



European Monitoring Centre
for Drugs and Drug Addiction



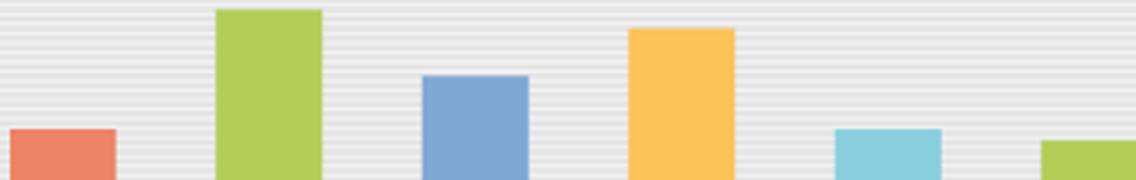
LISBON
ADDICTIONS
2019



European Syringe Collection & Analysis Project Enterprise

a multi-city study of monitoring consumption trends
of people who inject drugs

Lisbon, 23 October 2019



Why?

- **In France**
 - + **105,000** people who inject drugs (PWID)
 - **75,000** low threshold structures' clients
 - only those who answer to survey
 - declarative bias
- **Finally, little is known about substances injected by drug users**

In 2010, SAFE, a French harm reduction association, tried to find a way of getting information about the users of the AIKD who were not seen or for whom we were not able to talk with.



How?

- **SAFE manages the biggest French needle exchange program:**
 - 35 automatic injection kit dispensers (AIKD) in Paris,
 - more than 50 in all suburbs,
 - more than 110,000 syringes exchanged (83,000 in Paris)
- **Actually, SAFE was possessing everything they need to investigate**
- **Partnership with an analytical chemistry laboratory (Paris Sud University)**
- **In other countries, studies using this methodology were conducted**
 - Austria (non published)
 - Hungary (Péterfi et al., 2014)
 - Switzerland (Lefrançois et al., 2016)



European syringe collection & analysis project enterprise (ESCAPE)

- In December 2016, EMCDDA decided to support a multi-city study using the syringe analysis methodology
- Coordinated by the French monitoring centre for drugs and drug addictions



- **General objectives**
 - **Improve** national and European knowledge about the drugs injected by PWID in a sentinel network of cities
 - **Make comparisons** between cities and between different sites within the same city
 - Have a European **overview** on NPS injection
 - Assess the extent of **syringes reuse**





The methodology

Sampling methodology

As far as possible

Collect in 5 different sites per city

- To be **representative**
- To have a **good geographical coverage**

How many syringes?

First campaign: 300 syringes per city

- 150 during weekdays
- 150 during the weekend

Second campaign: 150 syringes per city

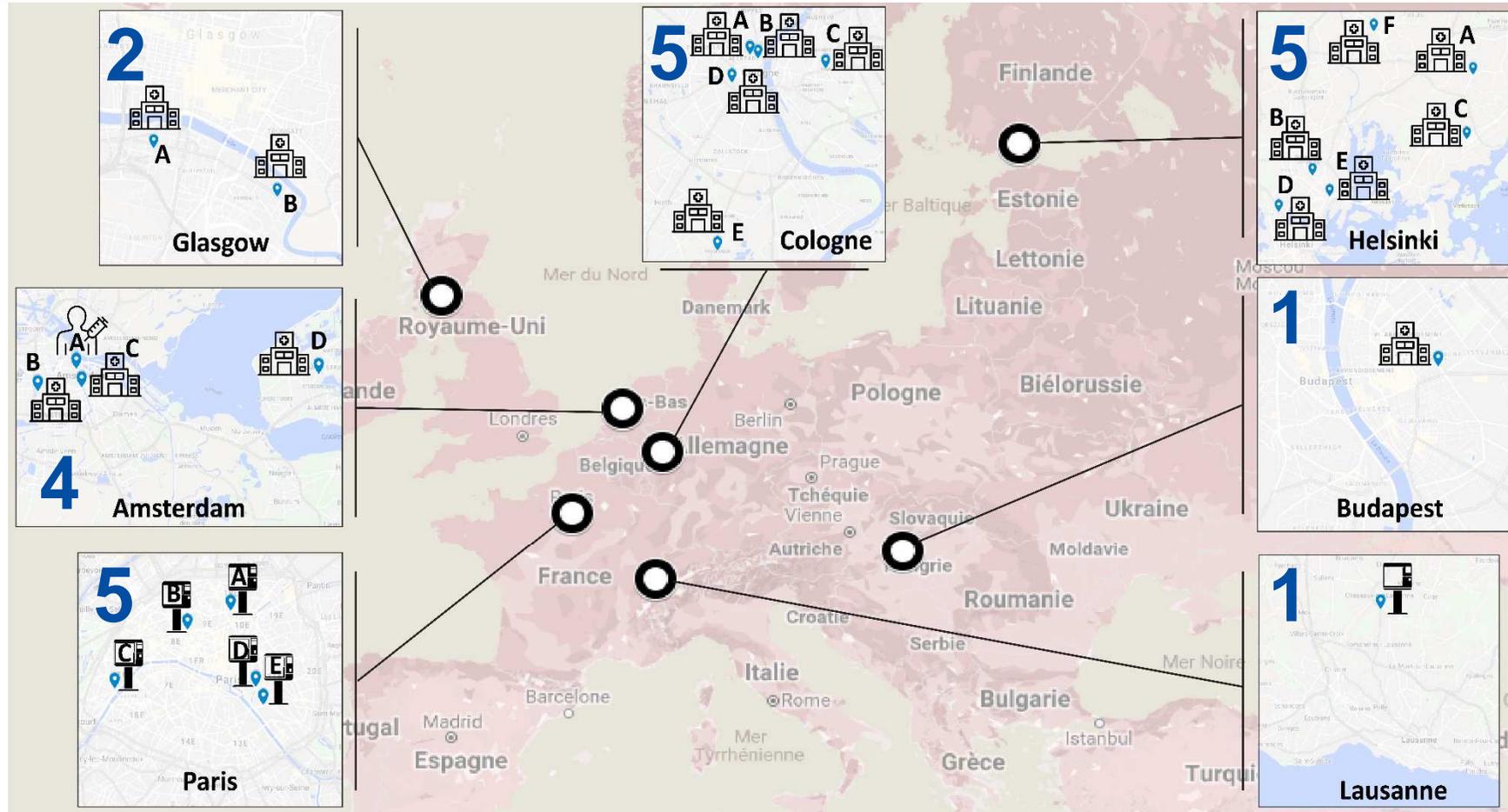
A minimum of 30 syringes per site

Good compromise between representativeness and cost of analyses

One month to manage syringe collection



Collection sites

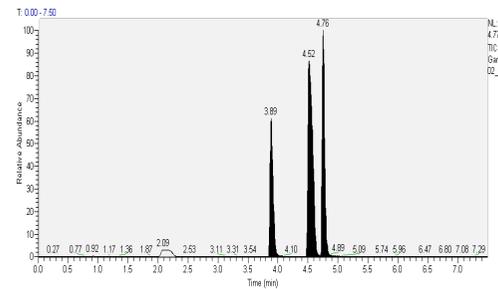
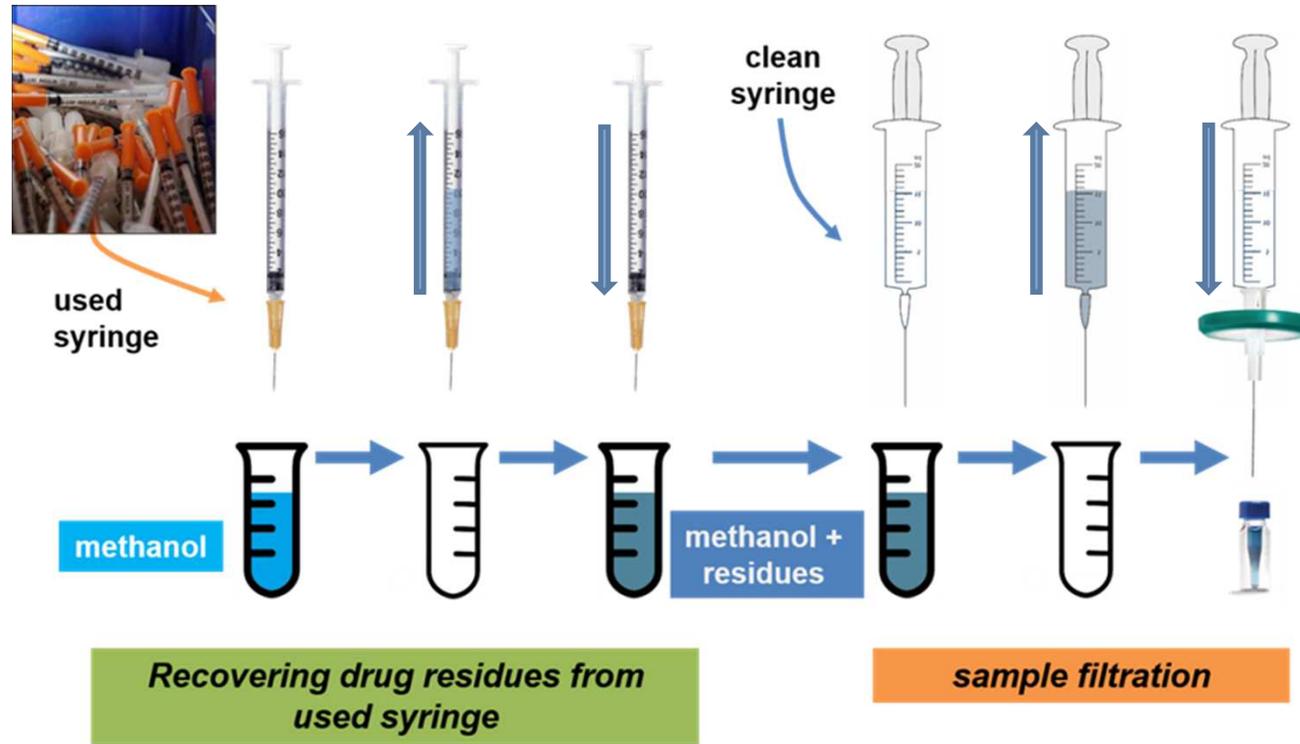


- **7 European cities**
- **24 different sites**

- 17 needle and syringe exchange programme centres
- 6 street bins
- 1 drug consumption room



Sampling preparation & analytical method



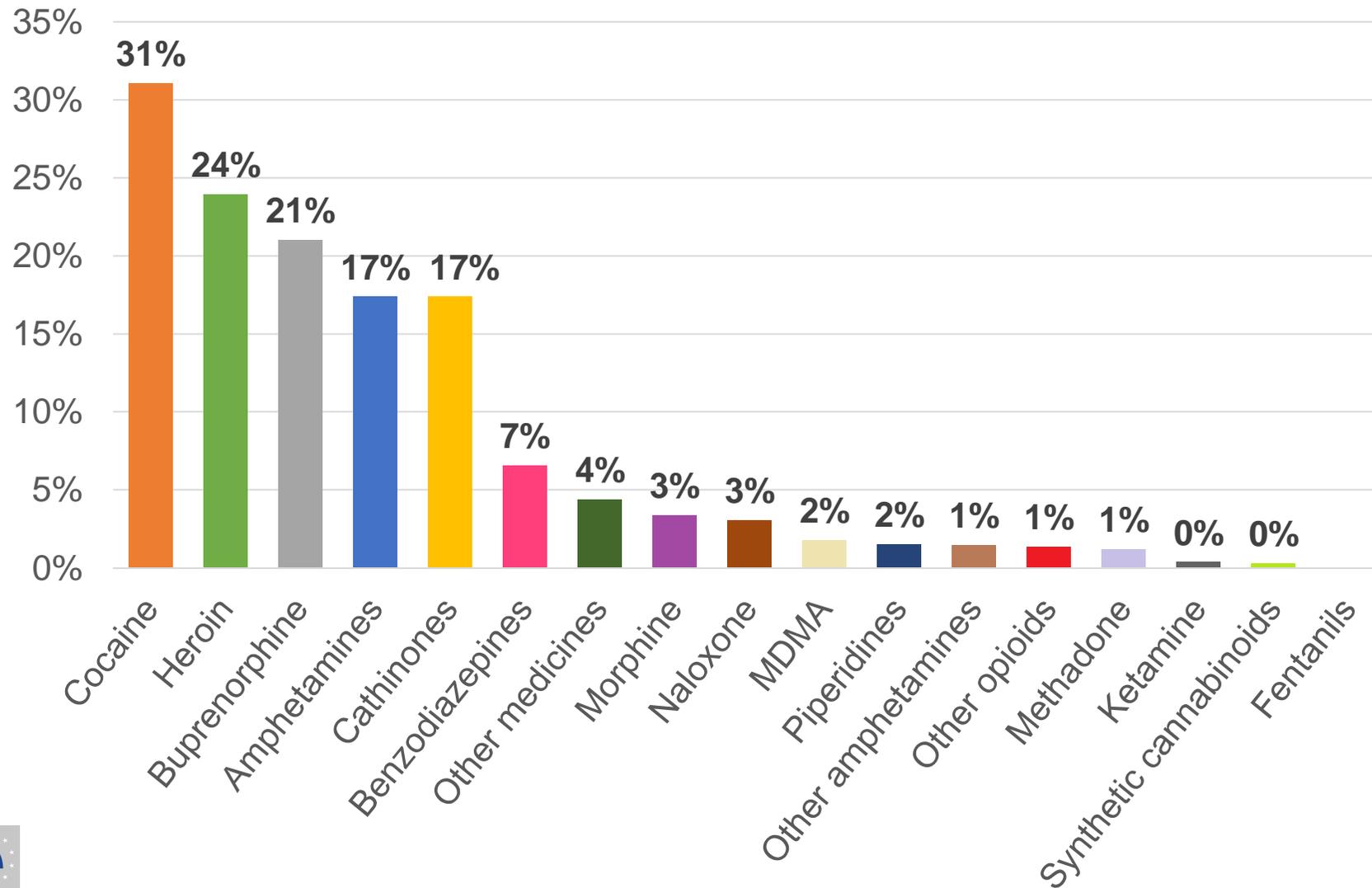
Main results

In total

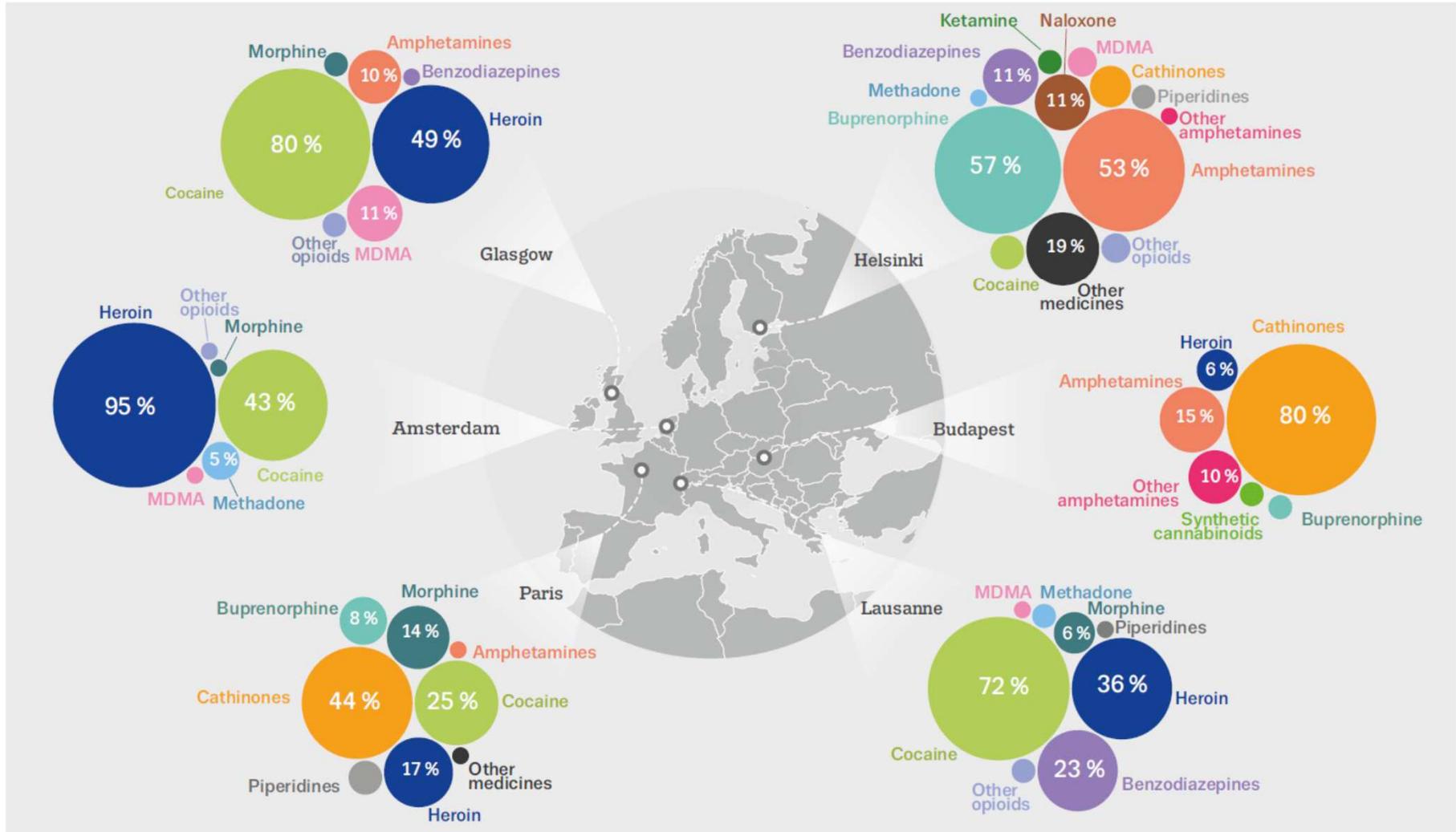
- **2 sampling campaigns**
 - **September 2017**
 - **March 2018**
- **2,364 collected syringes**
- **2,243 analysed syringes (95%)**
- **2,098 in which substance(s) was/were detected**
- **67 active substances identified**
 - + **cutting agents**
 - + **metabolites**



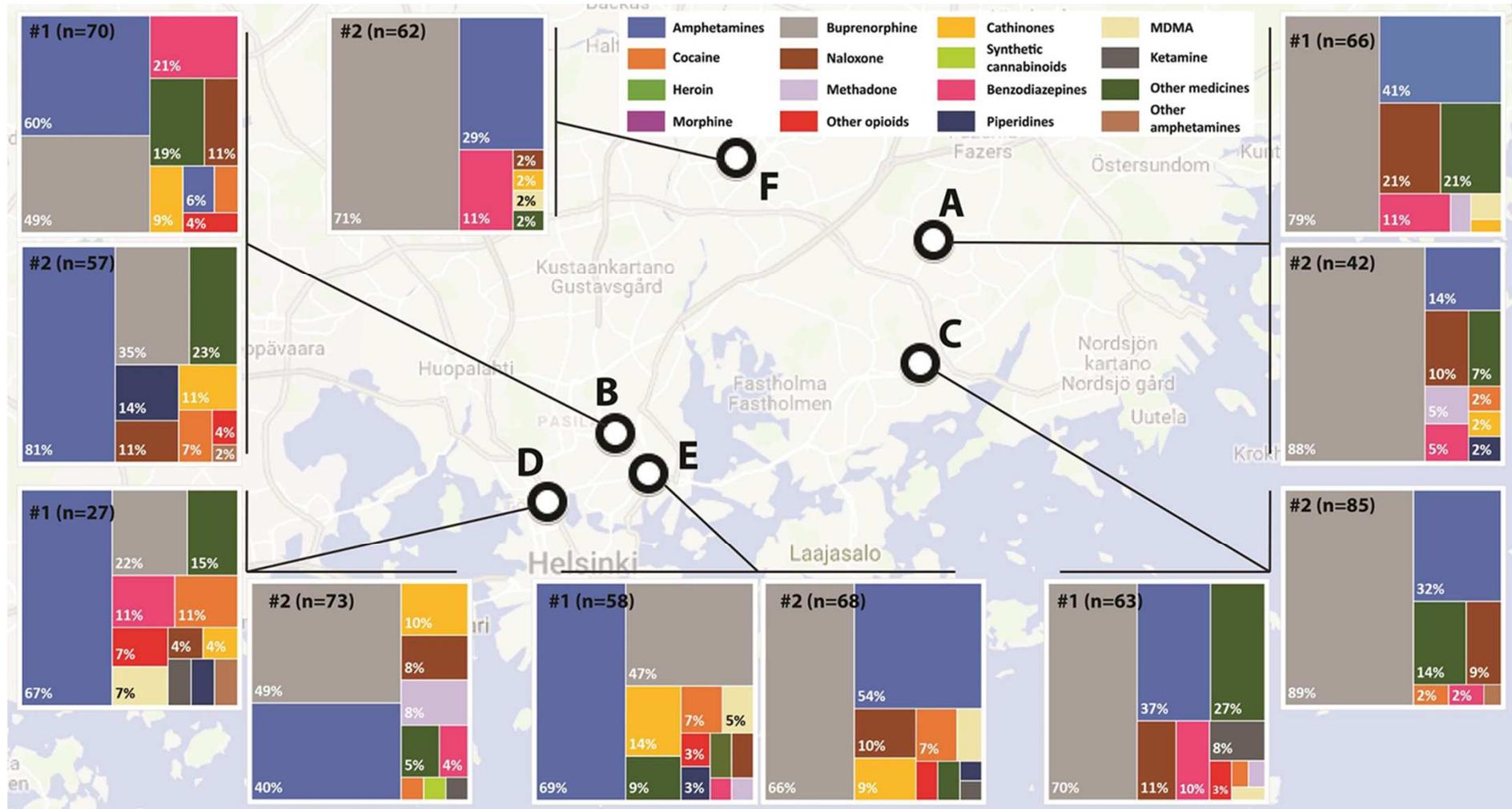
Percentage of detection by substance groups



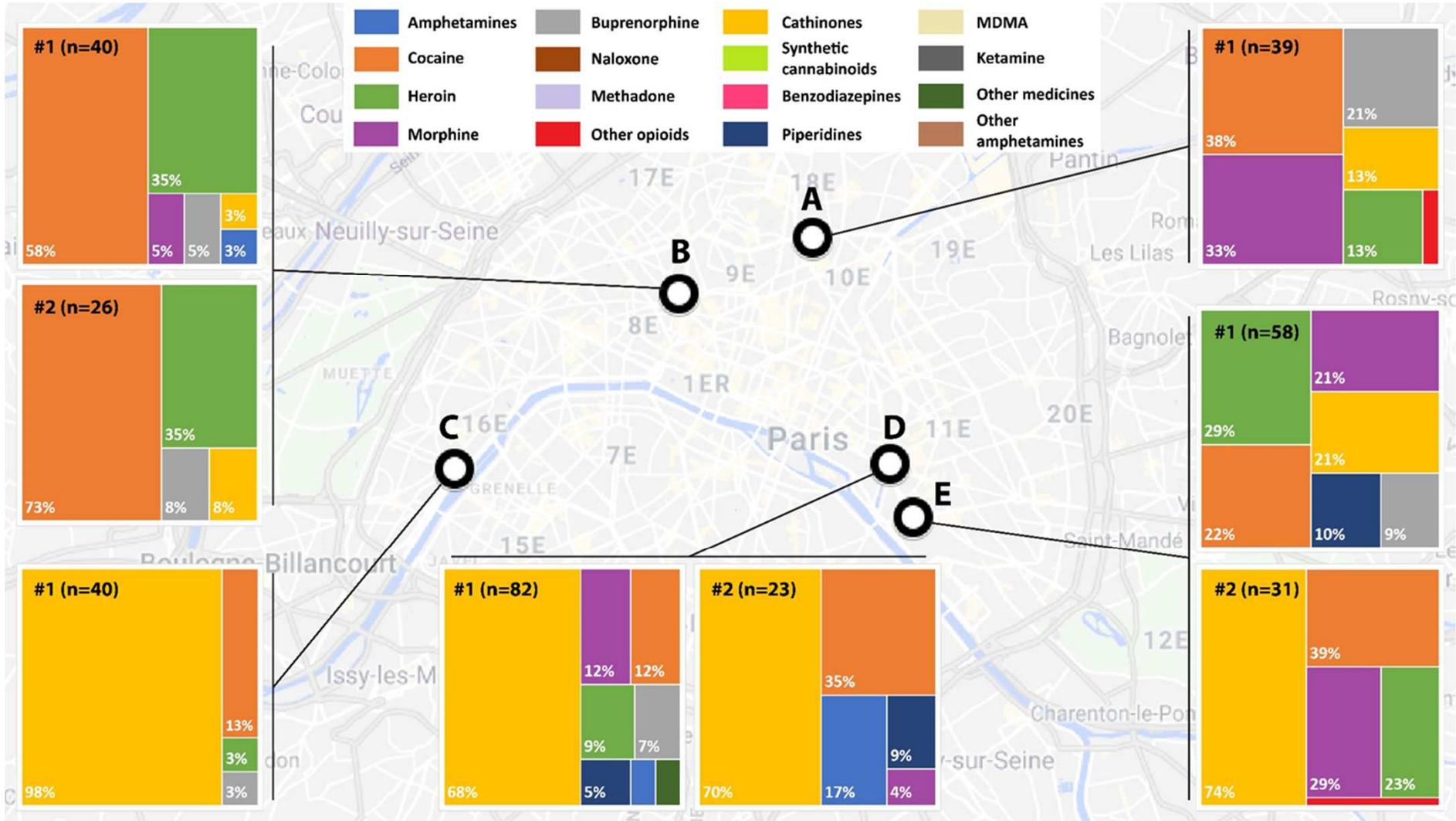
Results of the first collection campaign



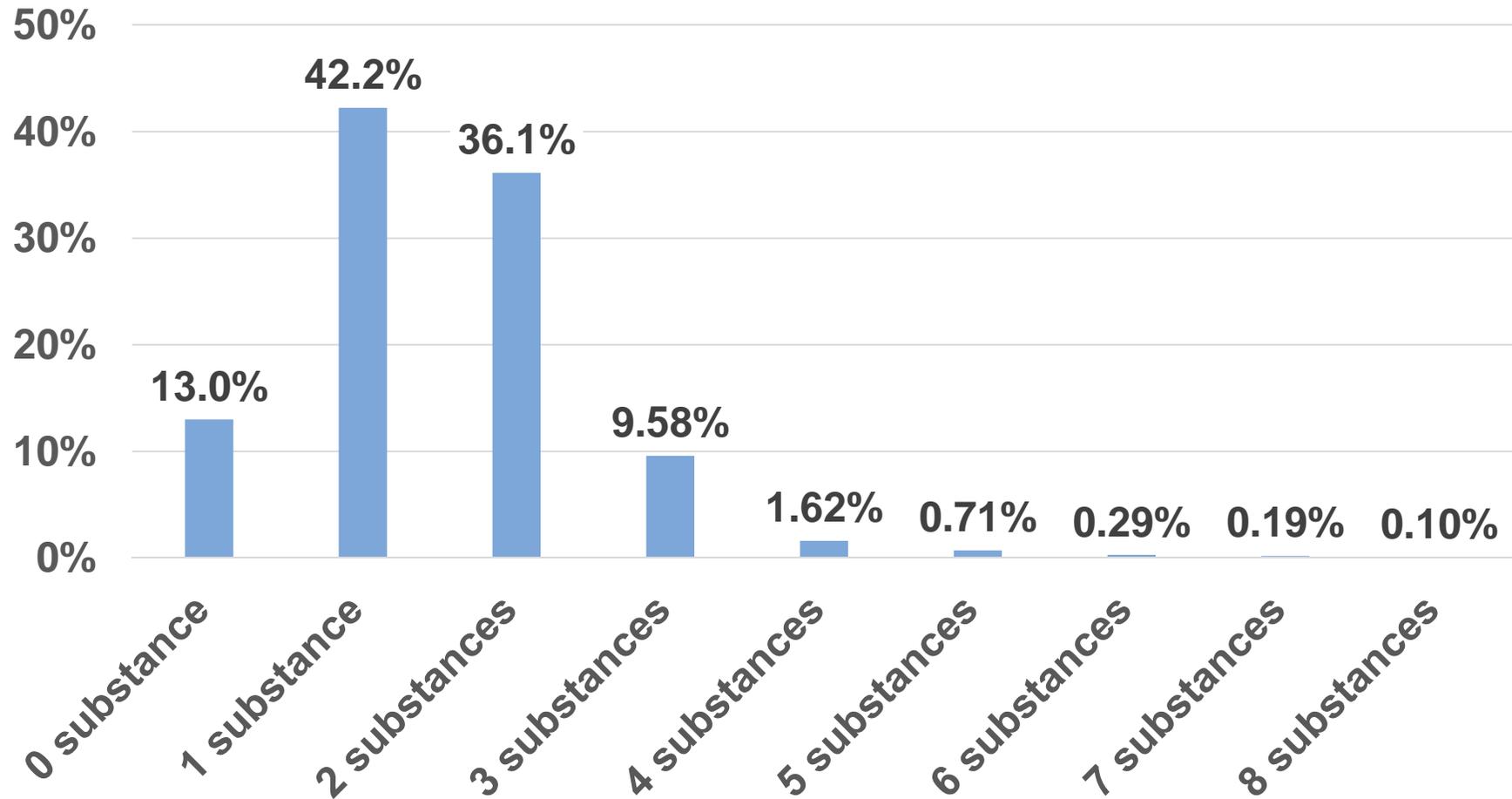
Helsinki results



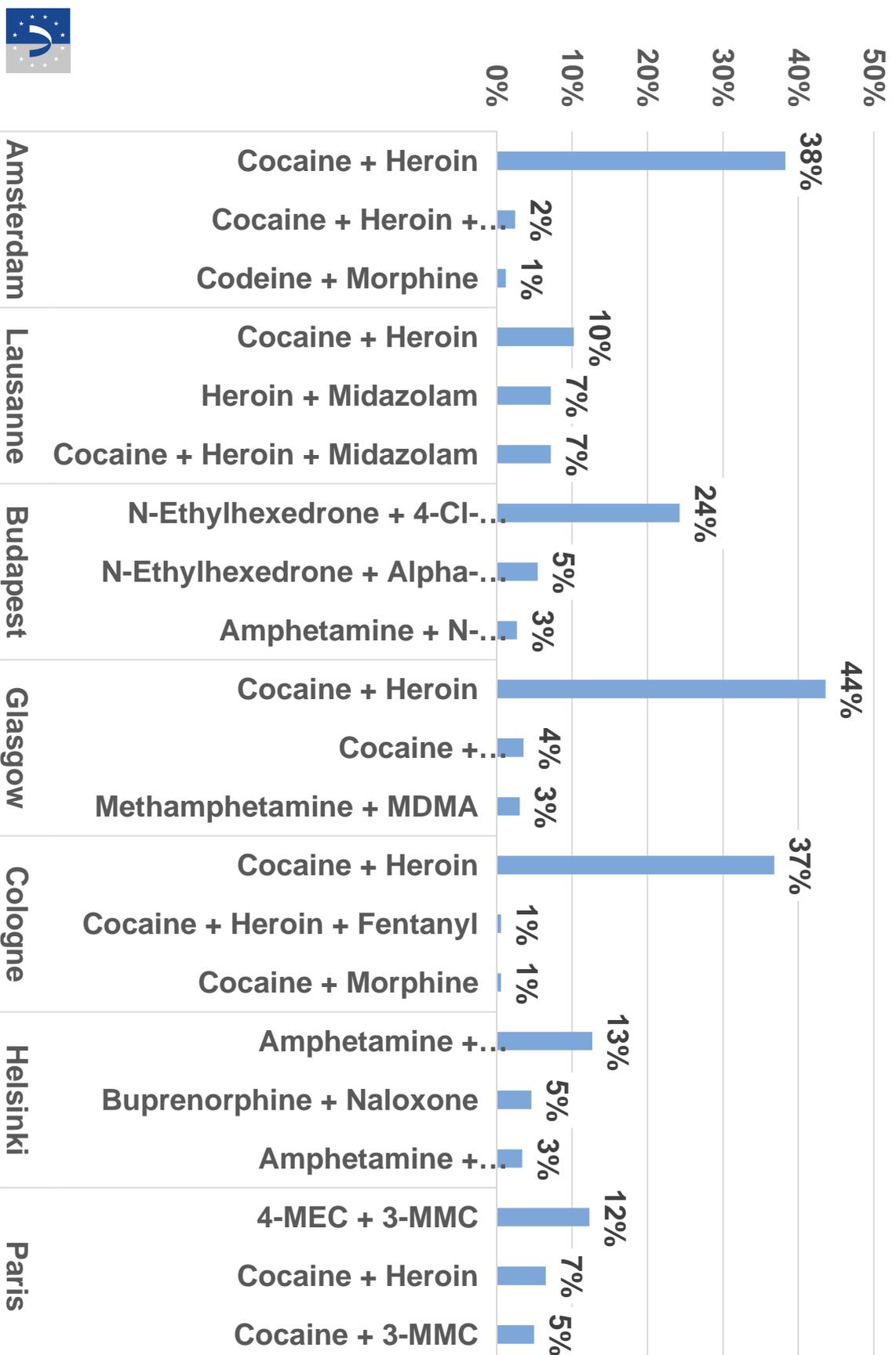
Paris results



How many substances in one syringe?



Three first most observed combinations of substances in syringes in each city (in percentage of total analysed syringes)



Conclusions

For the first time in Europe (in the world), a study based on the used syringe analysis methodology has been conducted twice simultaneously in 6 cities

- **Detection of high level of:**
 - Heroin in Amsterdam and Cologne
 - Cocaine in Glasgow, Cologne, Lausanne and Paris
 - Amphetamines and buprenorphine in Helsinki
 - Cathinones in Budapest and Paris
- **Geographical differences**
 - Between cities
 - Between sites within the city
- **Reliable and repeatable method**



A new indicator?

- **A new tool/methodology to assess the drug consumptions of a specific population of drug users**
- **Another piece to the puzzle**
 - ➔ **Better understanding of PWID practices**



Limitations

- **We see what we seek or what is detected**
 - Try to harmonize analytical methods
- **Different ways to get rid of syringes and different volume of syringes**
 - Not exhaustive sampling methodology
- **A person can throw away 20 syringes while 10 people can throw away 2 each**
 - A stimulant user will take drug more often
- **The syringes may have been disposed of several weeks after use**
 - Molecule degradation
- **Substances may have been consumed before**
 - They can be in the syringes because they come from blood



Perspectives

- **Repeat the exercise every year**
 - At least once a year
- **Consolidate our network**
- **Extend to other European cities**
 - associations (**professionals working in the field**) and universities (**researchers**)
- **Try to evaluate and reduce biases**
 - e.g. collect + individual survey in a supervised injection room



Thanks to all partners





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Thank you for your attention

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