



European Monitoring Centre
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

Prevalence and patterns of drug use among the general population (GPS)

Annual key-indicator expert meeting 2018

Monitoring drug use in European recreational settings

João Matias



Mapping studies in Europe...

Measuring 'drug use' in recreational settings in Europe

Quite inclusive... clear geographical pattern

- Studies specifically on recreational settings assessing drug use levels
- Studies on drug use that highlight use in nightlife settings although not being studies carried out in nightlife settings (e.g. GDS, NPS use study in Poland)
- Studies not specifically on quantifying how many use drugs but that find high levels of use in recreational settings (e.g. wastewater-based epidemiology)
- Part of an integrated approach (e.g. Antenne Netherlands, TREND in France)



Mapping studies in Europe...

Measuring 'drug use' in recreational settings in Europe

Setting/context: 'NTE' spaces (bars, club venues, music festivals, 'on the streets'), online,...

Method: surveys, wastewater, indirectly from hair testing, drug checking...

Measurements:

How many? Limited data on frequency and amounts used

Characteristics? Looking at typologies of users

Amounts? Scarce info on type of product

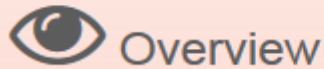


The buyer beware

- Night-time Economies (NTE) research continuing to dominate, although other 'recreational settings' are of interest. A wider range of recreational settings should be considered.
- Clear definitions of 'drugs', or 'nightclubs', and of 'recreational settings' are required if research is to be meaningful and more easily replicated.
- Studies focus mostly on risks, forgetting pleasure
 - It's in the drugs field, the only context on which the word 'recreational' has a negative connotation



Conclusions: good practices



Overview

Issues, main options and European picture



Evidence

What does the available evidence say?



Implications

Implications for policy and practice

Q Summary of the available evidence

Good practice in responding to drug problems in nightlife settings

The available research evidence and expert opinion suggest that a balanced approach is needed to tackle the drug- and alcohol-related health and social problems associated with recreational nightlife. There is less consensus on individual measures, although all of the following items merit consideration as part of a comprehensive response in this area:

- co-ordinated multicomponent interventions involving community stakeholders, generic health and emergency services, regulatory bodies, and policing and law enforcement;
- environmental strategies, such as providing chill-out rooms or free drinking water;
- training staff in these venues;
- rapid emergency response measures;
- early warning systems and monitoring of substances being consumed, including drug-checking services;
- provision of prevention and harm reduction materials — although on their own they are unlikely to be effective.

Overall, the evidence for the effectiveness of interventions to reduce alcohol-related harm is stronger than that for drug-related harm.

Setting the scene...

- There remains significant gaps in our knowledge about drug use in recreational settings, particularly in terms of those 'recreational settings' which remain difficult to access (e.g. domestic party spaces)
- Young clubgoers are getting fed up with being 'targeted'?
- What a 'recreational setting' is depends on multiple intersectional factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality and so on...
- Trendspotting component: sometimes the easiest and fastest way to assess new trends
- Those using drugs in recreational settings are not a homogenous group. Typologies of the characteristics of drug users in recreational settings developed from statistical data capture this diversity and enable better designed interventions relevant to each of these groups.



Setting the scene...

- Such surveys are a robust source of information on drug use, as well as a crucial aspect of multi-method drug monitoring systems aimed at drug prevention but also at reducing harm amongst users
- Biomedical data, drug-testing and wastewater analyses emerging as new sources of data to capture drug use in specific locales/events. Results should be treated with caution, and supplemented with survey research where possible
- The conceptualisation and measurement of drug use by in situ targeted surveys of *specific types of NTE venue* (pubs, bars, nightclubs, but also live music spaces) may also be improved. Studies may attempt to adopt common methodologies.



Setting the scene...

- To discuss and share experiences in developing new methods and tools for identification and reporting of new trends and threats in recreational settings.

Specific topics to be presented/discussed:

- i. To present the on-going work from the EMCDDA on the subject and how this can be used in the future;
 - ii. Round table on national experiences:
 - a) Pitfalls & negative experiences
 - b) Recommendations that come from own experiences
 - c) Defining what information still lacks, nevertheless the already performed efforts & approaches
 - iii. Trend spotting on the use of new psychoactive substances in recreational settings: discussion on questionnaire design
- iv. Using the collected data for the evaluation and development of specific interventions





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Thank you


Further questions:


Joao.Matias@emcdda.europa.eu

@JPCiMatias



| emcdda.europa.eu

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