6

SEROLOGICAL TESTS OF PEOPLE INJECTING DRUGS INTRAVENOUSLY – 2007

TYPE OF TEST	NUMBER OF TESTS	POSITIVE RESULT
Antibodies against HIV	676	10 1.48%
Antibodies against HCV	648	370 57.10%
HbsAg	656	37 5.64%
Syphilis	626	38 6.07%

Source: The Laboratory at the National Center for Addictions

The intravenous addicts who were tested in the Laboratory at the NCA are patients of the State Psychiatric Hospital for Treatment of Drug Addictions (SPHTDA) and customers of programs for indoor treatment with drug addicts – CARITAS and “Initiative for Health”.

1. ANTI HIV 1/2

Of the total **676** intravenous drug addicts who were tested:

- **497** patients of the Laboratory at the NCA, **5** of them are **HIV** positive;

- **79** customers of the program of “CARITAS “ **3** of them are **HIV** positive;
- **92** customers of the program of “Initiative for Health” **2** of them are **HIV** positive.

Out of 10 proven carriers of the HIV virus who inject drugs 8 have been registered for the first time: 2 of them have been tested with relation to their treatment at SPHTDA, but they have not announced a case, confirmed by the National AIDS Laboratory at the NCIPD. During the year totally 13 samples have shown primary reactivity, and 3 of them turned out to be negative.

The ratio male : female among the HIV positive patients is 80 % to 20 %. There is a considerable predomination of the HIV positive male patients.

- With the examined people at the age up to 25 the infection rate is 0.90 %;
- With the examined people at the age of 25 to 34 the infection rate is 1.83 %;
- With the examined people at the age of over 34 the infection rate is 1.39 %.

6 of the HIV virus carriers, found in the Laboratory at the NCA, are also carriers of the hepatitis C virus, and three – carriers of HIV, hepatitis C and syphilis.

2. HBsAg

Total number of tested patients **656**, **37** of them are positive - **5.64 %**

- **485** patients of the NCA - **29** positive **5.98 %**
- **79** customers of CARITAS **7** positive - **8.86 %**
- **92** customers of “Initiative for Health” **1** positive **1.07%**

We can indicate that the trend of **low spread of Hepatitis B virus infection** has been preserved, and with respect to the intravenous drug addicts it is within the average percentage for the country.

3. ANTI HCV

Total number of tested patients 648, **370** of them are positive or it equals to **57.10 %** :

- **477** of NCA, positive **290 – 60.80 %**
- **72** customers of CARITAS - **36** positive **50 %**
- **92** customers of “Initiative for Health” – **44** positive **47.82 %**

Table 6-7

RATE OF INFECTED WITH HEPATITIS C VIRUS OVER THE PERIOD 1995-2006

YEAR	NUMBER OF TESTS	POSITIVE	RATE (GIVEN AS %)
1995	109	53	49
1996	143	87	61
1997	308	170	55
1998	406	245	60
1999	242	175	72
2000	744	524	70
2001	435	254	58
2002	670	412	61
2003	1148	677	59
2004	1257	710	57
2005	815	385	47
2006	487	249	51*
2007	648	370	57

*These data are only for IDUs

Source : **Laboratory at the National Center for Addictions**

When analyzing these data the trend is delineated of **stabilizing the number of the Hepatitis C Virus carriers**.

- Among the tested persons of up to 25 years of age the rate of the infection is 68.40 %
- Among the tested persons aged from 25 to 34 years the rate of the infection is 46.05 %
- Among the tested persons above 34 years of age the rate of the infection is 92.16 %

4. Syphilis

The total number of the persons tested is 626; of them positive are 38 – 6.07 %. A certain decrease in the number of the injecting drug users ill with syphilis is observed, because in the preceding years the rate of the IDUs ill with syphilis was around 10 % of the persons tested.

Of all the injecting drug users tested three individuals are with a concomitant infection of HIV and Hepatitis C and Syphilis, 25 are ill with Hepatitis B and C; 20 are with Hepatitis C and Syphilis and one individual is ill with Hepatitis B and Syphilis. From the data it can be seen that **the number of the co-infected with two and more infections continues to grow among the ID users.**

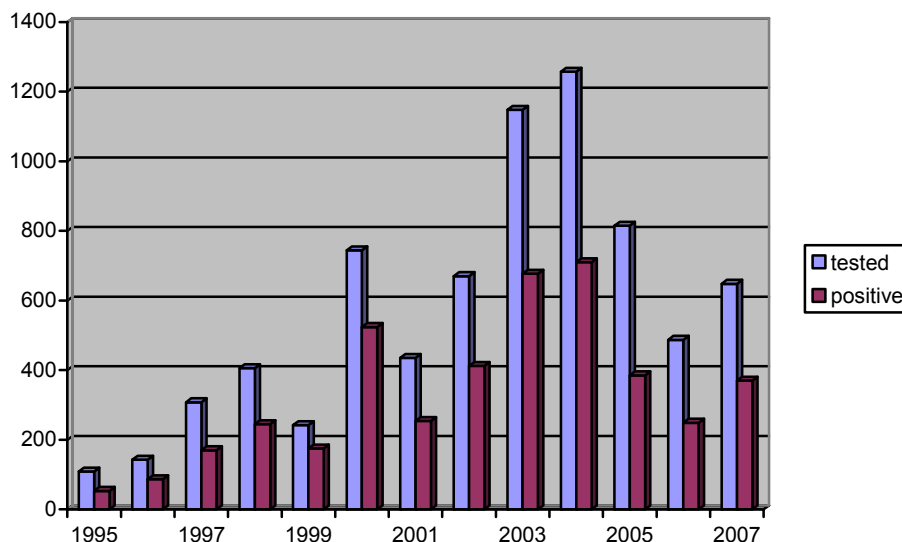
In 2007 7 infants and children aged up to 3 years of mothers from the methadone program carriers of Hepatitis C virus were tested for Hepatitis C infection and the results were negative. With these children the total number of the infants of mothers from the methadone program tested over the last 5 years is 21, and all the results are negative.

From the analysis of the results the following should be noted:

1. **The rate of the HIV infection continues to be low**, compared to the rate of the prevalence in the other countries from the region, but over the last three years **there is a tendency of increasing this rate among the number of the injecting drug users.**
2. **The rate of Hepatitis B infection remains around 5% (5.64%)**, which has been constant for 10 years now and it is comparable to the general Hepatitis B morbidity for the country.
3. It can be noted that **there is a tendency for the rate of the infected persons to remain the same**, which may be due to the better work of the programs for exchange of needles and syringes The rate of the individuals infected with **Hepatitis C virus** for all the IDUs tested at the NCA is 57.10 %..
4. From the data it can be seen that **the number of the individuals co-infected with two and more infections among the injecting drug users is growing.**

Figure 6-4

RATE OF PERSONS INFECTED WITH HEPATITIS C VIRUS OVER THE PERIOD 1995-2007 r.



Source: Laboratory at the National Center for Addictions

Psychiatric and somatic co-morbidity ³¹

On the data from the monitoring done by the National Center for Addictions for the activity of the programs for **methadone substitution and maintenance treatment in Bulgaria in 2007 the total number of the patients participating in them with double diagnosis was 143** ³², which makes 12 % of the population of patients treated under those programs (see *Table 6-8*). The most common psychic disease among the patients from the methadone programs is the depressive affective disorder. Paranoid schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder, panic disorder slight to moderate mental retardation, syndrome of alcohol addiction, diabetes mellitus, endocarditis, thrombophlebitis, polineuropathia and epilepsy have also been diagnosed ³³.

Table 6-8

NUMBER OF PATIENTS WITH DOUBLE DIAGNOSIS FOR 2007 IN THE PROGRAMS REVIEWED

№	Name of the program	Total number of patients in 2007	Number of patients with double diagnosis
1	2	3	4
1.	“Horizont - ” Outpatient Department for Individual Specialized Healthcare /ODISHC/” Ltd., Medical Center Sofia	230	46 ³⁴
2.	Regional Dispensary for Psychiatric Diseases with a Clinic – Plovdiv	147	3
3.	State Psychiatric Hospital for Treatment of Addictions and Alcoholism- Sofia	300	25
4.	ET „Outpatient Department for Individual Primary Specialized Psychiatric Healthcare /ODIPSPHC/– Dr. Al. Kanchelov”- Sofia	206	38
5.	“Perspectivi – ODISCH” Ltd., Sofia	93	1
6.	“Trust for Health” Sole Trader ODISCH ET –Sofia	212	30
7.	TOTAL	1188	147

Source: *Annual reports for the methadone substitution and maintenance programs for 2007 Individual reports for the monitoring done in May-June 2007 of the activity of the seven methadone substitution and maintenance treatment in Bulgaria*

The total number of the drug addicted persons with co-morbidity diagnosed who are participating in the rehabilitation programs is 6 ³⁵, and the total number of patients registered in the programs in 2007 was 198, which makes 3.03 % of the total population of addicted persons who have participated in the rehabilitation programs. Here are included persons with more severe disorders of the personality. Two of the clients of the programs are with antisocial disorder of the personality, and one is with emotionally unstable personality, borderline type. One has been diagnosed with panic attacks and two persons have been diagnosed with psychotic episodes as a result of continuous use of amphetamines prior to the inclusion in the rehabilitation program. ³⁶

³¹ Because of the fact that according to the existing practice in Bulgaria of treatment in relation to drug abuse the information about the somatic and the psychiatric co-morbidity is not given separately, here the data about both the indices will be given together.

³² The data have been generalized from 6 methadone programs, and the number of the functioning methadone programs in 2007 was 7, and they refer to the first half of 2007. All the patients with somatic and psychiatric co-morbidity are included in them.

³³ On the data from the annual reports for the methadone programs for 2007.

³⁴ The absolute value has been calculated on the basis of 20 % of the total number of patients in the program.

³⁵ On the data of the annual reports for two of the rehabilitation programs. The lack of extensive data is due to the fact that as a whole the rehabilitation programs do not work with patients with co-morbidities.

³⁶ For 2 of the participants in the rehabilitation program no type of double diagnosis has been indicated.

On the data of the annual report of the Prevention and Information Center on the problems of addictions in 2007 **137 examinations and consultations of addicted patients with co-morbidities were done.** The total number of **the new patients with two diagnoses is 14**, of whom 12 men and 2 women. **The number of drug-addicted patients with co-morbidities is 8**, 5 of whom are with schizophrenic psychosis, 1 with depressive disorder and 2 with disorder of the personality. **The alcohol – addicted persons with co-morbidity paranoid psychosis, depressive disorder, disorder of the personality and epilepsy number 5. 1 patient addicted to gambling and with co-morbidity epilepsy has demanded the services of the center.** For 2006 the data are as follows: 159 examinations and consultations of patients with co-morbidities were done, and the number of the newly registered at the center patients with co-morbidities was 12, of whom 8 men and 4 women.

The data from the Toxicology Ward of the “Pirogov” Multi-Profile Hospital for Active Treatment and Emergency Medicine /MHATEM/ indicate that 10 of the patients with heroine addiction who have been admitted to the hospital for treatment at the end of 2007 and at the beginning of 2008 were with **concomitant diagnosis schizo-affective or bipolar affective disorder.** In the rest of the patients disorders of the personality, depression and agitation were observed.

Other inter-relations and aftermaths, related to drug use

Non-fatal emergencies

In the last trimester of 2007 and the first trimester of 2008 at the Toxicology Ward of the “Pirogov” MHATEM – Sofia a total of **82 drug–addicted patients were admitted who have demanded treatment because of acute poisoning** (see Table 6-9). 54 of them were men and 28 - women. The relative share of these patients compared to the total number of the patients registered at the Toxicology Surgery for this period amounts to 2.9 %. The rate of the heroin-addicted patients who have been admitted to hospital was 58 % of the total number of the admitted patients with drug addiction. There is a tendency of equalizing the number of marijuana and amphetamines abusing patients among those admitted to the Toxicology Ward of the hospital. The number of the addicted individuals is the greatest in the age group 26-35 years – 51.2 % and in the group aged 19-25 years it is 28 %.

Table 6-9

DYNAMICS OF THE DRUG-ADDICTED PATIENTS WHO HAVE BEEN ADMITTED TO THE TOXICOLOGY CLINIC OF THE “PIROGOV” MHATEM

	IV trimester of 2007	I trimester of 2008
Total number of patients treated	49	33
Treated at the reception ward	41	20
Treated at the reception ward and hospitalized	8	13

Source: “N.I.Pirogov” MHATEM JSC Clinic of Toxicology

On the summarized data from the annual reports of the Regional Councils for Drugs (RCD) and of the Prevention and Information Centers (PIC) in the district towns in the country for 2007 **the total number of the non-fatal drug - related emergencies was 251**³⁷. 34 of them are cases of an overdose of opiates use and 168 are cases of another type narcotic substance use. In comparison to 2006 there is a tendency observed of increasing the number of youths above the

³⁷ The data are from 4 regional centers in the country – Sliven, Bourgas, Silistra and Blagoevgrad. The information has been gathered by specialized health centers for treatment, from emergency health establishments and from centers for Emergency Aid

age of 19 with acute intoxication as a result of the use of different psychoactive substances (including alcohol).

The analysis of the information from the abovementioned reports for 2006 showed a total of **258 non-fatal emergencies as a result of drug use over the year in the different towns in Bulgaria**.³⁸ 75 of these cases are cases of an overdose of opiates use and 37 are cases of an overdose of other narcotic substances use. The number of the cases of abstinence syndrome manifested related to drug use is 87.

Unlike in 2006, 2005 was characterized by a smaller number of the **emergencies which resulted from an overdose of opiates– 32**. The cases of **an overdose of other narcotic substances numbered 43**³⁹ (see Table 6-10).

Table 6-10

TOTAL NUMBER OF THE NON-FATAL EMERGENCIES AS A RESULT OF DRUG USE IN 2005, 2006 AND 2007

	2005	2006	2007
Overdose of opiates	32	75	34
Overdose of other narcotic substances	43	37	168
Acute reaction to opiates	89	8	-
Acute reaction to other narcotic substances	18	6	-
Abstinence syndrome from drug use	49	87	-
Other emergencies related to drug use	23	-	32
Total number of the emergencies because of drug use and not distributed according to paragraphs	-	45	16
Total number of the emergencies because of drug use	254	258	251

Source: Annual reports of the RCD and the PIC in the regional towns in the country

On the data of a research done by the National Focal Point with the Centers for Emergency Aid in the country⁴⁰, the number of the non-fatal emergencies for 2007, **related to heroine use was 664**, which is 80.5 % of all the non-fatal emergencies, included in the research. **101 are the cases caused by the use of other opiates** (morphin, codein, lydol) or 12.2 %. **13 persons** have demanded emergency aid because of **cocaine use** or 1.6 % of all the non-fatal emergencies. **47 are the cases registered at the emergency centers as a result of the use of other stimulants** (amphetamines, metamphetamines) or 5.7 %. **The greatest is the number of those admitted as a result an attempt to cope with abstinence - 416 for 2007 or 49.9 %**. **353 are the cases of an overdose**, which makes 42.3 % of all the reasons for contact. **274 are the cases of heroine**

³⁸ The data are from 7 regional centers- Dobrich, Veliko Turnovo, Pernik, Gabrovo, Silistra, Vidin, Pleven. The information has been gathered by specialized health centers for treatment, from emergency health establishments and from centers for Emergency Aid

³⁹ The data are from 5 regional centers in the country- Gabrovo, Kurdzali, Vidin, Varna, Pazardzik. The information has been gathered by specialized health centers for treatment, from emergency health establishments and from centers for Emergency Aid

⁴⁰ The data are from the Emergency Centers from 13 towns in the country- Blagoevgra, Bourgass, Varna, Vidin, Vratsa, Gabrovo, Montana, Pazardzik, Plovdiv, Rouse, Sofia, Stara Zagora, Turgovishte

overdose and 50 – of an overdose of other opiates. The non-fatal emergencies from **cocaine overdose are 6.** The number of the patients who have demanded aid at the emergency centers because of **overdose of other stimulants is 20.**

Pregnancy and infants born to drug users

On the data from the monitoring done by the National Center for Addictions of the methadone treatment programs in Bulgaria over the period May-June 2007 **the total number of the successful deliveries in them was 26** ⁴¹.

⁴¹ The data are for 2006 and for the first half of 2007

7. Responses to Health Correlates and Consequences

Within the frames of this section the following main topics will be reviewed:

- Prevention of drug-related deaths;
- Prevention and treatment of drug-related infectious diseases;
- Interventions related to psychiatric co-morbidity;
- Interventions related to other health correlates and aftermaths.

Prevention of drug-related deaths

Prevention of an overdose

Despite the on-going studies of drug-related deaths even in 2007, sufficiently accurate and reliable information about the deaths caused by an overdose or because of drug use is still not available. A large number of deaths among the drug users remain unregistered. Exitus lethalis of deceased under circumstances which are not clarified is often caused by an over dose, or is related to drug use, but still there is no forensic practice for these deceased to be obligatorily subjected to additional tests.

Regarding the over dose the etiology might be different:

- Injecting drugs- the risk is enhanced when the user is alone;
- The use of opiates, the use of heroin in combination with substances suppressing the nervous system;
- Loss of tolerability (after the period of abstinence and of reducing the use)

Prevention of deaths has been provided for in the Action Plan of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs 2003 – 2008. The main activities for the task 56 of the plan are:

1/ Presenting information and training of the I.V. drug users for safe injecting and for practices of drug use, reducing the risk of an over dose, and

2/ Education and training of the I.V drug users who are not treated how to provide first aid in cases of emergency.

The specific activities in this respect are the priority of the so called “pre-treatment programs” mainly implemented by NGOs.

The use of antagonists as a specific measure to prevent the effects of an over dose is practiced by the specialists from the Emergency Medical Centers. In Bulgaria the patent medicine Naloxone is used. The medicine is also known under its trade names Narcan, Nalonty, Nalon or Narcanty and in some of the countries it is used by the problem drug users themselves. In our country the rooms for use are also prohibited by law, as is the practice in some European countries.

As a whole in our country alongside with the changing statistical data about the drug related deaths in the last year, the scope of the prophylactic activities in this respect has also expanded in the form of consultations, training, distribution of condoms, which is done mainly by the NGOs.

The “Initiative for Health” Foundation is one of those working in the outreach programs. Its collaborators work after the method of outreach. In 2007 6 new terrains for work were developed in Sofia- in Nadezda residential district, in the Ovcho Pole St., Sredna Gora St., Todor Alexandrov Blvd., Opolchenska St., and Sofronii Vrachanski St. What is characteristic of the work done at the foundation are the methods of reaching the target groups by the “gatekeepers” and by the “Peer” hiring of collaborators from the target communities who play the role of “mentors”. The drop-in centers of the “Initiative for Health” are already two. There exchange of syringes is done and dissemination of information materials, consultations for safe injecting are done and also free examinations and treatment.

A mobile surgery which besides for doing tests is also used for outreach work, functions as a part of the foundation.⁴²

The “Dose of Love” Association – Bourgas expanded its activity in 2007. In March 2007 the Association opened the door to the first in the country Consultative Center for persons-drug users. The organization is still the only one of its kind working with active drug users and with actively prostituting men and women. The outreach practice as a method of working with target groups is still working. In 2007 973 different clients were encompassed by the practice at 55 terrains. The exchange of needles and syringes as well as the distribution of informational materials may be pointed as specific activity. 22,933 syringes and 45,866 needles were distributed. The activities of the mobile surgery continued over the last year as well. 1,055 individual and 460 group consultations were held. The activity of the drop-in center, which is the only one of its kind in the town is going on. The method of reaching the target groups via the “gate-keepers” and „Peer” is still functioning. Over the year 10 “gate-keepers” were trained, and three of them work actively. A lot of informational brochures have been distributed.⁴³

The “Panacea” Foundation has continued its activities in implementing the outreach program: providing training for safe injecting practices, distribution of materials for safe injecting - 76,590 syringes and 153,180 needles have been exchanged, psycho-social work among the addicts who number 835, referral for consultations and treatment to the specialized surgeries- 399 clients have been referred. Contacts have been made with 320 drug users who are newly enrolled in the program. More than 1,500 health educational materials have been distributed- brochures, including brochures on the topic “over dose”. The Foundation has at its disposal a mobile surgery as well. Over the year 5 terrains and a low-threshold center in the “Stolipinovo” quarter have been serviced.⁴⁴

“The Public Charity Foundation” in Blagoevgrad has also continued its activity of a daily exchange of syringes and needles and its work among the addicted persons for enhancing their awareness of the risk they run, for giving up or reducing their risky behaviour, and for supporting the positive changes in their behaviour.⁴⁵

The Varna Foundation “For Better Psychic Health” for its outreach work has made 3,416 contacts. There is a drop-in center at the Foundation as well, and for its premises a suitable site has been used. The relative part of the contacts made there makes 78.7% in comparison to the total number of the contacts. Number of 60,971 syringes and 121,942 needles have been supplied. 645 individual and 380 group consultations have been held and more specifically for safe practices of injecting - 658.⁴⁶

In spite of the difficulties that it faced in Pernik **the „P.U.L.S.” Foundation** continues its work after the outreach method and for the previous year it has made 1,255 direct and 277 referential contacts with drug addicts. 7,359 syringes, 10,459 needles and 7,589 condoms have been distributed and a lot of health informational materials.⁴⁷

The Bulgarian Red Cross- Rousse has also worked after the method of outreach at 9 key points in 2007. 1,048 contacts have been made and exchange of needles and syringes has been done- 12,156 needles and 10,025 syringes. A lot of materials have been distributed about the health risk run. On this topic work has been done by the outreach workers in the form of discussions with the drug addicts.⁴⁸

The Bulgarian Red Cross - Kyustendil has made a total of 2,291 personal contacts during its outreach work, as well as 1,791 referential contacts. 42,082 sets for safe injecting have been supplied, 113,036 needles, 42,082 syringes, 24,145 alcohol handkerchiefs, 117 troxevasin gel

⁴² Find more about the activity of the foundation on its address: <http://www.initiativeforhealth.org/>

⁴³ Find more on the activity of the association on its address : <http://www.doseoflove.hit.bg>

⁴⁴ Source : Annual report of the Panacea Foundation for 2007

⁴⁵ Source: Informational reference on the activity of the Public Charity Foundation – Blagoevgrad for 2007

⁴⁶ Source: Annual report of the “For a Better Psychic Health” Foundation for 2007

⁴⁷ Source: Annual report of the „П.У.Л.С.”Foundation

⁴⁸Source:Report of the Bulgarian Red Cross – Rousse for 2007

tubes, 4,6911-caps. 10,341 condoms and more than 500 information brochures on health have been distributed.⁴⁹

The main purpose of the **CARITAS CENTER** is to motivate the drug addicts to change their behaviour. In 2007 the organization continued its work on the “Mobile surgery work with individuals dependent on psycho-active substances (PAS)” project. 3,791 visits to the mobile surgery in Sofia were made, and 2,908 visits were made to the surgery in Bourgas. Within the frames of this project consultations were also planned and done on the health problems not only of clients, but also of their relatives. Primary healthcare has been provided to them.⁵⁰

At some of the prevention and information centers (PIC) in the country training on death prevention is also done in the form of consultations and dissemination of health and information materials.

The municipal PIC issues the “Together” bulletin in which 5 articles were published in 2007 on the topic of prevention. The specialists from the PIC have held 838 consultations with clients and their relatives.⁵¹

Alongside with the prevention activity of the **PIC in Gabrovo** it also offers services aimed at diagnosing and consulting the drug users and their families. And since on the territory of the municipality there are no specialized sites for the treatment and rehabilitation of addictions, those in need of help and information more and more often ask for this municipal structure in order to receive support and cooperation.⁵²

For the consultative and therapeutic activity of the **PIC in Rousse** 3 teams of specialists are included (psychiatrists and psychologists) from the Regional Dispensary of Psychiatric Diseases with a Clinic in Rousse Ltd. For the year 2007 professional aid and consultations have been demanded by 259 persons with opiate dependence.⁵³

The activities of an over dose prevention are funded by the National Strategy to Combat Drugs 2003 – 2008, by the Program of the Ministry of Health and by the Global Fund to Combat HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Prevention and treatment of infectious diseases related to drug use

Prevention

The prevention of the infectious diseases related to drug use is an integral part of both the basic documents adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria- the National Program of Prophylaxis and Control of AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases 2001-2007 and the National Strategy to Combat Drugs and Drug Addictions (2003 – 2008). The National Strategy to Combat Addictions 2009 – 2013 is to be adopted by the end of 2008. The National Strategy on the Prophylaxis of AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases started and so did the program of “Improving the Control of Tuberculosis in Bulgaria”, funded by the Global Fund to Combat AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

In the Action Plan under the National Strategy the Activities to prevent the drug related infectious diseases are signed as strategic task № 5: “Reduction of the prevalence of diseases among drug users which affect the society: blood borne infections (HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B and C, etc.), tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, etc.”

As tasks are marked:

- Training of the team for outreach work with the drug addicts;

⁴⁹ Source: Annual report on the project: “Mobile surgery for work with persons dependent on PAS”

⁵⁰ Source: Report of the regional council of the Bulgarian Red Cross in Kyustendil on the course of the implementation and on the results achieved after component 4 of the program „prevention and control of HIV/AIDS” for 2006 .

⁵¹ Source: Annual report of SPIC

⁵² Source: Annual report of PIC - Gabrovo

⁵³ Source: Annual report of PIC - Rousse

- Development and implementation of programs for outreach work, exchange of needles and syringes, distribution of condoms, holding consultations;
- Identifying the problems and preparing programs to reduce the risk of especially hard-to-access and high-risk groups;
- Program for early tests (Including outreach), pre- and post-test consultations and referring for specialized treatment.

All the organizations, working outreach, submit their projects to the medical council of the National Focal Point (NFP) (in accordance with Regulation № 30 dated 20.12.2000 of the Minister of Health).

In 2007 9 not-for-profit organizations developed activity on the prevention of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B and C among the injecting drug users and they have obtained a favourable opinion from the NFP for implementing these activities, namely the Programs for outreach work, exchange of needles and syringes and for doing tests for blood born and sexually transmitted diseases. These programs are implemented by NGOs within the frames of Component 4 “Keeping a low level of the prevalence of HIV among the I.V. drug addicts” of the “Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis” Program of the Ministry of Health, funded by the Global Fund, as follows:

- “Initiative for Health” Foundation - Sofia
- “Panacea” Foundation - Plovdiv
- “Dose of Love” Foundation – Bourgas
- The Bulgarian Red Cross - Kyustehdil
- The Bulgarian Red Cross - Rousse
- “For Better Psychic Health” Foundation - Varna
- “P.U.L.S.” Foundation - Pernik
- “Adaptation” Foundation– Blagoevgrad
- “Health and Social Development” Foundation– Sofia

Within the frame of the programs exchange of needles and syringes is done, of condoms and lubricants, and the IDUs are given information materials and referred and motivated for treatment.

In the country there are 5 low-threshold centers for IDUs.

The mobile surgeries are assisted by 5 NGOs after Component 4 and 2 by CARITAS in Sofia and Bourgas.

Consulting and testing

The test for HIV/AIDS in Bulgaria is free. The laboratory at the NFP is the only one established for servicing the individuals - drug users. The kits for this test are supplied by the Ministry of Health. The dependent individuals who have health insurance may be tested through the system of health insurance.

In 2007 18 surgeries for anonymous and free consulting and testing for HIV/AIDS continued their work in the big cities of the country.

Since 2000 in the Republic of Bulgaria no immunizations for hepatitis B and hepatitis A have been done in Bulgaria of the drug users. In Sofia the CARITAS NGO does free vaccinations of the IDUs, but the number of the people immunized is very small. Since 1992 free mandatory immunization for hepatitis B has been done to all the newborn children.

Treatment

All the persons who have been infected by HIV, as well as those ill with AIDS are tested and treated free at the specialized department of the Hospital of Infectious Diseases in Sofia as well as at the departments of infectious diseases for the treatment of AIDS in the town of Plovdiv and Varna. The antiretroviral treatment is provided for all the infected persons who need it. Free and immediate treatment is provided for the infected persons dependent on opiates after the program of methadone maintenance treatment at the State Psychiatric Hospital for the Treatment of Addictions and Alcoholism – Sofia and the municipal programs in Sofia, Plovdiv and Varna.

The treatment of the infected by hepatitis C dependent on opiates individuals is funded by the NHIF. According to the requirements of the NHIF the persons dependent on drugs can be included in an interferon treatment program only if they have not used drugs in the course of 6 months. The individuals who are not health insured have no access to hepatitis C treatment. The treatment of those individuals who have been approved for treatment by the NHIF is done at the departments of gastroenterology at different hospitals in Sofia but the data available to us have not been confirmed. The treatment of hepatitis B in its acute and chronic form is accessible only for the health insured dependent individuals.

The treatment of syphilis is regulated, it is done at the dispensaries of dermatology and venerology in the regional towns of Bulgaria and it is free.

Interventions related to psychiatric co-morbidity

The policy of the **methadone programs** in Bulgaria in relation to the medicinal interventions of the patients with several diagnoses is directed above all to their hospitalization at the drug department where the diagnoses are specified. Within a period of 7-14 days crisis intervention is also applied in case of exacerbation of the co-existing psychiatric disease, when there are problems in the family or problems of the couple and also on social indications. In all the substitution and maintenance programs in the country the patients with co-morbidities are under the observation of a psychiatrist and are treated according to the specific standards for the disease diagnosed.

The interventions in the **rehabilitation programs** working with patients with co-morbidities include a change of the therapeutic plan, in which the specific therapeutic difficulties of the dependent individuals are taken in consideration. These difficulties are due to the concomitant disorder. The patients are referred to a psychiatrist for concomitant medicinal treatment to be applied and depending on the specific case - for including additional psychotherapeutic consultations besides the program.

Interventions related to other health correlates and aftermaths

Co-morbidity with somatic diseases

There are no new data available on the somatic co-morbidity of the drug users.

Non-fatal emergencies

The patients admitted to the Toxicology Clinic of the “Pirogov” Multi-profile Hospital for Active Treatment and Emergency Medicine (MHATEM) – Sofia who are motivated for treatment and who are with **acute poisoning** because of drug use have the following therapeutic scheme applied to them in the course of about 10 days after the acute intoxication has subsided or has been overcome:

1. Detoxication and depuration therapeutic conduct
2. Anti-abstinence treatment which includes the following interventions:
 - Sudden withdrawal of the psychoactive substance
 - Administration of tranquilizers
 - Administration of neuroleptics with sedative and anti-abstinence effect
 - Administration of thymostabilizers
 - Administration of antidepressants
3. Hepatoprotective treatment
4. Cerebroprotective treatment
5. Treatment with vitamins
6. Symptomatic treatment– hypnotics other than benzodiazepines, non-narcotic analgetics for patients with opioid dependence
7. Rehabilitation treatment

There are no deaths registered of patients who have been admitted with an **overdose of heroin** irrespective of the severity of the clinical state (including patients with no breathing). This is due to the resuscitation and the adequate antidote treatment - bolus doses of naloxone⁵⁴.

Prevention and reduction of the road accidents related to drug use

There are no new data available on the prevention and reduction of the road accidents related to drug use.

Other activities related to the reduction of the health aftermaths

There are no new data available about other activities related to the reduction of the health aftermaths.

Interventions related to the pregnancy of drug users and to the children of drug users

The collaboration of the substitution programs for treatment with methadone in Bulgaria with the hospitals of obstetrics and gynecology regarding the pregnant patients admitted with priority because of medical indications is traditional. The interventions are related to the observation of the pregnancy, conducting the delivery and follow up of the mother and the baby in the period post partum.

⁵⁴ On the data from the Report on the patients with drug dependence who have been admitted to the Clinic of Toxicology of the "Pirogov" MHATEM for the last trimester of 2007 and the first trimester of 2008

8. Social Correlates and Consequences

Within the frames of this section the following topics will be reviewed:

- Social exclusion;
- Drug-related crime;
- Drug use in prisons.

When reviewing the topic of social exclusion in the context of the report attention was focused on the assessment of the number of homeless people, the data for the unemployed people, including those demanding treatment because of drug use, as well as on the data of the student dropouts.

The topic of drug related crime includes a review of the data from the police, the data for the activity of the Procurator's Office related to reducing the demand and supply of drugs and the data concerning antisocial deeds and crimes committed by minors and underage people.

Presenting the topic of drug use in prisons is based on the routine information received directly from the prison administration.

Social exclusion

Homeless people

Currently there is no exact statistics of the number of the homeless people in the country. The information about their number is inexact and incomplete, because of variations in the composition of this group at risk and the inadequate reliability of the sources. "The attempts those people to be gathered and institutionalized are not always successful, because they object to do this. There they are bathed and fed and the next moment they find themselves in the street again. Some of the homeless people have no IDs, which means they cannot be institutionalized anywhere. There is no such institution that could oblige them to go to the police and have their IDs. They can remain at the centers for temporary accommodation for up to three months".⁵⁵

By April 2007 the total number of the registered children working and begging in the street was 647.⁵⁶ These children get in an uncontrolled state because of their parents' irresponsibility. Life in the street often substitutes the problem family milieu and the violence at home. Most of the children in this group at risk come from families whose material status is under the social minimum. Because they are immature and unprotected all the children from this target group run the potential risk of malnutrition, labour exploitation, physical and sexual abuse, drug abuse and involvement in criminal activity.

The main problems for the children in the street are related on the one hand to the immediate risks of the street- violence, malnutrition, diseases. On the other hand there is the problem with their education and qualification - most of them do not go to school regularly and this limits their possibilities for development. They have difficulties accessing medical healthcare and are often engaged in hard physical labour.

Unemployed

⁵⁵ Albena Atanassova Deputy Mayor of the metropolitan municipality, for the Focus Agency, 2nd July 2008

⁵⁶ National Strategy for the Child 2008-2018

On the data of the Employment Agency for a seventh year in succession the trend of decreasing the number of the registered unemployed at the Labour Services continued. In 2007 their mean annual number was the lowest since 1991 and it was – 286,980 people. The reduction compared to the preceding year is by 69,074 unemployed people or 19.4 %. Over the period 2000-2007 the mean annual number of the unemployed in the country decreased 2.4 fold (by 406, 501 people).⁵⁷

Over the period 2000-2007 the mean annual rate of unemployment (unemployed per 100 economically active people) in the country decreased from 18.14 % to 7.75 %.

On the data of the Work Force Supervision Service and of the National Institute of Statistics in 2007 the mean number of the unemployed was the smallest since 1993 (the beginning of conducting this survey) – 239,100. Over the period 2001-2007 the mean annual number of the unemployed in the country decreased 2.8 fold (by 424,807 people).

Over the period 2001-2007 the mean annual coefficient of unemployment in the country decreased from 19.75 % to 6.95 %.

The dynamics of unemployment for 2007 was characterized by a growing negative average monthly rate - 3.0 %, while for the preceding year it was - 2.2 %.

The mean annual level of unemployment in 2007 was 7.75 % (See *Figure 8-1*). In comparison to the preceding year there was a drop of 1.86 points. At the end of the year the level of unemployment was by 2.76 points lower compared to the beginning of 2007 .

{RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT}

Figure 8-1



Source: Employment Agency, Statistics and Analyses, Periodic Bulletins 2007-2008

In the specific areas of the country the level of unemployment showed a drop in all the 28 regions in comparison to the preceding year. In 9 regions the level of unemployment is lower than for the rest of the country and in the remaining 19 regions the level of unemployment is higher than the average for the country.

The fact that the decrease is most obvious in the regions where the level of unemployment was the highest: Turgovishte (by 4.00 points), Vidin (by 3.72 points), Montana (by 3.61 points) and Razgrad (by 3.24points) is worth noting as especially positive.

Regarding the patients in the substitution maintenance programs in 2007 the rate of unemployment was nearly 30 %. (see *Table 8-1*)

⁵⁷ Annual Report 2007 of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy , Employment Agency.

Table 8-1

UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG THE PATIENTS IN THE SUBSTITUTION MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS (2007)			
Medicinal center	Number of patients	Of them: unemployed	%
“Therapy 2007” Medical Center (MC) - Outpatient’s Department for Individual Specialized Healthcare (ODISHC), Ltd., Varna	29	11	37.9
“Perspectives” MC- ODISHC, Ltd., Sofia	93	7	7.5
“Horizont” MC - ODISHC, Ltd., Sofia	230	51	22.2
Sole Trader (ST) “Outpatient’s Department for Individual Practice of Specialized Psychiatric Healthcare (ODIPSPHC)– Dr Angel Kanchelov”, Sofia	206	54	26.2
“Trust for Health Outpatient’s Department for Group Practice of Specialized Healthcare (ODGPSHC)” – Ltd., Sofia	212	37	17.5
Individual Practice for Specialized Psychiatric Healthcare (IPSPHC) “Dr Georgi Parchev”, Veliko Turnovo	17	10	58.8
“Outpatient’s Department for Group Practice for Specialized Healthcare (ODGPSHC) – Center of Psychic Health(CPH) – Varna” EOOD	144	38	26.4
“Regional Dispensary of Psychiatric Diseases with a Clinic (RDPDC) -Plovdiv” Ltd.	147	71	48.3
State Psychiatric Hospital for Treatment of Addictions and Alcoholism (SPHTAA) - Sofia	300	125	41.7
Total	1378	404	29.3

Source: Annual report for 2007 of the programs for substitution and maintenance treatment in effect

School dropouts

The reform being carried out in the system of education in Bulgaria is aimed at optimizing the school network, at increasing the quality of the education offered, at improving the connection between supply and demand at the labour market, and at rendering the system in conformity with the requirements for the performance of the highly qualified work force under the new economic conditions. One of the important elements of the reform of key importance for achieving the goals set is to undertake actions for solving the problem “school dropouts”.⁵⁸

In spite of applying appropriate traditional and new approaches in implementing this policy annually between 2 and 3% of the students from the system of the secondary education in Bulgaria drop out from school. This has been a lasting trend for the last few years.

On the data of the Regional Inspectorates of Education (RIE) for the school year 2004/2005 19,193 students who had been enrolled at the beginning of the year dropped out of school, out of a total of 963,051 students which is 1.99 % of the students. For the first term of the school year 2005/2006 the rate of the school dropouts was 1.23 %, including the pupils from the preparatory groups. For the specific levels of education the analysis shows that the rate of the school dropouts is the highest for the students from the last grades – 1.67 % of the dropouts are from the 9th - 13th grade. For the rest of the students from the system of education the statistics is as follows: 0.42 %

⁵⁸ Project for youths-dropouts (2005-2007)

are the pupils dropouts from the preparatory groups; 0.75 % are the dropouts from 1st - 4th grade; 1.17 % are the dropouts from 5th - 8th grade.

The students dropouts from the beginning of the school year 2006/2007 to the end of April 2007 numbered as follows: from the 1st grade- 922 pupils, from the 2nd grade – 875 pupils, from the 3rd grade – 886 pupils, from the 4th grade – 1250 pupils, from the 5th grade – 2140 students, from the 6th grade – 1377 students, from the 7th grade – 1395 students, from the 8th grade – 1423 students, from the 9th grade – 409 students, from the 10th grade – 215 students, from the 11th grade - 134 students, from the 12th grade – 97 students, from the 13th grade – 264 students, or the total number of the school dropouts was 11,410 students, which is 1.24 % of the children enrolled at school.

When analyzing the reasons for dropping out from school in the already existing literature sources and research already done it is stated that the reasons are grouped in several basic categories: economic, ethnic and cultural, social and pedagogic. The main factors, which according to the empirical data have the greatest impact on school dropping out are as follows:

1. Poor economic status of the family where the child lives.

2. Observing definite cultural stereotypes especially when the family lives in a compact group among the representatives of its own ethnos. The ethnicity exerts its influence on dropping out of school through the economic motives for dropping out of school as well as through the so called family reasons (early marriages, single-parent families, etc).

3. The school milieu and the pedagogic factors related to it: difficulties which the child faces at school; involvement with the educational process and the desire/lack of desire ensuing from it to go to school; conflict relationships with classmates and/or teachers; the quality and the methods of teaching and the help that the children get in overcoming the difficulties they have when they study their lessons.

Over the last years the parents' migration is of growing impact as a reason for the children's dropping out of school. Since the beginning of the school year 2006 till April 2007 1,340 students of the obligatory school age from the 1st to the 8th grade have left the country.

The students having left the educational system have not acquired a degree of professional qualification.⁵⁹ The possibilities of returning to the system of education for them are limited. In this sense they are in a disadvantaged position at the labour market and their chance of finding and doing work is little.

Financial problems

There is no information available about the drug related financial problems.

Social networks

There is no information available about the social networks.

Sex workers

In 2006 r. the "Initiative for Health" Foundation made 3,774 contacts with 710 sex workers using drugs⁶⁰. Of them 82.4 % were women. 65.4 % of the sex workers were Roma people. (See *Table 8-2*)

⁵⁹ Project for youths dropouts (2005-2007)

⁶⁰ <http://www.initiativeforhealth.org/bul/02act-06body.htm>

(Table 8-2)

APPORTIONMENT OF THE CONTACTS MADE WITH THE SEX WORKERS

Year	Number of contacts	Women	Men	Number of clients	% Women	% Roma people
2002	1885	1506	313	375	72.0	82.4
2003	1709	1530	179	491	98.6	72.3
2004	4253	3850	403	964	85.4	67.9
2005	4244	3770	474	919	80.3	69.2
2006	3774	3312	462	710	82.4	65.4

Source: "Initiative for Health" Foundation

The number of the contacts made with the sex workers in 2006 dropped in comparison to the two preceding years. In the 5-year period under review there is a trend marked of decreasing the relative quota of the women and of the Roma people in this group.

In 2007 under the "Mobile surgery for work with people dependent on psychoactive drugs from the town of Sofia" project of the KARITAS organization a total of 2,050 drug users were covered. Of them 1,502 were prostituting – 1,425 women and 77 men. 7.85 % (or 161) were drug dependent. (See Table 8-3)

(Table 8-3)

APPOORTIONMENT OF THOSE WHO WERE COVERED BY THE "MOBILE SURGERY FOR WORK WITH PEOPLE DEPENDENT ON PSYCHOACTIVE DRUGS" PROJECT IN 2007

Month	Number of contacts	Women prostitutes	Men prostitutes	Drug addicts prostitutes
January	167	15	124	4
February	119	6	59	4
March	139	1	69	7
April	270	3	157	20
May	294	7	150	22
June	236	11	150	29
July	195	9	212	19
August	0	0	0	0
September	161	8	114	12
October	157	12	174	15
November	210	2	133	10
December	102	3	85	9
Total	2050	77	1425	161

Source: KARITAS, Report on the "Mobile surgery for work with people dependent on psychoactive drugs" project in 2007

Drug related crime

Crimes (arrests/criminal reports on the trafficking/production/cultivation etc.)

Data from the police

On the data of the police in 2007 at the “Drugs” Department there were 1,160 notifications received (see *Table 8-4*).⁶¹ The most numerous were the notifications at the Metropolitan Police Directorate (MPD) – 470, followed by the Regional Directorates of the Ministry of the Interior (RDMI) in Blagoevgrad (138), Stara Zagora (63), Plovdiv and Haskovo (58). There are no notifications at the Regional Directorates in Smolyan and Jambol.

244 operative lawsuits have been instituted. The most numerous were at the Regional Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior (RDMI) in Sofia (50), Plovdiv (38) and Blagoevgrad (23) and Varna (9). Operative lawsuits have not been instituted at the Regional Directorates in Turgovishte, Shumen and at the regional Directorate of the police in Sofia.

2,847 persons were detained in 2007 in the country for the production of and for drug dealing. 55 % of them or 1,564 were detained by the Municipal Police Directorate (MPD). Next come the RDMI in Varna (212) and the RDMI in Plovdiv (196). In Jambol no people have been detained by the RDMI. Compared to the preceding two years there is a trend observed of increasing the number of the people detained.

2,530 specialized police operations (SPO) were carried out. The MPD (694) and the RDMI in Blagoevgrad (235) conducted the most operations. The fewest operations were conducted by the RDMI in Jambol (4) and by the RDMI in Shumen (11).

Table 8-4

WORK DONE BY THE REGIONAL POLICE SECTION IN RELATION TO DRUGS (NUMBER OF CASES) *			
Activities	2005	2006	2007
Response to signals	1138	1091	1160
Operative lawsuits instituted	258	260	244
Persons detained	2634	2773	2847
Specialized police operations realized	2352	2704	2530
Open drug scenes, pubs and recreational sites checked	6639	6133	4292
School regions checked	5514	3831	3389
New open drug scenes and meeting points for drug sale detected	289	228	199

* *The difference in the numbers is due to the fact that in 2005 and in part of 2006 the data were fixed on the basis of accumulation from the preceding periods under review.*

Source: National Police Service, Ministry of the Interior

To execute the instructions of the effective normative regulations monthly checks are done of the open drug scenes, public sites, school regions are checked, computer clubs, game halls and recreational sites.

In 2007 **the number of the open drug scenes, pubs and recreational sites checked was 4,292.**

The number of the school regions checked was 3,389.

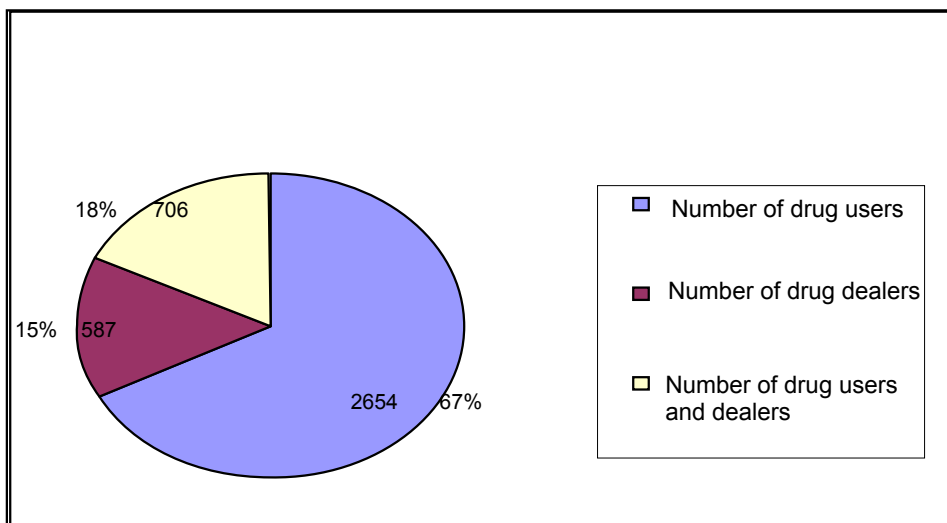
199 new open drug scenes and meeting points for drug sale **have been detected.** The greatest number detected was by the MPD by (57), RDMI Veliko Tunovo (23) and RDMI Plovdiv (22). Such scenes or meeting points have not been detected by the Regional Directorates in Gabrovo, Pleven, Rousse, Shumen, Jambol, or by the Transport Police Department.

The total number of the persons registered (drug users and drug dealers) by the groups of the National Police Service in 2007 was 3,947 (see *Figure 8-2*). Of them 530 (or 13.4 %) were minors or underage. 3,622 were men (91.8%), and 325 – women (8.2 %).

⁶¹ Report-Analysis for the Implementation of the enterprises of the annual Action Plan of Sector 07 “Drugs” at the Department of Criminal Police- Chief Directorate “Anti-social Deeds” over the period 01.01.2007 - 31.12.2007

Figure 8-2

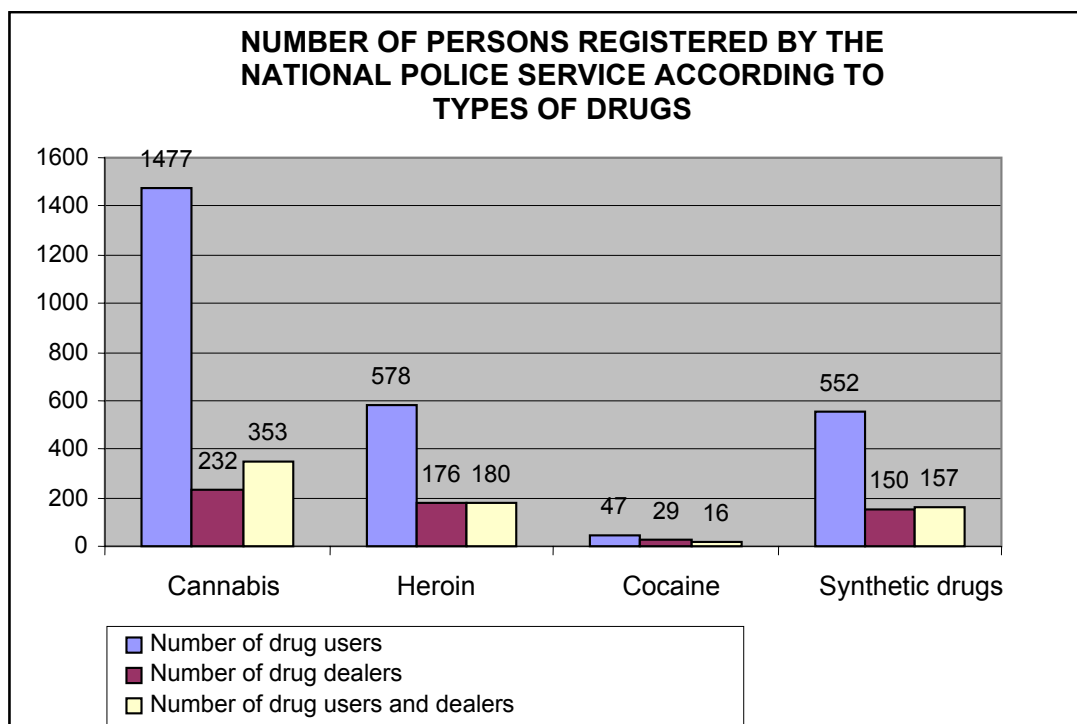
**PERSONS REGISTERED FOR “DRUGS”
(drug users and drug dealers)**



Source: National Police Service, Ministry of the Interior

According to the data from the police 1,477 (55.7%) of the persons registered (drug users and drug dealers) are cannabis users, 578 – use heroin (21.8 %), 47 – use cocaine (1.8 %) 552 use synthetic drugs – ecstasy, amphetamines, barbiturates (20.8 %). (See Figure 8-3)

Figure 8-3



Source: National Police Service, Ministry of the Interior

The number of drug dealers was 587 (compared to 1,020 in 2006) or 15 % of the total number of the persons registered (users and dealers). 177 (or 30.2 %) of the drug dealers are minors or underage. 232 (39.5 %) of them deal with cannabis, 176 (30 %) – with heroin, 29 – with cocaine

(4.9 %) and 150 deal with synthetic drugs - ecstasy, amphetamines, barbiturates (25.6 %).

The number of persons drug users and drug dealers at the same time in 2007 was 706 (compared to 941 in 2006 r.), which makes 18 % of the total number of the persons registered (drug dealers and drug users). Of them 200 or 28.3 % are minors and underage. For cannabis the persons registered (simultaneously users and dealers) number 353 (50 %); for heroin – 180 (25.5 %), for cocaine – 16 (2.3 %), for synthetic drugs they number 157 (22.2 %).

The number of the persons arrested with drugs on them in 2007 was 2,699. In 2006 this number was 2,524, or there is an increase by around 7 % (see *Table 8-5*). 2,517 of them were men and 182 – women.

Table 8-5

NUMBER OF PERSONS ARRESTED WITH DRUGS ON THEM			
	2005	2006	2007
Total number	2651	2524	2699
Bulgarian citizens	2631	2498	2678
Foreign citizens	20	26	21

Source: National Police Service, Ministry of the Interior

On the data from the police in 2007 there were a total of **2,391 claim files for instituting preliminary proceedings** for drug users and/or dealers (see *Table 8-6*). This number is nearly equal to the number of the claim files in 2006 (2,397) and it has decreased by around 2 % in comparison to the year 2005 when it was 2,445.⁶²

Table 8-6

NUMBER OF CLAIM FILES FOR INSTITUTING PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS			
	2005	2006	2007
Versus persons - drug users and drug dealers	1959	1892	1965
Versus persons – drug dealers	486	505	426
Total number of claim files	2445	2397	2391

Source: National Police Service, Ministry of the Interior

On the data of the Chief Directorate “Combating Organized Crime” in 2007 the persons detained for drug related offence numbered 354. In 2006 they were 271 i.e. there was an increase of 30 %. In 2007 the persons arrested for cannabis related offence numbered 82 (23.2 %), for heroin – 110 (31.1 %), for cocaine – 52 (14.7%), for amphetamines – 85 (24.0 %) , for ecstasy – 17 (1.5 %), and for other substances – 8 (4.8 %). The increase in comparison to the preceding year is due mostly to the greater number of the people arrested for offence related to cocaine, amphetamines, and ecstasy (see *Annex: Standard Table 11*)

Report of the procurator’s office on the implementation of the action plan regarding the decrease of drug demand and supply

In 2007 for crimes with subject drugs and precursors (against the public health and trafficking/customs drug smuggling) a total of 4,609 preliminary proceedings were **under the procurator’s supervision**, and the preliminary proceedings under the procurators’ supervision in

⁶² Report on the activity of the National Police Service, DRUGS Section generally for the country for the period 01.01.2007 - 31.12.2007

2006 numbered 4,920, in 2005 – 4,366, in 2004 – 3,544 and in 2003 – 4,865.⁶³ (See Figure 8-4)

The respective part of the proceedings under the procurator's supervision about drugs in comparison to the total number of the preliminary proceedings including all kinds of crime is 2%.

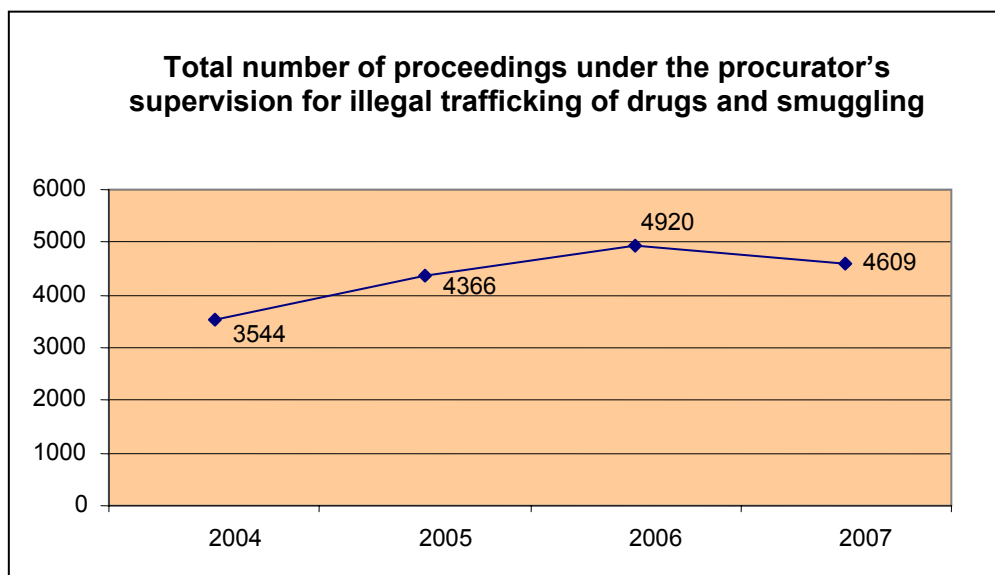
Under Chapter XI Indictable Offence, Section III - Crimes against the Public Health - the number of proceedings under the procurator's supervision decreased– they numbered 4,431 in 2007; 4,767 in 2006; 4,303 in 2005 and 3,440 in 2004.

For **drug smuggling** under Art. 242 from the Code of the Criminal Law a total of 178 preliminary proceedings were under the procurator's supervision. In 2006 the preliminary proceedings under the procurators' supervision numbered 153 (i.e. in 2007 there was an increase of 16%), in 2005 the respective figure was 63 and for the year 2004 - 104. Or it can be determined that this type of crime tends to diminish in comparison to the preceding 2006 year but the number of such cases in comparison to 2005 is bigger.

The newly instituted preliminary proceedings in 2007 for crimes with subject drugs – against the public health and smuggling – numbered 3,346, the respective figure in 2006 was 3,292, and for the rest of the preceding period they were 611. The respective figure in 2006 was 1,628.

In 2007, as well as in the preceding period predominate the acts under Art. 354a from the Code of the Criminal Law – 3277, in 2006 they numbered 3,167 and next come the crimes under Art. 354a, Para. 3 from the Code of the Criminal Law – 2,187 lawsuits, and Art. 354b, Para. 1–5 from the Code of the Criminal Law – 40, and the crimes under Art. 242 from the Code of the Criminal Law – 78.

Figure 8-4



Source: Supreme Procurator's Office

In view of the change in legislation made in the end of 2006 in the reports for 2006 the activity of the persons-drug users was contradistinguished against the activity of the persons – producers of drugs and drug dealers. Prior the change all these activities were regulated by one text – that of the Art. 354a from the CCL with specific hypotheses.

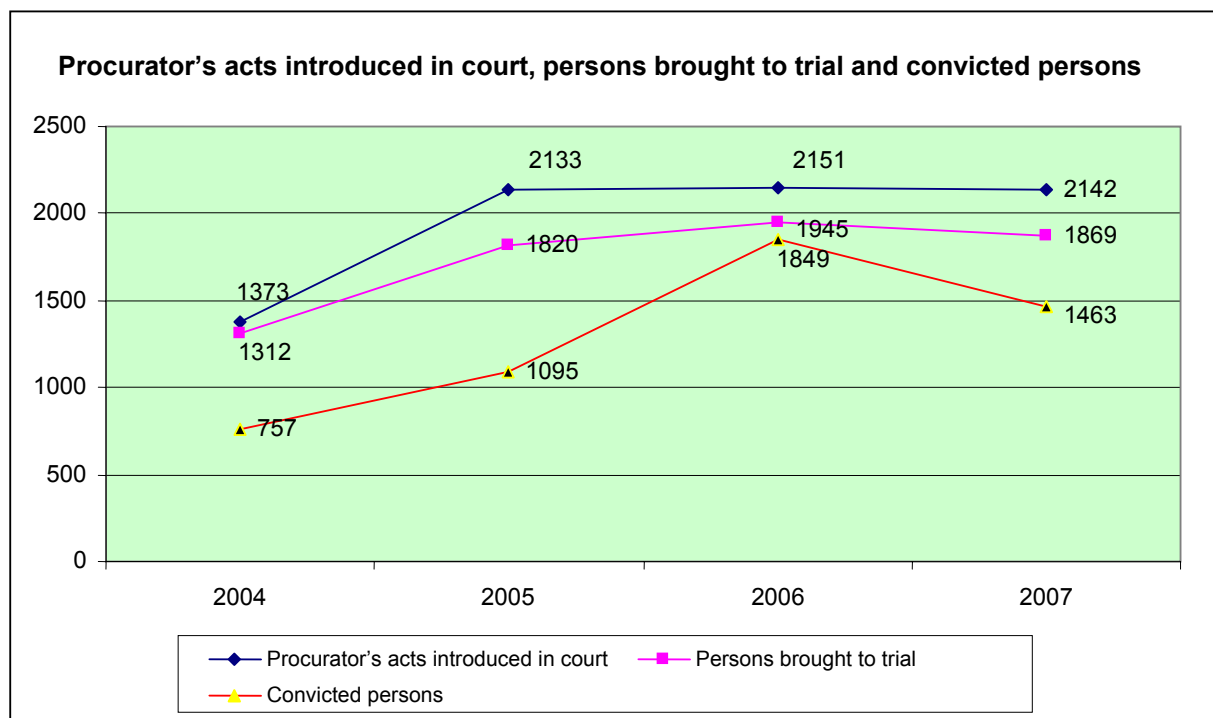
From the 4,609 lawsuits under the procurator's supervision in 2007 the procurators solved 3,066 of them. This means that 67% of the preliminary proceedings for such crimes were determined. In 2006 there were 4,920 lawsuits under the procurator's supervision and 4,002 of them were resolved. This means that 81% of the preliminary proceedings instituted for such crimes in 2006 were resolved. When this is juxtaposed to 2005 it can be noted that the relative part of the lawsuits resolved (2,343), compared to the lawsuits under the procurator's supervision (4,366) was 54 %. I.e., there is a slight tendency observed of reducing the total number of the lawsuits under the procurator's supervision as well as of the cases resolved.

A total of 1,869 procurator's acts **were introduced in court in 2007** or this makes 61% of the

⁶³ Report on the law enforcement and on the activity of the Procurators' Office and the investigating bodies in 2007

preliminary proceedings resolved against 1,060 persons. In 2006 the respective figures were 1,945 procurator's acts introduced in court which was 49% of the preliminary proceedings resolved against 2151 persons. 50 of them were foreigners. (See *Figure 8-5*).

Figure 8-5



Source: Supreme Procurator's Office

The convicted perpetrators of such crimes for the year under review 2007 were 1,463, in 2006 they numbered 1,849. For 1,393 of these persons (1,401 in 2006) the sentences have come into effect. There is an increase in the part of the penalized criminality in comparison to the preceding periods, respectively by 40% compared to 2005 and by 59% compared to 2004. This share has been reduced by 20% in comparison to 2006.

Crimes related to organized crime with subject drugs and precursors – committed by individuals acting on behalf of or executing decisions of organized criminal groups

Under Chapter VI from the Code of Criminal Law - Crimes against Economy, Section III - Crimes against the Customs Regime - in 2007 there were 178 lawsuits under procurator's supervision, 92 of which were newly instituted. The respective figure for 2006 was 69 lawsuits under procurator's supervision, and the newly instituted ones for 2006 were 53. The total number of the defendants in these types of lawsuits was 106. A total of 18 lawsuits were introduced in court with a bill of indictment against 36 individuals. 19 persons have been sentenced and for 12 of them the sentences have come into effect.

Under Chapter XI Indictable Offence, Art. 321–321a from the CCL in relation to Art. 354a from the CCL till the amendments of the Code of Criminal Law were introduced (State Gazette, issue 75/2006) a total of 727 lawsuits have been under the procurator's monitoring, (the respective figure for 2006 was 142 lawsuits) of which newly instituted were 374. The newly instituted lawsuits for 2006 numbered 117. The defendants numbered 363, and their number in 2006 was 173. 492 lawsuits have been resolved. The number of lawsuits resolved in 2006 was 99. 42 bills of indictment have been introduced in court against 63 individuals. 374 persons have been sentenced; for 42 of them there are judicial acts come into effect. In 2006 the number of the persons sentenced was 44.

In 2007 under the amended Art. 354a, Para. 2, item 1 from the CCL (a person acting on behalf of or executing a decision of an organized criminal group) 2 preliminary proceedings were instituted one of which was introduced in court. In 2006 12 proceedings were instituted against 28

persons. In the previous period there were 6 such proceedings. All the 18 lawsuits have been resolved and brought in court with bills of indictment. 4 of the persons are foreign citizens. Guilty verdicts have been passed for 16 persons. The verdict has come into effect for 1 person.

The data for 2007 compared to those for 2004, 2005 and for 2006 indicate a lasting tendency of improving the activity of supervising and managing the lawsuits with subject drugs. The investigation and the resolution of the proceedings instituted is done more quickly, the rate of the lawsuits resolved is high compared to the lawsuits supervised, the number of the procurator's acts introduced in court has increased, and so has the number of the perpetrators brought to court for major crimes.

Antisocial deeds and crimes committed by minors and underage persons

In 2007 at the Children's Pedagogic Services (CPS) there were 14,592 minors and underage individuals registered. (In 2006 there were 15,969 minors and underage registered at the CPS, which was 8.6% less). The number of minors and underage newly registered in 2007 was 4,327, or 10.4% less in comparison to the preceding year. The girls registered were 2,324, which is 13.8% less than in 2006. The individuals aged 14 - 17 years numbered 11,399 (78.1% of the total number of the minors and underage who have been registered), and there was a 9.8% decrease of this number in comparison to 2006. The number of the persons who have been registered aged 8 - 13 was 3,193 (in 2006 this number was 3,337 or 4.3% less).

The social characteristics of the minors and underage registered at the Children's Pedagogic Service are similar to the characteristics from the previous years. 10,818 children have lived in unfavourable milieu or that makes 74.1% (in 2006 the respective number of such children was 11,774). These are the children of divorced or practically divorced parents, children from socially disadvantaged families, children from single-parent families and orphans, children who have lived in conflict family milieu, in crime-generating family or friends' milieu. In 2007 2,041 from the children registered at the CPS did not work and did not go to school. In 2006 the number of these children was 2,442.

In 2007 the cases of truants were reduced by 13.6% (from 2,367 in 2006 they dropped to 2,044 in 2007). At the same time a reduction was observed of the number of the minors and underage who were registered at the CPS for prostitution and homosexuality of 30.1% (400 children in 2006 versus 276 children in 2007), and for alcohol drinking of 27.8% (652 children in 2006 versus 471 children in 2007). The number of persons having used drugs has grown by 4.0% - from 473 children in 2006 it has grown to 492 children in 2007 (see *Table 8-7*).

Table 8-7

MINORS AND UNDERAGE PERPETRATORS OF ANTISOCIAL DEEDS AND CRIMES (2000-2007)

(Number)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Children referred to the Children's Pedagogic Services for antisocial deeds committed								
Total for the country	10 305	10 322	11 070	13 196	13 343	12 407	10 765	9 651
including:								
Alcohol drinking	741	555	554	612	721	802	652	471
Drug use	815	872	846	841	920	584	473	492
Children perpetrators of crimes								
Total for the country	7 356	8 662	8 653	9 607	10 146	9 720	8 541	8 541
including:								
Drug related crimes				394	385	379	252	232

Source: *National Institute of Statistics*

The number of persons perpetrators of drug related crime was reduced by 7.9% (from 252 in 2006 to 232 in 2007).

Other crimes (e.g. against property, illegal prostitution, illicit prescriptions, violence under the influence of drugs, driving, etc)

There is no updated information available on drug related crime.

Drug use in prisons

According to the data of the sector "Medical" of the Chief Directorate "Penalty Enforcement" in the penitentiaries there are 1,143 persons deprived of freedom who are drug dependent. This makes 11.5% of the whole inmate population, who by 01.01.2008 numbered 10, 271 people.⁶⁴

There is a tendency of decreasing the number of the persons deprived of freedom, which in 2006 exceeded 11, 000 persons. The decrease of the total number of the convicted persons brought about a decrease in the number of the drug addicts registered in the penitentiaries. In 2006 they numbered 1,752, and in the end of 2007 their number was reduced by nearly 500 persons, which to a certain degree is due to the greater number of probations enacted as an alternative to the penalty *deprivation of freedom*. This result may be due to two other causes. A number of the persons deprived of freedom who come to prison keep their dependence a secret, and on the other hand there is a number of flaws and lapses in the medical and psychological diagnostics, and this does not permit a 100% precise registration of the addicted persons deprived of freedom who go to prison.

Social price

There is no updated information available about the social price of drug use.

⁶⁴ Report of КИИД about the implementation of the Action plan of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs, 2007

9. Responses to Social Correlates and Consequences

Within the frame of this section the following main topics will be reviewed:

- Social reintegration of the problem drug users and of the persons addicted to drugs;
- Prevention of drug related crime

On reviewing the topic of social reintegration the focus was on information and issues related to finding homes for the persons with problems and at risk as well as on finding work, on the vocational training and on the preparation of the problem drug users to begin work. The focus was also on combating unemployment. On presenting these issues information was used provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and by the State Agency for Child Protection.

In this report the topic of crime prevention is presented by information concerning the assistance that the drug addicts receive in prison (more specifically prevention, harm reduction and treatment related to drug use). On presenting these issues information was used provided by the Chief Directorate "Penalty Enforcement" at the Ministry of Justice.

Social reintegration

Finding homes

The total number of the children at the specialized institutions in 2006 was 8, 653.⁶⁵ In comparison to 2001 the number of the children institutionalized is reduced by 31,4 % (3,956).

When studying the data from 2001 to 2006 it can be definitely stated that there is a lasting trend confirmed of reducing the number of the children at the specialized institutions but nevertheless this number is still large. The reduction of the relative part of the children institutionalized in relation to the total population of children in the country is from 0.78 % in 2001 to 0.61 % in 2006. **In this totality are also included children abusing drugs but their number cannot be specified.**

According to the results of the survey conducted by the State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) the number of the children institutionalized who come from single parent families - 46 %, or 3,958 children is the greatest. The parents of 40 % (3,460) of the children are jobless, of a very low social status and they cannot cope with rearing their children. The children from large families represent 27 % of the children at the specialized institutions (2,328), next come the children who have been abandoned by their parents and the foundlings - 15 % (1,322), and the children of whom one of the parents has died - 8.6 % (742). The orphans are 2 % of the institutionalized children, or 174 children. At the specialized institutions there are 159 (1.8 %) children born to under aged parents - mothers under 18 years of age.

In 2006 the number of the children of foreign citizens and fugitives institutionalized in Bulgaria also increased by 56 % in comparison to the preceding year. In 2005 they numbered 62, and in 2006 they were already 97. The rest of the member countries of the European Union also face a similar problem- and this is the reason for undertaking special measures in the field of social policy.

The national survey of the SACP showed that in 2006 more than 80 % of the children at the specialized institutions had families but had been institutionalized because of impossibility to be

⁶⁵ National Strategy for the Child 2008-2018

reared at family milieu or similar to the family milieu.

The main factors for institutionalizing the children of socially disadvantaged families are the difficulties the families face when rearing them (economic, psychological and social) combined with the lack of sufficient alternative to the institutionalized care services. The main risks which the children from these families run are related to the quality of life, the atmosphere in the family and the access of the children to education. These data highlight the necessity of developing prevention and assistance policies aimed at limiting the "poverty" factor, as well as the necessity of providing new flexible forms of social services to assist the family as the main factor for the development of the child.

With the aim of providing more effective protection for the children at risk measures have been undertaken to popularize the professional and the voluntary foster care.⁶⁶

- A Program was prepared for the education of professional foster families. In this way they can acquire additional qualification on how to rear and educate the children according to their needs;
- In 2007 the approved voluntary foster families numbered 37 and the professional foster families numbered 41. 43 children were sent to voluntary foster families and for 20 children the stay was cancelled; and 39 children were sent to professional foster families and for 1 child the stay was cancelled. The total number of new cases of children being reared in foster families was 61. In comparison to 2006 the number of children sent to foster families has increased by 52 %. The total number of children sent to foster families in 2007 was 135.
- The criteria and the standards of the social services for children were changed. This has been aimed at improving the quality of the services for children, guaranteeing safer and more secure environment for rearing and educating the children and at protecting their rights and interests;

In relation to the process of deinstitutionalizing the children the measure of protection turned to be effective- namely sending the children to the families of relatives and friends. The children sent to the families of relatives and friends in 2007 were **1,230**.

The number of cases of having successfully prevented the abandonment of children has increased more than twofold. In 2007 the total number of these cases was 1,503.

The total number of children reintegrated in their biological families in 2007 was 2,505. 1,332 cases of reintegration have been completed successfully, and this represents 53 % of all the cases of reintegration.

The children are sent to specialized institutions only for a definite short period of time and when there are no other options to undertake measures to protect them. In 2007 the total number of children temporarily institutionalized was 2,771. The children for whom the institutionalization has been cancelled and other forms of care have been provided numbered 2,299.

The focus of the procedure of adoption was changed from "selection of a child for the family" to "selection of a suitable family for the child." The purpose of the new model is to guarantee the rights and the interests of the children to be adopted. The total number of the children adopted with ruling come into effect in 2007 was 708. In 2006 the number of the children adopted under court ruling come into effect was 634. The number of the children adopted in 2007 has increased by 11.5 %.

At the end of 2007 264 children and youths were cared for at "SOS Children's Settlements-Bulgaria". Of them 136 children (aged 15 and under) were in the "SOS Children's Settlements (in the town of Tryavna and in the village of Dren); 65 youths (aged from 15 to 18) – in the SOS homes for youths (in the town of Veliko Turnovo and in the city of Sofia) and 38 youths of age were

⁶⁶ Report on the activity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in 2007 .

included in the program "Beginning of Independent Life". 4 children were reintegrated in their biological families in 2007.⁶⁷

The SOS Children's Settlement is a community uniting 12-15 family homes. In each family home a mother rears and educates 6-8 children, boys and girls of different age. With the aim of acquiring full social integration the children go to a kindergarten or to school in the respective village or town.⁶⁸

Offering family type of care the SOS Children's Settlements present to the children deprived of parental care the possibility to be again part of a family. A basic principle of the association is that if a child cannot remain with his/her biological family at the SOS Children's Settlement he/she will be guaranteed the right of care, protection and equal chance in life.

The SOS children's settlements are aimed at rearing children at risk irrespective of their race, ethnical origin and religious belonging, providing the possibility to them to live their own life self - confidently, and on the basis of the accepted values, by integrating them in society and helping them on their way to a more secure future.

Education, training

There are no current data on the education/training for persons dependent on or abusing drugs.

Finding work

It is especially difficult for the jobless people who have been dependent on drugs and who have been registered at the "Labour Bureau" directorates to be included in the active work and social life and to be offered the possibility of independent and worthy life. These are people who in the course of 3, 4 or more years have had impaired relations with the community, their habit to work has disappeared and so has their motive for socialization. A number of them successfully undergo a course of treatment of the drug dependence and they can return to life of full value. The limited possibilities for their realization at the labour market are the result of:

- Lack of or loss of labour habits and skills – the dependence on drugs is the prerequisite and the cause for a lasting isolation and limited possibilities to create and acquire labour habits;
- Lack of motivation for realization in the process of work;
- Forbearance of the employers to employ such jobless people;
- There is a sustainable negative stereotype in society regarding these people.⁶⁹

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) has approved of a **National Program for employment of people with permanent disability as a continuation of the National Program "Independent Again."** In this program jobless people have also been included who have successfully completed a course of treatment for drug dependence.

In 2007 the National Center on Addictions referred 5 persons from treatment and rehabilitation programs for participation in the National Program for employment and vocational training of people with permanent disability.

According to the National Action Plan on employment in 2007 (adopted by the Council of Ministers on 1st February 2007), within the framework of the National Program for employment and vocational training of people with permanent disability jobs are provided to jobless people in the age of work capacity who have successfully completed a course of treatment for drug dependence. On the data of the Employment Agency in 2007 13 people were employed and for them the funds for the wages were provided from the state budget equal to the minimal wage for the country, the social and the health insurance.

⁶⁷ Annual report for 2007 of "SOS Children's Settlements – Bulgaria" .

⁶⁸ <http://www.sosbg.org/our-activity.html>

⁶⁹ National program of employment and vocational training of people with permanent disability.

In 2007 the municipality of Varna developed **courses for professional qualification, assistance and mediation with the employers for providing jobs to youths successfully overcoming drug dependence**. The users were 60 clients of the Program of Substitution and Maintenance Treatment with methadone and of the Programs for Intensive Outpatient Rehabilitation who were above 16, and were in the phase of commitment and rehabilitation. Enrollment in courses for acquiring professional qualification at different study centers in the town of Varna, motivation for work realization.⁷⁰

According to the National Action Plan on employment in 2008 (adopted by the Council of Ministers on January 31st 2008) for jobless people in the age of work capacity who have successfully completed a course of treatment for drug dependence, besides providing jobs there is also a possibility to organize a training to acquire professional qualification and motivation treatment for active behavior at the labour market and for work realization.

Main social assistance

In 2007 the policy of social assistance was aimed at guaranteeing effective social protection for the vulnerable groups of society. This policy was implemented by a better **allocation of the welfare to those most in need and by realization of effective social inclusion for the most vulnerable groups of the population**.⁷¹

Within the frames of this direction the efforts were targeted at **reducing the number of the passive benefit users, at triggering the activity of the jobless persons - subject of social assistance- to participate in employment, enhanced control and stricter sanctions when unscrupulous use of benefit was found**. The better coordination achieved between the system of welfare and the system of employment proved one of the main causes to significantly reduce the level of unemployment among the representatives of the disadvantaged groups at the labour market. The programs in the field of social assistance have also been improved by enhancing their purposefulness and considering the changes that have occurred in the social and economic conditions of the country.

The effective social inclusion of the most vulnerable groups of the population is realized mainly due to the **differentiated individual approach applied in regard to the different target groups including the drug users**. In this way a better purposefulness and a better effect of the social welfare and services provided was achieved and this as a result really brought about the alleviation of poverty. Regarding **child protection** a considerable improvement was found. Owing to the National Strategy for the Child 2008-2018 a unified, comprehensive and more coordinated approach for the improvement of the well-being of the children in Bulgaria will be applied. In the field of the policy of **integrating the disabled people** an improvement was also registered. A strategic approach was adopted based on long-term priorities for social inclusion of the disabled people in society.

In the sphere of the **social services** the lasting trend of **priority development of the social services in the community and expanding the number of the services and of the suppliers** is worth noting. The process of **deinstitutionalizing** the children has remained among the priorities in the field of the social protection and social inclusion.

One of the main goals in implementing the policy of social protection is the **introduction of the system of minimal standards** in this field.

Regarding the minimal standards in the field of social protection in 2007 in Bulgaria for the first time an **official poverty line** was set. Established on the basis of social methods the poverty line served as an objective measure of the number of the poor people in Bulgarian society and is an original criterion for the adequacy of all the protected social payments.

⁷⁰ Social Program of the municipality of Varna for 2008

⁷¹ Report of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in 2007

Crime prevention

Assistance for the drug users in the penitentiaries (prevention, harm reduction, treatment, social reintegration)

In 2007 2,235 examinations of people dependent on drugs and deprived of freedom were done.⁷² All the dependent persons on the list in the penitentiaries have been subjected to express psychodiagnostics, medical and psychiatric examination and to risk assessment.

311 individuals deprived of freedom who had symptoms of abstinence when they were detained in the penitentiaries **were subjected to detoxication.**

Irrespective of the fact that the total number of the patients with dependencies is reduced the number of the medical examinations done is increased and so is the therapy applied. The number of the psychological tests done and of the consultations of the dependent persons deprived of freedom has also been increased. These individuals are rather pretentious, unstable and rousing conflicts under the conditions of the penitentiary and that is why they need constant consultation and treatment. These are preceded by psychiatric and psychological diagnostics. In this context the work of additionally optimizing the methods of diagnosing, consulting and treating, offered by medical doctors and psychologists is going on.

78 patients underwent the methadone programs in 2007. This result shows that this type of treatment is sustained and confirmed in the practice of the penitentiaries.

In 2007 at the hospitals of the penitentiaries in Sofia and in the town of Lovech 31 patients with addictions were treated.

In 2007 the main information and preventive initiatives regarding the drug addictions were implemented in cooperation with the "Initiative for Health" foundation in the prisons in the towns of Vratsa and Sofia. Lectures were planned and delivered and discussions were held on similar topics in the prisons in the towns of Bobov Dol, Varna, Bourgas and Plovdiv. The connection between drug addiction and AIDS and how the latter can be prevented was discussed at a separate seminar with the participation of experts and managers working at the prisons in Bobov Dol, Pleven, Sofia and Stara Zagora.

In 2007 a 10-day seminar was held with the participation of the psychologists and the social workers from all the prisons and from the Chief Directorate "Penalty Enforcement" who had directly participated in the short - term program for work with addicted convicts. At this seminar experts from Britain supervised the activities done and made a number of recommendations on how to improve the activity of the program leaders.

The first stage of the specialized training of psychiatrists on the normative regulations for carrying out the substitution and maintenance treatment for addictions has been completed.

In the prisons in Bobov Dol, Vratsa, Lovech and Sliven the work on short - term basis with groups of addicted convicts continues. In the prisons in Stara Zagora and Varna activities have been fulfilled after a program designed like the 12-step one.

Practically a net has been built and the necessary experience has been gathered for applying a short - term cognitive and behavioral program for work with addicted persons. The program has been suggested to us by the English Prison Service.

⁷² Report of КИАД about the implementation of the Action Plan of the National Strategy to Combat Drugs, 2007

In spite of the training conducted after the 12-step program its implementation at certain sites is still delayed. In order to overcome the delay additional methodic, training and organizational measures will be applied.

When assessing the quality of the staff work and the professional competition among the prisons the activity for organizing and effectively conducting therapeutic modules with addicted persons under detention will largely be considered.

Policy of security in the city zones of drug related crime prevention (participation of the citizens, collaboration with different agencies, intervention to assist the victims).

There is no available updated information for 2007 about the policy of security in the city zones for prevention of drug related crime.

10. Drug Markets

Within the frames of this section the following main topics will be reviewed:

- Availability and supply;
- Seizures of drugs;
- Price and purity of drugs at street level.

On reviewing the topic of drug availability and the ways to supply drugs attention has been focused on the information and data related to drug availability among the population as a whole, among students at universities and among prisoners as representing specific social groups, as well as on the production, the sources for supply and models of trafficking drugs in the country and abroad. The different routes registered and ways of production are indicated – as a whole and for the different types of drugs. When reviewing these issues information from the Ministry of the Interior has mainly been used, and also information provided by the Customs Agency at the Ministry of Finance. Different studies conducted by the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions have been used as a source of information, too– mainly in relation to drug availability.

The number of seizures and the quantity of drugs seized have been the main point when analyzing the second topic in the section; and attention has been focused on the main trend as well as on the data about the specific drugs and in some cases - about the different institutions. Information provided by the Ministry of the Interior and by the Customs Agency at the Ministry of Finance has mainly been used.

In this report the topic of the price and purity of drugs at street level is presented by giving information on the price at street level (on the data from two sources- the police and the local regional institutions) as well as by presenting information on the purity at street level and the purity of drugs/tablets – according to types of drugs. On reviewing these topics information and analyses have been used presented by the Chief Directorate of the National Police, by the regional advisory boards for drugs and by the Forensic Science Institute.

Availability and Supply

Production, sources of supply and models of trafficking inside the country and abroad

The problem of the production, distribution, trafficking and use of drugs has acquired global dimensions and is considered one of the most serious threats for the global security in 21 century. Combating the production, trafficking and distribution of drugs demands the united international efforts of the respective law-enforcing agencies and institutions in each country. Bulgaria is not an exception in this respect as a country situated in a geographical region crossed by important routes connecting Europe and Asia, and via whose territory the so called “Balkan route” of drugs passes.

The traffic of cocaine is still done mainly by *couriers* – “*mules*” (Bulgarian citizens) recruited for couriers for trafficking cocaine from South America to Europe from amongst the common criminals and socially disadvantaged Bulgarian citizens. In this trafficking are also involved *couriers with the drug hidden in their hand luggage or in parcels*- small quantities of cocaine continue to be sent by parcel post by express courier companies. For the smuggling of cocaine vessels are also used, mainly yachts (for the period no Bulgarian vessels with Bulgarian crews on them have been caught).

In the trafficking of cocaine persons from African origin are also involved, residing in the country, and also Bulgarian citizens, the latter being responsible for the logistics of the criminal activity, for its funding, buying airplane tickets, organizing the illegal bases abroad /in Spain and Italy/ and recruiting couriers in the country.

For **the heroin trafficking** the trend still continues for Bulgaria not to be a preferred transit country along the route of the heroin traffic. More and more often the drug traffickers use the so called "North Route" from Afghanistan via the ex Soviet Asiatic republics, Ukraine and Russia to Europe. The trafficking of small quantities of heroin from Turkey to Western Europe *by couriers traveling by train still continues*. The trafficking of larger quantities of heroin from Turkey to Western Europe is done by hiding the drug in specially built for the purpose *secret places in the wagons of the international trains or in the vehicles*. More and more often *heroin is smuggled in small quantities*, so that the loss in case the shipment is seized by the police would be minimal. Some of the transporters are *citizens with double citizenship*- Bulgarian and Turkish, who smuggle heroin in vehicles of Turkish registration.

As a whole on the territory of the country *no large quantities of heroin are stored*, and instead the main quantity is smuggled to the countries in Europe.

In the trafficking of heroin Turkish, Albanian, Serbian, Macedonian and Bulgarian citizens are involved, the last mainly providing the transport and the persons to smuggle the drug.

For the **production and the traffic of amphetamines** the trend still continues of producing precursors from the so called pre-precursors, the supply of which is considerably less hindered. Some of the laboratories for the production of amphetamines have been moved out of the country to regions near the countries where the synthetic drugs are used. Up to now cases of export of the production of synthetic drugs to Turkey, Lebanon, Georgia, Armenia and Syria have been detected. The process is funded by persons of Arabian origin, who hire Bulgarian citizens for the building and the functioning of the laboratories.

The principle of barter trade is mainly observed for the heroin and synthetic drug deals- amphetamines for Turkey are exchanged for heroin for Europe and for the country.

The officers from the Drug Department of the CDCOC take part in the activity of the Interdepartmental Committee of Precursor Control on a regular basis and up to now no diversion of precursors from their legal application has been registered.

According to the report of the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addictions (EMCDDA) in Lisbon, the trend of using amphetamines and **ecstasy** in Europe is reinforced. Ecstasy is considered one of the "modern" synthetic drugs, preferred mainly by young people at recreational sites. Although in Bulgaria the use of ecstasy is already a fact, it is still comparatively limited. So are the seizures of this type of drug, which is illegally smuggled into the country mainly from Belgium and from the Netherlands (see Annex 1).

In regard to the illegally grown and drug-yielding shrub, cannabis is still the most massively produced, sold and used drug of herbal origin worldwide in all of its forms- marijuana, green mass, hashish, oil. It is also the drug most often seized in Europe, and particularly in Bulgaria. Cannabis is smuggled to the European drug market from South Africa, Nigeria, etc., and Albania is becoming a supplier of cannabis intended mainly for Turkey, Greece and Italy.

The main part of cannabis in Bulgaria is grown in the region of the towns of Petrich and Sandanski, mainly by elderly people who are paid for this by members of the organized crime. On the territory of Bulgaria for **marijuana** there exists a sustainable closed cycle beginning with its production and ending with its use. Part of the production, a small one, is probably trafficked to neighbouring countries. Greece is the main country for marijuana smuggling because of its four-fold higher prices there in comparison to Bulgaria.

For the whole country marijuana is becoming the most widely used and spread drug. The marijuana market differs from the hard drug market which is obligatorily controlled by ОПГ. Its distribution, alongside with its organized character, is done in most cases by independent dealers. The predominant part of cannabis seizures are done at the level of distribution, or during police operations at local level, when the ready crop is harvested.

From 1996 up to the present in the period of the wax ripeness of the plants the CDCOC together with RDP locally (mainly the Regional Police Department [RPD] – the town of

Blagoevgrad) carries out regular police operations "Autumn Harvest". As a result of these operations the growing of marijuana was reduced. Over the last years following the scheme established by the CDCOC these specialized police operations were done independently by the RPD Blagoevgrad. As a result of this more than 2.5 tons of green mass of cannabis were seized in 2007.

Hashish is the other form in which cannabis is used, Marocco, Pakistan and Afghanistan being the main countries producers of hashish. Hashish is mainly used by the countries in Western Europe and in Arabia. In Bulgaria both the use of and the seizures of hashish are still limited.

A large number of the unidentified organized criminal groups partaking in the production, trafficking and distribution of drugs have also been caught in the act of committing **concomitant illegal activity** in spheres like forging and obtaining personal data from credit cards with the help of "skimming" devices, illegal deforcing of vehicles from their owners, uttering dud banknotes, etc.

The illegally generated profits of the organized criminal groups, partaking in the production, trafficking and distribution of drugs, are legalized by registering **trade and insurance companies, by purchasing estates, by trading high-class vehicles and excises, gambling business, etc.** The money is usually invested in these spheres by companies belonging to figureheads, which in turn account for percent of the profit.

Seizures

In 2006 counteracting the traffic and the distribution of drugs on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria was still a priority in the activity of all the responsible for this law-enforcing institutions. The specialized offices at the Ministry of the Interior and the agencies at the Ministry of Finance are the main factor in respect to reducing the supply of drugs, they are a partner in reducing the demand and the use of drugs and they are the originator for bringing about changes in legislation concerning different aspects of the problem.

As a result of the activity of the CDCOC jointly with similar offices and agencies in 2007 on the territory of the country a total of **801,447 kg; 9,418 tablets; 101 doses; 7 ampoules; 2, 521,315 kg of dry mass and 14,530 kg of green mass of cannabis; 331 marijuana stalks and 0.02 kg of seeds; 50 kg phenylacetic acid and 0.262 l of amphetamine basis were seized**⁷³.

On foreign territory with the participation of CDCOC were seized: **159,740 of heroin in 9 cases and 19 Bulgarians and 1 Greek were detained; 90,348 kg of cocaine in 19 cases and 28 Bulgarians were detained; 182 kg amphetamine-substance and 1,769 number of tablets in 2 cases were seized and 3 persons were detained (from them- 1 Bulgarian with a double citizenship- Bulgarian and Turkish); 80,273 kg amphetamine- tablets in 2 cases were seized and 17 persons were detained- among them 3 Bulgarians; 12, 960 l acetic anhydride in 1 case were seized and 4 foreign citizens were detained**⁷⁴ (see Table 10-1).

⁷³ On the data of the Chief Department for Combating Organized Crime/CDCOC/ – National Police Service/NPS/- Ministry of the Interior/MI/, *The State of Drug Trafficking in 2007 in the Republic of Bulgaria*

⁷⁴ On the data of the Chief Department for Combating Organized Crime – National Police Service- Ministry of the Interior, *The State of Drug Trafficking in 2007 in the Republic of Bulgaria*

DRUGS AND PRECURSORS SEIZED BY THE CDCOC-NPS-MI 2007

TYPES OF DRUGS	UNITS	CDCOC AND SCOC-RPD	CDCOC AND SCOC RPD AND OTHER SERVICES AT THE MI	CDCOC AND SCOC RPD WITH CUSTOMS AGENCY	CDCOC, SCOC-RPD, AND SIMILAR SERVICES ON FOREIGN TERRITORY	TOTAL QUANTITIES	TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES	TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS DETAINED	CANALS BLOCKED	ILLEGAL LABORATORIES DETECTED
HEROIN	kg	163,154	0.377	409,321	159,740	732,592	75	106	14	
	doses	101				101	4	4		
COCAINE	kg	1,641	0.215	2,000	90,348	94,204	34	52	8	
MARIJUANA	kg	19,469	7,049	3,100		29,618	42	51		
CANNABIS – dry mass	kg	2, 517,32	1,000	3,000		2, 521,315	28	23		
CANNABIS-green mass	kg	1,540	12,990			14,530	1			
MARIJUANA -stalks	number	198	133			331	8	8		
CANNABIS-seeds	kg	0,02				0,02	1			
OPIUM	kg			25,750		25,750	1	2		
HASHISH	kg	0,025				0,025				
MORPHIN	kg/ampoules	0,315 kg; 7 ampoules				0.315 kg; 7 ampoules				
SYNTHETIC DRUGS										
AMPHETAMINE-substance	kg	105,797	0.564		182	288,361	36	42		
AMPHETAMINE-tablets	kg	62,670			80,273	142,943	5	20	3	1
	tablets	6 188	814		1 769	8, 771	13	20	1	
KAPTAGON	tablets	392				392	2	3		
ECSTASY	tablets	2 024				2, 024	9	17		
PRECURSORS										
AMPHETAMIN-base	l	0.262				0.262				
PHENYLACETIC ACID	kg	50				50	1	2		
ACETIC ANHYDRIDE	l				12, 960	12, 960	1	4		
TOTAL:	801,447 kg; 9 418 tablets; 101 doses; 7 ampoules; 2,521,315 kg dry mass and 14,530 kg green mass cannabis; 331 marijuana stalks and 0.02 kg seeds; 50 kg phenylacetic acid and 0.262 l amphetamine base. On foreign territory with the participation of CDCOC were seized: 159,740 kg of heroin in 9 cases and 19 Bulgarians and 1 Greek were detained; 90,348 kg cocaine in 19 cases were seized and 28 Bulgarians were detained; 182 kg amphetamine –substance and 1, 769 number of amphetamine-tablets in 2 cases and 3 persons were detained (of them - 1 Bulgarian with double citizenship – Bulgarian and Turkish); 80,273 kg amphetamine – tablets in 2 cases and 17 persons were detained- of them 3 Bulgarians; 12, 960 l acetic anhydride in 1 case and 4 foreign citizens were detained						261	354	26	1

Source: CDCOC-NPS-MI- "State of Drug Trafficking in 2007 in the Republic of Bulgaria"

The total quantity of narcotic drugs and precursors, seized by the Customs Agency in 2007 amounts to **1,224.492 kg, 9,681 tablets, 16.850 l and 10 cactuses in 129 cases**. Of them: heroin - 977.421 kg, opium - 53.096 kg, marijuana - 5.313 kg, cocaine - 2.581 kg, ecstasy - 1.505 kg, catine - 16.850 l, psychoactive substances - 9,162 tablets, ephedrine - 183.355 kg⁷⁵.

On the whole the total number and the quantity of drugs and precursors seized is considerably smaller than in 2006 when the customs officers seized a total of **1,459.895 kg and 96,618 tablets of narcotic drugs and precursors in 148 cases**⁷⁶.

It is obvious from the statistics that in 2007 **heroin** was again the most often smuggled type of drug across the Bulgarian border – **977 kg** in 30 cases. When comparing it to the previous year, when 493 kg were seized, **nearly double** the amount of the quantity seized is registered⁷⁷. For the rest of the drugs a **drastic reduction** of the quantities seized is seen in comparison to 2006. The difference in the quantity of cocaine seized over the last 2 years amounts to 60.752 kg, and while in 2006 63.333 kg were seized by the Customs Agency, in 2007 the quantity seized amounted only to 2.581 kg. The same trend is also observed for the quantities of ecstasy and cannabis-resin seized- respectively 75.126 kg for 2006 and 1.505 kg for 2007 for ecstasy and 29.792 kg in 2006 and 0.122 kg in 2007 for cannabis-resin. The difference in the quantity seized of cannabis – grass is considerably smaller- 1.097 kg more was seized in 2006⁷⁸. (see Table 10-2).

Over the last year the Bulgarian customs officers also prevented 4 attempts of trafficking opium with 53 kg seized. Thus the opioids seized account for more than **98%** of the total amount of all the drugs seized⁷⁹. In this relation we can make the conclusion that the Balkan Route for the trafficking of opioids is still effective and is used by the criminal groups.

Table 10-2

DRUGS SEIZES BY THE CUSTOMS AGENCY OVER THE PERIOD 2004 – 2007

	2004	2005	2006	2007
Cannabis resin.....kg	0.293 kg	0.002 kg	29.792 kg	0.122 kg
Cannabis grasskg	112.159 kg	39.726 kg	6.410 kg	5.313 kg
Cannabis plantsplants (Units)	X	X	400 стръка	X
Heroin.....kg	808.197 kg	324.499 kg	492.804 kg	977.421 kg
Cocaine.....kg	0.116 kg	131.460 kg	63.333 kg	2.581 kg
Crack.....kg	X	X	X	X
Amphetamines.....kg	409.801 kg	406.718 kg	281.802 kg	0.001 kg
Metamphetamines....kg	X	X	X	X
Ecstasy.....tablets (units)	25 tablets	5 tablets	X	7 tablets
LSD.....units	X	X	X	X

Source: Standard Table 13: Number and quantity of seizures of illicit drugs

In February and March 2007 as a result of a decision made by the Work Group for Customs Cooperation at the Council of the EU, an international operation was conducted under the name of

⁷⁵ On the data of Customs Agency– Ministry of Finance, *Information by Customs Agency in relation to preparing the Annual Report for 2008 of the National Drugs Advisory Board and of the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions on the state of the problems of drug use in Bulgaria*

⁷⁶ On the data of Customs Agency– Ministry of Finance, *Information by Customs Agency in relation to preparing the Annual Report for 2008 of the National Drugs Advisory Board and of the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions on the state of the problems of drug use in Bulgaria*

⁷⁷ On the data of Customs Agency– Ministry of Finance, *Information by Customs Agency in relation to preparing the Annual Report for 2008 of the National Drugs Advisory Board and of the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions on the state of the problems of drug use in Bulgaria*

⁷⁸ On the data of Customs Agency– Ministry of Finance, *Information by Customs Agency in relation to preparing the Annual Report for 2008 of the National Drugs Advisory Board and of the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions on the state of the problems of drug use in Bulgaria*

⁷⁹ On the data of Customs Agency– Ministry of Finance, *Information by Customs Agency in relation to preparing the Annual Report for 2008 of the National Drugs Advisory Board and of the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions on the state of the problems of drug use in Bulgaria*

“RED NOSE” to counteract the illegal cocaine trafficking from Latin America to Europe smuggled by airway passengers. On a signal to the Bulgarian customs and to the police a Bulgarian trafficker was detained with 13.943 kg of cocaine in Lima, Peru.

In the second trimester of 2007 the “MPPH” Department at the Customs Office at Sofia Airport carried out 2 operations under the code names “**CHEAP CHECK**” – for collecting intelligence information about suspected passengers on low-cost flights and “**CHECKMATE**” – for enhanced monitoring of postal and courier shipments to risk destinations. During the second operation 15 cases of smuggling of drugs- mainly products of cannabis, catin and hallucinogen mushrooms were detected.

For the period October-November 2007 and international operation was conducted named “**ATAMAN**”, on the initiative of the World Customs Organization, to counteract the illegal traffic of drugs and precursors by international postal and express courier shipments. As a result of the operation **14 seizures of drugs** (hashish, marijuana, psychoactive substances and ecstasy) were made. Also 14 attempts of illegal export of 1,310,450 number of tablets and 2,900 ampoules of anabolic steroids, 6 attempts of illegal export of antiques and movable culture monuments, as well as 3 cases of fake ID were foiled.

In the fourth trimester of 2007 2 international land operations were carried out on the initiative of the **ICHOE** Center for combating cross-border criminality in Bucharest. The first one was carried out under the code name “**LOGO**” to counteract the illegal traffic of synthetic drugs from Western and Central Europe to Turkey and the countries from the Middle East, and the second operation- under the code name “**PREVENT VI**” -to combat the illegal traffic of heroin along the Balkan Route. As a result of the enhanced control at the state borders 3 attempts of illegal drug traffic of a total quantity of 12.335 kg of heroin and marijuana were foiled; 1 case of smuggling of 39 kg gold and silver jewellery; 12 cases of cigarette smuggling and 1 case of hunting patrons smuggling.

The specialized departments for combating drug trafficking at the Customs Agency and CD COC – MI under the leadership of the Supreme Cassation Court participated in the organization and conductance of **7 international “controlled” shipments**, 6 of which of drugs and 1 of fake ID documents. On the territory of Bulgaria and abroad **83 kg amphetamines, 39 kg of heroin, 0.5 kg of cocaine and 13 tons of acetic anhydride were seized**. As a result of the successfully conducted “controlled” shipments a total of **29 persons** were arrested- members of organized criminal groups realizing the traffic⁸⁰.

The total quantity of drugs and precursors seized by the Chief Directorate for Counteraction of Criminality, Public Order Preservation and Prevention /CDCCPOPP/ for 2007 amounts to 2,446.942 kg, 6,509 tablets, 57,000 l and 69.51 decares of cannabis green mass. In comparison to the preceding year the quantity of heroin seized has grown nearly twice – 99.563 kg in 2007 vs. 49.943 kg in 2006. The quantity of cannabis green mass has grown threefold – 18.00 decares in 2006 vs. 69.51 decares in 2007. The quantities seized for the rest of the illicit drugs mark a tendency of significant reduction⁸¹ (see *Table 10-3*).

The analytical information from the CCPOPP indicates that for the last 10 - 12 years the traffic and distribution of drugs have been directed mainly outside Bulgaria. **Currently a trend is observed of re-directing the distribution inside the country and making the young people a market for the illegally distributed drugs**⁸².

The trend of increasing the number of drug users and drug dealers for the synthetic drugs from the end of 2005 still continues for 2007 – 139 persons for 2006 and 157 for 2007⁸³.

⁸⁰ On the data of Customs Agency– Ministry of Finance, *Information by Customs Agency in relation to preparing the Annual Report for 2008 of the National Drugs Advisory Board and of the National Focal Point for Drugs and Drug Addictions on the state of the problems of drug use in Bulgaria*

⁸¹ On the data of the Chief Directorate for Counteraction of Criminality, Public Order Preservation and Prevention- National Police Service- Ministry of the Interior, *Report-Analysis of the enterprises from the Annual Plan for the Activity of the 07 Drugs Department at O“KП”-CDCCPOPP over the period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2007*

⁸² On the data of the Chief Directorate for Counteraction of Criminality, Public Order preservation and Prevention – National Police Service- Ministry of the Interior, *Report –Analysis of the implementation of the enterprises of the Annual Plan for the Activity of 07 drugs Department” at O“KП”-CDCCPOPP over the period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2007*

⁸³ Report on the activity of the National Police Service bodies- for Drugs generally for the country over the period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2007 and 01.01.2006 – 31.12.2006

Table 10-3

DRUGS SEIZED BY CCPOPP OVER THE PERIOD 2006-2007

Quantity of drugs seized (kg)	Current period 2007	Preceding period – 2006	Increase/reduction
Of them: heroin	99.56342	49.94258	increase
marijuana	2,339.40	8,094.88	reduction
Amphetamine-substance	6.81117	261.09422	reduction
- amphetamine	57,000.00	-	-
- precursors in liters			
Amphetamine-tablets -			
- Ecstasy-tablets -	5,786	8,703	reduction
- barbiturates	723	938	reduction
cocaine	1.16737	2.18888	reduction
Cannabis green mass in dca	69.51	18.00	increase

Source: Report-analysis on the implementation of the enterprises from the Annual Plan for the Activity of 07 Drugs Department нпу "О"КП"-CDCCPOPP over the period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2007

Price/Purity

Price at Street Level

On the data of the Chief Directorate for Counteraction of Criminality, Public Order Preservation and Prevention and of the Regional Police Departments for 2007 no change in the prices of heroin, cocaine and amphetamines was registered. An exception to this is the maximal price of a tablet of ecstasy which rose by 10 € in 2007 (5 € in 2006 and 15 € in 2007), the minimal price has not changed - 2.5 €. The minimal and the maximal prices for a gram of cannabis grass for the preceding year were as follows: – 2.5 € minimal price and 15 € maximal. (See *Table 10-4*)

The data presented by the local bodies⁸⁴ however, show considerable differences for the prices of all types of narcotic substances which are sold in Bulgaria compared to the data presented by the law-enforcing bodies. The difference in the minimal price for 1 g of heroin between the two sources is 5 € and for the maximal price the difference is 10 €. The price of 1 g of cocaine in the different towns of the country varies from 40 € as a minimal price to 77 € as a maximal price being 10 € less than the minimal price indicated by the law-enforcing bodies and 17 € more than the maximal price. The variations in the price of amphetamines begin by 10 € minimal price on the data of the Regional Advisory Boards on Drugs and reach 25 € maximal price. The price indicated by the law-enforcing bodies for this type of substance is 13 € and the maximal price registered is 15 €. On the information of the town reports for 2006 and for 2007 the price of a marijuana cigarette is of stable upper limit of 1.29 €, while for the same period a difference was registered for the minimal price of 0.11 € of increase in 2007.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Source: The annual reports on the state of the drug-related problems of the Regional Drugs Advisory Boards in the towns of Pazardjik, Bourgas, Smolyan. Sliven, Blagoevgrad

⁸⁵ The data for the price of marijuana cigarette from the law-enforcing organs for 2007 are not shown

Table 10-4

PRICES OF THE MAIN DRUGS AT STREET LEVEL FOR 2006-2007 FOR GRAM IN €

Substance	Minimal price 2006	Maximal price 2006	Minimal price 2007	Maximal price 2007
Heroin	15	30	15	30
Cocaine	50	60	50	60
Amphetamines	13	15	13	15
Ecstasy	2.5	5	2.5	15
Marijuana			2.5	15

Source: Chief Directorate National Police Service and Chief Directorate for Counteraction of Criminality Public Order Preservation and Prevention at the Ministry of the Interior

Purity at street level and composition of the drugs / tablets

The data given in *Table 10-5* were taken from the data base of the Drugs Department of the Forensic Science Institute /FSI/-Ministry of the Interior and have been described according to the criteria in Standard Table 14 of the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addictions in respect to the purity and the composition of the illicit drugs at street level. The information about the synthetic drugs is of national range, because these drugs are only tested at the laboratory of the FSI. While the substances heroin, cocaine, cannabis, and hashish are analyzed in 12 other regional laboratories all over the country.

Table 10-5

PURITY AT STREET LEVEL OF SOME ILLICIT SUBSTANCES IN 2007

	Size of the excerpt	Minimum	Maximum	Average value	Mode
Cannabis resin (%THC)	7	0.2	8.6	3.4	5
Cannabis grass (unspecified type), (%THC)	291	0.1	8.4	1.5	1
Heroin brown (%)	127	1	67	22	25
Heroin white (%)	----	----	---	--	---
Cocaine (%)	19	9	67	23	30
Crack (%)	----	----	----	----	----
Amphetamines (%) ⁸⁶	571	0.2	68	10	20
Metamphetamines (%)	16	4	38	22	25
Ecstasy (mg of MDMA base per tablet/unit)	146	16.5	163	70	60

Source: Forensic Science Institute- Ministry of the Interior- MI

⁸⁶ Because in Table 14 there are no separate rows for the rate of content of amphetamine in objects in the form of powder or tablets the rate of amphetamine in the table is given without distinguishing between these two forms.

In 2007 the trend of increasing the number of objects containing tablets with MDMA vs. amphetamine-containing tablets still continues. The number of cases with tablets, containing chlorphenyl piperazine (CPP), is also considerably larger than it was in 2006. Besides the number of tablets containing more than one psychoactive substance has also grown, the number of the tablets analyzed containing besides MDMA also CPP and MDEA, amphetamine and N-ethyl MDA has also grown. This tendency, of mixing more than one psychoactive substance, is observed with the powder substances as well, where there are cases of combining amphetamine separately with c-heroin, codeine and cocaine.

Concerning the adjuvant substances (admixtures), there is no great difference in the narcotic substances analyzed such as – caffeine, procaine, chinin, pyramem, benzocaine, theophylline and paracetamol in the amphetamines; caffeine, paracetamol and pyramem in heroin; tetracaine, phenacetine and benzocaine in cocaine.

An increase of the vegetable materials containing narcotic substances is also observed, Mushrooms have been analyzed containing psilocybin and psilocin. Seeds from Hawaiian rose have been analyzed (ARGYREIA NERVOSA BABY WOODROSE), containing lysergamide which is not monitored according to the UN Convention and to the Drugs and Precursors Control Act. Neither are the seeds of the Peganum harmala plant (Syrian rue) containing the alkaloids harmine and harmaline. There is one case registered of analysis of finely ground vegetable material from the plant Mimosa Hostilis, in which the active component is DMT and another one, with proven 5-methoxy dimethyltryptamine availability in it (5-MeO-DMT).

Still another analyzed object of vegetable origin is ground vegetable mass which is identified as originating from the San Pedro cactus, which also contains the hallucinogen mescaline. There are also 2 cases of analysis of plants- Peiot cactuses, in which the presence of mescaline was proved.

The foliage of a cocaine shrub, in packets for tea or in sweets, containing leaves from coca or extract from such was also analyzed in 2007.

Part B: Selected issues

11. Sentencing statistics

No new data available.

Part C

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