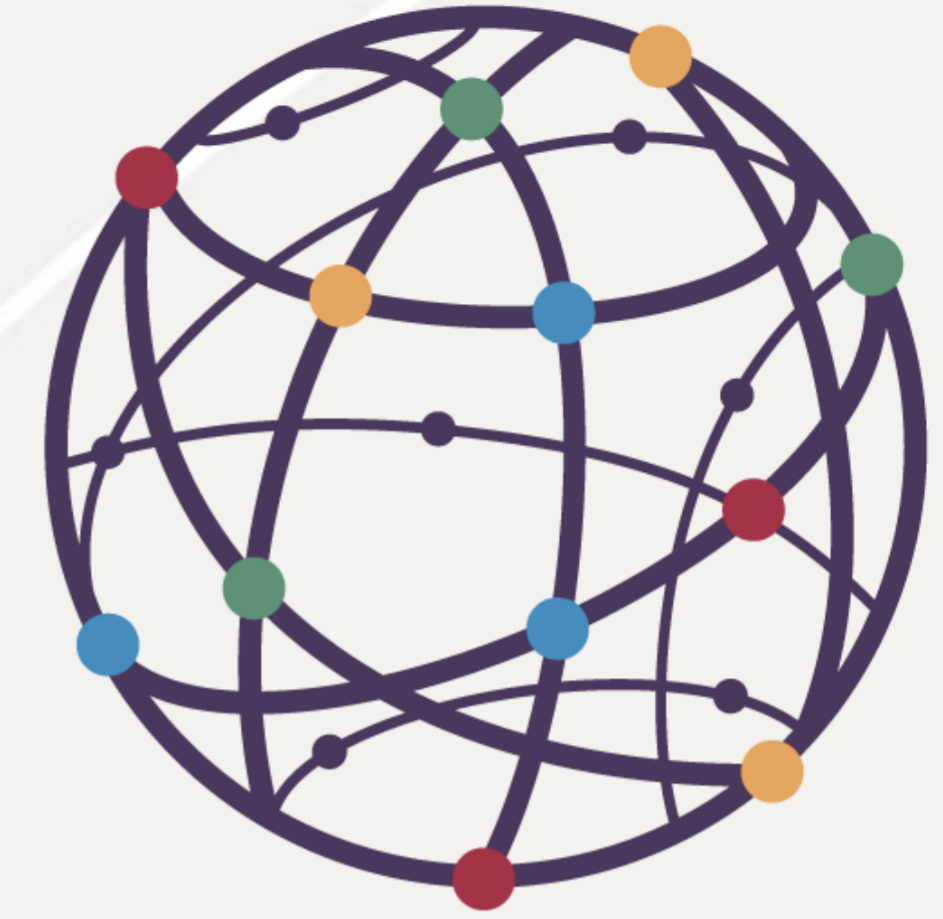


How prepared are monitoring systems to respond to rapidly changing drug markets in regions bordering the European Union?

- *Presented by Emadeddin Badi,*
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**GLOBAL
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AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME

The meeting is organised in the framework of the EU4Monitoring Drugs project funded by the European Union'

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Presentation of key GI-TOC findings from research under the EMCDDA/ EU4Monitoring Drugs initiative

- 1. Drivers and facilitators***
- 2. Production and trafficking patterns in flux***
- 3. Organized criminal networks' development***
- 4. Drugs' availability and use***
- 5. An outlook on state responses***



European Monitoring Centre
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

EN

Overview of drug markets in the European Neighbourhood Policy-South countries

Regional report

2022



1

Drivers and facilitators

Political instability and its knock-on effects on preparedness

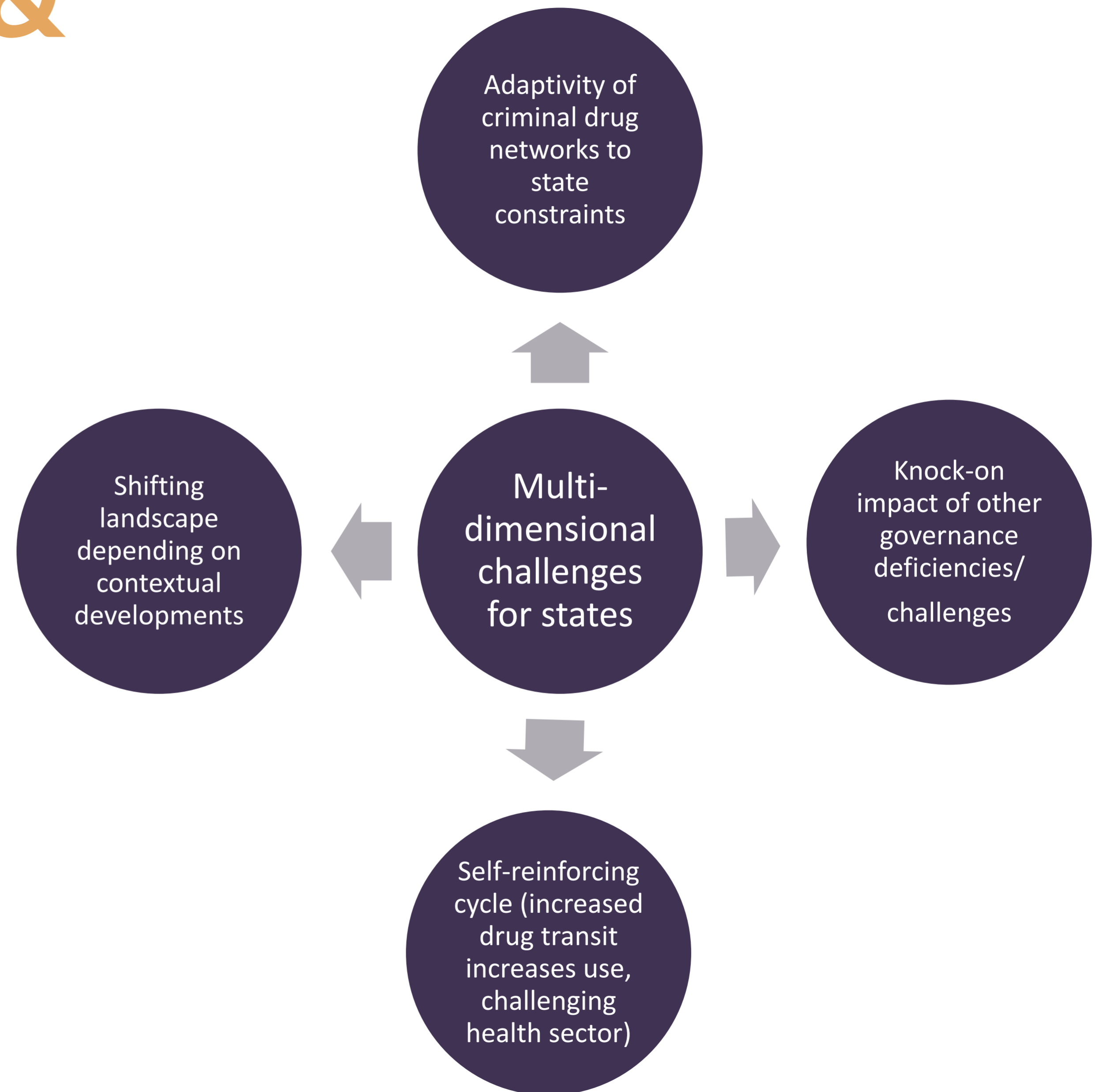


- Political instability and ongoing conflict in some parts of the region represent a major challenge to good governance and the rule of law
- A knock-on impact of this is that areas facing social instability are likely to become more vulnerable to drug production, trafficking and associated criminal activity – as well as vulnerability to drug problems

Between drivers & facilitators

Examples:

- *COVID-19 pandemic and associated effects*
- *Border movements and mobility constraints offset by drug networks*
- *TOC and importance of transnational/multilateral response*
- *Institutional and organizational capacity of state capacity to limit illicit sectors*





2

Production and trafficking patterns in flux

Shifts in production across the region

Important global production hubs in the Southern EN



Variable production patterns

Data points to cultivation remaining stable in North Africa, but expanded in the Levant

The emergence of Captagon – with drug trafficking networks straddling state and non-state stakeholders



Small-scale production of synthetics taking place

Ad-hoc reports of production or processing sites being identified and dismantled

Yet – knowledge gaps, states' lack of transparency/lack of communication limit ability to fully capture scale

Trafficking networks – resilient & adaptable

Trafficking hubs for multiple products' transit

Region contains several hubs for drug trafficking & their importance is increasing

Expansion of transport networks & infrastructure creates new opportunities for drug trafficking & new challenges for law enforcement.

An increasingly transnational effort

Cannabis and cannabis resin are the most trafficked substances, with routes crossing every country in the region

More elaborate routes (cannabis & captagon) – between Lebanon & Persian Gulf – via the Sahel and Libya

The multiplicity of trafficking modalities: by air, land & sea

Use of commercial air & maritime transport may be associated with the trafficking of smaller volumes but wider variety of illicit drugs

Trafficking of MDMA, cocaine, heroin from Europe to South may have increased



3

**Organized criminal networks'
development**

An increasingly glo-cal modus operandi



Increased links and more integration in operational activities between national and regional organised crime networks and their international counterparts.



Drug economy provides an opportunity for income generation for some armed forces and groups involved in conflicts in the region (e.g Syria)

While violence directly related to drug violence is low, this trend appear to be in flux, with a degree of diffusion



Established but growing challenge is entrenched corruption.

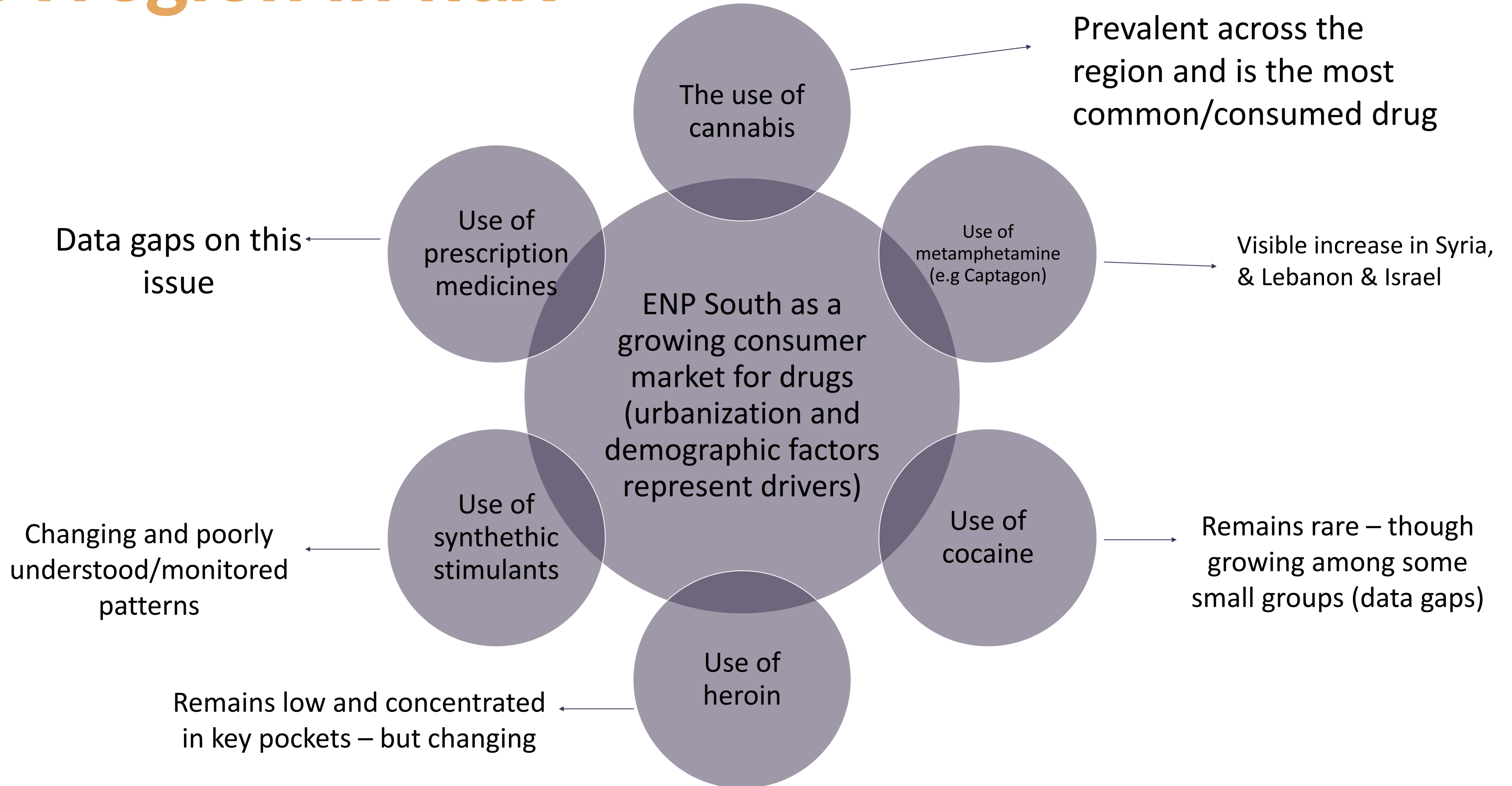
Trafficking networks are thought to have infiltrated state structures – however, this now appears to be multi-layered: small-payments to low-level officials & deep integration of state actors in criminality



4

Drugs' availability and use

A region in flux





5

Outlook on state responses

An open question?

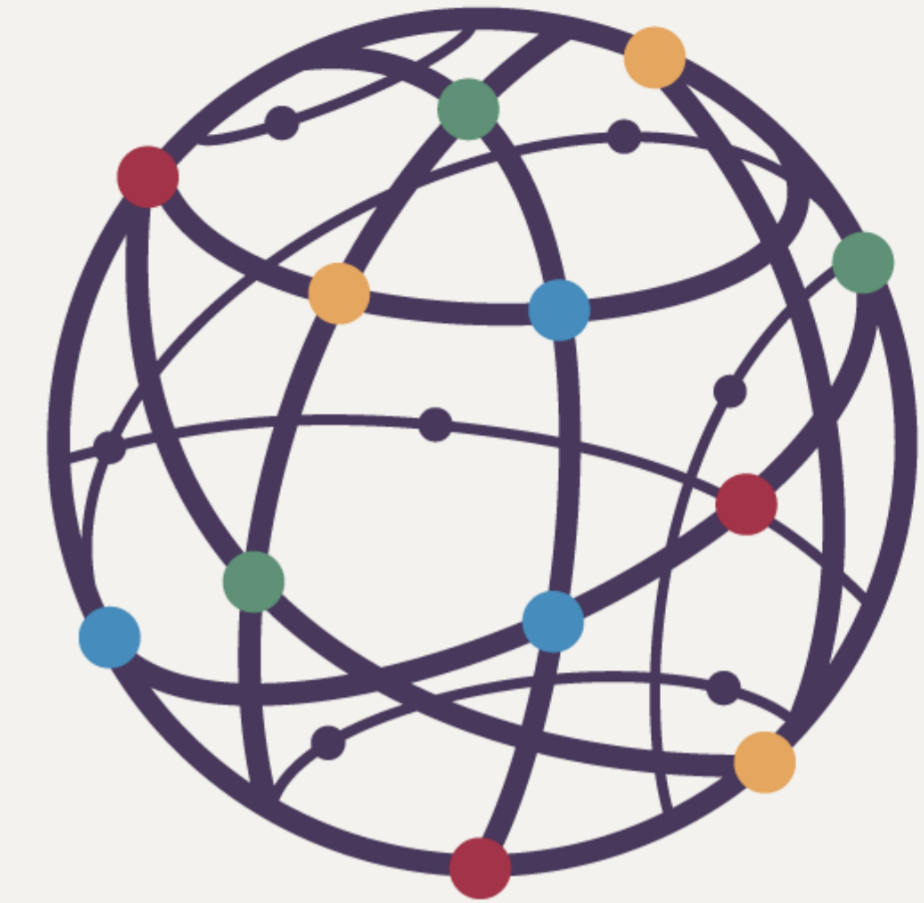
Further work is required to analyse in more detail the impact of drug use on public health in the region.

It can be concluded that state responses to drug problems in the region are **predominantly punitive and securitized**, with a focus on **law enforcement responses**.

While there has been **some expansion of public health approaches in recent years**, seen for instance in increased numbers of public and private treatment facilities, the information available strongly suggests **current capacity remains considerably below what is required to respond to estimated needs**.



Obrigado!



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