

# Opioid-related problems in Baltic States and Poland: Has the turning point come?

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# Conflict of interest

- Nothing to declare.

# Aims and method

## Aim

To analyze the differences and similarities of opioid-related problems in four countries (LT, LV, PL, EE) in terms of supply and demand. Focus is on new synthetic opioids.

## Method

Triangulation based on latest available data from all the countries and expert meeting in Vilnius. Source: EMCDDA focal points, experts 2017-2018

## Limitations

The data quality and availability. Some data sources are missing in some countries.

# Main drugs of PWID

Polydrug use is common in every country, but main injectable drugs have been:

- in Estonia fentanyl/analogues and amphetamines
- in Lithuania use to be heroin, which is lately replaced by carfentanil, methadone and Diphenhydramin mixture.
- in Poland new psychoactive substances (mainly synthetic cathinones), second position amphetamines/opioids
- in Latvia amphetamine, also fentanyl analogues

# Drug related deaths trends

- Lithuania- decreasing trend from 2015 115 cases to 83 cases in 2017 and 59 cases in 2018 (56 % related with opioids/ 3 carfentanil deaths+ 1 furanylfentanyl).
- Latvia- stable situation from 18 in 2016 to 23 cases in 2017 and 20 cases in 2018 (65% related with opioids, most of methadone).
- Estonia- decreasing trend from 110 cases in 2017 to 39 in 2018 (during the years 59-81% of DRD related with fentanyl)
- Poland (Warsaw)- stable, 47 cases on 2016 (60% related with opioids/no fentanyl deaths, but synthetic opioid UR 47700)

# Seizures of opioids in Poland and Baltic States

Heroin (Kg)							
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Poland	51.35	35.62	48.67	272.71	3.8	9.02	2.49
Lithuania	10.6	0.46	13.2	6.8	1.8	27.8	3.9
Latvia	0.44	1.39	0.719	0.77	2.63	0.151	0.164
Estonia	0.048	0.0004	0.0007	0.0032	0.00086	0.0031	0.0083

Fentanyl/analogues (Kg)							
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Estonia	0.9	1.7	1.07	0.74	0.99	0.6	10.2



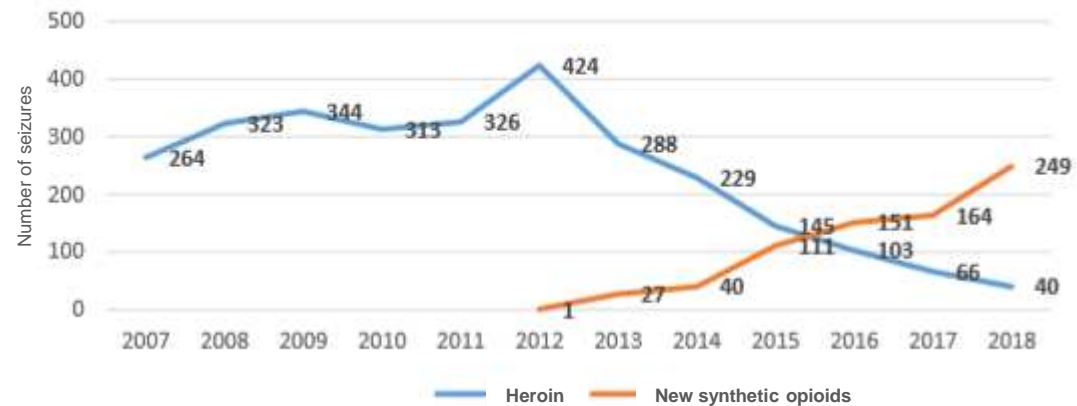
## Lithuania

Name of the substance / group	2015	2016	2017
<i>Synthetic cannabinoids (kg)</i>	7,8	19,6	7,2
<i>Medicines containing psychotropic substances (g / tablets)</i>	50,63 / 2092 tab.	54,3 / 1716 tab.	1200 / 3187 tab.
<i>Synthetic cathinones (kg)</i>	1,2	1,1	1,4
<i>Carfentanil (g)</i>	19,6	-	609
<i>Mixtures with carfentanil (g)</i>	18,8	97,6	74
<i>Other NPS (g)</i>	353,5	240,4 / 291 tab.	184

## Number of the most frequent NSO/ NSO mixtures seizures in Latvia, 2012-2018

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Cyclopropylfentanyl						44	
Carfentanil	1	27	10	33	54	42	
Carfentanil/methadone						33	76
Acrylfentanyl					8	15	
Carfentanil/a-PHP						14	
Heroin/carfentanil			30	78	81	5	26
Acrylfentanyl/carfentanil						2	
Heroin/carfentanil/methadone					2	1	13
Cyclopropylfentanyl/methadone						1	1
Cyclopropylfentanyl/heroin							13
Cyclopropylfentanyl/Carfentanil							3
Cyclopropylfentanyl/Carfentanil/ Methadone							3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>249</b>

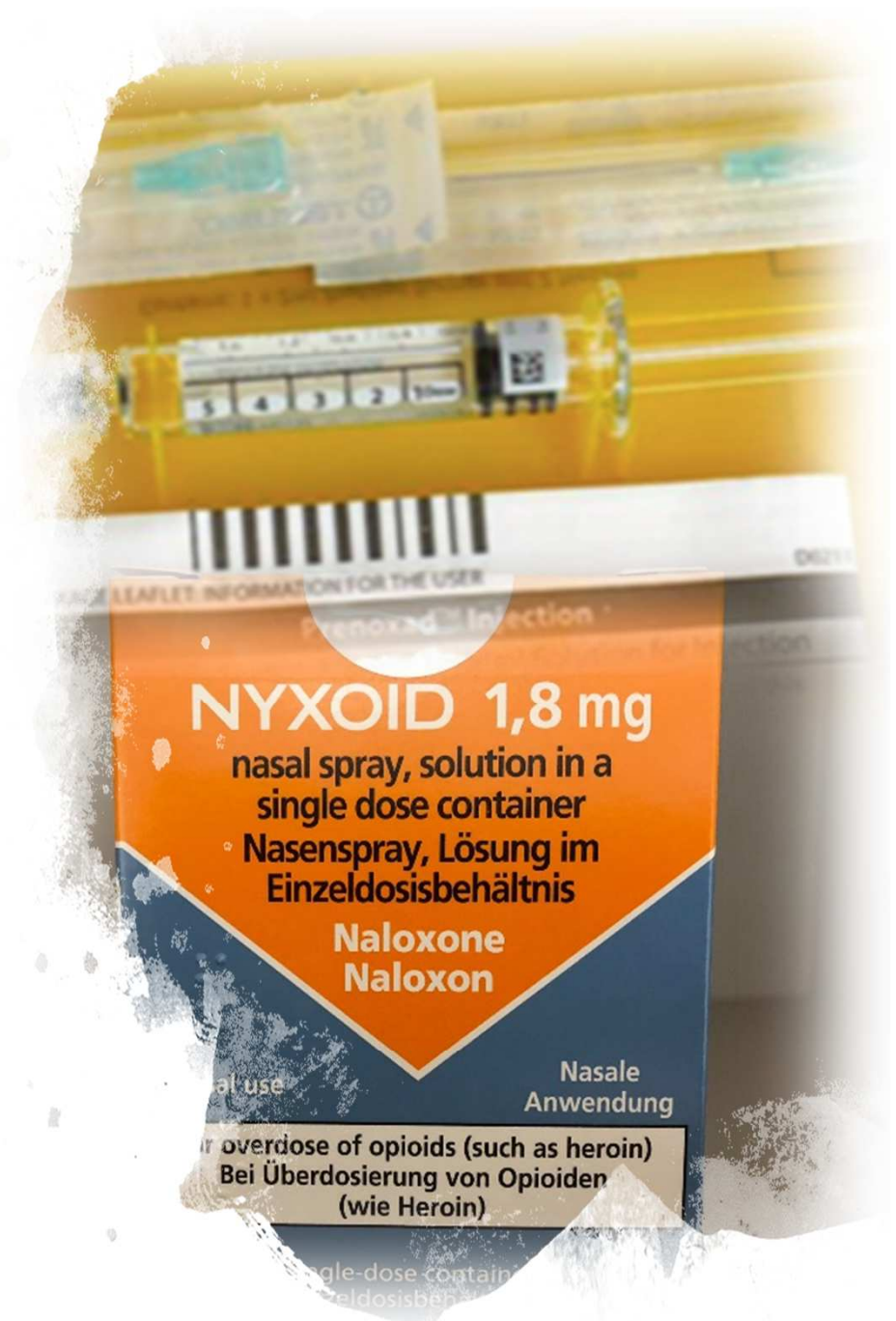
Number of seizures of heroin and new synthetic opioids in Latvia, 2007 - 2018



Source: State Police

## Response to the DRD situation in Estonia and Lithuania

- Since 2013 take home naloxone programme in Estonia. In 2017/2018 the introduction of wider scale naloxone programmes and the enhanced police operations targeted on dismantling the illegal fentanyl/analogues market in Estonia.
- Since 2016 in Lithuania take home naloxone provision programme available (the city of Vilnius). Since 2018 in other cities of Lithuania.





# Findings I

- Drug seizure data point to the increase in fentanyl seizures in the Latvia and Lithuania. Heroin seizures show rather declining trend.
- Drug markets in LT and LV are interrelated, the same trafficking road for distribution of fentanyles.
- Drug markets have been different for Estonia, Poland and LT/LV despite of the geographical closeness. Now the threat that the shift is for wider fentanyl market in all the Baltic States. In 2002 the shortage of heroin was replaced by fentanyl in Estonia.
- Wider fentanyl market is worrisome trend in case of DRD and health consequences.

# Findings II

- The heroin shortage in 2010 in Poland was compensated by synthetic cathinones. Shift to stimulant use not replacement by other opioid.
- In the light of the wider use and availability of synthetic opioids in Baltic States the availability of naloxone program and other harm reduction measures such as safe injecting rooms are essential to save lives.
- Disruption of criminal networks dealing with fentanyl supply has major influence on market and use.
- The improved situation in Estonia could change quickly if the regular fentanyl market returns or it's stronger analogue emerges to the drug market.