Drug market and crime workbook

2022

France

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Domestic drug market (summary of T1.1.1 & T1.1.2)

Herbal cannabis is the only illegal substance for which production is seen in France. While growing herbal cannabis in metropolitan France was mainly the work of small, self-sufficient growers, the situation began to change at the start of the 2010s with the emergence of cannabis factories run by organised crime groups and with individuals investing in its commercial production.

Given France's geographic position at the heart of Western Europe, it is a transit area for the main illegal substances (cannabis, cocaine, heroin and synthetic drugs) produced worldwide. This is also the case due to its overseas departments on the American continent (Guadeloupe, Martinique and Guiana) close to the major cocaine production (Colombia, Bolivia, Peru) and transit zones (Venezuela, Brazil, Suriname).

Cannabis resin used in France comes from Morocco and usually transits through Spain while herbal cannabis is imported mainly from Spain, the Netherlands and Belgium.

The cocaine used in France is produced mainly in Colombia. It mainly passes via sea routes through the south via Spain (Algesiras) and the north via the Netherlands (Rotterdam), Belgium (Antwerp) and to a lesser extent Germany (Hamburg). In recent years, cocaine, transiting in particular through Brazil and Venezuela then via the French West Indies, has been entering the European continent through the port of Le Havre. There has also been a major increase in air trafficking by "mules" between Guiana and mainland France since 2011.

The heroin used in France mainly comes from Afghanistan (brown heroin) and passes *via* the Balkans (Turkey, Greece, Albania). the Netherlands, ahead of Belgium, is the main platform which supplies French dealers.

Synthetic drugs (MDMA/ecstasy, amphetamines) used in France also mainly come from the Netherlands.

National drug law offences (summary of T1.2)

In 2021, the total number of persons accused of narcotic use in France is 189 713 (against 132 046 in 2020). 8 out of 10 people accused of a drug-related offence corresponded to simple use. The number of people involved in trafficking offences in 2021 in mainland France was 17 822, an increase compared to 2020 (14 791), while the number of user-dealers was 16 845 (compared to 14 844 in 2020). In 2010, 90% of the arrests concerned the simple use of cannabis, 5% simple heroin use, and 3% simple cocaine use (since 2010 national statistics no longer provide details of arrests for each substance).

Key drug supply reduction activities (summary of T1.3)

The National Plan for Mobilisation against Addictions (2018-2022) emphasises the importance of implementing a genuine national strategy based on better coordination between the various services involved (police, customs, Gendarmerie, justice). Money laundering, a key issue in a dynamic French drug market, is a major priority. The challenge of international cooperation, in particular, has also been placed at the forefront, notably the important role of French overseas departments (Guiana, Martinique and Guadeloupe, together with the French overseas territory Saint-Martin) in supplying the mainland market with cocaine. France's international actions are mainly based on the networks of internal security attachés, customs attachés and liaison magistrates in the main production and transit countries. Lastly, emphasis is placed on prevention to stop young people, especially minors becoming involved in local trafficking, firmly established in large cities.

In February 2020, the Ministry of the Interior officially announced the creation of OFAST (Anti-Narcotics Office), which succeeds OCRTIS (Central Office for the Repression of Drug-related Offences). This creation corresponds to the State's desire to increase cooperation between the various services in charge of law enforcement: police, customs, military police [*gendarmerie*] and justice. OFAST is organised into three divisions, "strategy", "intelligence" and "operations", to respond to the three missions "understand", "target" and "act". They are headed respectively by a customs administrator, a military police [*gendarmerie*] colonel and a divisional commissioner. The deputy head of the office comes from the judiciary. At a territorial level, OFAST has eleven regional offices and five territorial detachments. Since September 30, 2020, 104 operational drug intelligence units (CROSS) have been deployed throughout the country, one per department. One of their missions is to establish a map of the deal points located in French territory and their evolution on a quarterly basis. In 2021, the government announced the creation of a reporting portal for citizens to provide the police and *gendarmerie* with information about narcotic trafficking and its actors. This information is then transmitted to the CROSS for processing. This scheme should be fully operational during 2022.

In addition, the extent of trafficking in ports and airports has led OFAST and Customs to create CROSS THEMATIQUES covering port, airport and postal activities.

In addition, in order to increase the confiscation of criminal assets linked to drug trafficking, the government decided on 1 January 2021 to strengthen the resources of the Agency for the Recovery and Management of Seized and Confiscated Assets (AGRASC) by opening two regional offices in Lyon and Marseille. In 2022, two more regional branches are being established.

T1. National profile

The purpose of this profile is to provide a commentary on the drug supply chain within your country.

T1.1. Drug market

The purpose of this section is to summarise the basic structure of the drug market in your country.
Namely it should provide a commentary on

- Sources of drugs in your country: international sources of the drug, trafficking routes, domestic production/cultivation
- Information available on the wholesale drug market
- Information available on the retail drug market
- The numerical data submitted through ST11, ST13, ST14, ST15, ST16

Note: Please focus on the main/most important drugs in your country.

T1.1.1. Please describe any domestic production of drugs within your country by drug.
For synthetic drugs please include also processing stages such as tableting operations.

Herbal cannabis is the only illegal substance for which production is seen in France. Although herbal cannabis has mainly been cultivated by individuals at home and on a very small scale in mainland France, the situation is changing. At the start of the 2010s, “cannabis factories” began to appear. These factories are overseen by organised crime and use the investment of individual people in commercial cultivation (INHES and MILDT 2009).

The main producers of herbal cannabis can be classified as follows:

- Small growers, whose number is estimated between 150,000 and 200,000 persons (OFDT 2019), who produce for themselves or for their immediate circle of friends or family.
- Individuals getting involved in relatively large-scale commercial herbal cannabis production (several dozen plants).
- Criminal groups implementing real production units ("cannabis factories") with up to several thousand plants (Gandilhon *et al.* 2019), with an increasing involvement of groups coming from so-called "sensitive" suburban areas that originally were specialised in importing and distributing cannabis resin.

T1.1.2. Please comment on any available information on the routes of trafficking for drugs imported into your country whether in transit or not. Information relevant to this answer includes:

- origin
- most recent country prior to your country
- any other information on trafficking routes as well as the mode of transport

Owing to its geographical position at the heart of Western Europe, France is a transit area for certain illegal drugs. The South-to-North route is used for the transit of cannabis resin, produced in Morocco and transiting via Spain (where it is stored and redistributed), notably destined to supply Northern European markets. The North-to-South route is used for the transit of synthetic drug shipments through France (ecstasy, MDMA), produced in the Netherlands and Belgium, destined for Spain or Italy. This is also the case for heroin, stored in the Netherlands (Rotterdam, Maastricht, etc.), in transit to Spanish and Italian markets.

Cannabis

The cannabis resin smoked in France comes almost exclusively from Morocco and usually transits through Spain. In 2018, of the 85.3 tonnes of resin seized by the police, almost 84% came from Spain (OCRTIS 2019). It may also arrive directly from Morocco notably via the Tangier-Marseille sea route.
Since 2013, other routes for cannabis resin destined for the European and French market have appeared, notably from Libya. Hence, dealers taking advantage of the collapse of the state are said to be increasingly using Libya as a transit country, as evidenced by the scale of seizures in the eastern Mediterranean (Europol 2017). To a more marginal extent, France is seeing the emergence of markets for cannabis resin from Afghanistan and herbal cannabis from Albania, the latter becoming a major producer of this substance in Europe (Weinberger *et al.* 2019).

Cocaine

The cocaine used in France mainly comes from Colombia, the largest producer worldwide (UNODC 2022). To reach France, once the European continent has been reached, it mainly passes through the south via Spain (Algesiras) and the north via the Netherlands (Rotterdam) and Belgium (Antwerp). Over the past few years, the port of Le Havre became a major gateway for cocaine to France. This change is explained by the connections between the Antilles port of Fort-de-France and Le Havre in a context where the French West Indies are becoming a major developing zone for cocaine destined for France and Europe (Gandilhon 2014b; Gandilhon and Weinberger 2016). The substance leaves Colombia, passes through Venezuela (Weinberger 2013), and reaches Martinique via the Caribbean sea. The shipping line between the port of Santos in Brazil and Le Havre also seems to play an increasing role in supplying the French market. Therefore, in 2018, for the second consecutive year, Brazil was the first country of origin for cocaine seized in France. Guiana is increasingly establishing itself as a major source of cocaine destined for France or, to a lesser extent, for the Netherlands. There has been a major increase in air trafficking by "mules" between Guiana and mainland France since 2010.

Heroin

The heroin used in France mainly comes from Afghanistan (brown heroin) and mostly passes *via* the Balkans (Turkey, Greece, Albania). White heroin originating from the Golden Triangle (Thailand, Myanmar and Laos) is also imported; however, this phenomenon is unclear due to its marginal nature.
In recent years, some of the Afghan heroin has been trafficked on African routes, passing through East Africa (Kenya), or even South Africa. By 2018, South Africa was the fourth largest source country for heroin of known origin (OCRTIS 2019). The Netherlands, ahead of Belgium, is the main platform which supplies French dealers.

Amphetamines and MDMA/ecstasy

Synthetic drugs (MDMA/ecstasy, amphetamines) used in France mainly come from the Netherlands, the leading production zone in Western Europe. France is also a transit country for dealers particularly targeting the United Kingdom and Spain.

New psychoactive substances (NPS)

NPS, which circulate on the French market via the web, are mainly produced in Asia, particularly in China and India.

T1.1.3. Please comment on any available contextual information on trafficking within your country. Information relevant to this answer includes:

- range and relative importance of different products
- size of transactions
- smuggling methods
- organisation

The cannabis, cocaine and heroin markets are the three largest illegal drug markets in France. In 2018, the global sales of illegal drugs (cannabis, cocaine, heroin, MDMA/ecstasy, amphetamines) was estimated at 2.7 billion euros (Insee 2018).

In 2020, the OFDT published a new estimate of cannabis revenue in France based on the 2017 expenditures of 18-64-year-old and 17-year-old cannabis users. This would amount to at least 1.2 billion euros, an increase of 72% compared to 2010 (Spilka and Legleye 2020).

The wholesale and semi-wholesale levels of these drug markets are controlled by major organised crime networks. The police departments highlighted the stranglehold of the North African scene (specialising in cannabis resin) on cocaine trafficking, to the detriment of the Corsican-Marseille scene. The explanation lies in Spain's major role as a gateway and rebound area for cocaine destined for the rest of Western Europe, where French criminal gangs are well established. It is in the south of the Iberian Peninsula that they wholesale trade resin from metropolitan wholesalers and launder the money made from trafficking. Police observations also report the growing importance of Barcelona, as a large secondary market for cannabis resin in French organised crime.

Another factor is the increasing demand in France and the multiplicity of the social circles of cocaine users. Over the past few years, networks located in certain neighbourhoods with a high proportion of social housing and specialised in cannabis resin, are targeting working-class groups. In Marseille for instance, cocaine is present and available in all points of sale located in the northern districts of the city specialising in the resale of cannabis resin and herbal cannabis.

Alongside these "large" networks exist a myriad of small trafficking channels run by user-dealers, directly supplied by the Netherlands and Belgium.

The French drug market is increasingly influenced by the three overseas departments located near cocaine production areas, particularly Colombia.

Latin America and the West Indies supply mainland France through two main means: maritime and air.

Maritime supply is by far the most prominent and keeps growing. Almost 84% of cocaine seizures made in 2021 (against 57% in 2020) are reported to be carried out through this means, with containers playing a major role, which remain traffickers' preferred concealment method (OFAST 2022a).

Martinique and Guadeloupe are no longer only areas where free base cocaine is used (crack) but it now plays an increasingly important role in supplying the mainland market through maritime routes (Obradovic 2020). In this respect, given its status as France's leading port for container transportation, linking it to the French West Indies and Latin America, the port of Le Havre is an important gateway for cocaine on the French and European markets, as are other major ports in northern Europe, such as Rotterdam, Antwerp and to a lesser extent Hamburg. 2021 was marked by the highest level ever recorded, with 10.3 tonnes seized compared to 3.9 tonnes in 2020. However, based on the cocaine seized in these three ports, Le Havre remains much less affected than the Dutch and Belgian ports. In 2021, 89.5 tonnes of cocaine were intercepted in the port of Antwerp and 70,5 tonnes in the port of Rotterdam. Other ports in France saw major cocaine seizures in 2021: Dunkirk with 1.5 tonnes, i.e. an increase of 37% compared to 2020, and Saint-Nazaire.

The second major vector is air travel with about 23% of cocaine seizures in 2020 and 30% in 2019. At the heart of the air routes, the role of French Guiana has continued to grow, to the point that the route from Cayenne to Metropolitan France is one of the main routes for bringing cocaine into France. The strengthening of air traffic control between Paramaribo, the capital of Suriname, and Amsterdam is probably one of the major causes of French Guiana's growing role in the supply of cocaine to Metropolitan France. As the only airport with direct daily flights to France (and therefore Western Europe), French Guiana is also a strategic point for Surinamese organised crime to export cocaine via Cayenne and its international airport. As a result, French authorities have increased control between Cayenne and Paris since the implementation of the "mule" Plan in 2018 (a plan to fight against *in corpore* trafficking).

In parallel with the predominant role of Surinamese drug traffickers, in the past few years, criminal gangs in Guiana have become more empowered. They recruit French "mules" to travel to Paris, so as to set down roots in small and medium-sized metropolitan cities. In 2018, police services recorded an increasing collaboration of these networks with the criminal community that controls the cocaine and crack market. The cocaine which passes via Guiana is of equivalent quality (average purity of about 65% in 2017) but half the cost (5 000 euros per kg on average) as that purchased in the West Indies or in the Dominican Republic. In view of this price and given the poverty faced by the inhabitants, Guyanese channels could increase in scale in the next few years. Similar phenomena to those observed in Martinique currently in play, with the emergence of a local market and bartering of cannabis resin for cocaine.

The law enforcement services have observed an increase in postal cocaine trafficking originating from French overseas departments such as Guiana and the French West Indies (Guadeloupe and Martinique). Generally speaking, in 2021, drug seizures by Customs on express and postal freight rose by 35% to 20.9 tonnes, illustrating "the increased use of this vector by criminal networks" (DGDDI 2022).

Heroin trafficking in France is highly fragmented and relatively diversified. In addition to Turkish criminal organisations, there are small groups from the outskirts of the metropolitan areas that supply the Netherlands. As for the developments concerning cocaine, user-dealer micro-networks, sourcing their supplies in the Netherlands and Belgium, play an important role in explaining the availability of the heroin in France, particularly in the north-east of the country with extensive use in rural and periurban areas (Gandilhon and Cadet-

Taïrou 2015). The past few years has seen the significantly strong presence of criminal Albanian gangs in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, operating in both the wholesale and retail market. They tend to take root also in other regions such as Bretagne and Nouvelle-Aquitaine.

T1.1.4. Please comment on available information on the wholesale drug and precursor market.
Information relevant to this answer includes:
- range and relative importance of different products
- size of transactions
- common prices
- product transformation
- adulteration
- the nature and organisation of buyers, sellers and intermediaries

As France is not , with rare exceptions, a zone in which the production of synthetic drugs takes place, problems related to chemical precursors are marginal (Gandilhon 2014a).

Regarding the issue of wholesale markets, the most important point is the growing control of the cocaine market by organised crime networks which import cannabis resin.

In 2021, the median price per kilogram of cocaine in metropolitan France is €32 500 against €33 500 in 2020. Since the peak of the 2010s was reached in 2014, the wholesale price has decreased by more than 7%. A wholesale cocaine market exists, notably in the French West Indies and French Guiana, where prices are lower as dealers obtain supplies at €7 500 per kilogram.

In 2021, the wholesale price of cannabis resin reached €3 500 per kg and €4 250 for herbal cannabis. Since 2010, herbal cannabis and cannabis resin prices have increased by +40% and +54.5% respectively.

The wholesale price of heroin increased, from €13 625 in 2020 to €14 500 in 2021 (Ministère de l'Intérieur and Police nationale 2022).

T1.1.5. Please briefly comment on available information on the retail drug market.
Information relevant to this answer includes:
- nature and organisation of buyers, sellers and intermediaries
- range and relative importance of different products
- size of transactions
- common prices
- purity of products
- market locations and settings

Two main types of organisations control the retail market for illegal drugs:

- so-called “housing estate” networks, which are established in neighbourhoods located at the periphery of major cities; these networks deal either in wholesale or in retail sales;
- user-dealers of varying reach.

Note on prices/purity from the SINTES scheme
The average and median contents calculated from the SINTES analysis results are indicative and are not representative of the average contents of products circulating in French territory. As the SINTES collections were not carried out randomly, they observe specific collection patterns (selection bias). Moreover, the number of samples is too small to be representative. In order to express the statistical data in the most accurate way and to facilitate their understanding, the interquartile ranges are included. SINTES data should therefore be treated with caution like other data from epidemiological surveillance scheme.

Cannabis

According to the OFAST (Anti-Narcotics Office), the median price for herbal cannabis in 2021 was approximately €10 per gram and ranged from €7 to €12 per gram. The median price of cannabis resin is €8 (see table in T2.1).

The average potency of seized cannabis resin (STUPS© data) is slightly higher in 2021, 27.7% compared to 26.5 % in 2020.

In terms of the OFDT's SINTES scheme, the average THC potency of the analysed resin samples was 13.23% (IQR: [5.0 – 17.3]). This drop in THC content is explained by an increase in the collection of samples with suspected adulteration with synthetic cannabinoids.

The observation is the same for herbal cannabis, with an average content of 6.3% (IQR: [1-11]) for 28 samples with THC quantification performed.

Suspected adulteration is established when THC levels are low despite reports of adverse effects suggestive of acute cannabinoid intoxication.

On developments in the cannabis market:

The central Customs laboratory noted a 38% increase in their seizures of cannabis, mainly due to so-called 'wellness' products (oil, gum, etc.). While this phenomenon has been perceived in the European Union for almost two years (EMCDDA 2020), it was in 2020 that this phenomenon became so significant in France. The legal status of CBD in the country may have hindered its development (See T.3.1 of the 2021 'Drug policy' and 2021 'Legal framework' workbooks).

Other changes include:

- Since the end of 2020, there has been the development of a concentrated resin offer, reported by the Rennes and Lyon sites and the online discussion forums. Rather than varieties with a high THC content, it is more a question of resins obtained by repeatedly passing through several increasingly fine sieves, or of artisan techniques allowing the maximum amount of THC to be extracted (Ice-O-lator, Rosin, 3x...). This offer is available at prices higher than on the traditional resin market. This phenomenon was confirmed in 2021 by the increase in the number of seizures in France of "filtered" resin, the THC levels of which can reach 40 to 60% for prices two to three times higher than conventional resin (Ministère de l'Intérieur and Police nationale 2022).
- It should be noted that herbs with low (or no) THC levels are in circulation. Within this category, there are two types, one involving cannabis plants of a CBD-friendly variety, with relatively high levels of CBD, and another with virtually no phytocannabinoids present. Several hypotheses have been considered to explain the circulation of this cannabis:
  - Some of the seizures of so-called CBD cannabis are made in the vicinity of Switzerland and may originate from the Swiss market, and may correspond to crops that have been found to have a THC content of 1% or more, which is the threshold for illegality of the product in Switzerland (where the legal THC content must be strictly below 1%).
  - The market for cannabis from Albania could also be involved in this supply, regardless of cannabinoid levels.
  - Some of these low-grade types of cannabis could also be the result of the development in France of products obtained by extraction (i.e. BHO-Butane Hash Oil- products generating *wax*, *shatter*, or highly dosed resins, which are still not very common in France. Once the plant heads have been penetrated by the substance used for extraction, they may continue to appear visually intact.

- Finally, the circulation of cannabis that has a low level of natural cannabinoids and containing synthetic cannabinoids is also common, most often MDMB-4in-PINACA. Although this product has been identified in several regions at the beginning of 2021 (Detrez 2020), it is primarily concentrated around the Rhône basin.

  The adulteration phenomenon observed in 2020 continued in 2021, with adulterated products being collected throughout the country.

Cocaine

According to OFAST, the median price per gram of cocaine hydrochloride has been steadily decreasing since 2018. It was €65 in 2021 compared to €66 in 2020, €67 in 2019 and €70 in 2017/2018.

The average seizure content (retail, semi-wholesale, wholesale) was 66.1% in 2021, up from 63.5% in 2020, with a maximum rate of 100% (SNPS 2022). The average potency of cocaine seized in the street (<10 g) in 2019 was 60.3%.

In 2021, the average cocaine content of the samples collected under the SINTES scheme (n = 71) remained stable at 67.4%. However, the median of the samples was 73.3%. In addition, 25% of the quantified samples had a content higher than 85% (interquartile range: [49.5 – 85]). These observations should be seen in the context of the SINTES collection reasons related to unexpected and adverse effects.

Heroin

In 2021, the median price for a gram of brown heroin was approximately €33 according to the OFAST. This was the lowest level since 2010, when it was around €40.

The average potency of brown heroin seizures in 2021, at 16.9%, was significantly lower than in 2020 (20.3%). The average potency of heroin seized in the street (<10 g) in 2019 was 21.9%. The samples collected as part of the SINTES scheme had an average potency of 21.4% (70 samples, including 58 quantifications) compared to 13.5% in 2019.

The collections made via the SINTES scheme (n = 59) confirmed the 2020 observations of low heroin levels in the samples, with a median level of 11% and a mean level of 16.3% (interquartile range: [7.7 – 21]).

MDMA/ecstasy

It is necessary to indicate the galenic form in which the substance is sold: tablets, powder or crystal.

In 2021, according to OFAST, the average price for an ecstasy tablet is stable at 10 euros, compared to previous years. This retail price does not fully reflect the reality of the retail market since users tend to buy several dozen tablets at a time to lower the price per unit. By doing so, consumers can lower the unit price of a tablet to €2.50.

The data obtained from the seizures of drugs analysed by the National Forensic Science Institute in 2021 give an average content of MDMA tablets amounting to 31.5%, against 33.3% in 2020 (SNPS 2022). In 2021, the average ecstasy tablet contained 141 mg of MDMA, i.e. well above the toxicity threshold evaluated by the OFDT at 120 mg.

In 2021, 17 MDMA samples were collected by the SINTES scheme. The majority of the samples collected were in tablet form (n = 12). The most concentrated samples were 98% powder and 83% crystals. The average content of the tablets (n = 11 quantifications) was 36.9%.

New psychoactive substances (NPS)

In 2020, the OFDT exceptionally does not have the figures from the national police and the gendarmerie. However, the number of seizures continues to rise, with 1 666 seizures or

checks[1] linked to 126 different NPS[2] (compared to 1 255 seizures and checks in 2019 for 111 NPS).
The top three of the most frequently observed families has changed slightly. While cathinones are still the most represented (485 seizures involving 27 molecules), cannabinoids are now ahead of arylcyclohexylamines, which had not been the case since 2015 (471 seizures involving 25 molecules and 334 seizures involving 7 molecules respectively).
Ketamine (303 seizures, 728 kilos), 3-MMC (305 seizures for 5 kilos), and DMT (29 seizures for 24.5 kilos) remain in the top 10 seized substances since 2014. 4-MEC disappears from the ranking and other molecules appear for the first time, or reappear, such as GHB (33 seizures, for 5 litres), JWH-210 (223 seizures, 16 kilos) and 2C-B (32 seizures for 2 022 tablets).

The top ranking of the most frequently seized substances shows some discrepancies with the top ranking of the substances seized in the largest volumes, as is the case for NPS in the strict sense, such as 3-CMC (28 seizures, 9 kilos), euthylone (12 seizures 3.7 kilos), alpha-PHP (14 seizures 3.1 kilos) and MDMB-4in-PINACA (14 seizures 2.7 kilos), a cannabinoid particularly involved this year in important signals on the territory (See A T.1.2.4 of the 2021 'Drugs' workbook).

Classification is also made difficult by the 'tablet' form, which was very common in 2020 (it is then counted in units and not kilos), as is the case for 2C-B, but also for 1cP-LSD (12 seizures, 307 units), 3-MMC again (22 seizures, 250 units), or mephedrone (4-MMC, 203 units in 1 seizure) - which has hardly been observed for several years.

It is mainly medicines (otherwise monitored by the EMCDDA), such as promethazine (used in the manufacture of 'lean'), drug-derived NPS, such as flualprazolam (derived from the legally marketed benzodiazepine alprazolam), or medicines without a marketing authorisation (such as carisoprodol), which considerably change the nature of the most important seizures in terms of quantities (see T3).

T1.2. Drug related crime

The purpose of this section is to provide a commentary on the context and possible explanations of drug law offences within your country.

T1.2.1. Please comment on drug law offences data.
Please structure your response around supply data (if possible distinguish between trafficking, cultivation/production, wholesale/ retail, and other supply offences) and possession/use data.

In 2021, the total number of persons accused of narcotic use in France (metropolitan France and overseas) is about 190 000. Aside from these drug use offences (more than 80% of the total), the police services and French *Gendarmerie* accused almost 17 000 individuals of drug use-resale and 18 000 of trafficking-resale without the use of narcotics. In 2010 (since 2010 national statistics no longer provide details of arrests for each substance), 90% concerned simple cannabis use, 5% heroin use and 3% cocaine use.

In 2020, according to the Ministry of Justice, DLO convictions for main offences (single or multiple) represented 11.5% of all criminal record convictions, i.e. around 54 000. These offences can be broken down as follows: illicit use (54%), possession-acquisition (42%), supply and sale (3%), trade-transport (1%), import-export (32 cases), helping others use (27 cases) and other DLOs (236 cases). In the majority of possession-acquisition offences, offenders were sentenced to prison (85%), while using offences were mainly sanctioned by fines (77%). The number of fixed penalty notices amounted to 6 550 in 2021.

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T1.2.2. ***Optional***. *If possible, summarise any available data on drug related crime outside of drug law offences (i.e. possession/supply), e.g. money laundering, crimes undertaken under the influence of drugs (e.g. driving under the influence of drugs) or as a result of the use of drugs, crimes committed to fund drug use, crimes between drug market actors (e.g. violent crime, including homicide).*

Driving under the influence of narcotics has been an offence in France since 2003. These prosecutions represent almost 24% of road safety offences, but their numbers doubled between 2013 (18 827) and 2020 (43 546). To compare, in 2020 convictions relating to driving under the influence of alcohol account for 37% of road safety offences.

In 2019, the amount of criminal assets apprehended in connection with drug offences increased to almost €78.5 million, compared with almost €63 million in 2018.

The amount of the *Fonds de concours* ("Narcotics" support fund), consisting of the proceeds from the disposal of property confiscated in criminal proceedings in drug cases, amounted to 19.8 million euros in 2020.

Since March 2021, the French Ministry of Justice has deployed territorial branches of the Agency for the Recovery and Management of Seized and Confiscated Assets (AGRASC) in Lyon and Marseille to increase its effectiveness. Two more are to be implemented by the end of 2022.

T1.3. Drug supply reduction activities

The purpose of this section is to summarise the drug law enforcement activities for drug supply reduction.

T1.3.1. Please comment on drug supply reduction activities within your country. Please structure your response in terms of: a) the key priorities of supply reduction
b) areas of activity of supply reduction
c) organisational structures/co-ordinating bodies

Please note that information on specialist drug law enforcement (eg. drug squads) is part of a separate focused data collection.

The 2018-2022 National Plan for Mobilisation against Addictions (see T.1.1.1 of the 2018 'Drug policy' workbook) includes a major line of action for stepping up measures against trafficking, with the following objectives:

- Strengthening the coordination of services which combat drug trafficking
- Diversifying the strategies for combating trafficking, notably by increasing the criminal analysis capacity of police criminal investigation departments
- Strengthening international cooperation
- Reinforcing anti-money laundering measures and an asset-based penalties of legal investigations
- Developing prevention, particularly among young people to stop them being drawn into trafficking (Gandilhon 2016).

As regards operational aspects, see T1.3.1. of the 2021 'Drug market and crime' workbook.

T2. Trends

The purpose of this section is to provide a commentary on the context and possible explanations of trends in drug markets and crime within your country.

T2.1. For the most important drugs in your country, please comment on the possible explanations of short-term trends (5 years) and/or long-term trends (greater than 5 years) in the following aspects of the drug market:

- seizures (by weight bin if possible)
- price (wholesale and retail if possible)
- purity (wholesale and retail if possible)

Examples: changes in police practices, patterns of drug use, interruptions to the supply of drugs or the emergence of substitutes or alternatives.

Over the past 20 years, the supply of drugs in France has undergone major changes due to the wide diversification of the products on offer and a much more competitive market. According to the Ministry of the Interior, by the end of 2021, France, including its overseas territories, had nearly 3 325 “dealing points”, defined as permanent and structured sales outlets located in the public sphere (Premier ministre 2022). This leads to a growing diversity of actors involved in the supply side, while the development of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) favours a renewal of the ways in which networks and new relationships with users are organised.

The level of seizures shows that the quantities intercepted have risen sharply over the last twenty years, although the rates of increase differ according to the substance.

Table 1: Average annual quantities seized in France by decade (OFDT/OFAST)

	1991-2000	2001-2010	2011-2020
Cocaine (kg)	1 841	5 387	11 109
Heroin (kg)	446	738	900
Ecstasy (tablets)	657 220	1 254 725	1 071 254
Cannabis (herbal + resin) (kg)	49 175	69 577	78 983
Ratio herbal/cannabis (%)	5.5%	5.6%	23.3%
Cannabis resin (kg)	46 465	65 642	60 541

Several phenomena explain the more visible use of ICTs over the past decade. On the one hand, urban renewal policies in certain peripheral neighbourhoods of large metropolises have aimed not only to renovate the buildings, but also to reduce the deal areas. These developments have led many networks to build up customer files in order to maintain contact with users and thereby ensure the sustainability of the deal. Home deliveries have also been developed, notably with "cocaine call centres" and/or central purchasing offices. In the Paris region, the phenomenon has developed considerably in Seine-Saint-Denis, where the drug squad dismantles several dozen purchasing offices each year. Their activity is not limited to cocaine. Cannabis (in its resin or herb form) and ecstasy may also be offered. Most of these central purchasing offices are extensions of the activities of the points of sale within deprived neighbourhoods, which are clearly adapting to the needs of inner-city customers in a more competitive market. The phenomenon is developing in most French cities. An online survey conducted in 2021 among current cannabis and cocaine users (at least one use in the past year) showed that a significant proportion of them, especially those who use most intensively, are likely to use home delivery: 32% and 35% respectively. This was also the most common method of obtaining cocaine (unpublished data). In addition to home deliveries, the use of the Internet is also encouraging postal drugs trafficking. More recently, the dismantling of French or international sales platforms has also demonstrated the sustainability of this market. In France, online operations are carried out by the National Intelligence and Customs Directorate (DNRED) in collaboration with the Central Office for combatting Crime related to Information Technology and Communications (OCLCTIC) of the Central directorate of the judicial police (DCPJ). This does not only concern NPS, but also affects substances such as cocaine, MDMA/ecstasy, heroin, and even methamphetamine (Cadet-Taïrou *et al.* 2015).

The development of door-to-door sales does not mark the end of the traditional model of direct resale established in working-class neighbourhoods. It is constantly adapting to the changing aspirations and profiles of consumers. Therefore, the single-product model is disappearing.

Even if some traffickers still focus on cannabis resin, the transition to a multi-product offer based on two main products: cannabis resin and cocaine, which are more and more systematically combined, is reflected in:

- the *outsourcing* of certain functions such as product transportation, which is increasingly reserved for specialised teams;
- the multiplication of storage locations, or even "*zero stock*", intended both to overcome storage problems and to cushion the effect of large seizures;
- the *flexibility* of work through the use of day work, or shift work when the place of resale is open 24 hours a day and the sellers take turns. When it comes to recruiting a flexible workforce, criminal networks draw from the large pool of young people, sometimes with an immigrant background, living in precarious situations on the outskirts of metropolises. The TREND sites in Lille, Paris and Rennes have paid particular attention to the recruitment of minors who have dropped out of school. Another strategy used by traffickers is to increasingly recruit lookouts, dealers and, since 2020, team leaders, from outside the neighbourhood or even the city or region where the point of sale is located. The presence of women in networks also seemed to increase in 2020 and was no longer confined to subordinate functions (small supply missions, minders). Some are employed as dealers and, more often, as home deliverers. In the latter case, they are hired to protect themselves from the risk of arrest by the police, who focus their control more on men.

Cannabis

As in the rest of Europe, the cannabis market in France is changing, with an increasing share of herbal cannabis in consumptions. In 2020, 61% of cannabis smokers declared that they had smoked herbal cannabis during their last use *vs* 37% who declared that they had smoked resin (Le Nézet *et al.* 2021). On the supply side, the situation has also changed with the increased role of Spain, which has become a major producer of herbal cannabis, as a major source of supply for the French market. For example, in 2019 almost 90% of the herbal cannabis seized in France came from Spain. The Covid-19 crisis seems to have further accelerated trends with the shortage of cannabis resin, noted by law enforcement in the first half of 2020 and the influx of herbal cannabis from Spain. In 2020, cannabis resin seizures decreased by more than 32%, while herbal cannabis seizures increased by 54% to reach an unprecedented level of 46 tonnes after the record of almost 30 tonnes reached in 2018. Herbal cannabis accounted for almost 48% of total cannabis seizures in 2020 (up from 6% in 2012), although this level is largely the product of the exceptional circumstances associated with the Covid-19 epidemic.

The closure of Morocco's borders for much of 2020 and the border between Spain and France has obviously complicated the activities of cannabis resin trafficking networks. For instance, cannabis seizures on the French market fell by almost 50% in March and April 2020 (5.6 tonnes) compared with the same period a year earlier (11 tonnes) (See the 2021 'Drug market and crime' workbook).

Furthermore, in 2021, plant seizures, although declining, were still at historically high levels of over 100 000 units. 55% of seizures were made in the overseas territories, with Polynesia in first place ahead of New Caledonia and La Réunion. In Metropolitan France, the Nord department, where industrial cannabis cultivation has been booming, had the highest number of plant seizures. Cultivation is dynamic in the south-west and south-east of France, particularly in the departments in which the large metropolitan areas of Bordeaux, Toulouse, Montpellier and Marseille are located, where demand is strong. In 2021, the number of dismantled cannabis cultivation sites increased from 3 148 to 3 236 compared to 2020, of which 70% were for *indoor* production (OFAST 2022b).

Cocaine

The cocaine market, driven by a steady increase in demand over the last twenty years and a more recent growth in supply, is very dynamic. In 2020, the lockdown measures affected the functioning of the market, with the banning of party events, the suspension of airlines to French

Guyana and the closure of the border with Belgium (making it more difficult for the trafficking networks to supply the Netherlands, where the main wholesale cocaine market in Western Europe is located).

In 2021, after three consecutive years of decline (13 tons in 2020 compared to 15.7 tons in 2019 and 16.4 in 2018), cocaine seizures reached an all-time high of 26.5 tons (OFAST 2022a). This level is well above the average level observed between 2011 and 2020, i.e. over 11 tonnes. In 2018, crack cocaine seizures reached one of their highest levels with over 20kg. This substance is mainly trafficked in Paris and the Parisian region. It began in the late 1980s and has continued ever since. One of its characteristics is the continuity of the players who are at the heart of this trade and the dominance of networks from Senegal. With no real known hierarchy, they are very small in size, not very violent and have a virtual monopoly on the supply of crack cocaine in Paris. The cocaine supplied to these networks is believed to originate mostly from West Africa, via drug mules using the commercial airborne route. A supply chain from Guiana would also emerge (Cadet-Taïrou *et al.* 2021).

The second significant player in drugs trafficking in the Île-de-France region is the housing estate networks, particularly in the Seine-Saint-Denis department. Although the resale of crack cocaine, compared to cannabis resin or cocaine, is still marginal, it is likely to increase in the future given the strong growth in cocaine use over the last ten years, particularly among a more socially integrated population.

Heroin

The heroin market, based on the proportion of annual users in the population aged 18-64, is much smaller than the cocaine market (0.2% for heroin *vs.* 1.6% for cocaine) (Spilka *et al.* 2018). However, it is one of the largest markets in Western Europe. With regards to availability, OFAST noted an increase in the amount of heroin in the territory, while highlighting the great regional disparities in this area. Since 2018, the Lille metropolitan area experienced an increase in trafficking and is becoming a national centre for the wholesale resale of heroin for the French networks.

Refer to the "Market and Crime" Workbook 2021 for the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on the market. The strong recovery of the market at the end of the first lockdown period, expressed by a tenfold increase in seizures between May and November, resulted in the highest level of seizures ever recorded in France in 2020, at 1.1 tonne. This recovery was confirmed in 2021 with 1.3 tonnes seized, a record level. The average purity of the product, as measured by the samples analysed by the National Forensic Science Institute (INPS now SNPS) in 2020, is the highest it has been for 10 years. It decreased in 2021, but remained at a much higher level than at the beginning of the decade.

Synthetic drugs

The synthetic drugs market is still dominated by MDMA/ecstasy. However, for the past few years, major changes have been observed with the development of the "crystal" form, which has attracted strong interest from younger generations (under 25s) in the recreational setting; this phenomenon transcends both cultural affiliation and social class. Furthermore, after years of decline, there has been a resurgence in the use of tablets in the recreational setting, whether in the commercial scene (clubs, discotheques) or the alternative scene (free parties, teknivals, etc.). This re-emergence goes hand in hand with a genuine marketing strategy by producers with larger, more potent, 3D tablets.

Moreover, the supply network is organised via user-dealer micro-networks who obtain supplies in Belgium and the Netherlands where most of the European production units are based. The high level of seizures of ecstasy tablets in 2021 (see Table 2) clearly confirms the dynamics of this market whose strong demand keeps the price of the tablet at a high level (in contrast to the "crystal" form for which the price per gram has rather tended to fall since 2010).

Methamphetamine is very scarce on the mainland French market due to the lack of structured supply. It is distributed within tightly restricted social circles. In 2014 and 2015, however, this substance was identified in the Bordeaux (Aquitaine) region via the SINTES scheme. According to user claims, it originates from purchases on the deep web, where it sells for between 20 and 30 euros as capsules, and between 80 and 120 euros per gram. On the other hand, a methamphetamine market has been developing in French Polynesia for the last ten years, see section T4.2 below (Simon and Valiergue 2022a).

The SINTES scheme collected 8 samples of methamphetamine in 2021 with very high levels (average 88.6% and median 92.5%, interquartile range: [81.75 – 98.6]. Of the 8 samples collected, one was purchased on the darknet.

New psychoactive substances (NPS)

The number of identifications of new molecules has been stable between 2019 and 2020, whereas it has been in drastic decline since 2014, when it peaked (57 identifications compared to 16 in 2018). Thus, 23 new molecules were identified in 2020 (25 in 2019), with a classic over-representation of cathinones, cannabinoids and hallucinogenic NPS (indolalkylamines, arylxyclohexylamines, others…). 32 NPSs were identified in France in 2021. As in the previous year, the increase was driven by the diversification of available synthetic cannabinoids and hallucinogenic NPSs. Note the identification in France of 5 new synthetic opioids of the benzimidazole family, which carry a high risk of intoxication due to their potency.

If in terms of volumes, whether in kilos, litres or units, the most important products remain DMT, ketamine, GHB, 2C-B, 3-MMC and JWH-210 (a product whose recurrence of visibility over the last 4 years is all the more remarkable, as it has not subsequently been evidenced in the territory); the usual classification is strongly modified by particular medicinal substances, such as Gabapentin, Pregabalin, etc. (see section T3). (See section T3. “New developments” of the 2021 ‘Drug market and crime’ workbook).

Table 2: Quantities of drugs seized (in kg), from 2017 to 2021 and changes 2020/2021 (in %)

Drugs seized	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Evolution 2020/2021 (%)
Cannabis: resin	67 359	85 354	74 340	50 248	72 400	+ 44
Cannabis: herbal	20 220	29 800	29 952	46 277	39 500	- 14.6
Cannabis: plants	137 074	138 561	183 034	115 365	101 771	- 11.8
Heroin	658	1 100	1 073	1 132	1 300	+ 15
Cocaine	17 500	16 400	15 761	13 145	26 500	+ 101.5
Crack cocaine	na	20	na	na	na	
Amphetamines	238	208	na	706	226	- 68
Methamphetamines	122	126	na	na		
Ecstasy (tablets)	1 130 839	na	1 699 848	1 227 876	1 454 085	+ 18.4
LSD (blotter)	794	2 979	na	na	na	na
Ketamine	277	249	na	na	na	na

Source: OSIRIS (OFAST)
na: not available

Table 3 : Change in retail median drug prices (in euros) since 2000

	TREND*				OFAST**			
	2000* **	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**

Heroïn	76	40	40	40	35	30	33	30
Cocaine	108	78	71.5	70	70	67	66	65
Ecstasy (tablets)	19	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Cannabis resin	na	5.5	6	6.5	7	8	8	8
Herbal cannabis	na	10	9.5	9.5	10	9	10	10
Amphetamines	19	15	12	15	15	15	15	12.5
LSD (blotter)	8.5	10	na	na	10	10	10	na

*Source: * TREND ethnographic observations / ** OFAST Price Barometer / *** The prices shown for the year 2000 have been converted into constant euros / na: not available*

*T2.2. **Optional**. Please comment on the possible explanations of long-term trends and short-term trends in any other drug market data that you consider important.*

The spread of e-liquids containing synthetic cannabinoids, described in previous reports (see T.2.2 of the 2020 'Markets and Crime' workbook and also discussed in the 2021 'Drugs' workbook), has continued since 2018, and now concerns the south of the country. This spread is more low-key, seen through police cases or SINTES collections, rather than through local health agencies, as was previously the case.

In 2021, the SINTES scheme collected 21 vaping liquids. After analysis, synthetic cannabinoids were identified in all samples analysed (n = 21). As with the adulterated cannabis samples (resins and herbal cannabis), MDMB-4en-PINACA was the synthetic cannabinoid most frequently found in e-liquid collections (n = 11, or 52%). These were mainly product advertised as CBD that were mis-sold.

Since 2021, there has been an upsurge in the collection of *Buddha Blues* or *Pète-ton-crâne* [Crack your skull], which cause damage to pupils in schools. On analysis, synthetic cannabinoids are frequently identified, but sometimes they are accompanied by new benzodiazepines such as clonazolam. Raising the awareness of school health professionals and active monitoring schemes, as well as the publication of articles on this phenomenon, make it possible to increase the detection of adverse effects associated with this type of product, leading to serious adverse effects.

The French department of Mayotte located in the Indian Ocean is also characterised by a specific practice of consumption of synthetic cannabinoids (Cadet-Taïrou and Gandilhon 2018). Since 2011, a new substance, known locally as “*la chimique*” or “chemical tobacco” (a mixture of synthetic cannabinoids, tobacco and alcohol) has emerged on the street market and is overwhelmingly affecting vulnerable young men. Although Mayotte had somewhat escaped the scourge of traditional criminal networks due to its geographical location away from the main trafficking routes, the Internet has found a way to overcome its isolation.

Since 2021, the SINTES scheme has been collecting samples of *chimique* in La Réunion. 9 samples were collected, with ADB-BUTINCA (n = 8) and MDMB-4in-PINACA (n = 1) identified as cannabinoids.

Following the ban on 3-MMC in the Netherlands on 28 October 2021, SINTES collections show that it is being replaced by other cathinones, mainly 3-CMC and 4-MMC. This replacement is mostly unknown by the purchasers but a small part of users are aware of this substitution, as a result of the Dutch ban. This transfer results in an increase in the number of mis-sales related to alleged 3-MMC collections and also in the occurrence of unexpected and adverse effects associated with them.

T2.3. Please comment on the possible explanations of short- and/or long-term trends in the following drug law offences data:
- supply (if possible distinguish between trafficking, cultivation/production, wholesale, retail, and other supply offences)
- possession/use

Examples: changes in law enforcement practices, government priorities, patterns of drug use, sources of drugs.

*T2.4. **Optional**. Please comment on the possible explanations of long term trends and short term trends in any other drug related crime data that you consider important.*

In terms of narcotics, the control of demand is a major aspect of law-enforcement service (police) activities. Hence, the majority of accused individuals are drug users, mainly for cannabis (as an indication, arrests currently represent less than 4% of the estimated number of active cannabis users). Between 2010 and 2020, the total number of individuals accused of narcotic use in metropolitan France increased from nearly 138 000 to nearly 190 000. After a decrease between 2014 and 2020, they rose again in 2021, partly due to the entry into effect of the criminal fine procedure (see T. 3.1), which will account for almost 103 000 suspects by the police and *gendarmerie* in 2021 (See the 2022 'Legal framework' workbook).

T2.5. Please indicate notable trends or important developments in the organisation, coordination and implementation of drug supply reduction activities in your country over the past 5 years.

T3. New developments

The purpose of this section is to provide information on any notable or topical developments observed in drug market and crime **since your last report**.

T1 is used to establish the baseline of the topic in your country. Please focus on any new developments here. If information on recent notable developments have been included as part of the baseline information for your country, please make reference to that section here. It is not necessary to repeat the information.

T3.1. Please report on any notable new or topical developments observed in the drug market and crime in your country since your last report.

In 2020, the illicit drug market in France has been heavily impacted by the measures taken by the State and the European Union to contain the COVID-19 epidemic. The most visible impact occurred during the first lockdown from 17 March to 11 May 2020, during which seizures of the main drugs (resin, herbal cannabis, cocaine, heroin) fell sharply compared to March-April 2019 (OFAST 2020). In a report published on 15 June 2020, OFAST estimates that activities linked to trafficking have fallen by around 30 to 40% (OFAST 2021).

In 2021, it seemed that the market had regained a strong dynamic in view of the record seizures of cocaine and heroin and very high seizures of cannabis (herbal cannabis and resin) made by the police, the *gendarmerie* and Customs in French territory.

2021 was also marked by the dismantling in the Montpellier region of a kitchen lab producing synthetic drugs (MDMA, 3MMC, methamphetamine, alpha-ph, etc.) run by an individual who sold his production via the darknet and in socially integrated environments. This phenomenon remains an exception in France.

T4. Additional information

The purpose of this section is to provide additional information important to drug market and crime in your country that has not been provided elsewhere.

T4.1. ***Optional****. Please describe any additional important sources of information, specific studies or data on drug market and crime. Where possible, please provide references and/or links.*

Since 2020, the TREND scheme has reported the growing visibility of 3-MMC at festive parties in clubs and discotheques (in Paris, Bordeaux, Marseille and Lyon, for example). Consumed by sniffing or ingestion, this synthetic cathinone with both euphoric and empathic effects is perceived by users as combining the effects of cocaine and MDMA/ecstasy for a price per gram (€20 to 40) that is lower than those of the above-mentioned substances. The use of 3-MMC was previously almost exclusively observed among men who have sex with men (MSM). Its spread would be favoured by its increased presence in the range of products available (resin, herbal cannabis, cocaine, MDMA, ketamine, etc.) in the context of home sales. As with GHB/GBL in 2018, this diffusion among other groups takes place at parties attended by both MSM familiar with the product and other drug users who are going to experiment with it (Gérome 2021).

T4.2. ***Optional****. Please describe any other important aspect of drug market and crime that has not been covered in the specific questions above. This may be additional information or new areas of specific importance for your country.*

Methamphetamine use appears to be marginal in France. The qualitative observations made by the TREND scheme over the last 20 years have shown that use takes place in circles of insiders, particularly in the context of chemsex, and that certain digital platforms targeting this public are present. There is also use within the Asian community, particularly from Thailand and the Philippines, especially in the Paris region, as reported by law enforcement agencies, but there is still very little known about this phenomenon. In this landscape, French Polynesia seems to be an exception.

This overseas territory, located in Oceania, has seen an increase in the use of this substance over the past twenty years, particularly among adolescents (13-17 years old), for whom a survey carried out in 2016 showed that more than 3.3% of them had used methamphetamine before. Qualitative surveys, in the absence of epidemiological data on drug use in the adult population, show that the typical user profile is a man aged 25-30 years (Simon and Valiergue 2021).

At the beginning of the phenomenon, given the high price of the substance, use was limited to the wealthy strata of the population, and then use started to spread to more modest strata of the population. This process has been fuelled by the creation of an increasingly structured local supply, which is essentially supplied in the United States by mules carrying the product in their luggage or *in corpore,* using the airline between Papeete and Los Angeles. The difference between the purchase price in the United States, between $10 and 50 per gram, and the retail price on the Polynesian market, €80 on average for 0.04 g (€2 000 per gram), would ensure that traffickers make large margins and contribute to the development of the phenomenon in a territory marked by a high poverty rate. In fact, the statistics on arrests show that most of the people arrested for trafficking belong to the working classes (employees, labourers, unemployed).

However, the law enforcement services mention a professionalisation of the supply as shown by the diversification of trafficking vectors (container ships), the dismantling of local laboratories and the problems linked to money laundering generated by trafficking. The development of the market and the problems it brings in terms of public health and social stability of the Polynesian territories, favour an awareness of the public authorities in Polynesia on the need to take into consideration the phenomenon in a context which mobilises significant parts of the population.

From 11 to 13 May 2022, the security attaché of the French Embassy in the United States, in collaboration with the Customs advisor, organised a seminar on the sources and routes of synthetic drugs in the South Pacific, thanks to MILDECA's drug support fund. The trade was mainly in methamphetamine or "ice", now the main drug intercepted in the world, with the quantity seized tripling between 2013 and 2019 from 100 to 325 tonnes (UNODC 2021). French Polynesia is particularly affected by the threat posed by this product, both in terms of health and safety, with more than 10 000 consumers for 276 000 inhabitants.

Organised in Los Angeles in the presence of the Consul General of France and the President of MILDECA, this seminar brought together French police officers, magistrates and Customs officers (from France, but also from French Polynesia and New Caledonia), as well as representatives of the Australian, New Zealand and American security services, and a Mexican analyst. An informal contact group was to be set up to share information and good practice on ice trafficking, particularly in the South Pacific.

The OFDT, for its part, has devoted a special issue to the question in its publication *Drugs, international issues*, based on a field survey conducted by two post-doctoral students as part of a partnership between the *Maison des sciences de l'homme du Pacifique* (Pacific House of Human Sciences) and the Polynesian Ministry of Health (Simon and Valiergue 2022b).

T5. Sources and methodology

The purpose of this section is to collect sources and bibliography for the information provided above, including brief descriptions of studies and their methodology where appropriate.

T5.1. Please list notable sources for the information provided above.

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Besides these bibliographic references, the main source of information is data from law enforcement services (police, Customs and *Gendarmerie*), which are centralised on an annual basis by the Anti-Narcotics Office (OFAST). These data indicate, among other things, the quantities of illegal drugs seized in France, the prices and information on the structure of the trafficking networks.

Additionally, the TREND scheme provides qualitative information on methods for gaining access to substances and on micro-trafficking.

Internet sales of new psychoactive substances, whether classified in France or not, have given rise to different forms of flows. Their documentation has required the contribution of additional sources of information. The Customs Laboratories Joint Service (SCL) and the National Forensic Science Institute (SNPS) are the main bodies that collect information on the number of seizures, their quantities and the identification of the substances involved.

Analyses of seizures by law enforcement laboratories provide the main source of information on the composition of illegal substances in France.

The National Forensic Science Institute (SNPS) and the Forensic Sciences Institute of the French Gendamerie (IRCGN) are the main bodies that provide information on the active ingredient content of the main substances circulating in France. The data collected by the SNPS and the IRCGN are grouped in the STUPS© software (“*Système de Traitement Uniformisé des Produits Stupéfiants”* or Standardised Narcotics Processing System). An information and prevention tool, STUPS© provides not only information to investigators and magistrates but also to health services such as the French Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (OFDT), particularly in the event of the discovery of a new product or a high dosage.

Analyses resulting from collections from drug users within the framework of the OFDT's SINTES system complete the knowledge of the composition of the products.

T5.2. Where studies or surveys have been used please list them and where appropriate describe the methodology?

Methodology

Data on prices

Two resources make it possible to collect unit sale prices of illegal substances:

- A periodic OFAST survey based on data collected at 69 sites throughout metropolitan France records the median semi-wholesale and retail prices of certain illegal substances (heroin, cocaine, cannabis and, ecstasy);
- The TREND scheme, on the basis of interviews and observations with drug users, workers in harm reduction facilities (CAARUD) and workers in techno party settings of each site of the scheme. For each substance under consideration (illicit or diverted), the current retail price as well as the lowest and highest price observed are reported.

STUPS© national database

French National Forensic Science Institute (SNPS)

Created in 1986, the French National Register of Drug Seizures (FNDS) initially focused on heroin analyses; from 1990, cocaine samples were also studied, before being extended to all drugs, as part of the STUPS© (harmonised narcotics processing system) database, initiated in 1999.

Five national forensic science institutes (Lille, Paris, Lyon, Marseille, Toulouse) and the Forensic Sciences Institute of the French *Gendarmerie* (FSIFG) add their analyses to this database, accompanied by photos, logos, etc. in order to identify the substances in circulation.

National Criminal Record [*Casier judiciaire national*]

Ministry of Justice, Sub-Directorate for Statistics and Studies (SDSE)

Data from the National Criminal Record makes it possible to describe the punishable offences, the court order procedures, the diversity of responses provided by the courts (convictions imposed, but also alternatives to prosecution, fixed penalty notices, dismissal, etc.), the nature and quantum of sentences and the socio-demographic profile of people who have been convicted since 1984 (when the record was automated). The Criminal Record is based on a detailed classification, grouping around thirty offences into seven classes that are different from the police categories (regarding drug law offences (DLO)): use, possessing-procuring, trafficking, transport, supply and sale, helping others use and other DLO. Since 2017, the system for using the National Criminal Record and recording data has been undergoing a revision in order to improve the quality of conviction statistics. This revision concerns the determination of the main offence (a convicted person may be convicted of more than one offence), which is what the statistics are based on. The Ministry of Justice has been suggesting their data be revised since 1995 on this new basis.

SINTES: National Detection System of Drugs and Toxic Substances

French Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (OFDT)

The SINTES scheme is based on collecting samples of illegal and legal substances directly from drug users. The products collected are forwarded to one of the 8 forensic laboratories working in partnership with OFDT, to determine their composition. At the same time, drug users are asked to complete a questionnaire on the context of use for the substance and its purchase price. This makes it possible to directly correlate the price and purity of a given substance.

The SINTES scheme has three sections:

- The observation section provides an annual overview of the composition of a particular illegal substance. The SINTES observation scheme relies primarily on the French TREND network.
- The monitoring section comes under the health alert system. It is based on the TREND network sites as well as sites outside of this network that have signed agreements. The contributions made in this section are limited exclusively to the identification of newly circulating molecules and up-to-date information on the composition of certain substances at a given moment and in a given location.
- Since 2010, SINTES has been exploiting the Internet to monitor for new psychoactive substances (NPS) and document them.

TREND scheme: Emerging Trends and New Drugs

French Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (OFDT)

The aim of the TREND scheme, which was established in 1999, is to provide information about illegal drug use and users, and on emerging phenomena. Emerging phenomena refer either to new phenomena or to existing phenomena that have not yet been detected by other observation systems.

The system is based on data analysed by eight local coordinating sites (Bordeaux, Lille, Lyon, Marseille, Metz, Paris, Rennes and Toulouse) that produce site reports, which are then extrapolated to a national level:

- continuous qualitative data collection in urban settings and the party scene, by the local coordination network, which has a common data collection and information strategy
- the SINTES scheme, an observation system geared towards detecting and analysing the toxicological composition of illegal substances
- recurring quantitative surveys, particularly among CAARUD clients (ENa-CAARUD)
- partner information system results
- thematic quantitative and qualitative investigations that aim to gather more information about a particular subject.