CONTENT

• Prevalence drug use young adults
• Acute health incidents
• Prevalence drug use college students
• Risk perception
• Implications for prevention
OVERVIEW OF PREVALENCE OF XTC, COCAÎNE AND AMPHETAMINE USE AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

Figure 1: Prevalence of recent drug use (last year) in %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>15–34 yr Europe ('17)</th>
<th>15–34 yr Netherlands ('17)</th>
<th>20–24 yr Netherlands ('17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XTC</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamine</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References:
- EMCDDA 2019 (data largely from 2016 or 2017)
- Gezondheidsenquête/Leefstijlmonitor CBS, RIVM, Trimbos–instituut, 2017
HEALTH INCIDENTS RELATED TO DRUG USE

• Monitor Drug Incidents (DMI) 2018 in the Netherlands

  • Pooled data from Ambulance, First Aid Services, Hospitals in the Netherlands.
  
  • 6,108 drug-related health incidents in 2018, around 800 severe.
    
    • Half of the incidents involved people younger than 25yr
    
    • Prevalence of drug use is reflected in the incidents (31% included XTC, 16% cocaine, 11% Amphetamine)
      
      • GHB and Ketamine are particularly risky
    
    • 19% polydrug use, strongly related to severity of incident
WHAT ABOUT COLLEGE STUDENTS?

• A subgroup of young adults

• Existing data on prevalence of drug use is inconclusive (Dorsselaer & Goossens, 2015):
  • Metastudy showed large differences in prevalence of drug use, for a large part due to non-representative samples (selection largely through internet fora).

• We are also interested in the knowledge about the health risks of the substances
TWO STUDIES IN GRONINGEN (2017 & 2019)

• stratified sample in Groningen:
  • 50,000 students; University and Applied university, 5 fields (Human sciences, Law, Economics, Life sciences, sciences & Technology.
  • Making sure that all ‘types of students’ are proportionally represented; going to campuses on multiple locations and time-slots
  • N ‘17 = 266, N ‘19 = 488
PREVALENCE OF DRUG USE YOUNG ADULTS AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

Figure 2: Prevalence of recent drug use (last year) in %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>15–34 yr Europe ('17)</th>
<th>15–34 yr Netherlands ('17)</th>
<th>20–24 yr Netherlands ('17)</th>
<th>Students Groningen ('17)</th>
<th>Students Groningen ('19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XTC</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cocaïne</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amphetamine</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ketamine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>GHB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RISKPERCEPTION

• 15 statements (True / False / Dont know) about:
  • Strength and quality of the substances
    • “Every XTC–pill has the same strength”
  • Mixing / combining substances
    • “Combining XTC and speed is extra dangerous”
  • Substance–specific risks
    • “When on XTC, the more water you drink, the better”
    • “Cocaine can look like heroin”
    • “When on XTC at a danceparty, overheating is a risk”
RISKPERCEPTION: RESULTS

• **Strength and quality:**
  - Users are aware that quality and strength can vary significantly (around 6% thinks that quality and strength is fixed)

• **Mixing with other substances**
  - 8% thinks that combining (uppers with downers, drugs with alcohol, XTC with speed) does not increase health risks
  - 2% thinks that combining drugs with prescription medicine is not a risk

• **Substance-specific**
  - 25% thinks, the more MDMA in XTC, the better the effect
  - 15% thinks cocaine cannot resemble heroin
  - 12% thinks, the more water you drink while on XTC, the better
  - 7% thinks that overheating on XTC during a raveparty is not a risk
CONCLUSIONS

• College students drug use is above average.
• There are knowledge gaps regarding health risks of drug use:
  • Assuming that a white powder is cocaine.
  • Assuming that more MDMA automatically leads to a better effect.
  • Underestimating water intoxication.
  • Underestimating dangers of combining different drugs and alcohol.
• Ideal opportunity for prevention activities in the introduction period:
  • Make accurate knowledge and testing really accessible (peer education?).
  • Zoom in on student societies.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!
REFERENCES

• Prevalence drug use young adults:
  • Trimbos Nationale drugs Monitor 2018:
    • [https://www.trimbos.nl/docs/8081bdca-2ff7-4b5d-98df-a961a3888fa8.pdf](https://www.trimbos.nl/docs/8081bdca-2ff7-4b5d-98df-a961a3888fa8.pdf)

• Drug incidents in the Netherlands:
  • National Drug Monitor 2018: [https://www.trimbos.nl/docs/8081bdca-2ff7-4b5d-98df-a961a3888fa8.pdf](https://www.trimbos.nl/docs/8081bdca-2ff7-4b5d-98df-a961a3888fa8.pdf)

• Prevalence college students and risk perception:
  • Dorsselaer & Goossens (2015). *Alcohol-, tabaks- en drugsgebruik door studenten*: [https://www.trimbos.nl/docs/f5a4716f-a658-4a45-81ff-ac1682139a4e.pdf](https://www.trimbos.nl/docs/f5a4716f-a658-4a45-81ff-ac1682139a4e.pdf)