

Legal framework workbook 2025

France

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Table of Contents

T0. Summary	3
T1. National profile	3
T2. Trends	8
T3. New developments	11
T4. Additional information	13
T5. Sources and methodology	14

T0. Summary

Please provide an abstract of this workbook (target: 500 words) under the following headings:

- Summary of T.1.1.1 on the characteristics of drug legislation and national guidelines for implementation within your country (are offences criminal; what is the range of possible penalties; are there alternatives to punishment)?
- Summary T1.1.2: on how do the penalties vary by drug / quantity / addiction / recidivism?
- Summary T1.1.3: are there distinct laws for controlling NPS?

In France, the regime applicable to the use of drugs and trafficking was established by [Law no 70-1320 of 31 December 1970](#) on health measures to fight drug addiction and combat the trafficking and use of poisonous substances. The provisions of this law were since codified in the French Public Health Code (CSP in French).

The penalties incurred by the perpetrators of drug-related offences depend on the severity of the offences committed (see T1.1.1), thus the illicit use of drugs (Art. L.3421-1 of the Public Health Code) is less severely punished than drug trafficking (Art. 222-34 et seq. of the Penal Code) or related offences (money laundering, failure to provide proof of resources corresponding to one's lifestyle, etc.), because the perpetrator is considered by the law to be a delinquent as well as a patient. The criminalisation of drug use is reflected in a wide range of responses: some suspend or cancel prosecution but are still sanctions, such as alternatives to prosecution or fixed penalty notices; others result in legal proceedings, which may lead to a fine or other types of sentence (or even, sometimes, imprisonment).

Although French law makes no distinction between drugs as some countries do, it distinguishes between the illicit sale and supply of narcotics to a person in light of their personal use and other situations. Repeated offences are more severely sanctioned (see T1.1.2).

There are no specific laws regulating new psychoactive substances (NPS). The rationale for classifying a NPS on the list of narcotics is both individual (each prohibited substance is named on the list) and generic (See T1.1.3).

In 2024, new developments include the extension of the trial on the use of medical cannabis, the addition of nitazenes, CBD derivatives, and some new synthetic cannabinoids on the list of narcotics, a ban on disposable electronic cigarettes; and a review of the terms and conditions for prescribing tramadol/codeine (see T3).

T1. National profile

T1.1. Legal framework

The purpose of this section is to summarise the basic penalties and other responses to the offences of use, possession for personal use, supply (including production) of illicit drugs.

T1.1.1. Please describe the characteristics of drug legislation and national guidelines for implementation within your country (are offences criminal; what is the range of possible penalties; are there alternatives to punishment)?

In France, narcotics-related offences are classed as crimes or offences according to their severity and the penalties incurred.

- **The illicit use of narcotics**

The illicit use of any substance or plant classed as a narcotic is an offence that will result in penalties that may go up to one year in prison and a fine of €3 750 (Art. L.3421-1 of the Public Health Code).

By virtue of the principle of opportunity applicable in French law, the facts must be considered on a case-by-case basis in order to adopt a penal response adapted to the local specificities and to each individual situation, taking into particular consideration the nature of the product used, its quantity, and the personality and criminal record of the individual.

The range of penal responses includes 3 types: the fixed fine which is issued directly by the security forces, alternatives to prosecution which are decided by the public prosecutor and legal proceedings which lead to the decision of a judge.

1/ Criminal fixed fine (AFD)

Created by [Law 2019-222 of 23 March 2019](#) establishing the 2018-2022 justice programme, the criminal fixed fine has been added to the system of criminal responses to illegal drug use since 1 September 2020. This fine is set at an amount of €200 (reduced to €150 and increased to €450 depending on the time taken to pay). It is issued by the police, without recourse to a magistrate, to people caught using a narcotic or being in possession of small quantities. This payment puts an end to legal proceedings but is considered a criminal conviction and is recorded as such in the criminal record. Article L.3421-1 of the Public Health Code provides that any illegal use of drugs may be subject to a fixed fine. In practice, it is reserved for situations in which the use does not appear to require the referral of the user to a health facility. Criminal policy instructions issued by the Public Prosecutor, specifying the nature and quantities of products that may be affected by the procedure, provide a framework for the action of law enforcement officers.

2/ Alternatives to prosecution

For all offences, including narcotics use, the law provides for alternatives to prosecution: the public prosecutor, instead of referring the case to court, offers one or more alternatives to the individual. If the individual accepts the alternative measure(s) and carries it(them) out, the public prosecutor closes the case with no further action. However, non-compliance, even partial, with these alternatives may result in a summons to appear before the court with a view to a ruling.

Alternatives may or may not be recorded in the criminal record.

Measures not recorded in the criminal record are provided for in Article 41-1 of the Criminal Procedure Code. As far as narcotics use is concerned, they mainly consist of the following:

- a reminder of the law by a judicial police officer or by a delegate of the public prosecutor;
- referral to a healthcare, social or professional organisation: in this context the person is invited to contact a treatment structure; he/she may also be required to complete an internship or training course at a healthcare, social or professional organisation, in particular, a course to raise awareness on the dangers of drug and alcohol use carried out at his/her expense;
- a court-ordered treatment measure.

The measures recorded in the criminal record are fixed penalty notice measures described in Article 41-2 of the Criminal Procedure Code. A fixed penalty notice measure, proposed by the public prosecutor, must be accepted by the individual and approved by a judge. In this context, a fixed penalty fine may be ordered, unpaid community service for a maximum of 60 hours, court-ordered treatment, a drug awareness course at the user's expense.

3/ Proceedings and court trials

If alternatives to prosecution fail or if there is a justification due to the personality of the defendant, the public prosecutor may decide to prosecute. These proceedings can take several procedural forms, which result in a conviction if the defendant is found guilty. The most common procedural routes used for drug offences are:

- A penal order, a simplified procedure allowing the individual to be judged without appearing before the court. The individual can only be sentenced to a fine. No prison sentence can be pronounced in this context.
- A guilty plea: this allows the prosecutor to propose one or more sentences to an individual who recognises the facts of which they are accused. A guilty plea involves a public hearing during which the sentence proposed by the prosecutor and accepted by the individual must be

approved by the presiding judge. Once proceedings have been initiated, the judge or court may order a prison sentence of up to one year and/or a fine of up to €3 750. These sentences may be suspended or conditional, with a number of obligations (e.g. compulsory drug treatment or court-ordered treatment).

The judge or the court may also impose alternatives to imprisonment, such as court-ordered treatment, a drug awareness course, community service, suspension of driving licence, a ban on carrying out certain activities, the obligation to wear an electronic bracelet.

- **Driving under the influence of drugs**

Driving under the influence of drugs, regardless of the quantity consumed, is an offence punishable by 2 years imprisonment and a fine of €4 500 (Art. L235-1 et seq. of the French Traffic Code). It is accompanied by an automatic loss of 6 points of the driving license.

This offence is accompanied by additional penalties which may also be imposed on the driver at fault (suspension or cancellation of the driving licence, day-fine, community service, road safety and/or drug awareness course, etc.).

In the event of an accident, the fact of having used drugs constitutes an aggravating circumstance. The penalties for accidents and associated damage resulting in total inability to work of up to three months are increased to three years' imprisonment and a fine of €45 000 (Article 222-20-1 of the Penal Code).

It is worth noting that cannabis test positivity is likely to last for up to several weeks depending on the person, and that the law does not establish a threshold, above which an offence has been committed. Similarly, some CBD users are likely to produce a positive THC test result, given that it is a legal substance in France. This reality is currently sparking numerous debates in France (see T3) (Willeman *et al.* 2023).

- **Drug trafficking** (Art. 222-34 et seq. of the French Penal Code)

Drug trafficking covers several offences which are punished differently:

- directing a criminal group with the aim of illicitly producing, manufacturing, importing, exporting, transporting, possessing, offering, transferring, acquiring or using drugs is a crime punishable by life imprisonment and a fine of 7.5 million euros (article 222-34 of the Penal Code);
- the illicit production and/or manufacture of drugs are also crimes, punishable by 20 years' imprisonment and a fine of 7 500 000 euros, which may be increased to 30 years of imprisonment if committed by an organised gang (article 222-35 of the Penal Code) ;
- the illicit export and/or import of drugs is punishable by a maximum of 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of 7 500 000 euros, which may be increased to 30 years if committed by an organised gang (article 222-36 of the Penal Code);
- the illicit transport, possession, supply, transfer, acquisition or use of drugs (trafficking) are offences punishable by 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of 7 500 000 euros (article 222-37 of the Penal Code);
- Equivalent penalties are provided for in the event that drugs are issued through fictional prescriptions or convenience, or in order to facilitate, by any means whatsoever, illicit drug use (Art. 222-38 of the Penal Code);
- the illicit transfer or offer of drugs to a person for personal consumption is an offence punishable by 5 years' imprisonment and a fine of 75 000 euros, with the prison sentence being increased to 10 years when the drugs are, in particular, offered or sold to minors (article 222-39 of the Penal Code). In practice, according to the principle of opportunity, prosecutors and courts take into account the quantity detained and the circumstances of the offence in order to qualify the facts as criminal.

These offences may also lead to the confiscation of all or part of the offender's property or property at his freewill, even if it has not been bought from the proceeds generated by drug trafficking.

A specific investigation regime for drug trafficking cases (Art. 706-80 to 706-106 of the Criminal Procedure Code) is also provided for: extension of police custody to 96 hours with the magistrate's authorisation, night-time searches, sound recordings, controlled deliveries.

- **Other offences related to drug trafficking**

Drug trafficking acts also constitute the customs offence of smuggling, importing or exporting drugs without declaration which, under Article 414 of the Customs Code, is punishable by:

- A prison sentence of a maximum of 10 years;
- The confiscation of the object of fraud, the means of transport and the objects used to conceal the fraud;
- The confiscation of property and assets which are the direct or indirect product of the offence;
- A Customs fine of up to 10 times the value of the fraudulent goods.

Furthermore, the laundering of money from drug trafficking (Article 222-38 of the Penal Code) is punishable by 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of 7 500 000 euros. The maximum sentence is increased to 20 years for laundering of drug production/manufacture and 30 years for importing or producing drugs in an organised gang.

Finally, Article L.321-6 of the Penal Code makes it an offence not to be able to justify resources corresponding to one's lifestyle, or not to be able to justify the origin of property held, while being in habitual relationships with one or more persons engaged in the commission of crimes or offences, in particular relating to drug trafficking, and providing the latter with a direct or indirect profit. The penalty is 3 years' imprisonment and a fine of 75 000 euros.

All these penalties, which are not exhaustive, may be accompanied by various measures involving deprivation or restriction of liberty, professional bans, residence bans or inadmissibility for foreigners.

- **Cannabidiol (CBD) legislation**

Products containing CBD are exempt from the general ban on narcotics, regardless of their form, if they comply with the conditions set by the [legislative order of 30 December 2021](#), issued pursuant to Article L. 5132-8 of the Public Health Code (CSP). This legislative order, repealing the order dated 22 August 1990, has extended the scope of exceptions to the general ban on products derived from hemp: it authorises the cultivation, import, export and industrial use of hemp (or *Cannabis sativa* L.) under the following cumulative conditions:

- Products containing CBD must be derived from plant varieties:
 - listed in the Common Catalogue of Varieties of Agricultural Plant Species or in the Official Catalogue of Species and Varieties of Cultivated Crops in France,
 - and with a THC content of 0.3% or less.
- Regarding their cultivation, only active farmers as defined by current European and national regulations may grow hemp flowers and leaves in France. Only certified seeds may be used. The sale of plants and the practice of taking cuttings are prohibited. Crops do not have to be declared to any authority, except in the case of active farmers wishing to obtain Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) subsidies.
- Hemp extracts, as well as products containing them, must have a THC content of 0.3% or less.

As a result, certain products incorporating hemp extracts and raw parts of the hemp plant, including the flowers and leaves, are permitted under narcotics law if they comply with the conditions listed above. Otherwise, they are subject to penal policy for combating narcotics (the penalties incurred are described [here](#) in French).

- **Legislation on tobacco and alcohol**

See the Prevention workbook.

T1.1.2. How do the penalties vary by drug / quantity / addiction/recidivism?

According to Articles 132-9 and 132-10 of the Penal Code, sentences may be doubled in the event of a subsequent offence, although this does not specifically concern drug law offences (DLO).

T1.1.3. What, if any, legislation within your country is designed to control New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)?

There are no specific laws regulating new psychoactive substances (NPS). The legal framework relating to narcotics applies to NPS, as soon as they are included on the list of substances classified as narcotics. The rationale for classifying a NPS on this list is both individual (each substance is named) and generic: it "starts with a basic molecular structure (not necessarily psychoactive) and stipulates the variants affected by the ban" (Martinez 2013). The decision is taken by the director of the French National Agency for Medicines and Health Products Safety (ANSM).

In a [decision dated 22 May 2024](#) the ANSM opted to include new cannabinoids on the list of narcotics due to the risks and potential for addiction associated with their use. This list includes H4-CBD, H2-CBD and certain synthetic cannabinoids with a chemical core called benzo[c]chromene, such as HHCP, THCP and THCA. Their production, sale and use in particular were therefore banned in France as of 3 June 2024.

In a [decision dated 5 July 2024](#), the ANSM also decided to add nitazenes, a new class of synthetic opioids, to the list of narcotics. Nitazenes are synthetic opioids; they correspond to derivatives of the chemical structure 2-[(2-benzyl)-benzimidazole-1-yl] ethanamine. The production, sale and use of these products have been prohibited since 9 July 2024.

T1.1.4. *Optional. If available provide information in a separate paragraph on other topics relevant to the understanding of the legal framework for responding to drugs in your country, such as: drug driving, workplace regulations, drug testing, precursor control, organised crime legislation relevant to drug trafficking, issues focused on minors. Regulatory aspects of treatment and harm reduction are also of interest.*

The *Mission nationale de contrôle des précurseurs chimiques* (National mission for the control of chemical precursors, [MNCPC](#)) was set up in 1993 to coordinate the implementation of policies to fight the diversion of chemical precursors. Reporting to the Industry Department of the Directorate General for Enterprise, it aims to gather information on precursors used in industries, that are likely to be diverted by drug dealers and to pass it on to investigation and law enforcement services. Classified precursors, whose trade is strictly controlled, as well as other substances identified by the European Union as likely to be used in the manufacture of synthetic drugs are targeted by its action. The MNCPC and the professional organisations involved in the fight against the diversion of chemical precursors for trafficking have drawn up a national code of conduct setting out rules and best practices for securing these substances.

In an effort to comply with the "catch-all" clause (see T3), the MNCPC contributed, in 2023 and then 2024, to strengthening the power of customs to seize licit precursors on suspicion of use to manufacture NPS.

T1.2. Implementation of the law

The purpose of this section is to

- Summarise any available data on the implementation of legislation.
- Provide any additional contextual information that is helpful to understand how legislation is implemented in your country.

T.1.2.1. Is data available on actual sentencing practice related to drug legislation? Please provide a summary and a link to the original information or state if no information is available.

In 2023, according to the Ministry of Justice, drug law offence (DLO) convictions for main offences (single or multiple) represented 9% of all criminal record convictions, i.e. around 50 000. The offences involved are: illicit use (37%), possession-acquisition (57%), supply and sale (5%), trade-transport (1%), traffic-import-export (1%), facilitation of use by others (0.06%) and other DLOs (0.8%).

Imprisonment is the most common punishment in cases of offences related to possession and acquisition – this course of action being mainly applied in cases of drug trafficking (83%) – whereas offences related to use are mainly punished by fines (70%). The number of fixed penalty notices (Article 41-2 of the Penal Procedure Code) accepted and enforced for offences against the legislation on poisonous substances, narcotics and doping products in 2024 came to 3 864. This is an alternative procedure to prosecution, but the offence is nevertheless recorded in the Criminal Record.

With regard to use, a significant proportion of the offences committed are sanctioned prior to prosecution in court. In terms of police activity, criminal fixed fines represent around 68% of those questioned about use, reaching nearly 200 000 in 2024. At the level of the public prosecutor's office, among criminal responses (judicial prosecutions or alternatives to prosecution), in 2024 alternative measures to prosecution accounted for 16% of the measures taken against perpetrators of drug use offences (of which 25% were drug warnings and approximately 21% referrals to a health and social facility). 3 459 fixed penalty notices relating to infringement of use were successfully handed down in 2024. At the level of the trial courts, fines represent the majority of judgements: they represent 70% of convictions for use in 2023 compared to 11% resulting in custodial sentences.

T.1.2.2. Is data available on actual sentencing practice related to legislation designed to control NPS? Please provide a summary and a link to the original information or state if no information is available.

Actual court practices on the penal response to NPS cannot be documented at present. They may have recourse to the article on inciting use, but no detailed statistics according to type of substances are available. Furthermore, when suspect goods are detected by the services, particularly Customs, in order to remove it from the market, the substance may be assimilated to a "medication by function". The public prosecutor may decide to initiate an investigation and, if appropriate, to prosecute the offenders in court.

T1.2.3. *Optional. If possible, discuss why implementation might differ from the text of laws (e.g. political instructions, resource levels, policy priorities).*

T2. Trends

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

T2.1. Please comment on any changes in penalties and definitions of core offences (offences of use, possession for personal use, supply (including production) of illicit drugs) in the legal framework since 2000.

If possible discuss the possible reasons for change (e.g. political philosophy, changes in the drug situation, public debate, policy evaluation).

The framework of the French policy for combating illicit drugs is set forth in the 1970 French law on narcotics [[Loi n°70-1320 relative aux mesures sanitaires de lutte contre la toxicomanie et à la répression du trafic et de l'usage illicite des substances vénéneuses](#)]. Only a few legislative changes have occurred since (see below). Beyond the modifications of the law, the orientations of the penal policy for combating drug use and traffic have been regularly redefined and have led to a quasi-systematization of the penal response to the use of narcotics (see T1.1.1).

The law of 9 March 2004 [[Loi n°2004-204 portant adaptation de la justice aux évolutions de la criminalité](#)] allows to reduce by half sentences handed down to offenders in particular for trafficking offences if, "by having informed the administrative or legal authorities, the offender has made it possible to put an end to the offence and possibly identify other guilty parties".

This possibility for "penitents" to get a reduced sentence for trafficking is a new feature in the French penal process.

The "delinquency prevention law" of 5 March 2007 [[Loi n°2007-297 relative à la prévention de la délinquance](#)] provided for a wider range of law enforcement measures that could be taken against drug users:

- It introduced a new penalty: a mandatory awareness course on the dangers of drug and alcohol use (article 131-5-1 of the Penal Code), mandatory and paying (€450 maximum, the amount of a third-class contravention). Its aim is to make offenders fully aware of the danger and harm generated by the use of narcotic substances, as well as the social impact of such behaviour. The drug awareness course may be proposed by the authorities as an alternative to prosecution and to fixed penalty notice. An obligation to complete the drug awareness course may also be included in the criminal ruling as an additional sentence. It applies to all individuals over the age of 13.
- It also broadens the scope of application of the court-ordered treatment measure provided for in Articles L. 3413-1 to L. 3413-4 of the Public Health Code: previously an alternative measure to prosecution, court-ordered treatment can now be ordered at all stages of criminal proceedings as a means of enforcing a sentence. The application directive issued by the Ministry of Justice on 16 February 2012 [[Circulaire CRIM 2012-6/G4 relative à l'amélioration du traitement judiciaire de l'usage de stupéfiants](#)] invites the legal authorities to systematically envisage a drug treatment order when circumstances reveal that the suspect needs treatment.
- This law also makes it possible to use the penal order, a simplified procedure allowing the person to be judged without appearing before the court, for the offence of drug use.

In addition, the [Law of 5 March 2007](#) makes being under the influence of drugs an aggravating circumstance for the crime of rape (Art. 222-23 of the Penal Code) and several offences: violence (Art. 222-11 and 222-13 of the Penal Code), sexual assaults other than rape (Art. 222-27 and 222-29 of the Penal Code), sexual offences against a minor of fifteen years of age or under (Art. 222-5 of the Penal Code).

[Law no. 2019-222 of 23 March 2019](#) programming and reforming the 2018-2022 justice programme introduces various measures to improve the effectiveness of the criminal response to drug offences. In addition to the creation of the criminal fixed fine (see T.1.1.1), it extends the possibility of using the penal orders for offences involving the supply and transfer of drugs for personal use, while repealing the probation order and the penal transaction, which were very rarely used. These measures are alternatives to prison that simplify and speed up the criminal response.

The Senate commission of inquiry on the impact of drug trafficking in France and the measures to be taken to address it delivered its findings on 14 May 2024. The creation of new criminal procedure tools to combat drug trafficking was a key focus of the work of this inquiry commission, which aimed to anticipate the law against drug trafficking enacted on 13 June 2025¹ (Commission des lois 2025).

T2.2. Please comment on how the implementation of the law has changed since 2000. If possible discuss the possible reasons for change (e.g. new guidelines, availability of alternatives to punishment)

Most of the drug law offence arrests are linked to the use of drugs, which therefore constitute a mass case. In 2024, they accounted for almost 200 000 suspects implicated by the police and gendarmerie. 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.

To cope with the high volume of such arrests, the use of alternative measures to prosecution (drug warnings, referral to a health and social centre, treatment order, etc.) became increasingly systematic during the 2000s and 2010s (see T2.1). Cases closed after alternative measures accounted for 16% of the total imposed on drug users in 2024 (compared to 44% in 2019). This decrease is a result of the widespread introduction of criminal fixed fines for offences in 2020, which also had an impact on drug warnings, which fell from 41 026 in 2019 to 2 076 in 2024. The decline in treatment orders, which began in the 2010s, is continuing (425 in 2024 compared to 2 530 in 2012), as is the case for treatment referrals (1 763 in 2024 compared to 9 721 in 2012). Conversely, there has been a significant increase in awareness courses (around 13 000 in 2022 compared to 6 609 in 2018) (Obradovic *et al.* 2021).

The work of V. Gautron and I. Obradovic (Gautron and Obradovic 2023) nevertheless shows that these measures are not used in the same way in the various territories. They show that the choice of these measures is guided by motivations related with the management of the flow of criminal cases. In the most congested jurisdictions, for example, drug warnings are used for larger quantities of the seized product than in rural jurisdictions. The number of mandatory awareness course on the dangers of drug use pronounced in a given jurisdiction also depends on the number of social and health structures existing on the territory. Similarly, the article by Choquet and Mainaud (Choquet and Mainaud 2018) shows that criminal measures are not used in the same way depending on the offenders' profiles. In particular, they show that minors involved in drug trafficking are prosecuted more than 4 times out of 10 in a court of law, while minors who just use drugs are subject to alternative prosecution procedures almost 9 times out of 10.

Cases involving drug-driving offences account for around 29% of all road traffic offences. In ten years, their number has tripled (60 270 offences in 2023 compared with 19 000 in 2013).

Furthermore, the penal response to these cases of use is characterised by the increasingly frequent recourse to court convictions during the 2000s. Although the number of annual convictions remained below 5 000 in the 1990s, these increased more than seven-fold between 2000 and 2019 (more than 35 000 convictions for a drug use offence). Convictions have, however, been on the decline since the appearance of the criminal fixed fine: they are about 18 000 in 2023. The implementation of a financial penalty prior to court proceedings, immediately applicable by law enforcement, has automatically reduced the number of people brought before the courts. Since its widespread adoption in September 2020, the criminal fixed fine (AFD in French) has seen significant growth. The Statistical Department of the Ministry of Justice recorded nearly 200 000 suspects subject to an AFD in 2024. This represents 5% of all offences recorded by the national police and gendarmerie in the course of the year (SSMSI 2025). According to an earlier report published by the Ministry of the Interior statistical office in March 2022 (Fumat *et al.* 2022), the implementation of criminal fixed

¹ [Loi contre le narcotrafic : ce qu'il faut retenir](#) [Anti-narcotics law: the key points].

finances has led to a sharp increase in suspects for the use of narcotics (+39%), which has been accompanied by a significant reduction in the proportion (-50%), and volume (-5 700), of not only minors suspected in 2021, but also women. In 2024, this trend was confirmed as police and gendarmerie services reported over 290 000 suspects for drug use.

Among the convictions for use, custodial sentences declined, while fines increased. Fines accounted for nearly 70 % of convictions for drug use as a primary offence in 2023 compared to 42% twenty years previously (2000). This increase in fines, can be explained by the transformation of the procedural routes for dealing with drug use since [Law No. 2007-297 of 5 March 2007](#) on the prevention of criminality, which opens up the possibility of using the penal order for ordinary users. This simple procedure that is quick to implement only allows fines to be imposed.

Lastly, fixed penalty notices accepted and enforced for offences against the legislation on poisonous substances, narcotics and doping products remain pronounced to a limited extent, amounting to almost 3 864 in 2024.

Furthermore, schemes inspired by the problem-solving justice model in English-speaking countries have become increasingly widespread in France in the last ten years. This new model is based on the idea of returning the defendant to the centre of the judicial process, with the aim of identifying priorities and achievable objectives with their cooperation to resolve the key issues that are keeping them in a cycle of crime (housing, employment, addictions, family conflicts), and promoting collaboration between stakeholders in the judicial, health and medico-social fields. This system has been implemented in a large number of countries and has been extensively and precisely validated scientifically, with research having shown its effectiveness in preventing reoffending compared to traditional models.

Since 2015, numerous public prosecutor's offices or sentence enforcement services have implemented schemes inspired by this model. Many of these schemes have received and continue to receive financial support from MILDECA. Today, more than forty different schemes are listed throughout France, including overseas territories. An evaluation of the French pilot schemes inspired by the problem-solving justice concept, led by Professor Martine Evans, has been underway since the end of 2022. The findings of this research, funded by credits from the "Narcotics" support fund, will be communicated in June 2025 to the interministerial working group involving representatives from the DGS, DACG and DAP as well as MILDECA.

T3. New developments

The purpose of this section is to provide information on any notable or topical developments observed in legislation, the implementation of legislation, evaluation, and the political position on drug legislations **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. What, if any, laws have changed in the last year? Please use the following table to structure your answer, providing the title of the law, a hyperlink if available and a short summary of the change and explanatory comments.

- [Law No. 2023-1250 of 26 December 2023 on social security financing](#). A temporary status adapted for medical cannabis has been created for a duration of five years to follow on from the therapeutic cannabis trial which ends in late March 2024, pending a European decision regarding its marketing authorisation (Article 78, Art. L. 5121-15).

- [Decree No. 2024-435 dated 14 May 2024](#) on European reference prices and tariffs for setting the price of cannabis-based medicines referred to in point 4 of Article L. 5121-1 of the Public Health Code. This text identifies European countries with a comparable total market size (Germany, Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom) whose prices or tariffs will be used as a reference for setting the price of cannabis-based medicines reimbursed by the National Health Insurance Fund.
- Article 41 of [Law No. 2024-449 of 21 May 2024](#), aimed at securing and regulating the digital space specifies the necessary procedures for companies offering blockchain gaming, as well as the role of the French Gambling Regulatory Authority (ANJ) which "*monitors compliance by companies offering monetisable blockchain games with their legal and regulatory obligations. It sets out to address the illegal provision of such games*". An initial assessment of this experiment will be carried out by the government after eighteen months in conjunction with the ANJ, to assess the economic and health impact of this experiment.
- [Decision of the National Agency for Medicines and Health Products Safety \(ANSM\) dated 22 May 2024](#) : inclusion on the list of narcotics of new cannabis-derived compounds: **H4-CBD, H2-CBD** and "*any substance derived from the benzo[c]chromene nucleus, whether it is non-hydrogenated or partially or fully hydrogenated on ring A (defined as the unsaturated ring bearing the methyl group in position 9 of said nucleus in tetrahydrocannabinol) [...]*".
- [Decision of the National Agency for Medicines and Health Products Safety dated 5 July 2024](#) amending the list of substances classified as narcotics. The authorities decided to add **nitazenes** to the list of narcotics: their production, sale and use were prohibited from 9 July 2024.
- [Decision of the National Agency for Medicines and Health Products Safety dated 24 September 2024](#) implementing part of the narcotics regulations and setting prescription durations for **tramadol and codeine**. Article 2: "*The prescription of medicines for human or veterinary use containing codeine or dihydrocodeine, alone or in combination, is limited to twelve weeks of treatment. Continuation of treatment requires a new prescription*".
- [Decision of the National Agency for Medicines and Health Products Safety dated 24 September 2024](#) regarding the inclusion of poisonous substances on Lists I and II, as defined in Article L.5132-6 of the Public Health Code: **codeine in syrup form** was removed from List II and classified on List I of poisonous substances.
- [Law No. 2025-175 of 24 February 2025](#): ban on disposable puff vapes.

T3.2. How was the law implemented in the last year? What, if any, changes have occurred? Please provide sentencing or other outcome data, or provide the link to any relevant reports or information.

T3.3. Has there been an evaluation of the law in the last year, or other indications as to its effects? Please specify and provide links to the original report.

T3.4. *Optional. Summarise any major political discussions in the last year relating to legislation or its implementation that you feel is important in understanding the current legal framework within your country.*

Discussions are underway to control the sale and use of nitrous oxide:

- ➔ **Bill tabled on 24 October 2024 aimed at strengthening prevention and control measures against fire risk linked to lithium batteries and nitrous oxide canisters in collection, sorting and recycling facilities.** The text was adopted by the Senate on 6 March 2025 and forwarded to the National Assembly for consideration on the same day. In addition to explosions in incinerators, nitrous oxide canisters also generate additional costs for local authorities, due to the proliferation of discarded bottles in urban public spaces. This text aims to apply the polluter pays principle to producers of nitrous oxide canisters.
- ➔ **Bill aimed at restricting the sale of nitrous oxide solely to professionals and strengthening prevention measures against misuse** tabled before the National Assembly on 19 November 2024, then adopted on 29 January 2025. In January 2025, the bill was in its first reading in the Senate. It aims to extend the ban on the sale of nitrous oxide, or laughing gas, to all individuals, regardless of age, in all public places, shops and online from 1 January 2026. The sale of this product will be reserved to certain professionals. The text also prohibits the import of nitrous oxide. As all cylinder and canister factories are located abroad, this provision will allow these products to be intercepted upon entry into France if professional use cannot be demonstrated.
- ➔ **Bill aimed at enhancing measures to address the misuse of nitrous oxide:** text transmitted to the National Assembly on 7 March 2025. This bill aims to expressly penalise the misuse of nitrous oxide with a fine and a prison sentence; improve the regulation of N2O sales by making them subject to a declaration system; prohibit the possession of N2O canisters by minors and increase penalties for sales to minors; explicitly include information on the dangers of nitrous oxide in addiction prevention programmes in middle schools and secondary schools.

"Smoke-free spaces" decree: In accordance with the guidelines set out in the 2023-2027 National Tobacco Control Programme, the Council of State must be consulted on the draft "smoke-free spaces" decree, which extends the list of public places where smoking will be prohibited.

On 29 April 2025, the National Assembly definitively adopted the bill aimed at getting France out of the "narcotrafficking trap". The Constitutional Council was referred to by members of the National Assembly on 12 May 2025. The text introduces new procedural mechanisms to combat organised crime, from the investigation stage to the enforcement of sentences. Among the main measures provided for are: the creation of an organised crime prosecutor's office; the use of **algorithmic techniques** to detect internet connections that may reveal threats related to drug and arms trafficking and associated money laundering, and the creation of specific prison units for drug traffickers. Following the Council's decision of 12 June 2025 ([Decision no. 2025-885 DC](#)), the law aimed at getting France out of the drug trafficking trap was enacted on 13 June and published in the Official Journal of 14 June ([Law no. 2025-532](#)).

The regulatory document subjected to amendments / Initial version of the text	The amended regulatory document / Current version of the text		

T4. Additional information

The purpose of this section is to provide additional information important to understanding drug legislation 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 the legal framework. Where possible, please provide references and/or links.

T4.2. **Optional.** Please describe any other important aspect of the legal framework that has not been covered in the questions above. This may be additional information or new areas of specific importance for your country (e.g. money laundering, tobacco, alcohol legislation, new/changing organisations/structures, regulations related medical or industrial cannabis, and regulatory framework of opioid substitution treatment).

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.

Legislative sources used are mainly the Public Health Code and the Penal Code. All information provided herein is based on permanent monitoring of legislation by the OFDT and on the following data:

- *Etat 4001*, Ministry of the Interior (for data on accused individuals)
- National criminal record, Ministry of Justice (for convictions)

Choquet, L.-H. and Mainaud, T. (2018). Le traitement judiciaire des infractions liées aux stupéfiants commises par des mineurs. *Infostat Justice*. Ministère de la Justice (158). Available: https://www.justice.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2023-05/stat_Infostat_158.pdf [accessed 19/06/2025].

Commission des lois (2025). *L'essentiel sur... la proposition de loi visant à sortir la France du piège du narcotrafic*. Sénat, Paris. Available: <https://www.senat.fr/l'essentiel/pp123-735.pdf> [accessed 10/06/2025].

Fumat, V., Gerbeaux, A. and Poulhes, M. (2022). *Amendes forfaitaires délictuelles pour usage de stupéfiants : premiers éléments d'évaluation*. Document de travail SSMSI. Ministère de l'Intérieur, Paris. Available: <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Interstats/Actualites/Document-de-travail-n-2-Amendes-forfaitaires-delictuelles-pour-usage-de-stupefiants-premiers-elements-d-evaluation> [accessed 19/06/2025].

Gautron, V. and Obradovic, I. (2023). Entre incitation aux soins, punition et gestion des flux. Le traitement ambivalent des usagers de stupéfiants par le parquet. In: Gautron, V. (Ed.), *Réprimer et soigner. Pratiques et enjeux d'une articulation complexe*. PUR, Rennes.

Martinez, M. (2013). Contrôler les NPS : du classement comme stupéfiant à l'utilisation d'autres réglementations. *Actal* (13) 62-66.

Obradovic, I., Protais, C. and Le Nézet, O. (2021). Cinquante ans de réponse pénale à l'usage de stupéfiants (1970-2020) [Fifty years of penal response to drug use (1970-2020)]. *Tendances*. OFDT (144). Available: <https://www.ofdt.fr/publication/2021/cinquante-ans-de-reponse-penale-l-usage-de-stupefiants-1970-2020-596> [accessed 25/06/2025].

SSMSI (2025). Les amendes forfaitaires délictuelles : un dispositif en plein essor. *Interstats Analyse*. Service statistique ministériel de la sécurité intérieure (SSMSI) (76). Available: <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Interstats/Actualites/Interstats-Analyse-n-76-Les-amendes-forfaitaires-delictuelles-un-dispositif-en-plein-essor> [accessed 21/07/2025].

Willeman, T., Micallef, J., Alvarez, J.-C. and Revol, B. (2023). Consommer du CBD ou conduire, faut-il choisir ? *Thérapies* 78 (6) 749-751, 10.1016/j.therap.2022.11.006.

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

The **data relating to arrests** was originally derived from État 4001, a crime and offence recording tool shared by the national police and gendarmerie. This register lists 107 categories of offences, including drug-related offences based on complaints received or according to findings made by the services from intervention reports. Since 2016, the Ministerial Statistical Department for Internal Security (SSMSI) of the French Ministry of the Interior has relied on the "suspect database"² to address indexing and recording issues specific to État 4001, modifying the number of indexes listing drug-related offences. The data presented here are derived from this new database. The series relate to the accused and not the victims. They refer to any person against whom there are grounds to believe that they have participated or attempted to participate in the commission of an offence, i.e. suspects. Indictments, which are the decision of the investigating judge, are not recorded by the Ministry of the Interior.

Data on convictions were extracted from the National Criminal Record (CJN). The CJN records all crimes and offences punishable by law in a given year. The data presented here exclude convictions for criminal acts, as these represent too small a number. They therefore solely relate to the category of punishable offences.

Convictions recorded in the CJN may apply to one or more offences. Convictions for multiple offences are common in drug-related cases (almost half on average). Only the main offence (the most serious) is retained, in other words the one determining the court's decision.

In the CJN, a conviction refers to an individual, however this person may be convicted several times in the same year. The number of convictions recorded in the CJN is therefore often higher than the number of people convicted.

The data presented here do not include fixed penalty notices. These are provisions allowing the Public Prosecutor, under certain conditions, to offer a person who admits to having committed an offence an alternative to imprisonment, instead of bringing them before the court.

A set registration period means that the data are final after 3 years and provisional for two years. Uncertainties related to entry problems and double recording are estimated to generate around 2% errors, according to estimates.

The series presented here each describe the response provided by the services and administrations to drug-related offences in their respective fields. These statistics thus reflect the activity of the services responsible for combating drug-related offences. The evolution of the data may reflect variations in the activity of the services and may also indirectly show changes in supply and demand for narcotics. Year-on-year variations should in any case be interpreted with caution and by cross-referencing information from multiple sources.