

seizure

**DRUG-RELATED CRIME
ANNUAL REPORT 2017**



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PREFACE

Dear reader!

In the last ten years, the number of reported narcotic drug crimes in Austria peaked. In 2017, the threshold of 40,000 reports was reached for the first time, which means a doubling of offences in the last decade. There are multiple reasons for this: In 2016, the new legal framework gave police the opportunity to act consistently against drug trafficking on the street. This is exactly what police have implemented. Especially in the federal capital and in the provincial capitals, targeted checks raised the pressure on dealers. In critical areas such as parks or railway stations, the police have stepped up patrols to tackle this problem.

A major challenge, which is reflected in the number of reported crimes, is the strong increase in illicit drugs sold through the Darknet and delivered via letters and parcels. This calls for intensified, concerted and internationally coordinated investigations, which are currently being prepared and conducted by the Narcotic Drug Crime Office at the Criminal Intelligence Service Austria in close cooperation with customs authorities and local police units. In addition, the migration situation has had an impact on the number of incidents in recent years.

The 2017 report underscores our ongoing commitment to effectively combating drug crime and its ramifications in Austria, with efforts ranging from frequent and deterring checks to international operations and prevention projects for young people.

Herbert Kickl
Federal Minister of the Interior

General Franz LANG
Director of Criminal Intelligence Service Austria

Dr. Michael Fischer
Deputy Director of Criminal Intelligence Service Austria

GENERAL INFORMATION

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Information included in this report is drawn from the data published by the Austrian law enforcement services on punishable offences involving narcotic drugs as defined in the Narcotic Drugs Act (SMG) in the year under review. The statistics contained herein reflect the criminal complaints filed. They are stored in the database hosted by the Data Processing Centre of the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI) and are prepared for publication by the Criminal Intelligence Service Austria (BK).

The interpretation of the statistical data must be carefully considered, because they reflect not only general trends in drug-related crime, but also the resources used to combat this criminality. Additional information should, therefore, be taken into account.

As monthly and sometimes annual fluctuations in the number of charges are quite common, investigations may take months or even years and are reflected in the statistics only after completion. It is, therefore, worthwhile to consider trends not only in comparison to the previous year, but over several reporting years and to include additional background information. Our drugs statistics underwent a major renewal in 2015. Until then, drug statistics had been compiled independently of general crime statistics. In 2015, they were incorporated in the crime statistics. This involved an automatic quality control and thus an increase in data quality.

In addition, it provided the facility to record additional parameters, which made it possible to retrieve enhanced information from the statistics. The result was a more comprehensive picture of the situation, in particular in respect of the ratio of crime reports about criminal groups to narcotic substances and to the geographical distribution.

The terms „indictable offence“ (felony) and „non-indictable offence“ (misdemeanour) are used as defined in section 17 of the Penal Code (StGB). “Indictable offences” are intentional acts that are punished by life imprisonment or terms of imprisonment exceeding three years. All other criminal acts are non-indictable offences.

The present report is structured as follows: The first part consists of a summary of the situation in Austria and the outlook for the year 2018. The second part consists of the key data on drug-related crime in Austria in 2017. The third part contains a situation report on the individual types of narcotic drugs. The fourth part gives an overview of the situation in the provinces.

This is followed by a glossary of criminal offences pursuant to the Narcotic Drugs Act (SMG) and the New Psychoactive Substances Act (NPSG) as well as by a description of the various narcotic substances. The report ends with an appendix containing detailed tables and charts.

SUMMARY

If it comes to illegal narcotic drugs, Austria serves as a region of consumption, transit and trade and as the seat for various groups of offenders and distributing networks. There are five main factors that influence these criminal activities:

- Austria's geographical position on the Balkan route, where heroin and opiate products are smuggled from Afghanistan into Europe and drug precursor substances from Europe eastward to the central Asian area.
- Drug precursors are smuggled on the Balkan route from Europe to Central Asia via Vienna International Airport, which is moreover used especially for smuggling of cocaine from South American countries into Austria
- Countries in Europe producing synthetic drugs
- Home production of cannabis products
- An increasing number of illicit drugs and new psychoactive substances are offered on the Internet, especially on the Darknet.

In the first half of 2016, the introduction of the Penal Law Amendment Act 2015, particularly the modified definition of the nature of criminal activities as a regular source of income (section 70 Penal Code), had a massive impact on the open drug scene, as it was no longer possible to remand street vendors in custody. Often suspects were caught in the act of drug trafficking and reported several times a day.

In June 2016, section 27, subsection 2a was introduced into the Narcotic Drugs Act, allowing for more effective police intervention in cases of drug dealing in public places. As a result, the open drug scene was sustainably suppressed through targeted operations also in 2017.

OUTLOOK 2018

Due to its geographical location on the Balkan route, Austria has an important role in the fight against international organised drug crime. As a transit country and marketplace for illicit drugs and as a base of operations for various multinational offender groups, Austria constantly faces the challenge of effectively combating drug-related crime.

The traffic in illicit drugs on the Internet and Darknet is booming. In general, an interdisciplinary cooperation as well as the „multi-agency principle“ need to be applied when illicit drugs are ordered via the Internet and delivered by letters and parcels. However, close attention must continue to be paid to open street dealing. In addition to the new scenarios, illicit drugs continue to be smuggled along the traditional Balkan route and via Vienna International Airport.

The migration situation in Europe and thus in Austria will continue to present a major challenge.

BASIC FIGURES

REPORTS RELATING TO THE NARCOTIC DRUGS ACT

In 2017, the number of crime reports relating to the Narcotic Drugs Act rose by 17.6 per cent from 36,235 to 42,610 reports. This is again the highest value within the last ten years.

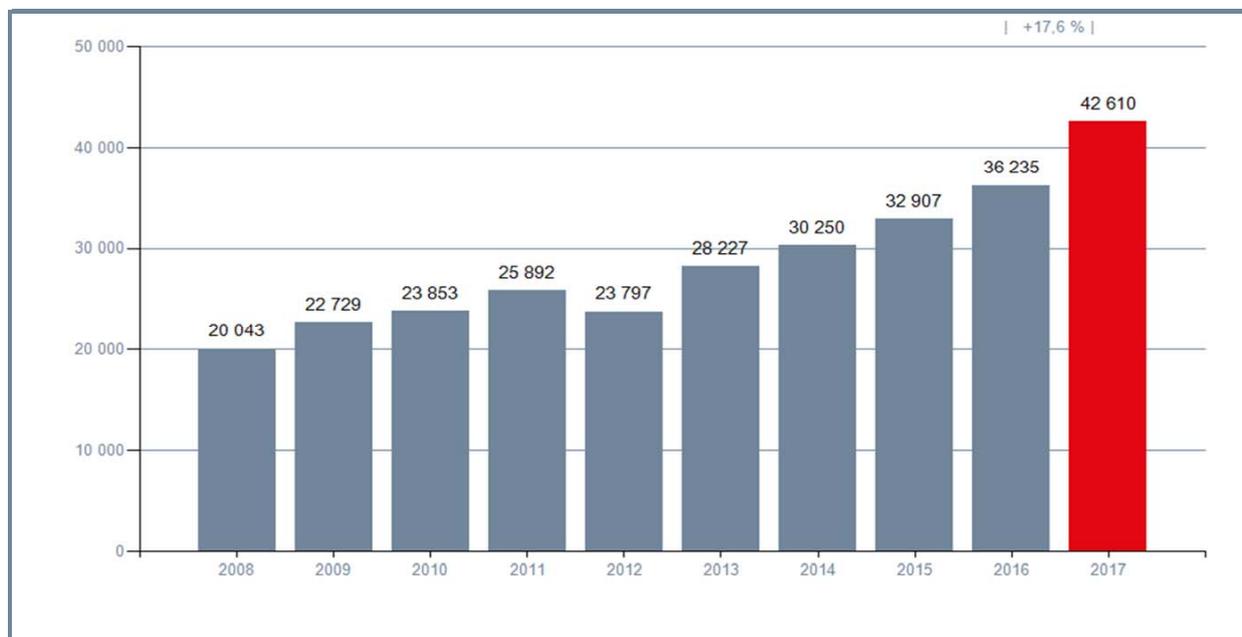


Figure 1: Development of overall crime reports relating to the Narcotic Drugs Act in Austria between 2008 and 2017

SEIZED ILLICIT DRUGS

In 2017, 70 kg of heroin, 71.4 kg of cocaine, 1.659 kg of cannabis products, 446,465 pieces of ecstasy, 50.3 kg of amphetamines and 5 kg of methamphetamines as well as 633.5 kg of khat were seized.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis	695 685,2 g	967 951,8 g	985 158,5 g	695 988,5 g	985 675,3 g	1561 883,9 g	1427 170,1 g	1138 794,9 g	1082 776,6 g	1659 199,2 g
Heroin	103 975,0 g	189 594,8 g	96 066,6 g	64 878,1 g	222 109,8 g	80 248,0 g	56 160,7 g	69 534,7 g	68 916,1 g	69 950,0 g
Cocaine	78 383,3 g	53 209,8 g	240 978,5 g	138 934,1 g	64 641,6 g	24 736,9 g	30 979,3 g	119 675,3 g	86 449,2 g	71 425,0 g
XTC	45 334,5 Stk	5 847,5 Stk	7 275,0 Stk	11 432,0 Stk	8 998,0 Stk	5 768,0 Stk	5 001,0 Stk	10 149,0 Stk	29 485,1 Stk	446 465,0 Stk
Amphetamine	12 926,7 g	63 871,6 g	21 909,5 g	13 360,5 g	32 141,8 g	21 406,7 g	15 860,1 g	66 657,5 g	87 649,4 g	50 268,0 g
Methamphetamine	120,1 g	1 065,0 g	1 446,6 g	2 419,0 g	3 238,5 g	7 574,0 g	4 731,1 g	2 944,0 g	4 800,4 g	5 036,4 g
Khat									451 301,2 g	633 456,4 g

Figure 2: Seizures in Austria between 2008 and 2017

The amount of narcotic drugs seized in a reporting year is strongly influenced by large seizures. Therefore, an annual comparison of seizure quantities alone is not valid as a sole parameter for drawing conclusions on the development of drug-related crime.

PRICES ON THE BLACK MARKET

In 2017, the average wholesale price per kilogram was EUR 5,000 for cannabis (cannabis herb and resin), EUR 44,000 for heroin, EUR 60,000 for cocaine, EUR 11,000 for amphetamine and EUR 40,000 for methamphetamine. 1,000 units of ecstasy (MDMA) cost about 6,000 Euro.

The narcotic drugs seized had the following black-market prices in street dealing: The calculation is based on average prices in Austria. The prices represent only an illustration of the market values, but may vary greatly depending on region and quality.

	2017
Cannabis	19 910 390
Heroin	4 022 125
Cocaine	6 071 125
XTC	7 366 673
Amphetamine	1 005 360
Methamphetamine	314 775

Figure 3: Black market prices of the narcotic drugs seized in 2017 in EUR

QUALITY OF THE ILLICIT DRUGS

The following table shows the development of the quality of the seized and forensically examined illicit drugs in the last ten years. It shows the mean values in each case. Despite the wide variation range, it was possible to increase the quality of many types of narcotic drugs, especially cannabis products as well as heroin and cocaine. This applies in particular to cannabis products as well as to heroin and cocaine. Furthermore, the examination of the most consumed illicit drug in Austria - cannabis - often revealed very high maximum values of more than 50 per cent of the principal psychoactive agent tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

	Quality (purity) of illicit narcotic drugs seized and examined									
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis-herb	7,2%	7,5%	7,0%	5,0%	9,7%	9,6%	8,9%	9,8%	10,8%	13,9%
Cannabis-resin	10,9%	12,2%	9,0%	9,3%	10,9%	9,8%	12,0%	15,2%	15,1%	9,6%
Heroin	11,3%	12,9%	5,8%	7,8%	6,4%	7,6%	11,9%	13,7%	13,7%	15,0%
Cocaine	32,1%	27,3%	27,5%	27,6%	28,1%	26,0%	31,6%	33,4%	45,9%	51,4%
XTC/MDMA	38,3%	90,7%	63,4%	44,5%	50,6%	46,0%	44,6%	48,7%	47,7%	38,3%
Amphetamine	9,1%	7,8%	7,9%	4,1%	8,4%	9,5%	10,6%	18,5%	14,5%	13,8%
Methamphetamine	46,3%	56,7%	52,0%	61,2%	54,4%	56,0%	63,5%	51,5%	58,7%	57,2%

Figure 4: Quality (purity) of illicit narcotic drugs seized and examined

SUSPECTS

Suspects broken down by age groups and gender

There has been an increase in all age groups as well as in the number of total crime reports. The age group from 25 to 39 years is the strongest group of drug offenders.

Age group	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Tendency prev. Year
	2 577	2 876	2 724	2 706	2 444	3 290	4 325	4 270	5 223	5 771	10,5 %
18 to 20 Years	4 228	4 897	4 836	5 240	4 563	5 559	5 978	6 610	7 426	8 989	21,0 %
21 to 24 Years	4 843	5 438	5 563	5 874	5 108	5 977	5 740	6 253	6 847	8 061	17,7 %
25 to 39 Years	6 388	7 302	8 148	9 238	8 606	9 649	9 950	11 167	11 462	13 817	20,5 %
40 years and older	1 588	1 638	1 819	2 017	2 069	2 192	2 384	2 506	2 495	3 008	20,6 %
Unidentified Suspects	419	578	763	817	1 007	1 560	1 873	2 101	2 779	2 956	6,4 %

Age group	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	12,9 %	12,7 %	11,4 %	10,5 %	10,3 %	11,7 %	14,3 %	13,0 %	14,4 %	13,5 %
18 to 20 Years	21,1 %	21,5 %	20,3 %	20,2 %	19,2 %	19,7 %	19,8 %	20,1 %	20,5 %	21,1 %
21 to 24 Years	24,2 %	23,9 %	23,3 %	22,7 %	21,5 %	21,2 %	19,0 %	19,0 %	18,9 %	18,9 %
25 to 39 Years	31,9 %	32,1 %	34,2 %	35,7 %	36,2 %	34,2 %	32,9 %	33,9 %	31,6 %	32,4 %
40 years and older	7,9 %	7,2 %	7,6 %	7,8 %	8,7 %	7,8 %	7,9 %	7,6 %	6,9 %	7,1 %
Unidentified Suspects	2,1 %	2,5 %	3,2 %	3,2 %	4,2 %	5,5 %	6,2 %	6,4 %	7,7 %	6,9 %

Figures 5 and 6: Distribution of crime reports by age groups between 2008 and 2017 expressed in absolute and in percentage terms

The frequency distribution by gender showed small changes in respect of female suspects. Men continued to be reported much more frequently than women in 2017 (around 87 per cent as against 13 per cent).

Sex	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Tendency prev. Year
Total	20 043	22 729	23 853	25 892	23 797	28 227	30 250	32 907	36 235	42 610	17,6 %
male	16 661	18 890	19 599	21 325	19 615	22 957	24 529	26 802	29 364	34 621	17,9 %
female	2 963	3 261	3 491	3 750	3 175	3 710	3 848	4 004	4 092	5 033	23,0 %
Unidentified Suspects	419	578	763	817	1 007	1 560	1 873	2 101	2 779	2 956	6,4 %

Figure 7: Distribution of crime reports by gender between 2008 and 2017

Domestic and foreign suspects

In 2017, a total of 25,043 crime reports were filed against domestic suspects and 14,612 reports against foreign suspects for punishable offences that fall under the Narcotic Drugs Act. In 2017, the number of domestic suspects continued to decline between 2008 and 2016 and remained at 63.2 per cent in 2017. The number of foreign suspects identified continuously increased in the period until 2016 and remained at a high level of 36.8 per cent after a slight decline in 2017. The number of total reports rose by 17.6 per cent compared with 2016. It is striking to note that there is a high proportion of foreign nationals in crime reports for indictable offences.

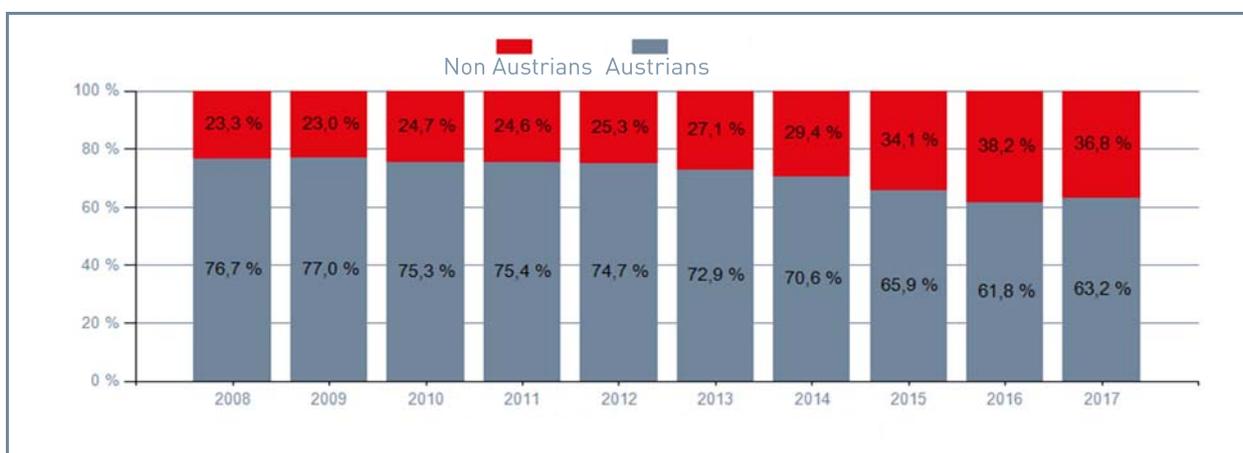


Figure 8: Distribution of indictable and non-indictable offences by domestic and foreign suspects between 2008 and 2017

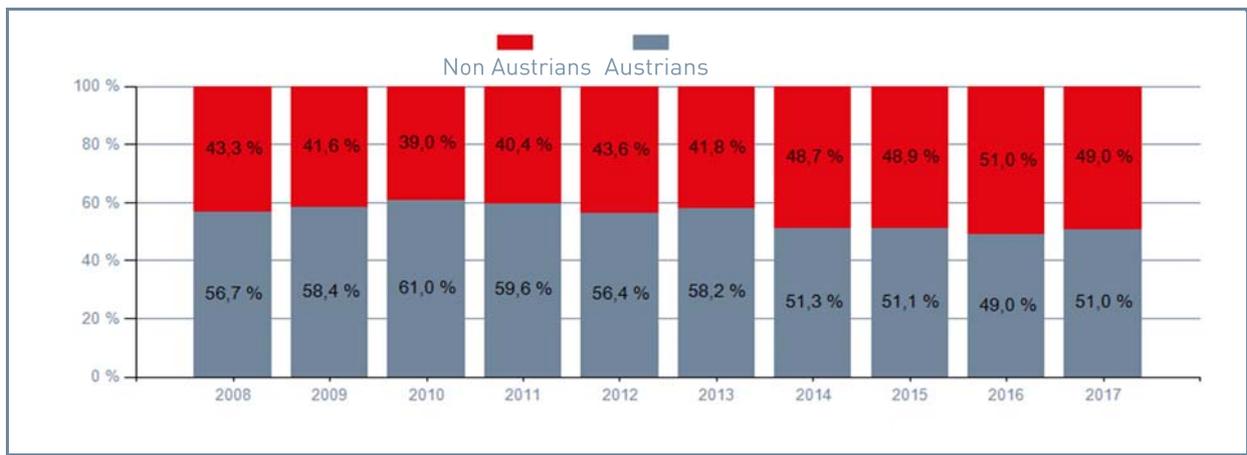


Figure 9: Distribution of indictable offences by domestic and foreign suspects between 2008 and 2017

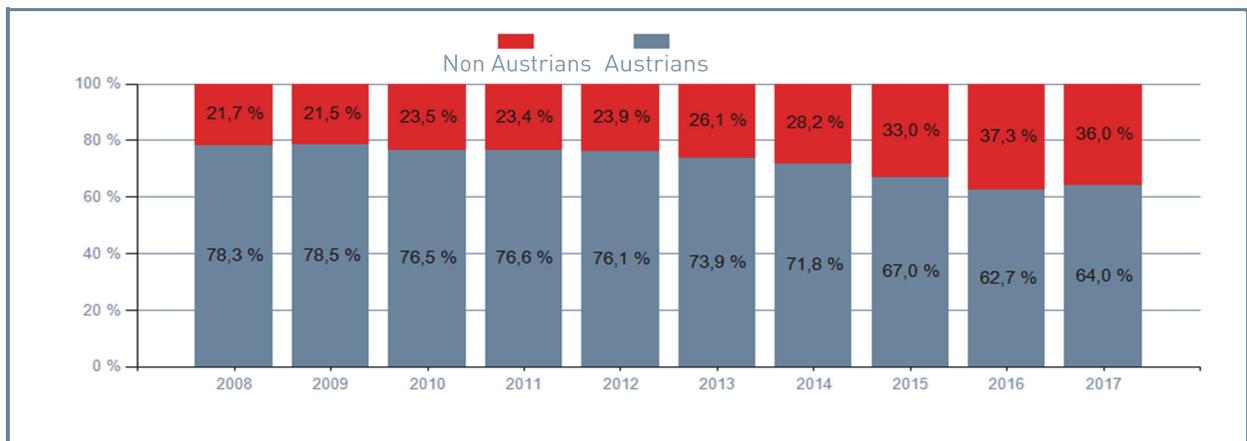


Figure 10: Distribution of non-indictable offences by domestic and foreign suspects between 2008 and 2017

The analysis by nationality shows that the proportion of non-Austrian nationals remained high. In the area of indictable offences, the number of reported drug-related offences committed by foreign suspects exceeded 50 per cent for the first time in 2017. Offences falling under the Narcotic Drugs Act increased considerably within a year from 1,103 to 2,025 among Afghan nationals.

Nation	Total	Crime	Misdemeanours
Afghanistan	2025	98	1927
Nigeria	1614	79	1535
Serbia	955	263	692
Germany	940	50	890
Turkey	892	115	777
Algeria	636	51	585
Morocco	566	36	530
Bosnia-Herzegovina	535	73	462
Romania	461	30	431
Russia	427	11	416

Figure 11: Foreign suspects broken down by nationality in 2017

The following figure shows the types of narcotic drugs of the Austrian and foreign suspects broken down by nationality.

	All	Austria	Alien	Afghanistan	Nigeria	Serbia	Germany	Turkey	Algeria	Marocco	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Romania	Russia
Cannabis	67,0%	63,7%	72,0%	90,3%	76,1%	48,7%	67,2%	54,9%	83,1%	84,6%	55,1%	73,9%	67,4%
Heroin	4,9%	4,7%	5,6%	1,5%	3,7%	24,2%	1,6%	13,3%	0,4%	0,5%	10,5%	2,8%	9,2%
Cocain	7,7%	7,0%	9,1%	1,5%	19,7%	12,9%	7,3%	13,1%	5,0%	5,6%	14,1%	6,9%	6,3%
XTC	3,6%	4,0%	2,9%	2,4%	0,1%	2,4%	4,6%	2,1%	3,9%	2,7%	2,8%	3,4%	2,5%
Amphetamine	5,7%	7,5%	2,6%	0,5%	0,0%	2,4%	8,4%	4,0%	0,1%	1,0%	4,4%	4,3%	1,7%
Methamphetamine	2,3%	2,3%	2,4%	1,9%	0,1%	1,0%	1,7%	6,0%	0,6%	0,8%	2,8%	3,0%	3,2%
other	8,8%	10,7%	5,5%	1,9%	0,3%	8,4%	9,1%	6,6%	6,9%	4,9%	10,3%	5,8%	9,7%

Figure 12: Distribution of narcotic drugs by suspects and their nationality in 2017

The following figure shows the frequency of foreign suspects by province.

	Afghanistan	Nigeria	Serbia	Germany	Turkey	Algeria	Marocco	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Romania	Russia
Burgenland	0,7%	0,4%	0,7%	2,2%	1,1%	0,0%	0,4%	0,8%	1,3%	0,2%
Carinthia	3,3%	0,9%	1,2%	6,8%	1,1%	1,4%	0,2%	9,4%	3,7%	2,6%
Lower Austria	4,7%	2,8%	8,2%	7,8%	10,9%	3,9%	5,1%	7,3%	13,0%	8,7%
Upper Austria	15,4%	8,0%	8,3%	17,5%	16,3%	3,9%	6,5%	28,4%	19,3%	12,7%
Salzburg	4,6%	1,5%	5,2%	14,7%	4,7%	4,7%	8,0%	10,8%	2,6%	2,8%
Styria	15,9%	3,4%	1,1%	5,6%	3,7%	3,9%	2,8%	9,4%	19,7%	12,4%
Tyrol	5,6%	0,2%	4,7%	21,2%	9,5%	13,4%	46,6%	6,7%	4,6%	3,3%
Vorarlberg	2,7%	0,1%	2,6%	8,1%	9,9%	0,5%	0,2%	1,3%	2,2%	3,3%
Vienna	47,2%	82,8%	68,1%	16,2%	42,8%	68,2%	30,2%	26,0%	33,6%	54,1%

Figure 13: Distribution of foreign suspects by provinces in 2017

OFFENDER GROUPS

The nationalities of smuggling and trafficking networks remained unchanged depending on the type of narcotic drugs. As a rule, they were closely linked to the countries where the respective drug types originated and to those countries that were used as transit and depot areas. Migration flows also had an impact on the development of offender groups.

Offender groups often operated from countries situated along the Balkan route. Macedonian, Serbian, Croatian, Bulgarian and Turkish groups stood out in this region. Austrian nationals held leading positions in the production of cannabis herb. A strong increase in drug trafficking was recorded on virtual trading platforms. Anonymous dealing on the Darknet and virtual payment methods as well as sending of illicit drugs by parcel are still a major challenge for the law enforcement agencies.

ACTIVITIES AND MAIN TARGETS OF POLICE

Narcotic drug offences are police check-related offences. Accordingly, the increased number of checks is reflected in a higher number of crime reports. In 2017, there were targeted anti-drug operations across Austria which will be continued in 2018. This increase is partly due to the amendment of the Narcotic Drugs Act, which came into force on 1 June 2016 and introduced a new criminal offence (section 27 subsection 2a), making it possible to take more effective action against the open drug scene. The Darknet has become an important investigative source,

opening lines of inquiry for structured investigations and analysis. They provide the necessary investigative approaches for international investigations. Similarly, the migration flows since 2015 have their influence on the increase in the number of drug-related offences.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND PROJECTS

Organised and cross-border drug trafficking can only be successfully combated with great determination. Hence, great importance is attached to international cooperation.

The strategically essential circumstances of the geographical positioning of Austria along the main drug trafficking route, the Balkan route, and Vienna International Airport as drug-dealing spot demand special measures and commitment from the Austrian law enforcement agencies. International cooperation is effected through tried-and-tested communication channels such as Interpol, Europol, Eurojust, the United Nations network and through Austrian liaison officers accredited to foreign countries and foreign liaison officers accredited to Austria.



Figure 14: Logo of the European Union

Projects co-financed by the European Union provide valuable assistance in the fight against crime. With these projects it is possible to test and implement necessary tactical measures as well as to create new important infrastructure and police information networks.

International airports

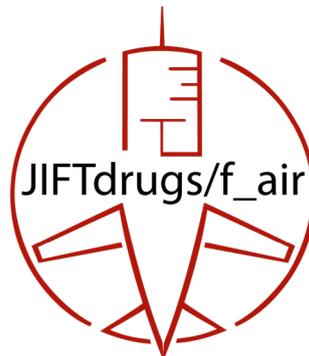


Figure 15: Logo of the project "JIFTdrugs/f_air"

In the framework of the project „Joint investigation to fight trafficking in drugs and firearms with the main focus on international airports within and also into the EU“ Austria and its partner countries Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99) and the Czech Republic commit themselves to fight illegal trade in drugs and weapons focusing mainly on the international airports. In addition to making seizures and dismantling offender groups, the project is intended to yield intelligence to be used as a base for situation analysis. The project ends in November 2018. In 2017, in addition to the police and customs administration in Austria, the countries of Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Colombia, Kosovo, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain and the Czech Republic actively participated in operational tactical measures. During the project implementation phase around two tons of illegal narcotic substances were seized.

Western Balkans und Darknet

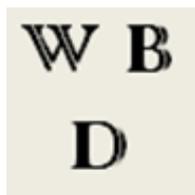


Figure 16: Logo of the project „Drug Policing - Western Balkans and Darknet“

Austria achieved sustainable results with the project series „Drug Policing Balkan“ and the project „Joint investigation to combat drug trafficking via the virtual market Darknet within and also into the EU“. Suppression strategies in the Balkans were strengthened on the one hand, and tactical measures in the area of the Internet and Darknet were implemented on the other. The ISF-P National Project „Drug Policing - Focus on the Western Balkans and Darknet“ launched in July 2017 uses the intelligence gained and networks built in the previous projects to combat crime developments in both areas.

Illicit drug trade via Darknet

Large parts of the Worldwide Web are not accessible to current search engines. The Deepweb is an Internet area consisting of corporate networks, databases of libraries, universities and research institutions. Websites on the Deepweb can be accessed with a standard Internet browser. However, most sites require a login. The Deepweb is the larger part of the Internet. The Darknet is an area of the Internet that is not accessed with conventional browsers. Special software, such as the Tor Browser (“The Onion Router”) is needed, allowing data to be sent anonymously and in encrypted form through different servers. Encrypted data is transmitted on the Darknet anonymously between several servers.

Like an onion, they are transmitted back and forth between servers without leaving any trace. Darknet addresses consist of combinations of numbers and letters. The information transmitted on the Darknet can be read again in plain text in the end. The Darknet was intended for journalists and organisations threatened by censorship and has gained a bad reputation, because it is being used as a platform for illegal arms and drug trafficking, hacker services and other criminal activities

Online trade in prohibited substances has meanwhile developed in Austria from a trend towards a common mode of committing drug-related crime. Both individual offenders and criminal organisations use the Darknet marketplaces as a means to handle their organised drug trafficking and generate their illegal profits. Everything is processed through encrypted networks, from establishing contact to negotiating sales and effecting payment.

However, in order to finance the addictive behaviour, there is still accompanying crime in the real world. Investigations show so far that the online drug trade does not displace the street trade. Rather, the trade on online platforms is used to acquire illicit drugs of higher quality and sell them profitably on the streets. Thus, the Internet trade is an addition to the classic street trade. However, inferior narcotic substances are also offered for sale, such as the amphetamine paste, which is largely made up of solvents and waste products used in the production of speed. The mailing of designed derivatives such as carfentanyl or the substance U-47700 also represents an increasing danger of online trade. These substances can - already by inhalation or mere skin contact - cause considerable damage to health or even death.

A large number of illegal narcotic drugs sold on the Darknet are manufactured in the Netherlands and sent to Austria via various distribution channels by post.

REPORTING OFFICE FOR DRUG AND EXPLOSIVE PRECURSORS

Points of contact for private individuals and businesses represent an important means for enhancing public security in Austria. In view of the chemicals used, measures are needed to prevent potential hazards for the public such as fires, explosions or poisoning by vapours. The Precursor Competence Centre with its Reporting Office for drug and explosive precursors has an important role in this respect. The Centre is established in Sub-Department Drug-Related Crime of the Criminal Intelligence Service Austria.

Drug precursor substances

Certain chemicals are misused by criminal networks for manufacturing narcotic drugs, for example synthetic drugs such as ecstasy. The Reporting Office was created to prevent the diversion of such chemicals from legal channels for illicit drug manufacturing. On the basis of existing legal regulations, businesses report all observations suggesting that chemicals may be diverted for illicit drug production.

Added to that, private individuals can help to prevent the manufacture of narcotic drugs through their perceptions and observations and thus contribute to the protection of our youth.

Explosive precursor substances

Another focus of the Precursor Competence Centre is the monitoring of the trade in explosive precursors. Easily accessible chemical precursors are often used by terrorists to build improvised explosives. Reports submitted by businesses are forwarded to the Federal Agency for State Protection and Counter Terrorism (BVT), if appropriate, after their criminal relevance has been assessed. In 2017, the main focus of CID activities was on raising awareness among businesses and their umbrella associations

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DRUG VICTIMS

In conjunction with drug-related crime, deaths occur after the consumption of illicit drugs every year.

Number of drug deaths	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	197	175	201	206	187	201	161	138	122	153	165

Figure 17: Development of drug-related deaths in Austria between 2006 and 2016

(Source: "Epidemiologiebericht Sucht 2017 – Illegale Drogen und Tabak" (ed. Gesundheit Österreich GmbH, produced on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Health and Women's Affairs, https://goeg.at/DRD_Statistik).

PREVENTION WORK

Crime prevention for young people is a planned sequence of projects carried out by specially trained officers police in cooperation with institutions concerned, such as schools, private associations and families, is a sensitive way. Addiction prevention forms an essential part of the activities. In 2017 throughout Austria, 2,119 preventive measures were carried out and 37,604 persons were given counselling.

In 2016, police launched a new nationwide school program aimed at supporting young people in their development and deterring delinquent behaviour by strengthening their personalities and promoting responsible behaviour towards themselves and others. Discussions on permitted and prohibited substances were an important part of the program. Internet addiction and other dependencies which, as a result, can lead to delinquent behaviour, were also part of this comprehensive program.

The program "Look@your.Life", was developed by committed police officers with university education in order to raise crime prevention in this area to a new level. On the basis of the quality criteria of prevention work, which envisage a strengthening of young people when being confronted with illicit substances, 120 prevention officers were trained for the implementation all over Austria by the end of 2017. The implementation of the prevention measures takes place through workshops focusing on interacting with young people.

The project is intended for 13- to 17-year-old students. The prevention program comprises four modules with a total of 19 teaching units.

What makes the program special is that parents or guardians and teachers are also actively involved in the program, so as to achieve a multi-level approach to sustainable prevention. An information event for parents and a briefing session for teachers is organised.

At the end of 2017, the program was integrated into the overall concept of crime prevention with the target group of adolescents „UNDER18“. In 2018, another 100 prevention officers will receive a training in this program.

ORGANISED ILLEGAL TRAFFICKING IN NARCOTIC DRUGS

The following is an overview of what the situation of organised trafficking in illicit substances is in Austria according to substances most frequently used in Austria.

HEROIN

In 2017, global opium poppy cultivation reached a new record high with an estimated total area of 418,000 hectares. In Afghanistan, an estimated area of 328,000 hectares was under poppy cultivation. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Afghanistan recorded the largest quantity of opium poppy harvested since records began with an estimated 9,000 tons. It is well-known that terrorist groups benefit from the global illicit drug trade. In Afghanistan, in particular, an estimated 85 per cent of opium poppy cultivation is controlled by the Taliban.

UNODC reports that compared with 2016, global opium poppy cultivation increased by 37 per cent to an estimated 10,500 tons. It is estimated that some 1,400 tons of unprocessed poppy remained in the production country. The rest was processed for the global market into an estimated 700 to 1,050 tons of heroin. A study conducted in seven West European countries showed that criminal organisations active in Western Europe have a net margin (proportion of revenues remaining) from global trade of heroin of up to 47 per cent which are left at their disposal for money laundering purposes (cf. UNODC WDR2017, Booklet 5, p. 27, source Savona and Riccardi). Profits that can be made by international heroin smuggling and trafficking prevail over any religious or national conflicts. In most cases, the criminal networks also operate in other areas of crime. As has been mentioned, Afghanistan is still considered to be the most important heroin production country, but according to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), large morphine seizures in Pakistan and Iran suggest that heroin is also produced in large quantities in other Southeast Asian countries as well.

Due to Austria's geographical position on the main heroin smuggling route, the Balkan route going from Turkey to Western Europe via Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia, the availability of heroin and opiate products is unchanged.

In Austria and throughout Europe, the number of individual heroin seizures stagnated and even declined until 2014. After that, the number of seizures increased again. In 2014 already, more than two thirds of total seizures in Europe were accounted for by single large deliveries. This trend continued in 2015, 2016 and 2017. This means that the number of single seizures is declining in many European countries, while the quantities seized and especially the heroin qualities constantly increase. In the years of 2012 and 2013, Macedonian networks were primarily responsible for heroin smuggling and trafficking from and into Austria. From 2014, a growing number of Serbian, Kosovar and Albanian offender groups were noticed. This trend also continued in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

The Balkan route from Afghanistan to Western Europe via Iran and Turkey continued to be the world's most important trafficking route for opiates. UNODC estimates that approximately 40 per cent of worldwide heroin and morphine seizures were made in countries along the Balkan route. As an alternative, the Caucasus route going from Afghanistan via Iran, Armenia or Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine and Romania, seems to have become more important, especially due to the increase in the flows of migrants to the countries of the European Union. This route avoids Turkey, but joins Romania again on the traditional course of the Balkan route.

As in 2016, an increase in Turkish offender groups was recorded across Europe in 2017. A large proportion of the suspects arrested in Austria can be linked to international organised crime networks. Their well-tried structures and hierarchies were adopted by nearly all criminal organisations and associations, regardless of whether they are multicultural or multinational or made up of nationals of one or more countries or members of one or more religions. In most cases, a clearly structured, hierarchical distribution of tasks within the organisation was strictly adhered to. It was often noticed that suspects belonging to a certain hierarchical level had very little knowledge of the other organisational levels or of accomplices. This strategy was pursued to make prosecution by law enforcement agencies more difficult.

Drug trafficking has always been an essential funding source for criminal organisations. Despite intensified police checks, West African drug traffickers continued to be active, mainly in urban areas. Heroin of quite different

qualities was offered for sale. „Balkan heroin“ seized was usually of a much higher quality than heroin sold by street traders from Western Africa, called „street runners“. This is still a major risk of overdose. Add to this, heroin was offered and sold by hidden services on Darknet platforms.

As a rule, this heroin was of higher purity and quality. Despite the fact that the heroin seized was of increasingly high quality, prices stagnated on both wholesale and street markets. As in 2015 and 2016, black market prices for heroin ranged between EUR 25 and 100, with an average price of around EUR 60 per gram being paid. The price of the heroin offered on Darknet platforms (EUR 60 to 80) did not deviate significantly from traditional „offline“ drug dealing, although the quality was usually higher.

There are no indications that the „offline“ heroin traffic shifted to online channels, rather drugs supplied on Darknet platforms were added to the traditional drug supply. Great attention must be paid to this phenomenon also in the future, as this is an area where combating drug trafficking at national or even regional level is no longer possible.

Darknet markets are unlikely to replace or significantly influence the traditional drug trafficking scene in the near future. However, they are expected to snowball and become a greater and greater challenge for law enforcement services.

COCAINE

Cocaine is one of the most frequently used illicit drugs. According to UNODC, the drug is grown mainly in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. Cocaine is produced from the leaves of the coca bush. Latest figures available to UNODC show that since 2016, the area under coca cultivation has grown to an estimated 213,000 hectares and a production of 1,410 tons of cocaine. Due to existing ports of import and smuggling routes, the use of cocaine is generally higher in the countries of Southern and Western Europe.

The transport to Europe mainly takes place by sea and air. The classic smuggling routes lead to North America. Cocaine is shipped to Europe not only from the ports of the producing countries, but to an increasing extent also via Brazil, Costa Rica and Panama and often through African countries. Larger quantities are usually smuggled in containers, but high-sea sailing ships and private jets are increasingly used.

In 2017, cocaine smugglers mainly used Vienna International Airport Schwechat, and occasionally some smaller international airports in Austria. Body packing, i.e. swallowing of small containers, or hiding in specially prepared luggage, continued to be the most popular smuggling methods. Additionally, smugglers used rail services and long-distance coaches to cater to domestic demand for cocaine in Austria. The average quantity of cocaine carried by smugglers ranged between 300 and 1,000 grams. The composition of offender groups operating in Austria varied from province to province. In the southern parts of the country, an increasing number of West African drug dealers came to notice in addition to organised groups from the Balkans, whereas in Eastern Austria, mainly groups from West Africa and the Western Balkans were active. Domestic dealers occasionally came to notice, who purchased cocaine in Spain or in the Netherlands and sold it with profit in Austria.

As in the previous year, the average purchase price for one gram ranged between EUR 50 and 150. The quality sold on the streets was considerably inferior to that in the production countries.

Online trade via the Internet Browser Tor („hidden services“) for the purchase of cocaine on Darknet platforms is growing in importance.

Cocaine will continue to play an important role among drug users and no change is expected for the future.

CANNABIS

Products from the cannabis plant *cannabis sativa* were, as in previous years, the most frequently consumed, dealt, produced and imported narcotic drugs in Austria. The preferred forms were dried herbs from the inflorescences, called marijuana, and the resin obtained from the female inflorescences, called hashish. While cannabis herb /

marijuana was increasingly produced in Austria, cannabis resin / hashish was almost always imported. Austria continued to play an important role as transit country for the smuggling of cannabis products.

Cannabis-herb

Domestically produced marijuana was mainly grown in indoor farms. For personal use it was cultivated in so-called grow boxes. These are freely available turnkey systems, which are sold for a few hundred Euros in hemp shops, grow shops, headshops and through the Internet. Trade with such equipment is legal. The sale of cannabis seeds and cannabis cuttings poses a problem. These products are openly offered, although the mature plants may contain high concentrations of THC. It is extremely difficult to prove that the seller intended the plants to be used for the production of narcotic drugs.

Grow boxes for up to 500 plants were usually operated by domestic cultivators, but also by non-Austrian offenders. Farms with more than 500 units were operated by East European groups – chiefly Serbian offenders. In 2017, farms containing far more than 1,000 plants grown by Serbian offenders were seized.

As in the previous years, most of the marijuana imported to Austria originated from Albania, the main European cultivation area. Cannabis herb from Albania was smuggled along the Balkan route or by sea and through Italy. Albanian perpetrators set up depots in Italy, the Czech Republic, Germany and in the Eastern European countries along the Balkan route, and used them to export the marijuana to Central and Northern Europe. Marijuana continued to be imported by groups of different ethnicity and by domestic criminals directly from producers and traffickers in the Netherlands, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, for personal use as well as further sale.

Cannabis-resin

Cannabis resin came almost exclusively from Morocco. The most popular smuggling routes from Morocco to Austria were Spain - France - Switzerland, Spain - France - Germany and Spain - Italy. Smuggling of cannabis resin from India or Pakistan by air came to a standstill. Small amounts of cannabis resin were produced, especially for own use, from blossoms of cannabis grown indoors.

Distribution of and traffic in cannabis products

Besides Austrian perpetrators, groups from the Maghreb countries, particularly Moroccan and Algerian offenders, as well as West African groups dominated the market. Groups of Afghan asylum seekers established themselves in the field of cannabis trafficking. Offenders from Germany, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Turkey and Macedonia were also active in the distribution of cannabis products. Prices varied depending on purity and quantity. Large quantities were sold at about EUR 3 to 4 per gram, small quantities were sold on the streets at up to EUR 12. Regarding cannabis consumption, there were no significant socio-demographic variations. Cannabis was consumed across all age groups and social strata. In view of the findings of 2017, a further increase in cannabis consumption, production and traffic is expected.

SYNTHETIC DRUGS

Unlike heroin and cocaine, which are produced outside Europe, illicit synthetic drugs seized in Austria were for the largest part produced in the Schengen area. Because of the closeness to the producing countries, such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia etc., they were smuggled in smaller quantities than heroin and cocaine, while the number of smuggling trips was higher. The narcotics were smuggled into Austria by Austrian nationals as well as by drug mules of different nationalities. As smaller amounts were smuggled, seizure by police resulted in smaller financial losses for the delinquents and in less severe penalties in the case of convictions. Synthetic drugs were predominantly smuggled in motor vehicles and sometimes by train or regular bus. As before, numerous packages with synthetic drugs sent by post and parcel services, ordered via the Darknet and mainly produced in the Netherlands, were seized. Austria continued to be used as an unsuspecting transit country for the smuggling of synthetic drugs from Europe to overseas, as Austria is not regarded as a country producing this type of narcotic drugs.

Amphetamine – MDMA – Ecstasy

The amphetamine seized in Austria was usually produced in the Netherlands and in Poland. MDMA was also chiefly produced in the Netherlands and distributed in Austria both as a pure powder and as an active ingredient in ecstasy tablets. In 2017, a major single delivery of 404,900 ecstasy tablets were seized in Austria which were intended to be transported by articulated truck from the Netherlands to Turkey. This seizure illustrates once again Austria's role as a transit country for narcotic drugs trafficking. Ecstasy tablets available on the Austrian market still contained a high proportion of active ingredients, carrying the risk of death upon use.

Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine on the Austrian market was produced for the most part in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, but also in other European countries. There are also productions in Lithuania and the Netherlands, which, however, currently have no relevance for the Austrian market. Up until a few years ago, methamphetamine was only available in the area of the borders with the Czech Republic and Slovakia, but has meanwhile reached the scene in all provinces. The methamphetamine seized continued to be of high quality with active substance contents of 70 to 80 per cent, in some cases even higher.

Psychotropic Substances

In the drug scene, the availability of psychotropic drugs continued to increase. Several post packages were seized containing psychotropic substances partly in pure form, partly as tablets. Orders were made via the Internet or Darknet and for the most part concerned benzodiazepines.

New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)

The rise in new drugs found in Europe classified as NPS continues. At the moment, 700 NPS are known which were reported to have been seized by police, customs and health authorities.

In Austria, 115 different NPS were established in 401 seizures made in 2017. The NPS were usually ordered on relevant Internet pages or via the Darknet and sent in letters and parcels by post or courier services. Subsequent investigations revealed that the Asian area, especially China, continued to be the country of origin and production of NPS.

Due to the fact that there is no pan-European legal regulation in respect of NPS, mail-order trade from the European area is on the increase. Countries in which NPS are not subject to any statutory regulation, are obviously chosen as countries of dispatch. The New Psychoactive Substances Act was amended in October 2016 to include new groups of substances and individual substances, but some NPS are still not regulated by law in Austria. This is due to the rapid development and availability of new, only slightly modified substances.

PRODUCTION OF ILLICIT DRUGS IN AUSTRIA

ILLICIT DRUG LABORATORIES IN AUSTRIA

In 2017, a total of six narcotic drug laboratories were seized in Austria, of which one in Salzburg, two in Lower Austria, one in Styria and two in Tyrol.

In 2017, laboratories detected primarily served the production of methamphetamine (crystal meth) and amphetamine, or a combination of them. The narcotic drugs were mostly produced to cover the operator's own needs or to supply a local group of consumers. The quality of the equipment became better and better and production methods became more and more sophisticated. In some cases, an increase in the productivity of the synthesis processes was noticed.

The operators were chiefly Austrian citizens. The chemicals were usually purchased in Austria, sometimes in neighbouring countries or on the Internet or Darknet.

CANNABIS PLANTATIONS

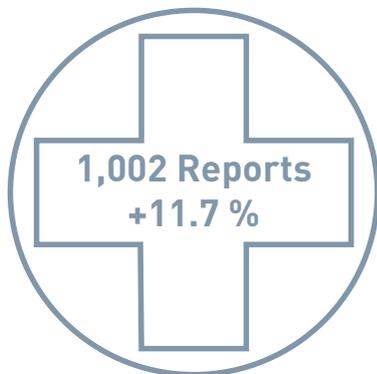
In 2017, cannabis products were again massively present on the Austrian drug market.

2017	Outdoor	Indoor	All
Burgenland	13	24	37
Carinthia	15	51	66
Lower Austria	66	142	208
Upper Austria	47	137	184
Salzburg	14	33	47
Styria	42	84	126
Tyrol	35	58	93
Vorarlberg	13	32	45
Vienna	16	126	142
Austria	261	687	948

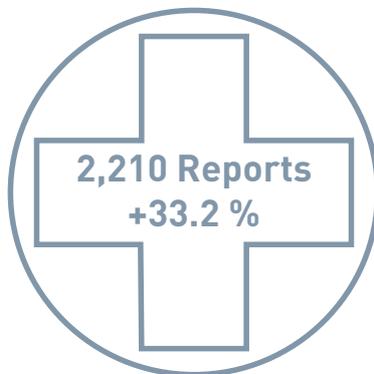
Figure 18: Number of plantations discovered in Austria in 2017

DRUG CRIME IN THE PROVINCES

BURGENLAND



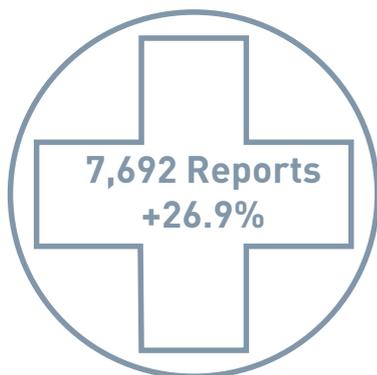
CARINTHIA



LOWER AUSTRIA



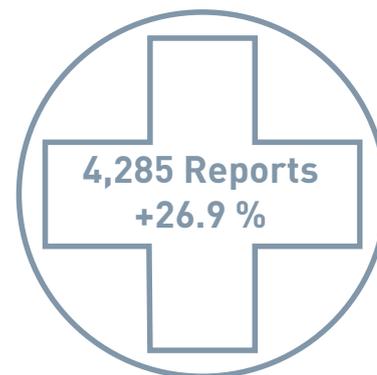
UPPER AUSTRIA



SALZBURG



STYRIA



TYROL



VORARLBERG



VIENNA



BURGENLAND

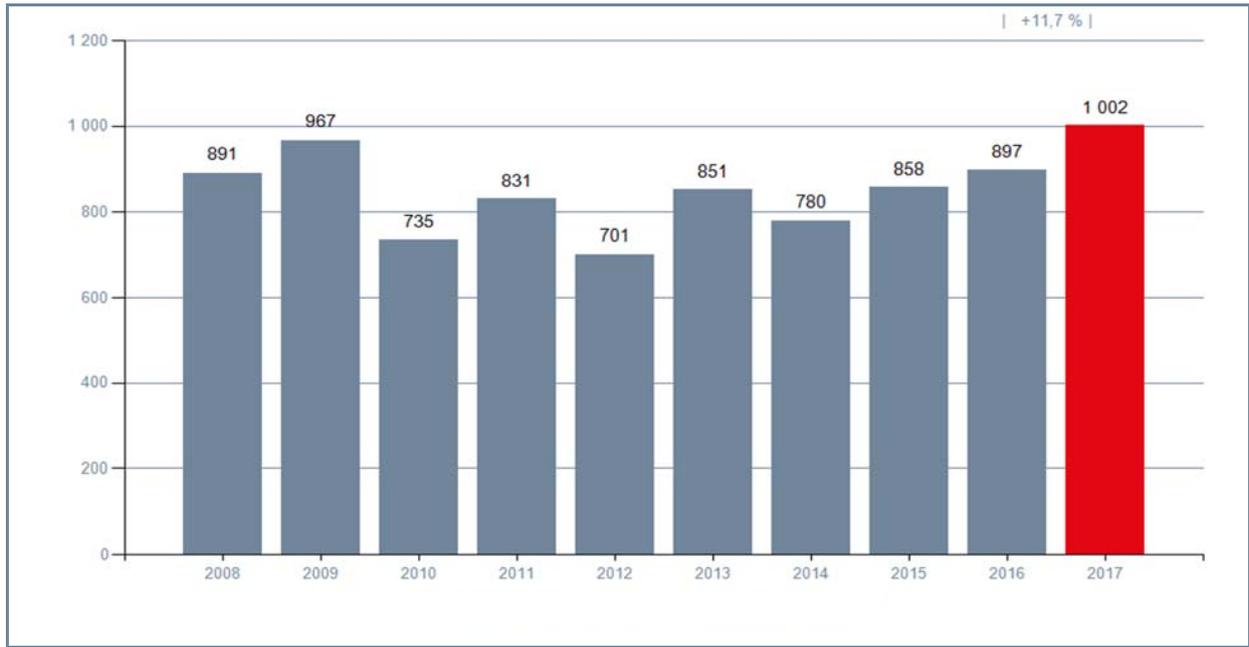


Figure 19: Development of the total number of reports under the narcotics drugs act in Burgenland between 2008 and 2017

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis	28 446,1 g	42 675,6 g	33 018,6 g	113 982,5 g	47 801,3 g	87 101,8 g	73 421,4 g	31 906,3 g	44 909,9 g	29 214,7 g
Heroin	11 088,8 g	719,1 g	70,6 g	910,5 g	409,3 g	36,0 g	0,1 g	23,6 g	1 004,8 g	0,1 g
Cocaine	308,4 g	638,6 g	1 247,6 g	894,3 g	237,8 g	2 740,0 g	230,7 g	456,1 g	615,6 g	564,4 g
XTC	1 100,0 Stk	1 763,0 Stk	37,0 Stk	4 497,0 Stk	617,0 Stk	103,0 Stk	23,0 Stk	292,0 Stk	174,0 Stk	43,0 Stk
Amphetamine	188,3 g	3 898,8 g	7 358,6 g	3 307,2 g	2 211,1 g	2 238,2 g	81,9 g	823,4 g	144,1 g	390,6 g
Methamphetamine	3,0 g	664,8 g	16,7 g	1 076,1 g	568,5 g	286,1 g	127,6 g	43,7 g	440,8 g	1 612,1 g

Figure 20: Seizures of the main substances in Burgenland in 2017

Offender groups, types of narcotic drugs and transport routes

All types of illicit narcotic drugs were traded and smuggled. Railway lines and road connections reaching national borders are by nature strongly frequented transnational transport routes.

Individual groups from Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Serbia, Hungary, Chechnya, Turkey, Thailand, Poland and Austria were involved in the illegal trade of methamphetamines. The individual groups were not structured between them and only partly connected with each other. Drugs were usually smuggled by passenger cars from Slovakia to Austria via the motorway border crossing of Kittsee/Jarovce, but also by train or taxi. Narcotic drugs were sold predominantly in the larger area of Vienna. Methamphetamine, cannabis herb, ecstasy, LSD, cocaine and amphetamine were offered for sale in the districts of Eisenstadt and Mattersburg by a Slovakian national residing in Eisenstadt/Burgenland. Further quantities of cannabis herb, ecstasy as well as a banned weapon were seized in his apartment.

Amphetamine, ecstasy, MDMA, heroin, cannabis products, cocaine, and ketamine were distributed in the district of Oberwart by two Austrian nationals. An interesting development was noticed in the area of cannabis products. Cannabis resin and cannabis oil hardly played a role anymore. These products were seized in just a few cases from home producers. A Pakistani national residing in the district of Oberwart and belonging to a Ukrainian offender group was the key figure in Austria's Eastern region, being associated with a criminal organisation aimed at the distribution and sale of cannabis blossoms. Further offenders involved came from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Poland, the Czech Republic and Austria. Various couriers, primarily persons from the Ukraine, smuggled cannabis blossoms, which had been masterly hidden in wood-burning stoves, to Austria via Poland and the Czech Republic. These drugs were profitably sold in the east of Austria.

Cannabis plantations and the offender groups associated with them

Growing of cannabis plants in indoor and outdoor plantations remained unchanged, with the latter being more numerous. The offenders were almost exclusively Austrian nationals.

Consumer behaviour and abuse of illicit drugs

Cannabis was the most used illicit drug. A pronounced increase in the use of methamphetamine (crystal meth) was noticed. A rise was also noticed in the use of amphetamine and ecstasy. This appears to be due especially to the easy accessibility on the Darknet. Heroin and cocaine were hardly used in Southern Burgenland, but were slightly on the increase in the Northern part of the province. In the southernmost districts of Güssing and Jennersdorf, the use of illicit drugs was limited primarily to cannabis, which was partly self-produced and partly obtained in adjacent Styria, and sold or passed on in small units to users in Burgenland. The district of Jennersdorf was supplied with cannabis products also from neighbouring Slovenia.

Darknet

As in 2016, sales and acquisitions of narcotic drugs were carried out through Internet trading platforms, using virtual currencies such as bitcoins. Counterfeit currency for buying illicit drugs was sourced i.a. via Darknet fora.

Developments in the area of acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime

In 2017, acquisitive crimes such as burglaries and thefts slightly increased. Banned weapons and handguns were sometimes used in these offences. In addition to currency counterfeiting and distribution of counterfeit banknotes, some money laundering activities were reported.

New psychoactive substances

As reports were filed only in connection with illicit drugs, NPS did not appear to be of any importance in the province of Burgenland.

Outlook

Methamphetamine was imported to Burgenland predominantly in small quantities from Slovakia by passenger car. The offender groups behind mostly belonged to the Slovak Roma community.

CARINTHIA

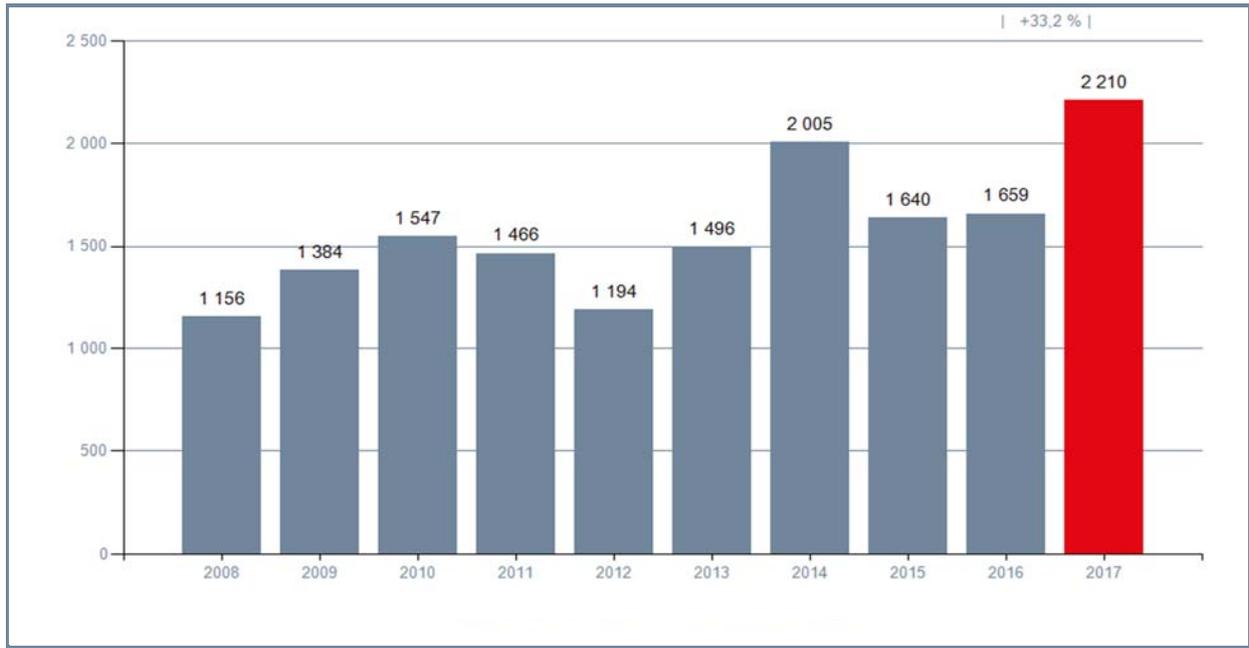


Figure 21: Development of total number of reports under the narcotics drugs act in Carinthia between 2008 and 2017

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis	59 453,4 g	31 087,2 g	117 760,9 g	40 780,3 g	62 422,2 g	545 452,6 g	53 170,0 g	36 899,0 g	29 226,6 g	63 897,6 g
Heroin	13 418,1 g	4 638,6 g	1 398,9 g	161,1 g	2 687,5 g	879,7 g	282,8 g	3 032,0 g	836,8 g	2 546,2 g
Cocaine	850,9 g	796,1 g	3 200,3 g	106 509,3 g	13 088,0 g	849,0 g	697,4 g	1 005,4 g	740,9 g	3 251,8 g
XTC	196,0 Stk	134,0 Stk	5,0 Stk	19,0 Stk	32,0 Stk	52,5 Stk	312,0 Stk	639,0 Stk	2 168,3 Stk	384,0 Stk
Amphetamine	19,7 g	2,7 g	463,1 g	875,0 g	6 724,2 g	239,4 g	18,3 g	122,0 g	435,5 g	1 487,9 g
Methamphetamine	4,3 g	10,0 g	204,4 g	1,2 g	1,9 g	79,9 g	41,1 g	18,8 g	34,9 g	189,9 g

Figure 22: Seizures of the main substances in Carinthia in 2017

Offender groups, types of narcotic drugs and transport routes

Aside from Austrian offender groups, a variety of groups from different countries operated in Carinthia. It is noteworthy that activities of Slovenian drug couriers, which receded in the past due to migration flows, were now on the increase again. Drug users of Austrian nationality or living in the province continue to obtain their narcotic drugs from Slovenia. Heroin, cocaine and cannabis products were imported to Carinthia from Slovenia by Slovenian nationals. In most cases, the illicit drugs were bought by Austrians in Slovenia directly and brought to Carinthia by way of the “ant-trade” (smuggling of very small quantities by many individuals). Smuggling trips were usually carried out by use of private cars, seldom by public means of transport. The border crossing most frequently used was Loiblpass. Alternative routes went via Wurzen Pass and Karawanken Tunnel. The quality of the illicit drugs smuggled to Austria from Slovenia considerably increased. Purity levels of up to 90 per cent in cocaine were not unusual.

An Afghan offender group was noticed primarily in the town of Villach and surroundings, with a number of drug dealing spots having developed in the town of Klagenfurt. For the most part, cannabis products and especially cannabis herb, which had been sourced in Vienna and surroundings, were sold on a commercial scale. For smuggling, public means of transport (trains, coaches) were generally used. Several kilograms of cannabis herb were simply stowed into travel bags brought along. A couple of cannabis safe depots were set up in open spaces in the town area of Villach. Portioning of the drugs for street sale was usually made in apartments or accommodations allocated to asylum seekers. The structures of the offender groups were organised along strictly hierarchical lines.

Among African criminal groups, mention must be made especially of Nigerian nationals, who continued to play a leading role in the sale of narcotic drugs in the capital of Klagenfurt. In the first place, cocaine and to a lesser extent heroin balls were marketed.

Cannabis plantations and the offender groups associated with them

As in the previous years, several cannabis plantations were detected in 2017.

Consumer behaviour and abuse of illicit drugs

Cannabis products continued to be the most popular illegal drug. So-called "open drug scenes" were found sporadically in the towns. As in previous years, drug use increasingly shifted to private venues, such as apartments and closed parties.

Darknet

The trend to order narcotic drugs and NPS on the Internet and Darknet remained unbroken. This problem area is now more and more taken note of in rural areas.

Developments in the area of acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime

Acquisitive and accompanying crime, such as robberies by breaking and entering and thefts were committed chiefly in Villach and Klagenfurt and the outskirts of the district towns. However, no particular development can be deduced from this.

New psychoactive substances

NPS were generally purchased on the Internet or Darknet at a great variety of Internet marketplaces.

Outlook

A steady increase of drug-related crime is to be expected. The present oversupply of illicit drugs and the rising quality in connection with falling prices aggravate this development:

LOWER AUSTRIA

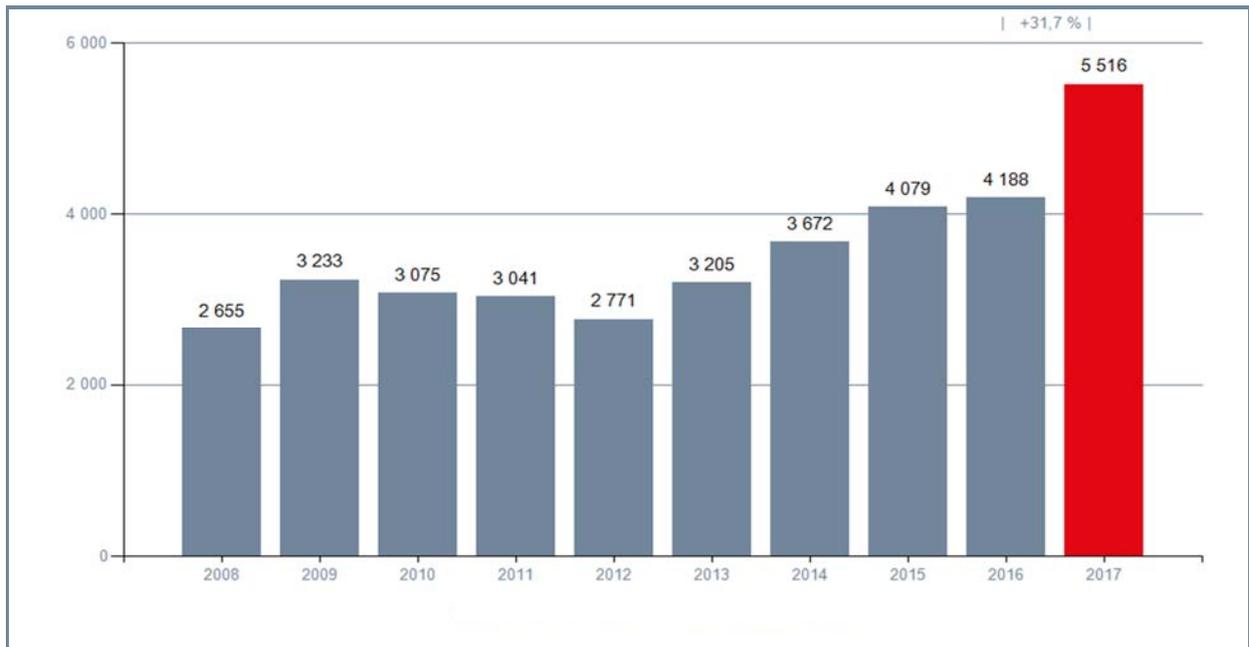


Figure 23: Development of total number of reports under the Narcotic Drugs Act in Lower Austria between 2008 and 2017

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis	145 940,5 g	92 738,0 g	122 149,9 g	112 290,1 g	182 737,2 g	151 726,2 g	359 385,3 g	162 114,7 g	233 899,7 g	222 063,1 g
Heroin	12 237,6 g	2 413,9 g	1 157,8 g	355,9 g	13 139,4 g	5 314,6 g	12 998,4 g	5 447,4 g	2 150,0 g	17 962,7 g
Cocaine	32 850,8 g	15 214,7 g	220 302,2 g	4 888,2 g	19 241,4 g	4 171,9 g	4 071,4 g	10 141,0 g	7 702,3 g	18 274,7 g
XTC	4 357,5 Stk	589,0 Stk	27,0 Stk	362,0 Stk	326,0 Stk	666,5 Stk	105,0 Stk	1 769,0 Stk	2 518,2 Stk	9 217,0 Stk
Amphetamine	561,2 g	50 309,4 g	5 157,9 g	2 073,7 g	2 843,4 g	988,6 g	627,1 g	10 978,3 g	5 814,9 g	6 030,3 g
Methamphetamine	51,9 g	279,4 g	744,8 g	813,3 g	610,0 g	120,0 g	1 141,3 g	540,5 g	383,9 g	930,2 g
Khat	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	71 203,0 g	549 740,8 g

Figure 24: Seizures of the main substances in Lower Austria in 2017

Offender groups, types of narcotic drugs and transport routes

Serbian and Albanian offender groups continued to traffic heroin, cannabis herb and partly also cocaine to Lower Austria along the Balkan route. Albanian criminal groups smuggled cocaine and cannabis herb to Austria by ship and through Albania and Italy. Cocaine continued to be smuggled to Austria from the Netherlands. The route going through the Kosovo, Serbia, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Austria is preferred by Albanian as well as Serbian groups for the transport of cocaine and cannabis herb. From the Czech Republic, especially methamphetamine (crystal meth) was imported.

Cannabis plantations and the offender groups associated with them

As in previous years, several cannabis plantations were seized in 2017.

Laboratories for the production of narcotic drugs and the offender groups associated with them

An Austrian national operated a laboratory for the production of methamphetamine. He was proven to have sold several hundred grams of methamphetamine. Another Austrian national was found to run a laboratory for the production of methamphetamine and amphetamine.

Consumer behaviour and abuse of illicit drugs

A great variety of illicit narcotic drugs were used in Lower Austria. Reports frequently involved cannabis products, heroin and cocaine, drug substitutes, psychoactive substances and synthetic drugs such as amphetamine and methamphetamine

Darknet

The purchase of illicit drugs via the Internet and Darknet remained high. The connected delivery of illicit drugs by post and parcel services continued to increase.

New psychoactive substances

NPS were predominantly purchased on the Internet and Darknet. No significant upward trend was noticed.

Developments in the area of acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime

No changes were registered in respect of the offences of negligent homicide, theft, fraudulent appropriation, robbery, aggravated robbery, extortion, fraud, failure to help, dangerous threat, handling of stolen goods, sexual abuse of a defenceless or mentally impaired person, negligent bodily injury, theft of non-cash means of payment, giving false evidence, criminal conspiracy and violation of the Weapons and Firearms Act.

Vienna International Airport Schwechat

In 2017, a total of 24.4 million passengers and 206,918 tons of air freight passed through Vienna International Airport.

A development noticed was a growing number of seizures of illicit drugs on passengers from South America. Airports of departure were predominantly Bogota/Columbia and Rio de Janeiro/Brazil. Smugglers arriving from South American countries usually travelled via the transit airports of Madrid/Spain and Zurich/Switzerland to Vienna, the final destination. The couriers were given orders by Nigerian criminal groups in Vienna. These were in direct contact with Nigerian offenders in South America. Quantities ranging between 1.5 and 5 kilograms of cocaine were smuggled in one smuggling trip. Nigerian body packers continued to import cocaine in quantities of 400 to 700 grams from Madrid/Spain, in the majority of cases taking direct flights from Madrid/Spain to Vienna International Airport. Airports of departure in Pakistan and Arabian countries increasingly served as base for heroin smuggling to Vienna International Airport. African airports of departure such as Mozambique and Nairobi/Kenya were used as a base for heroin smuggling to Vienna International Airport with Austria serving as transit country for further smuggling into Italy and the Netherlands. Interestingly, there was a decline in cannabis smuggling from Delhi/India. A sharp rise, however, was noted in seizures of khat plants originating from West Africa. They involved dried as well as fresh khat plants, which were primarily intended for transit. While destination airports used to be located in Germany, the United Kingdom and northern countries of Europe, there is now also an unmistakable trend to Vienna being chosen as destination.

Major seizures

At the end of January 2017, a Spanish smuggler was found to carry 400 grams of cocaine in her hand luggage and at the beginning of March 2017, a Nigerian body packer was arrested at the airport carrying 220 grams of cocaine. The drugs were smuggled on direct flights from Madrid/Spain to Vienna International Airport and were destined for Klagenfurt/Carinthia. The organiser was a 47-year-old Nigerian national who was subject of a Schengen alert as wanted for arrest.

In February 2017, a 48-year-old Indian national arrived in Austria from Delhi/India via Istanbul/Turkey intending to continue to Italy by train. 43,198 pieces of Spasmo Proxyvon Plus capsules were seized from him. He was also proven to have carried out two similar smuggling trips in the past. The capsules were calculated to contain a total of 1,830 grams of the active ingredient of tramadol. The threshold quantity under Austrian law would be 40 grams.

In March 2017, a 27-year-old Venezuelan woman smuggled five kilograms of cocaine hidden in 250 dead skin rasps from Rio de Janeiro/Brazil to Austria via Zurich/Switzerland. The person taking over the drugs, a 27-year-old Benin national, was arrested in Vienna.

In June 2017, a 38-year-old Columbian woman was arrested at Vienna International Airport after arrival from Bogota/Columbia via Panama City/Panama, Rio de Janeiro/Brazil and Zurich/Switzerland, carrying 1.6 kilograms of cocaine hidden in three writing cases. The recipient was identified as an African criminal group. It is to be noted that there was an obvious connection to the seizure of five kilograms of cocaine in March.

In August 2017, four kilograms of a viscous substance mixed with the narcotic substance dimethyltryptamine (DMT) were seized in an EMS parcel sent from Peru. The parcel was to be delivered to Vienna.

In September 2017, a 27-year-old Latvian national was arrested at Vienna International Airport after arrival from Maputo/Mozambique via Addis Ababa/Ethiopia carrying four kilograms of heroin concealed in the double bottom of his suitcase. The drugs were planned to be transported by train from Vienna to Amsterdam/Netherlands. Investigations by criminal police finally resulted in the dismantling of a criminal association in Mozambique and in the Netherlands.

Developments in the field of express parcel services and the redirection post office at the airport: Seizures of illicit drugs and NPS strongly increased in 2017. This success was achieved thanks to the EU-sponsored project "Joint investigation to fight trafficking in drugs and firearms with the main focus on international airports within and also into the EU" which has been in implementation since December 2016. The illicit drugs were ordered on the Internet and Darknet and delivered by post and parcel services. In view of the considerable individual quantities involved, the violations against the Narcotic Drugs Act usually qualified as offences punishable under criminal law.

Results of the Project

- Rise by approximately 50 per cent in the number of seizures of narcotic drugs from persons at airports
- Tenfold increase of the number of seizures of narcotic drugs in postal transports until September 2017 (averaging 50 seizures per month of postal packages containing narcotic drugs of various types)
- Seizure of a handgun and identification of the owner, connection to terrorism suspected
- Increased use of drug sniffer dogs by customs and police services
- More rapid and direct exchange of information with other organisational units and foreign airport search units
- Jointly coordinated rosters of customs and police services and intensified
- cooperation with airlines in information gathering
- Joint multinational "Action Days" with partners from Europe and South America

Outlook

In view of the great numbers of asylum seekers coming to notice for dealing with illicit drugs, a rise in violations against the Narcotic Drugs Act is expected. As methamphetamine continued to be manufactured in the neighbouring countries of Czech Republic and Slovakia, drug smuggling from these countries is unlikely to decrease. Obtaining of illicit drugs via the Internet and Darknet and the connected sending by post and parcel services will continue to trend up.

UPPER AUSTRIA

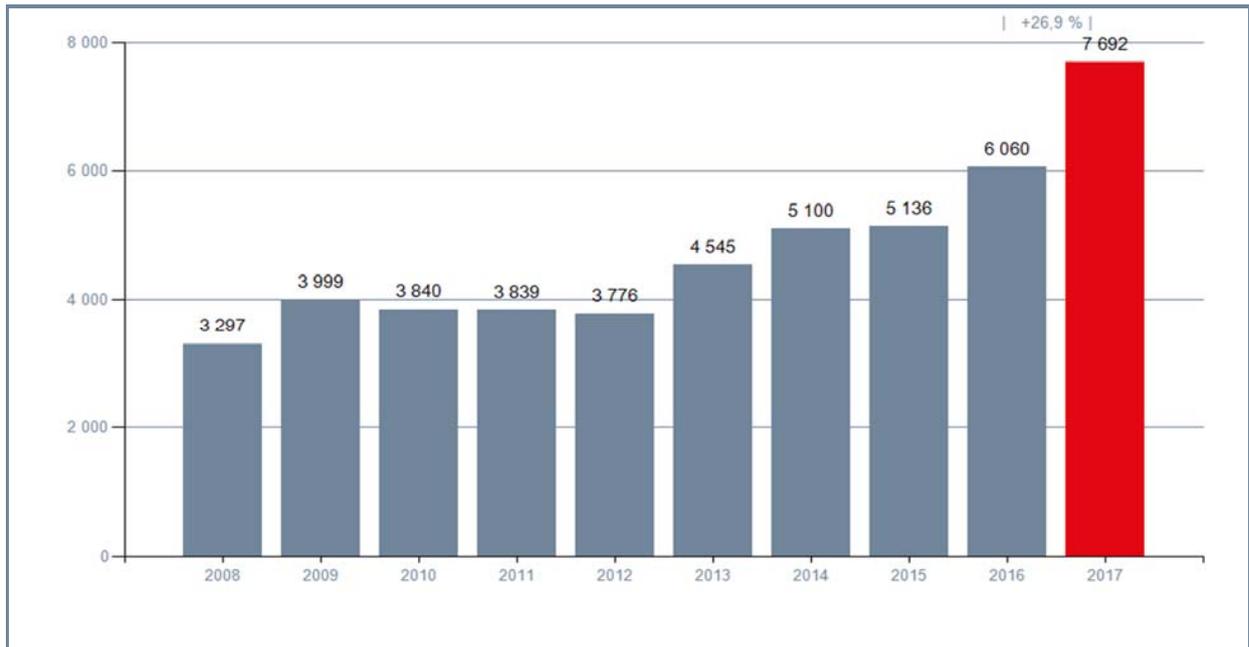


Figure 25: Development of total number of reports under the Narcotic Drugs Act in Upper Austria between 2008 and 2017

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis	156 510,0 g	138 682,9 g	67 965,8 g	68 135,8 g	94 808,1 g	70 507,9 g	77 918,8 g	109 655,9 g	104 756,4 g	225 067,6 g
Heroin	1 721,6 g	37 042,1 g	13 838,7 g	655,8 g	126 515,6 g	3 544,6 g	31 953,5 g	3 798,0 g	1 076,7 g	1 377,0 g
Cocaine	9 391,4 g	8 933,8 g	3 418,7 g	1 736,4 g	1 631,1 g	782,0 g	3 910,9 g	60 102,5 g	10 698,8 g	6 478,2 g
XTC	5 840,0 Stk	768,5 Stk	4,0 Stk	161,0 Stk	273,0 Stk	1 238,0 Stk	1 269,0 Stk	558,0 Stk	5 524,5 Stk	407 407,0 Stk
Amphetamine	3 594,9 g	1 231,5 g	789,8 g	491,5 g	221,2 g	2 345,8 g	2 990,6 g	3 491,3 g	13 908,8 g	14 518,9 g
Methamphetamine	12,0 g	63,7 g	69,0 g	174,9 g	417,3 g	1 301,3 g	1 606,9 g	1 329,0 g	347,2 g	516,8 g

Figure 26: Seizures of the main substances in Upper Austria in 2017

Offender groups, types of narcotic drugs and transport routes

Nationals of a wide range of countries were involved in illicit drug dealing. Austrian nationals usually traded in substitution medications and benzodiazepines. The illicit drugs were predominantly ordered via the Internet and Darknet, and to a certain extent they were smuggled in from the Czech Republic and Bavaria, Germany. Within Austria, the drugs were acquired in the cities of Vienna and Wels.

Albanian nationals and Austrians with Albanian migrant background primarily dealt in cannabis herb, but also cocaine and heroin.

Smuggling was primarily carried out via the Balkan route, but also via Italy. These offender groups usually did not sell drugs directly on the street, but preferably to middlemen. They were excellently networked and usually moved in the field of organised crime.

Serbian nationals primarily smuggled heroin and cocaine on the Balkan route.

Turkish nationals and Austrians with Turkish migrant background primarily dealt in methamphetamine, but only, as with other drugs, in smallest amounts. However, in the reporting year, there was one major seizure of 400,000 pieces of ecstasy smuggled in a truck by an organised criminal group.

Afghan nationals chiefly dealt in cannabis herb and methamphetamine. This group of offenders was well-networked and their activities usually took place from Vienna.

Nationals of West African countries dealt in all types of illicit drugs, primarily cannabis herb.

Nigerian nationals had a leading position in this area.

Nationals of the Czech Republic mostly dealt in methamphetamine, cannabis herb and chemical substances used in clandestine laboratories.

Offenders from Chechnya appeared only in the towns of Wels and Linz. They distributed smallest amounts of various narcotic drugs.

Nationals of the Dominican Republic smuggled cocaine to Austria along smuggling routes starting in South America.

Nationals of Syria, Pakistan, Egypt and Morocco generally dealt in cannabis herb. Small amounts of all types of illicit drugs were dealt in by nationals of Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Germany and Italy.

Cannabis plantations and the offender groups associated with them

As in previous years, several cannabis plantations were seized in 2017.

Consumer behaviour and abuse of illicit drugs

Illicit drugs were often used in mixed consumption. Cannabis herb was by far the most frequently consumed narcotic drug. In upper circles of society, cocaine, sometimes combined with heroin, was the most frequently used illicit drug. There were no disparities between town and country. Cocaine was becoming more important than methamphetamine.

For about two years, a growing use of heroin has been registered. Substitution substances were popular subjects of trade. They were consumed mixed with stimulants. Ecstasy, LSD and psychotropic substances were primarily ordered via the Internet and consumed mixed with other substances.

Darknet

The trend to obtain illegal narcotic drugs via the Internet and Darknet remained unbroken.

Developments in the area of acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime

Criminal offences continued to be accompanying effects of drug crime.

New psychoactive substances

NPS were mostly obtained via the Internet and Darknet on a great variety of markets. The number of orders dropped considerably.

Outlook

A decline in drug-related crime is not expected.

SALZBURG

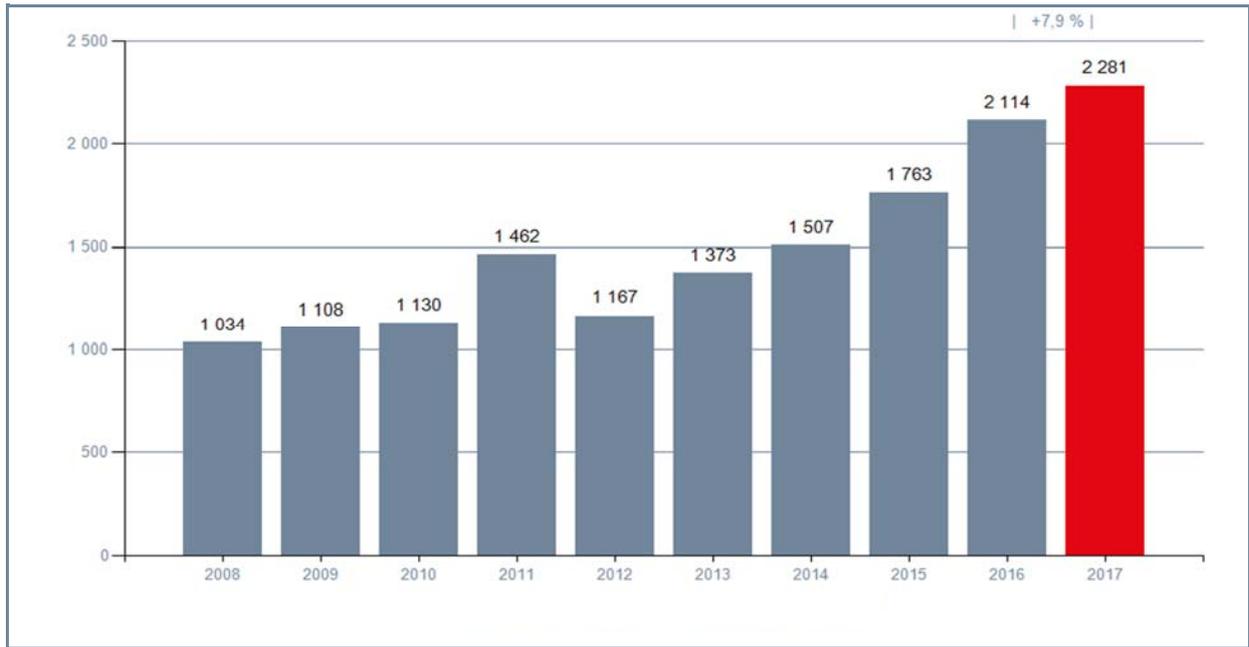


Figure 27: Development of total number of reports under the Narcotic Drugs Act in Salzburg between 2008 and 2017

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis	49 010,4 g	13 404,4 g	124 682,3 g	29 996,0 g	39 801,0 g	34 484,4 g	38 117,7 g	72 212,8 g	40 330,0 g	164 636,1 g
Heroin	9 947,2 g	7 885,1 g	10 677,9 g	0,6 g	1,5 g	56 154,8 g	2 394,8 g	13 004,1 g	6 124,4 g	381,7 g
Cocaine	1 326,7 g	1 426,3 g	323,6 g	2 078,3 g	1 396,5 g	2 671,1 g	736,5 g	3 096,3 g	3 443,3 g	2 256,5 g
XTC	95,5 Stk	418,0 Stk	6 698,5 Stk	5 296,0 Stk	817,0 Stk	245,0 Stk	632,0 Stk	331,0 Stk	1 688,7 Stk	1 270,0 Stk
Amphetamine	890,0 g	1 515,7 g	1 334,5 g	1 422,2 g	15 489,2 g	1 949,1 g	4 123,6 g	503,4 g	3 480,0 g	5 344,1 g
Methamphetamine	2,0 g	12,9 g	3,3 g	23,7 g	8,7 g	1 363,6 g	119,1 g	12,1 g	12,2 g	83,3 g

Figure 28: Seizures of the main substances in Salzburg in 2017

Offender groups, types of narcotic drugs and transport routes

Austrian offenders and offender groups dealt in all common types of illicit narcotic drugs. Cocaine was smuggled to Salzburg primarily through the Netherlands, Germany, Slovenia and Serbia. Cannabis products were imported from the Netherlands, Albania, Germany, Ukraine and the Czech Republic. Home cultivation in indoor plantations was on the increase. The products were sold on the domestic market. Amphetamines were imported to Salzburg from the Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Heroin was smuggled in from Slovenia, Germany and the Netherlands. Amphetamines and cannabis products from the Netherlands and Germany ordered via Internet platforms and Darknet were increasingly smuggled to Salzburg.

Albanian and Serbian criminal groups were responsible for international trafficking of heroin, cocaine, amphetamine and cannabis products. Smuggling was usually done via the Balkan route or from Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Albania.

Turkish criminal groups delivered heroin to Salzburg via the Balkan route and from here also to East European countries.

Moroccan, Pakistani, Algerian and Afghan offender groups focused on the trade with cannabis products, even on a large scale, as was shown by the dismantling of an internationally active drug network and the arrest of 51 suspects. Amongst others, the illegal trade of several hundred kilograms of cannabis herb was discovered and 64 kg of cannabis herb were seized.

Most of the cannabis herb had been produced in indoor plantations in the Ukraine and smuggled to Salzburg by couriers. In Salzburg, it was sold on the streets primarily by Afghan nationals.

Apart from cannabis products, small amounts of cocaine and amphetamine were traded. Nationals of West African countries were active in the street sale of cannabis products and cocaine.

Netherlands nationals were primarily active in the trade with cocaine and amphetamines. The narcotic drugs were delivered to Salzburg by biker groups based in the Netherlands.

Cannabis plantations and the offender groups associated with them

Cannabis was cultivated predominantly by Austrian nationals.

Laboratories for the production of narcotic drugs and the offender groups associated with them

In Salzburg/Tennengau, an Austrian national operated a laboratory for the manufacture of small amounts of crystal meth.

Consumer behaviour and abuse of illicit drugs

The use of cannabis products and amphetamines slightly increased, while the use of heroin and cocaine stagnated.

Darknet

The purchase of narcotic drugs via the Internet and Darknet has become a fixed component of illicit drug dealing.

New psychoactive substances

There were no indications of a rise in NPS use in Salzburg.

Developments in the area of acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime

In 2017, offences in the areas of acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime were on the increase. Most of them concerned violent, property and fraud offences.

Outlook

A rise in drug-related crime is to be expected. This appears to be true especially for cannabis products and amphetamines. In general, a massive increase is expected in the trade of illicit drugs via trading platforms on the Internet and Darknet.

STYRIA

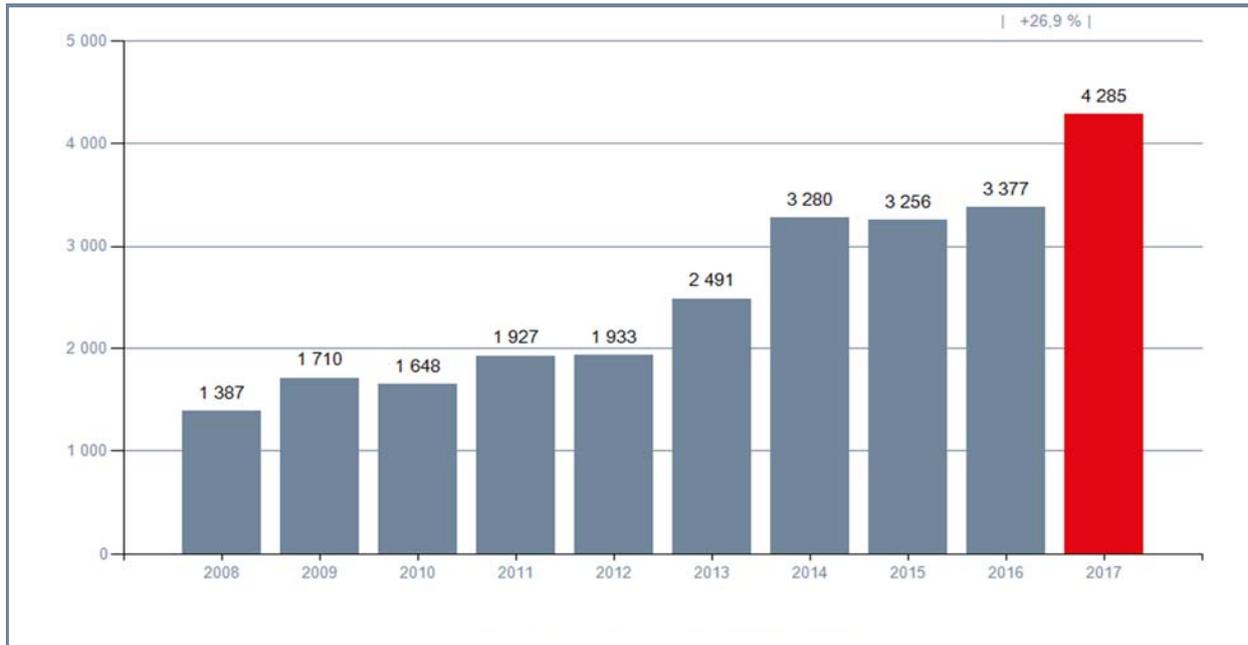


Figure 29: Development of total number of reports under the Narcotic Drugs Act in Styria between 2008 and 2017

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis	114 800,0 g	40 846,2 g	40 977,9 g	55 828,7 g	131 028,2 g	88 010,7 g	109 810,6 g	189 213,6 g	111 151,7 g	292 471,0 g
Heroin	306,2 g	14 549,4 g	5 654,1 g	11 376,8 g	54 270,9 g	g	96,2 g	38,2 g	38 531,8 g	268,4 g
Cocaine	123,4 g	1 587,9 g	594,7 g	848,1 g	3 173,6 g	531,7 g	805,0 g	7 901,9 g	8 066,1 g	5 430,9 g
XTC	106,0 Stk	556,0 Stk	g	713,0 Stk	6 062,0 Stk	29,0 Stk	991,0 Stk	1 158,2 Stk	2 199,9 Stk	2 742,0 Stk
Amphetamine	572,4 g	92,0 g	2 445,6 g	790,1 g	2 319,2 g	638,4 g	927,1 g	39 024,3 g	7 479,0 g	2 323,5 g
Methamphetamine	2,5 g	6,4 g	1,7 g	114,8 g	28,4 g	125,9 g	151,7 g	98,1 g	105,8 g	214,9 g
Khat	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	660,0 g

Figure 30: Seizures of the main substances in Styria in 2017

Offender groups, types of narcotic drugs and transport routes

Narcotic drug crime continued to exist in all districts of Styria. Hotspot of drug crime was again the capital of Graz. The offender groups based there had close connections to Vienna, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and the Balkan countries. In general, large amounts of cannabis herb were brought from Albania and Kosovo to the Styrian region.

Cannabis herb destined for Styria was sold on the streets of Graz primarily by asylum seekers of various nationalities (mostly Afghan, Nigerian, Syrian, Moroccan and Tunisian nationals). Apart from the domestic market, the illicit drugs were also intended for further transport to neighbouring countries. Smugglers were nationals of various West Balkan countries.

In 2017, Bosnian and Slovenian smugglers increasingly came to notice who were also responsible for selling the illicit drugs. While the well-known Balkan route continued to serve as main smuggling route, consignments also reached Austria via ship routes to Calabria/Italy and on the Adriatic Sea. As before, cocaine was transported to Styria from Slovenia and sold to users in the area of Graz usually by foreign offender groups. In West Balkan countries, large quantities of cocaine were warehoused for further distribution in Central Europe to ensure a short-term availability. Smuggling of a great variety of illicit drugs from the Netherlands continued.

At hotspots such as parks in the town of Graz, West African criminal groups sold primarily cannabis herb, which had been smuggled in by couriers from Nigeria arriving on long-distance coaches from Rome/Italy. These offender groups delivered illicit drugs to Graz also from the Netherlands via Germany. Smugglers of cocaine, cannabis herb and ecstasy were usually Spanish and Netherlands nationals, but also Chechen nationals who established themselves at medium management level. These groups again use the Darknet to source illicit drugs.

In addition, nationals of countries of the Arab region came to notice. They were used as couriers, transporting illicit drugs to Styria primarily from the Czech Republic, and handing them over in Graz, usually to asylum seekers, who acted as small-scale dealers selling the drugs in various parks.

In the year under review, like in previous years, groups from the Dominican Republic appeared on the scene. They were active not only in Graz, but also in other Styrian towns, and were found to be closely linked to each other. They dealt above all in cocaine and cannabis herb. Cocaine was smuggled in from Spain, and cannabis herb from the Czech Republic, by couriers and body packers. Another active group consisted of offenders from Romania. They were involved primarily in the smuggling of large quantities of cannabis herb from Spain or Slovenia.

Cannabis plantations and the offender groups associated with them

The operation of cannabis plantations is a fixed element of the narcotic drugs scene. Most of these offenders are Austrian nationals. The number of outdoor facilities decreased. Indoor plantations were preferred, as they are better protected from discovery. The cannabis herb manufactured was usually produced by Austrian offenders for Austrian recipients, and was partly re-sold at a profit. Self-produced as well as imported cannabis herb usually had a very high THC content (on average circa 15 per cent).

Laboratories for the production of narcotic drugs and the offender groups associated with them
In 2017, a clandestine laboratory for the production of amphetamine, managed by an Austrian national, was discovered.

Consumer behaviour and abuse of illicit drugs

Around 80 per cent of narcotic drug dealers were of foreign origin or had a migrant background. Consumers, however, were predominantly Austrian nationals. The classical use of narcotic drugs mixed with medications and substances classified as NPS prevailed. The use of cannabis products slightly increased, as did the THC content of smuggled or home-produced cannabis herb with an average of 15 per cent of THC. A growing number of juvenile users was registered. It was interesting to notice a decrease in the abuse of psychoactive substances, while the use of heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine again increased. The ready availability of these illicit drugs, especially on the Internet/Darknet, appeared to contribute to this development.

Darknet

Ordering illicit drugs via the Internet and Darknet has become fully established.

New psychoactive substances

Substances subject to the New Psychoactive Substances Act continued to be used. However, no large-scale trade with larger amounts came to notice. NPS were usually sourced from the Darknet and sent by postal letters. In street sales, NPS were virtually non-existent.

Developments in the area of acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime

Acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime was primarily registered in Graz and involved thefts, burglaries and muggings such as mobile phone and handbag snatching. Most of these offences were committed by young people. In the Styrian districts, offences of this kind were only rarely committed. Mention must be made of the turf wars between the various offender groups which are sometimes fought with utmost brutality.

Outlook

A decline in drug-related crime is not expected, the foremost reason being the easy availability of illicit drugs on Internet and Darknet trading platforms.

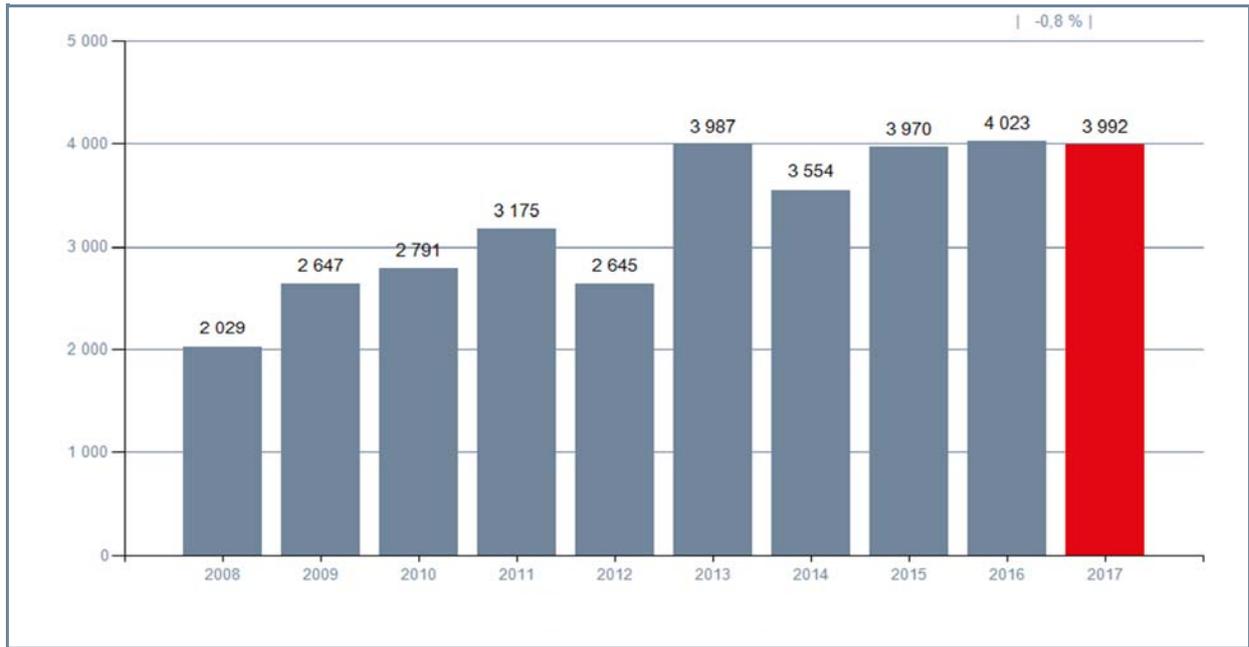


Figure 31: Development of total number of reports under the Narcotic Drugs Act in Tyrol between 2008 and 2017

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis	50 768,9 g	170 897,7 g	50 304,4 g	70 752,7 g	46 144,9 g	105 175,5 g	110 842,9 g	115 161,7 g	152 058,4 g	106 502,4 g
Heroin	39,4 g	111,1 g	1 080,6 g	334,3 g	268,4 g	406,0 g	4,4 g	1 093,3 g	85,8 g	219,1 g
Cocaine	2 548,1 g	1 768,7 g	2 303,0 g	2 690,9 g	1 872,7 g	2 875,1 g	969,2 g	2 530,9 g	13 211,5 g	1 421,7 g
XTC	256,0 Stk	222,0 Stk	180,0 Stk	58,0 Stk	554,0 Stk	1 294,0 Stk	341,0 Stk	244,0 Stk	1 011,3 Stk	2 080,0 Stk
Amphetamine	180,1 g	3 789,2 g	411,5 g	407,6 g	143,6 g	1 362,3 g	901,0 g	417,5 g	5 446,8 g	1 226,5 g
Methamphetamine	24,5 g	3,2 g	47,1 g	32,6 g	24,0 g	912,4 g	80,0 g	192,4 g	168,2 g	159,9 g
Khat	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	98,2 g	g

Figure 32: Seizures of the main substances in Tyrol in 2017

Offender groups, types of narcotic drugs and transport routes

Various offender groups were active in the province of Tyrol. North African offenders continued to be present, but were partly elbowed out by Afghan nationals. A new element were Chechen nationals dealing with cannabis products and cocaine.

A major part of the trade in illicit drugs (cannabis resin and cocaine) sold in the town area of Innsbruck continued to be organised and performed by individuals from the North African countries of Algeria and Morocco staying illegally in Austria. The narcotic drugs distributed were smuggled in by the Maghreb group of offenders mostly from Northern Italy (Milan, Turin, Bologna), as well as from Belgium. Smuggling trips were carried out by North Africans residing in Tyrol, or by relatives living abroad. Added to that, illicit drugs were imported to Tyrol by Austrian drug addicts

by train or by car. A withdrawal of North African offenders from the public area was noticed. Drug dealing increasingly took place in shops, apartments and asylum seekers' accommodations. An estimated 80 persons staying in Innsbruck made their living through drug distribution.

Asylum seekers from Chechnya, working as bouncers, increasingly tried to deal in illicit drugs. The drugs sold were usually cannabis products and cocaine obtained in the federal capital of Vienna. The criminal groups were very well connected and tended to commit acts of violence.

The number of asylum seekers from Afghanistan suspected of punishable offences has been on the rise since 2016. In the meantime, several criminal groups have formed which have hierarchical structures, are mutually connected and commit their criminal acts at supra-local level. Cannabis herb in kilogram quantities was obtained from fellow

countrymen in Vienna and transported by train, partly by young couriers, to Kufstein, Wörgl and Innsbruck. The drugs were sold throughout Tyrol, sometimes with Austrian and German nationals acting as sub-dealers.

An Afghan group of offenders smuggled several kilograms of cannabis herb from Italy to Tyrol by car. The same criminal group went on to smuggle cocaine and ecstasy. Afghan nationals sold the illicit drugs in various pubs. They were extremely aggressive, violent and often armed with knives. Grievous bodily injuries were a regular occurrence.

Nationals of Sub-Saharan countries, who were very well connected, primarily dealt in cannabis products and cocaine. They have a Europe-wide distribution network to rely on. Asylum seekers from Somalia and Eritrea recently surfaced. Some of them sold drugs on behalf of the North Africans, others made their own dealings.

German citizens were users, obtaining their supply of drugs from the North African dealers. In some cases they sold cannabis herb on behalf of Afghan nationals.

Illicit drugs used and smuggled through ant-trade by Austrians with migrant background (Turkey, Balkan states) were imported from Turkey, the Balkan states and also from the Netherlands. Increasingly, these groups of persons bought and consumed synthetic drugs at "GOA" or "rave" parties, but also re-sold them to other visitors of the events.

Austrian nationals primarily appeared as users and small-scale dealers. They supplied themselves with illicit drugs from the Innsbruck North African scene and from Afghan asylum seekers. Austrians also ran indoor plantations for cannabis production. Amphetamine was primarily bought via the Darknet from dealers based in the Netherlands and Germany.

Cannabis plantations and the offender groups associated with them

Production was on the increase. Plantations were operated predominantly by Austrian nationals. Plant seeds and cuttings were bought on the Internet and Darknet and sent by post and parcel services. Plantations were rather small with a maximum of 50 to 70 plants, but were equipped with high-grade facilities allowing the manufacture of high-quality products.

Laboratories for the production of narcotic drugs and the offender groups associated with them

In the municipal area of Innsbruck, two laboratories for the production of illicit narcotic drugs were detected. A German national managed to produce monoacetylmorphine. An Austrian with migrant background prepared a heroin-like substance from the medication Compensan mixed with acetic acid.

Consumer behaviour and misuse of illicit drugs

Cannabis continued to be the most consumed illegal drug, followed by cocaine and amphetamine. Heroin played a very minor role. The majority of former heroin users are now on substitution programs. The heroin was typically obtained via the Internet and Darknet. Illegal synthetic drugs were bought and consumed chiefly at „GOA parties“ or similar events primarily by young people, who sometimes also sold them to finance their own needs.

Darknet

It has become a common practice to order illicit drugs on the Internet and Darknet.

New psychoactive substances

NPS play a minor role in Tyrol.

Developments in the area of acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime

Among North Africans in Tyrol, the drug scene increasingly moved into the private sphere. Instead, asylum seekers from Afghanistan and Somalia took their position in public areas. These offender groups also committed robberies, thefts, damages to property, coercions and bodily injuries.

Outlook

A decline in drug-related crime is not expected. Successful suppression appears to be possible only by continual checks and searches. The fight against drug crime on the Internet and Darknet has become of crucial importance.

VORARLBERG

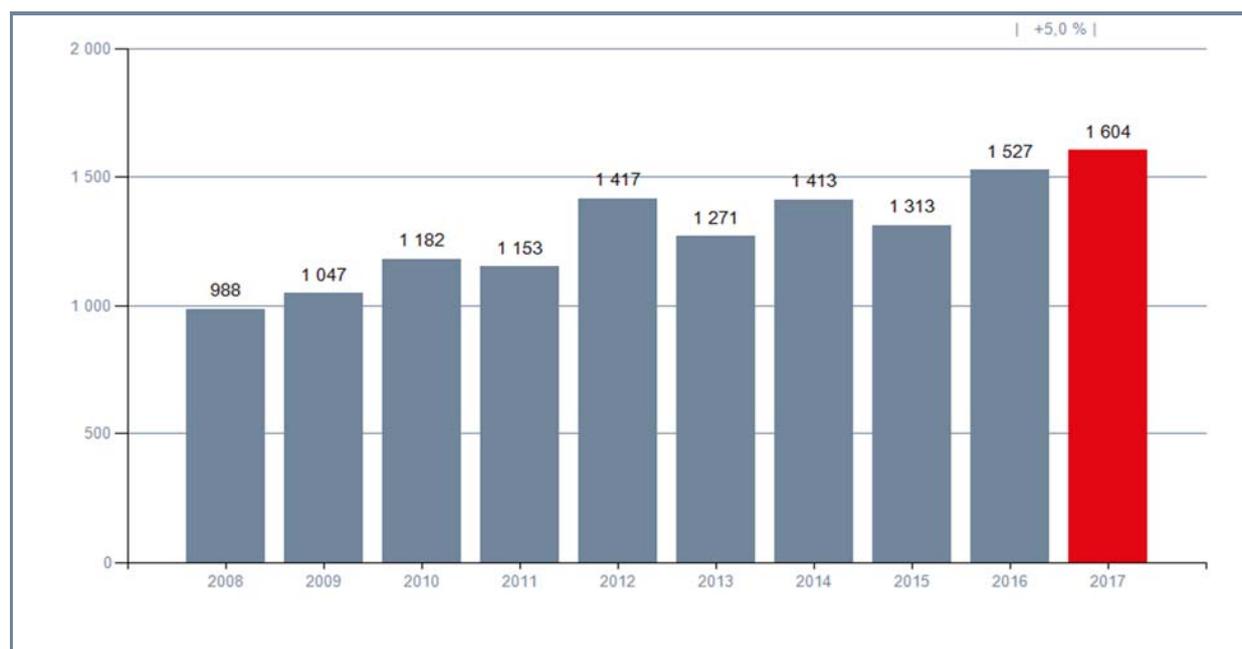


Figure 33: Development of total number of reports under the Narcotic Drugs Act in Vorarlberg between 2008 and 2017

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis	9 970,4 g	14 677,6 g	9 132,4 g	16 961,1 g	16 573,5 g	154 149,5 g	17 934,3 g	13 358,3 g	9 752,3 g	24 644,6 g
Heroin	199,6 g	273,5 g	189,5 g	7 078,1 g	62,2 g	266,3 g	77,7 g	29,8 g	216,6 g	265,6 g
Cocaine	264,7 g	1 718,2 g	2 501,3 g	1 095,8 g	253,3 g	1 005,8 g	2 614,2 g	2 308,9 g	2 444,6 g	3 444,7 g
XTC	46,0 Stk	64,0 Stk	38,0 Stk	g	23,0 Stk	31,0 Stk	355,0 Stk	430,0 Stk	409,1 Stk	393,0 Stk
Amphetamine	17,9 g	13,7 g	27,6 g	63,8 g	607,1 g	3 853,1 g	77,6 g	901,6 g	657,2 g	1 390,7 g
Methamphetamine	1,3 g	g	91,1 g	4,8 g	4,6 g	278,7 g	11,1 g	6,2 g	27,0 g	49,8 g

Figure 34: Seizures of the main substances in Vorarlberg in 2017

Offender groups, types of narcotic drugs and transport routes

Serbian nationals smuggled heroin via the Balkan route to Hungary and on to Austria, Switzerland and Vorarlberg. For departure from Austria to Switzerland, the offenders usually chose small, unguarded border crossings and always sent forerunners ahead to see whether there were any covert checks. Serbian coach operators and drivers were employed for drug transports and also for smuggling of drug money to Serbia. High-quality cocaine (85 per cent) was smuggled from the Netherlands to Vorarlberg and Switzerland via Germany. Drugs depots were set up in the areas of Dornbirn and Feldkirch.

Turkish nationals smuggled high-quality cocaine (80 per cent) from the Netherlands to Austria via Germany by passenger car and sold them to recipients in Vorarlberg, mainly in gambling circles.

Austrian nationals were active especially on the Darknet, obtaining large amounts of amphetamine, ecstasy and LSD. These drugs were sold in the party and discotheque scene. Austrians also appeared as smugglers of heroin from Switzerland.

Afghan and Syrian nationals smuggled cannabis herb from the area of St. Pölten/Lower Austria to Vorarlberg by train. The drugs were sold at various public places such as railway stations, bus car parks, lake areas in Bregenz, and parks, also in Dornbirn and Feldkirch.

Cannabis plantations and the offender groups associated with them

In 2017, cannabis plantations were operated by Austrian nationals exclusively.

Consumer behaviour and abuse of illicit drugs

The use of LSD markedly increased in 2017. This appears to be due to the availability of the drug on Internet trading platforms, especially on the Darknet. Likewise, heroin use rose again. Consumers ingest heroin by smoking the drug placed on a foil, by sniffing, and very rarely by injecting. Almost all users have regular jobs and are otherwise inconspicuous.

Heroin dealing in the canton of St. Gallen/Switzerland also affected the province of Vorarlberg. The business was controlled chiefly by Serbian offender groups. Prices per gram ranged between EUR 30 and 35, while sales price in Vorarlberg reached EUR 90 approximately.

The use of amphetamine in Vorarlberg was estimated to be very high, especially in the age group of 16 to 30-year-old people.

Cannabis was the most frequently used illicit drug and was abused especially for experimental purposes. The use of cannabis continued to rise.

Darknet

Illicit drugs were ordered on the Internet and Darknet on specialized trading platforms, which have become an essential source of supply.

New psychoactive substances

The number of unrecorded cases related to NPS was high, as the orders were placed primarily on the Internet and Darknet.

Developments in the area of acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime

Robbery, fraud and theft offences were frequently committed in connection with narcotic drug crime. Dealers, but also users, were partly equipped with all sorts of weapons to defend themselves against possible rivals and attackers. Users committed property crimes such as robbery, theft, fraud and also currency counterfeiting and circulation of counterfeit currency to finance their drug purchases.

Outlook

Dealing and consumption of cocaine in Vorarlberg are on the increase. This development is aggravated by the numerous gambling places, which are operated primarily by Turkish nationals. Due to the vicinity to the border and the low prices of narcotic drugs in Switzerland, small-scale dealers can smuggle drugs across the border and make profits by selling the drugs in Vorarlberg. Further challenges are the Darknet and connected delivery of illicit drugs by post and parcel services.

VIENNA

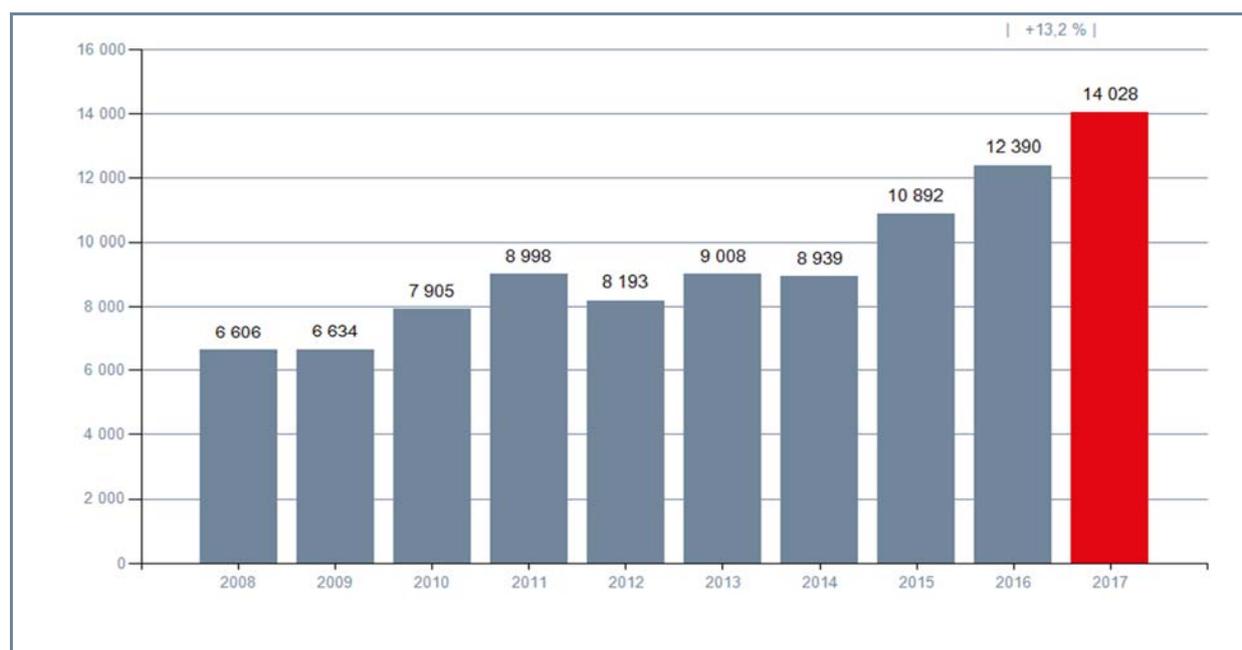


Figure 35: Development of total number of reports under the Narcotic Drugs Act in Vienna between 2008 and 2017

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cannabis	80 785,5 g	422 942,3 g	419 166,4 g	187 261,4 g	364 358,9 g	325 275,2 g	586 569,1 g	408 272,6 g	356 691,6 g	530 702,3 g
Heroin	55 016,6 g	121 962,2 g	61 998,6 g	44 005,0 g	24 755,0 g	13 645,9 g	8 352,8 g	43 068,3 g	18 889,2 g	46 929,2 g
Cocain	30 719,0 g	21 125,5 g	7 087,3 g	18 192,9 g	23 747,3 g	9 110,5 g	16 944,0 g	32 132,4 g	39 526,1 g	30 302,1 g
XTC	33 337,5 Stk	1 333,0 Stk	285,5 Stk	326,0 Stk	294,0 Stk	2 109,0 Stk	973,0 Stk	4 727,8 Stk	13 791,1 Stk	22 929,0 Stk
Amphetamine	6 902,2 g	3 018,7 g	3 921,0 g	3 929,6 g	1 582,7 g	7 791,9 g	6 112,9 g	10 395,9 g	50 283,1 g	17 555,5 g
Methamphetamine	18,6 g	24,5 g	268,5 g	177,7 g	1 575,2 g	3 106,4 g	1 452,2 g	703,2 g	3 280,4 g	1 279,5 g
Khat	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	380 000,0 g	83 055,6 g

Figure 36: Seizures of the main substances in Vienna in 2017

Offender groups, types of narcotic drugs and transport routes

Nationals of African countries (except Northern Africa) usually dealt in heroin and cocaine of poor quality as street runners, recently also in cannabis. All means of transport (train, coach, car) were used to smuggle narcotic drugs from Northern Europe (Belgium, Netherlands) into Austria. Air transport, sometimes on misleading flight routes, was used for drug smuggling from South America. Smugglers continued to travel as body packers. They communicated via contact persons in Austria, who distributed the substances to middlemen, who in turn supplied street runners.

Nationals of North African countries sold cannabis herb on the streets in what is called „baggies“, one or two gram units. From mid-2017, it was found that in addition to cannabis herb, they also sold ecstasy. The illicit substances were smuggled in from Northern Africa, Northern Europe and the Czech Republic.

Due to the still high share of asylum seekers of Afghan origin, the numbers of offences related to the Narcotic Drugs Act committed by Afghan nationals increased. In all cases, they were found dealing in cannabis herb in the open street.

Leading roles in illicit drug trafficking were assumed by nationals of Serbia, Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo and Croatia. This is explained by the existence of the Balkan route. The ethnic groups involved sometimes worked together by sharing tasks. Serbian criminal groups acquired a pre-eminent role in street dealing and showed a strong presence in the heroin trade. They were organised on the basis of division of jobs, assuming roles of either

runners, keepers, smugglers or organisers. Small quantities of heroin (up to one kilogram) were smuggled from interim depots in the Balkan countries to Austria by passenger car or coach. Larger quantities were transported through Austria and stored in large depots in Germany.

Austrian offenders showed a low degree of mutual organisation. In large part, they operated independently and used existing contacts. For heroin and cocaine dealing, established offender groups were used as sources. Cannabis herb was produced in indoor facilities and also imported from the Netherlands, Albania and the Czech Republic. Amphetamine and methamphetamine were imported mostly through the border areas of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, but also by post from Asia. The production of amphetamine and methamphetamine was rare in Vienna. The Internet was used to import NPS, which were delivered by post. The Netherlands continued to be the main source country of illicit synthetic drugs.

Persian and Turkish offender groups were well structured and continued to be active in the smuggling, less so in the sale, of drugs. They were generally structured according to ethnicity and used existing connections in their respective countries of origin.

In the open street scene, criminal groups constantly changed strategies. They moved their dealings to byroads, evening and night hours. The effort to complete a drug deal became greater and thus less attractive. Main trading points were traffic hubs such as the Praterstern area and underground stations and their surroundings, in particular the line U6 (stations Jägerstraße, Josefstädterstraße, Thaliastraße, Längenfeldgasse and Niederhofstraße) and partly the U4. Further drug scenes were found in the area of the Gürtelring road, especially at Arbeitergasse and Steinbauergasse (inner and outer Margareten Gürtel). Added to that, increased narcotic drug dealing was noticed in the surroundings of trendy pubs.

Suspects were usually West and North Africans, in particular Algerian and Afghan nationals, and criminal groups from Balkan countries such as Serbia. Some of them were staying in Austria in the framework of asylum proceedings. Apart from cocaine and heroin, cannabis herb was the drug most frequently sold on the streets. Criminal groups of Maghreb nationals additionally sold ecstasy.

Cannabis plantations and the offender groups associated with them

The trend to cannabis plantations was unbroken. On average, one indoor farm was found and seized every one or two weeks. Their size ranged from a few plants to several thousand marijuana plants. The equipment used became quite professional. The plants were grown in living areas, cellar compartments, warehouses and/or other buildings.

Consumer behaviour and abuse of illegal drugs

In addition to heroin, cocaine and cannabis products, synthetic drugs became an essential part of illicit drug use. The purchase of narcotic drugs on the Internet/Darknet became firmly established. As ever, cannabis herb remained the classic conditioning drug. Young users were hardly convinced that they did something wrong when consuming marijuana. The curiosity and excitement of trying something new was also evident in respect of synthetic drugs. They were often used for stimulation, as party drugs or to boost performance. The risk of negative psychological effects in addition to physical damage were underestimated or unwittingly accepted.

Darknet

Ordering of illicit drugs on the Internet and Darknet became the order of the day. Related Internet platforms became an essential source of supply.

New psychoactive substances

NPS were not sold in the street scene, but were bought exclusively via the Internet and Darknet.

Developments in the area of acquisitive, accompanying and secondary crime

The majority of crimes committed were burglaries in cellars and motor vehicles. Added to that, a multitude of robbery offences were committed, such as mugging and shop raids.

Outlook

Major challenges result from the strong increase in the purchase of illicit narcotic drugs via the Internet and Darknet. Methamphetamine, known under street names such as crystal meth, crystal, piko/pico, pervitin or bato, will continue to be imported through border areas of the Czech Republic and Slovakia/Bratislava. Home production of cannabis products remains unbroken and will continue to rise.

GLOSSARY

STATUTORY DEFINITIONS IN THE NARCOTIC DRUGS ACT [“Suchtmittelgesetz“ or SMG]

§ 27 **Illegal Handling of Narcotic Drugs**

- (1) Anyone who
 - a) acquires, possesses, produces, transports, or imports a narcotic drug, offers to supply it to another person, passes it on to another person or procures it for another person contrary to regulations
 - b) grows opium poppy, the coca bush or the cannabis plant for the purpose of producing narcotic drugs or
 - c) offers mushrooms containing psilocin, psilotin or psilocybin to another person, passes them on to another person, procures them for another person or grows them for the purpose of drug abuse shall be punished with imprisonment not exceeding one year or with a fine of up to 360 daily rates.

- (2) Anyone who commits such a criminal act exclusively for personal use shall be liable to a term of imprisonment of up to six months or a fine of up to 360 daily rates.

- (2a) Anyone who offers narcotic drugs to another person, passes them on to another person, or procures them for another person, in return for a consideration and contrary to regulations, in a public transport system, a public transport facility, a public traffic area, a public building or in any other place accessible to the general public, shall be punished with imprisonment not exceeding two years.

- (3) Anyone who commits a criminal act as specified in subsection 1, 2 or 2a above as a regular source of income shall be liable to imprisonment of up to three years.

- (4) The punishment shall be imprisonment not exceeding three years if
 - a) the commission of a criminal act as specified in subsection 1 or 2 makes possible for a minor to consume a narcotic drug, provided the offender is of full age and more than two years older than the minor, or
 - b) if the offender commits such a criminal act as a member of a criminal association.

- (5) Anyone who is addicted to a narcotic drug and commits a criminal act as specified in subsection 3, 4 sub-paragraph 2 chiefly for the purpose of procuring himself a narcotic drug for personal use or the means to buy it, shall merely be punished with imprisonment of up to one year.

§ 28 **Preparation of Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs**

- (1) Anyone who purchases, possesses or transports a narcotic drug in a quantity exceeding the threshold quantity specified in section 28b with the intent to distribute it contrary to regulations shall be liable to imprisonment not exceeding three years. The same punishment shall be applied to any person who grows the plants specified in section 27, subsection 1, sub-paragraph 2 with a view to extracting a narcotic drug in such a quantity for later distribution.

- (2) Anyone who commits a criminal act as specified in subsection 1 involving a narcotic drug in a quantity exceeding fifteen times the threshold quantity (section 28b) shall be liable to imprisonment not exceeding five years.

- (3) Anyone who commits the criminal act described in subsection 1 as a member of a criminal association shall be liable to imprisonment ranging from one to ten years.

- (4) If the conditions in section 27, subsection 5 are met, an offender shall merely be punished with imprisonment of up to one year in the case of subsection 1 above, imprisonment of up to three years in the case of subsection 2 above and to imprisonment of up to five years in the case of subsection 3.

§ 28a Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs

- (1) Anyone who produces, imports, exports a narcotic drug or offers to supply it to another person, passes it on to another person or procures it for another person contrary to regulations in a quantity exceeding the limit specified in section 28b shall be liable to imprisonment of up to five years.
- (2) The punishment shall be imprisonment ranging from one to ten years if an offender commits a criminal act as specified in subsection 1 above
 1. gewerbsmäßig begeht und schon einmal wegen einer Straftat nach Abs. 1 verurteilt wurde,
 2. als Mitglied einer kriminellen Vereinigung begeht oder
 3. in Bezug auf Suchtgift in einer das Fünfzehnfache der Grenzmenge übersteigenden Menge (große Menge) begeht.
- (3) Unter den in § 27 Abs. 5 genannten Voraussetzungen ist der Täter jedoch im Fall des Abs. 1 nur mit einer Freiheitsstrafe bis zu drei Jahren, im Fall Abs. 2 nur mit Freiheitsstrafe bis zu fünf Jahren zu bestrafen.
- (4) Mit Freiheitsstrafe von einem bis zu Fünfzehn Jahren ist zu bestrafen, wer die Straftat nach Abs. 1
 1. as a regular source of income and has been previously convicted of an offence as described in subsection 1
 2. as a member of a criminal association, or
 3. involving a narcotic drug in a quantity exceeding fifteen times the threshold quantity (large quantity).
- (5) The punishment shall be imprisonment ranging from ten to twenty years or life imprisonment if an offender commits a criminal act as specified in subsection 1 above and is a leading player in an association of a larger number of people conspiring to commit such offences.

§ 28b Threshold Quantity for Narcotic Drugs

The Federal Minister for Public Health shall fix by decree, in agreement with the Federal Minister of Justice, for each narcotic drug a threshold quantity in terms of pure substance of the active agent capable of jeopardizing the life and health of people in larger doses (threshold quantity). In doing so, the addictiveness of the respective narcotic drug and the habituation behaviour of addicts to that drug shall be taken into account.

Penal provisions for psychotropic substances

§ 30 Illegal Handling of Psychotropic Substances

- (1) Anyone who acquires, possesses, produces, transports, or imports a psychotropic substance, offers to supply it to another person, passes it on to another person or procures it for another person contrary to regulations shall be punished with imprisonment not exceeding one year or with a fine of up to 360 daily rates.
- (2) (Anyone who commits such a criminal act exclusively for personal use shall be liable to imprisonment of up to six months or with a fine of up to 360 daily rates.
- (3) An act as specified in subsections 1 and 2 above shall not be prosecuted as a criminal offence if a person
 1. acquires, possesses, transports, imports, or exports a medication containing a psychotropic substance for personal use or for administration to an animal, or
 2. offers to supply such a medication to another person, passes it on to another person, or procures it for another person without material benefitprovided that the quantity involved does not exceed the threshold quantity as specified in section 31b.

§ 31 Preparation of Trafficking in Psychotropic Substances

- (1) Anyone who acquires, possesses, or transports a psychotropic substance in a quantity exceeding the limit specified in section 31b with intent to distribute it shall be liable to imprisonment of up to two years.
- (2) The punishment shall be imprisonment not exceeding five years if an offender commits a criminal act as specified in subsection 1 above involving a psychotropic substance in a quantity exceeding fifteen times the threshold quantity specified in section 31b (large quantity).

- (3) Anyone who commits the criminal act described in subsection 1 as a member of a criminal association shall be liable to imprisonment ranging from one to ten years.
- (4) If the conditions in section 27, subsection 5 are met, an offender shall merely be punished with imprisonment of up to one year in the case of subsection 1 above, imprisonment of up to three years in the case of subsection 2 above and to imprisonment of up to five years in the case of subsection 3.

§ 31a Trafficking in Psychotropic Substances

- (1) Anyone who produces, imports, exports a psychotropic substance or offers to supply it to another person, passes it on to another person or procures it for another person contrary to regulations in a quantity exceeding the threshold quantity specified in section 31b shall be liable to imprisonment of up to three years.
- (2) The punishment shall be imprisonment not exceeding five years if an offender commits a criminal act as specified in subsection 1 above involving a psychotropic substance in a quantity exceeding fifteen times the threshold quantity specified in section 31b (large quantity).
- (3) Anyone who commits the criminal act described in subsection 1 as a member of a criminal association shall be liable to imprisonment ranging from one to ten years.
- (4) If the conditions in section 27, subsection 5 are met, an offender shall merely be punished with imprisonment of up to one year in the case of subsection 1 above, imprisonment of up to three years in the case of subsection 2 above and imprisonment of up to five years in the case of subsection 3.

§ 31b Threshold Quantity for Psychotropic Substances

The Federal Minister for Public Health shall fix by decree, in agreement with the Federal Minister of Justice, for each narcotic substance a threshold quantity in terms of pure substance of the active agent capable of jeopardizing the life and health of people in larger doses (threshold quantity). Section 28, second sentence, shall apply mutatis mutandis.

Penal provisions for drug precursor substances

§ 32 Illegal handling of drug precursor substances

- (1) Anyone who produces or transports a drug precursor substance or passes it on to another person with a view to being used in the production of narcotic drugs contrary to regulations shall be punished with imprisonment not exceeding one year.
- (2) Anyone who acquires or possesses a drug precursor substance with a view to being used in the production of narcotic drugs contrary to regulations in a quantity exceeding the threshold quantity as specified in sections 28b and 31b respectively shall be liable to imprisonment of up to two years.
- (3) Anyone who produces, imports, exports a drug precursor substance, offers to supply it to another person, passes it on to another person or procures it for another person with a view to being used in the production of narcotic drugs contrary to regulations in a quantity exceeding the threshold quantity as specified in sections 28b and 31b respectively shall be punished with a term of imprisonment not exceeding five years.

New Psychoactive Substances Act (NPSG)

§ 4 Penal provisions for psychoactive substances

- (1) Anyone who - with intent to gain an advantage - produces, imports, exports or lets another person have or supplies another person with a new psychoactive substance specified by a regulation pursuant to section 3 or defined pursuant to section 3 as belonging to a class of chemical substance so that the other person or a third party can apply it in the human body with a view to achieving a psychoactive effect, shall be punished by up to two years of imprisonment.
- (2) If the offence results in the death of a person or gross bodily injuries (section 84 para. 1 of the Penal Code) of a large number of persons, the offender shall be punished by one to ten years of imprisonment.

DESCRIPTION OF ILLICIT NARCOTIC DRUGS

The description of the individual narcotic substances on the following pages was sourced from "Suchthilfe Vienna GmbH", an institution which offers a wide range of services: prevention, advanced training, information, drug education, counselling, treatment and support for addiction-prone and addicted persons, promotion of socially acceptable coexistence in public areas, and (re-)integration of addicts into the labour market.
Contact: www.suchthilfe.at

Cannabis

Chemical information

Cannabis is the umbrella term for the hemp products hashish and marijuana. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the most important psychoactive agent among the approximately 400 different chemical ingredients of the hemp plant. The highest THC concentration is found in the resin of the female inflorescences. Hashish (dope, shit) consists of the resin of the inflorescences, while marijuana (grass, ganja) consists of a mixture of crushed leaves, flowers and stem pieces of the hemp plant. Aside from marijuana and hashish, hemp is also processed into hashish oil. Despite its high THC content, hashish oil is the least common hemp product. Generally, a distinction is made between three species of the botanical genus cannabis: cannabis sativa, a large plant with few side shoots; cannabis indica, a smaller form with many bushy side shoots, and cannabis ruderalis, a small, unbranched or hardly branched plant. The resin has different names, depending on the colour of the variety. There is the Yellow Morocco, the Red Lebanese and the Black Afghan. The potency of cannabis is determined by the THC content of the resin, the quantity of resin and by age and storage conditions.

Legal Framework

The acquisition, possession, import and export of cannabis, the procurement for and handing over to others (distribution and sale) is a punishable offence and may result in monetary penalties and imprisonment. Anyone who passes on a "joint" in convivial company – without taking a single puff themselves – is liable to criminal prosecution for possession or distribution of narcotic drugs. When a crime report is filed for the purchase and possession of a small quantity of cannabis for personal use, it is suspended by the public prosecution service for a probationary period of two years after the public health authority has assessed whether health-related measures such as medical checks, urine samples, medical treatment, psychological or psychotherapeutic care is necessary or whether such measures can be foregone. Unless charges of purchase and possession of narcotics have been preferred within the last five years, the public prosecution service may abstain from involving the public health authority and suspend the charges immediately.

Mechanism of action

When marijuana is inhaled hundreds of different substances enter the body. So far, it has not been possible to identify the exact mechanisms of action. THC, the most important psychoactive substance, is absorbed through the pulmonary mucosa when marijuana is smoked and through the intestinal mucosa when it is consumed orally. In the bloodstream THC is transported to all organs, where it accumulates in tissues with a high fat content because of its elevated fat solubility. This is why traces of THC can be detected in the urine even after weeks. Although most effects of cannabis consumption are felt for only a few hours, half of the THC is still in the blood after 20 hours. In the brain, THC binds to the recently discovered cannabinoid receptors whose exact functions are yet unknown. A large number of cannabinoid receptors are located in a brain structure that is responsible for remembering new contents. This explains why people can hardly remember anything under the influence of cannabis and have a different perception of time. Further cannabinoid receptors are found in the cerebellum, the brain region responsible for automatic movements such as walking. Hence the coordination difficulties that are experienced under the influence of cannabis.

History

Cannabis is the umbrella term for the hemp products hashish and marijuana. Hemp was used as a textile material as early as 6000 years ago, and knowledge of the psychotropic properties of cannabis goes back just as far. It was considered a sacred intoxicant, dedicated e.g. to the god Shiva in Hinduism, and was used as a sedative or narcotic in ritual use as well as in the traditional Asian medicine. In Europe, it was Marco Polo who reported in the 13th century for the first time that the hemp plant was used as a narcotic drug. In modern medicine, cannabis is increasingly used, particularly in the treatment of glaucoma patients as well as in the suppression of nausea and for appetite stimulation in cancer and AIDS patients.

Mushrooms containing containing psilocin, psilotin or psilocybin

Chemical information

Psilocybin (4-phosphoryl-dimethyl-tryptamine) and psilocin (4-hydroxy-dimethyl-tryptamine) are chemical substances that are present in at least 15 different fungi of the genera psilocybe, panaeolus and conocybe. The active substance content of the mushrooms greatly varies, within a species and between different species, and it also depends on factors that are difficult to determine, such as point of discovery and climate. When a dose exceeds about 3-7 mg of psilocybin or psilocin, or about 0.05 to 1 mg per kilogram body weight, perception starts to be distorted. Consumers report average amounts of about 10 mg, which is equivalent to 5 - 10 g of fresh or 1 g of dried mushrooms.

Legal Framework

The substances psilocin and psilocybin are controlled substances under the Narcotic Drugs Act. More specifically, the purchase, possession, production, import and export, transfer to and procurement for others (distribution and sale) is a punishable offence and may result in monetary penalties or imprisonment. The Narcotic Drugs Act does not explicitly mention the actual mushrooms. Nevertheless, growing „magic mushrooms“ for the production of a narcotic drug can be prosecuted as a criminal offence. In Austria, however, this act is generally punished as an administrative offence under section 44 of the Narcotic Drugs Act. Penal law is usually only applied when the narcotic drug, i.e. psilocin, psilotin or psilocybin, is actually produced or extracted from the mushrooms.

Mechanism of action

Mushrooms are usually consumed orally in dried or fresh form. The effect starts after approx. 30min, reaches its peak after approx. 2 hours and declines quite abruptly after 4-6 hours. A quarter of the dose is excreted unchanged, 80 to 90 per cent of the remainder is metabolized (converted) within eight hours. A small part - which is responsible for tolerance development - remains in the body for over a week. The processes affecting the brain are essentially the same as those described for LSD.

History

Psychoactive mushrooms are among the oldest drugs used by mankind. In El Salvador, Guatemala and in some areas of Mexico stone sculptures (dating back to 500 BC) representing psychoactive mushrooms have been found. They were used in spiritual ceremonies and rituals because of the mystical and daemonic powers attributed to them. For instance, Aztec priests used the South American mushroom Teonanactl (“meat of the gods”) for getting into contact with their gods, healing sick people, and making prophecies. The mushrooms served as a „gateway“ between human beings and the supernatural world. In 1958, Albert Hofmann, who discovered LSD, isolated the substances psilocybin and psilocin. The pharmaceutical group Sandoz, Hofmann’s employer at that time, put psilocybin on the market under the name of Indocybin. Indocybin has been tried out as a treatment for depression.

Mephedrone - 4-Methylmethcathinone / MMC

Chemical information

Street names: MMC, mephedrone MMC is chemically related to cathinone, the stimulating agent of the khat shrub, and to methcathinone (ephedrone). MMC is a stimulant and is used as a white powder or in tablet form. Mephedrone is one of what is called research chemicals, i.e. it is largely unexplored and there are no scientific findings on the mechanisms of action, risks, long-term sequelae and possible dangers in the case of mixed consumption. Knowledge of effects, dosage and risk reduction is, therefore, based almost exclusively on accounts of consumers’ experiences.

Legal Framework

Mephedrone has been included in the Austrian Narcotic Drugs Act since 21 August 2010. Consequently, the acquisition, possession, production, import and export and the procurement for others (distribution, sale) is a punishable offence and may result in fines or imprisonment.

Mechanism of action

Mephedrone leads to euphoria, increased attention, alertness, inhibition of appetite, increased extroversion and urge to self-expression, mobilization of energy reserves, reduced sleep requirement, irritation of the upper throat area and accompanying slight sore throat and dry mouth. Moreover, craving for the substance, impaired short-term memory, concentration difficulties, tachycardia, feelings of anxiety and depression, strong sweating, dilated pupils, distorted perception occur. MMC is usually consumed through the nose or mouth. Nasal consumption may

result in burning and pain in the nose, and damage to the nasal septum cannot be ruled out. After heavy drug use, consumers report pain in the kidney area. Since the substance has not been in circulation for a long time, there are no findings in respect of long-term sequelae on human beings.

History

The production was discontinued when mephedrone was declared illegal by the Israeli government in January 2008. MMC was distributed on Internet pages operated from English-speaking countries as a plant fertilizer and bath salt. In March 2008, it was reported by several national authorities to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA).

Heroin

Chemical information

Heroin, whose chemical name is diacetylmorphine, belongs to the class of semi-synthetic opioids. What is called morphine base is extracted from the juice of the poppy plant (*papaver somniferum*) by distillation. After further chemical processing, including the addition of acetic anhydride, diacetylmorphine is formed. Illicit, non-medical heroin, called „H“, „brown“, or „poison“, is usually diluted by street dealers mixed with substances such as glucose, lime, powder sugar or paracetamol and has, therefore, a relatively low degree of purity (between 15-45%).

Legal Framework

In 1961, poppy straw concentrate, opium, raw opium, heroin, methadone, morphine and codeine were included in the New York Convention on Narcotic Drugs. Heroin is subject to the Narcotic Drugs Act and its penal provisions. In particular, the acquisition, production, import and export, transfer to and procurement for others (distribution and sale) is a punishable offence and may result in monetary penalties and imprisonment.

Mechanism of action

Because of its chemical structure and high fat solubility, heroin enters the brain faster than morphine. The short „approach time“ brings about an intensive state of intoxication or „kick“. The faster a substance enters the brain, the greater its addictiveness is. In the organism, heroin is converted into morphine and eventually excreted through the kidneys.

History

Heroin was first synthesized in 1874 and put on the market as a cough treatment drug by the pharmaceutical company Bayer in 1898. As heroin was administered orally for cough treatment, thus slowly entering the brain and having only a weak psychological effect, its huge addictiveness was not realized for a long time. At the beginning of the 20th century, there was an increasing opposition to the then widespread non-medical use of heroin in the USA, which eventually led to the Opium Convention of 1912. This international agreement was a precursor to the opium ban and provided for the „gradual suppression of the abuse of opium, morphine and to those processing forms and derivatives of the substances that may give rise to similar abuses or have the potential to do so“. In 1920, 43 countries signed up to the International Opium Convention, and in 1961 poppy straw concentrate, opium, raw opium, heroin, methadone, morphine and codeine were included in the New York Convention on Narcotics.

Raw opium

Chemical information

The capsules of the opium poppy (*papaver somniferum*), the variety used for producing opium, contain a milky juice which is transformed into a brown mass when exposed to the air: raw opium. Opium contains between 25 and 40 different nitrogen compounds, called alkaloids, with morphine, narcotine and codeine being the most important substances in terms of quantity. Morphine is the basic substance for producing diacetylmorphine, or heroin. Opioids can be classified into natural (morphine, codeine), semi-synthetic (e. g. heroin), synthetic (such as methadone) and endogenous opioids (endorphins or enkephalines). Natural opioids are all substances found in the juice of poppy seeds. They are also known as opiates.

Legal Framework

In 1961, poppy straw concentrate, opium, raw opium, heroin, methadone, morphine and codeine were included in the New York Convention on Narcotic Drugs. In Austria, heroin is subject to the Narcotic Drugs Act and its penal provisions. In particular, the acquisition, production, import and export, transfer to and procurement for others (distribution, sale) is a punishable offence and may result in fines and imprisonment.

Mechanism of action

Opioids affect those areas of the brain that contain what is called opiate receptors, no matter whether they are injected, inhaled or taken orally. The duration of the action of opioids depends on the type and amount of substance, the route of administration, and on physical factors like weight or gender and ranges from one hour to more than one day. After several weeks of intensive opioid consumption, the body develops tolerance to the opioids taken, which means that their quantity needs to be increased in order to achieve the desired effect again. When consumption is discontinued, the body reacts with hot and cold shivers, severe pain in the limbs, depression and hallucinations.

History

The home of the poppy, from which opium is extracted, is the region that is southern Iraq today. Opium is said to have been used as an intoxicant as long ago as 6000 years. In ancient times, poppy seeds were regarded as food for „fortune-telling dragons“, as a mysterious magic plant and as „dreaming and sleeping drug „ because of their intoxicating effect. During the Roman rule in today's Greece, opium use spread to all parts of Europe, and subsequently to Persia, India and China. In the history of pharmacy, poppy plays an important role as a medicinal plant. In the early 16th century, opium was first used by Paracelsus, the physician, natural scientist and founder of modern medicine, for medical purposes, primarily for the treatment of pain, diarrhoea and as a sleeping drug. In the 17th century, opium became a major commodity. In 1805, 18-year-old German pharmacist Friedrich Wilhelm Sertürner isolated morphine from opium, which is being used in medicine as a painkiller instead of raw opium to date. The increasing importance of opium in medicine and trade and its use as an intoxicant led to what is called the Opium War between China and England in 1839, which ended with the subjugation of China. Today, it is clear that opium was only used as a pretext for waging war. Poppy cultivation for extracting opium and as a cultivar is now common in many countries around the world. The largest crop-growing regions are located in the „Golden Triangle“ - the border areas shared by Laos, Myanmar and Thailand - as well as in Central Asia, Turkey and Mexico. In Austria, poppy is cultivated in small quantities as an ornamental plant and for processing poppy seeds and poppy seed oil.

Morphine and derivatives

Chemical information

Besides codeine, morphine is the main component of raw opium, which is obtained from the sleeping poppy (*papaver somniferum*) and is classified as a natural opioid. Morphine belongs to the class of opium alkaloids and has the chemical formula C₁₇H₁₉N₃O₃. It affects an opiate receptor called μ -receptor. Its activation causes euphoria, respiratory depression, dependence, cough suppression and stool constipation. Illicit non-medical morphine is also known as „M“, morph and Miss Emma and is usually distributed as a white crystalline powder with a bitter taste.

Legal Framework

Morphine is subject to medical prescription under the Pharmaceutical Act. Anyone who passes on or sells this drug violates the Pharmaceutical Act, even if it was initially prescribed by a doctor. Morphine is also subject to the Narcotic Drugs Act and its penal provisions concerning psychotropic substances. In particular, the acquisition, possession, production, import and export, transfer to and procurement for others (distribution, sale etc.) is a punishable crime and may result in fines and imprisonment. So, misusing morphine is liable to criminal prosecution both under the Pharmaceutical Act and the Narcotic Drugs Act.

Mechanism of action

Morphine is soluble in water and therefore passes the blood-brain barrier more slowly than fat-soluble opioids, such as heroin. As all other opioids, it stimulates the opioid and the enkephalin receptors and causes release of dopamine. Morphine is administered orally, rectally or by intramuscular, subcutaneous or intravenous injection. Intravenous administration in non-medical use involves major risks such as the likelihood of overdose or the infection from impure syringes and syringe utensils. When illegally consumed on the streets, morphine is often smoked or „pulled“.

It is rapidly transformed in the liver and excreted in the kidneys. Its duration of action is four to five hours.

History

Besides codeine, morphine is one of the main components of opium. The poppy, from which opium is extracted, became one of the most important medicinal plants in history. In 1805, the German pharmacist Friedrich Sertürner

isolated morphine. Today, it is used for pain treatment instead of raw opium.

Cocaine

Chemical information

Cocaine is a white, crystalline, bitter-tasting powder made from coca leaves by adding water, lime or sodium carbonate, kerosene and ammonia. On the black market it is diluted with other substances, including milk powder and synthetic substances. Some of them, for instance lidocaine or novocaine, have a vaso-constrictive, analgesic or anaesthetic effect.

Typically, cocaine is snuffed, but it can also be administered intravenously (injected). Chemical processing can turn it into a smokable drug - crack or free base, which has mental effects that start within seconds, but last for only a few minutes, never exceeding 10 minutes. Crack and free base lead to severe psychological addiction more quickly than cocaine administered through different routes. Crack is produced by releasing cocaine with baking powder (see description of cocaine). Its degree of purity of 80 to 100 per cent makes it more dangerous than „standard“ cocaine. Crack looks like small, white or light yellow (sometimes pinkish) rocks, ranging from sand to pebble size. Due to its enormous short-term effect and the subsequent deep dark hole, the psychological and physical dependence potential is much higher than for other narcotics.

Legal Framework

Kokain und Crack unterliegen dem Suchtmittelgesetz. Der Erwerb, der Besitz, die Erzeugung, Ein- und Ausfuhr, Überlassung (Weitergabe) an und Verschaffung (Verkauf) für andere ist gerichtlich strafbar und kann Geld- oder Freiheitsstrafen nach sich ziehen.

Mechanism of action

Cocaine enters the bloodstream through the nasal mucous membranes, when crack or free base is smoked, or by injection. Cocaine is fat-soluble, i.e. it passes the blood-brain-barrier and affects the brain. Unlike amphetamine, which causes an increased release of the semiochemicals norepinephrine and dopamine in the brain, cocaine prevents these semiochemicals from being absorbed in the nerve cells. However, the result is a similar in both cases: neurotransmitters are accumulated in the synaptic gap, causing dopamine and norepinephrine to permanently stimulate the downstream nerve cells, which is psychologically experienced as euphoria and strength. After intoxication, the brain needs a few days to rebuild the neurotransmitters, bringing about depressive moods, fatigue and apathy.

History

The South American Andes are the origin area of the coca bush. Coca leaves have been used there for centuries for religious, mystical, social and medical purposes. Consumption of coca leaves leads to increased endurance, suppression of hunger and increased well-being. The psychoactive substance of the coca bush was first chemically isolated by Albert Niemann in the mid-19th century. The Vienna physician Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, was so enthusiastic about the euphoric and activating effect of cocaine that he praised it in his article „About Coca“ as a new „miracle drug“. Freud was soon to change his mind: a good friend of his, who wanted to free himself from his morphine addiction, increased his daily cocaine dose to over one gram and eventually died from the consequences of his cocaine habit. In medicine, cocaine was used as a local anaesthetic because of its astringent or vaso-constrictive effect. In 1888, a drink on the basis of a coca and cola nut extract was put on the market as a headache remedy and as a revitalizer for adults.

The drink was named Coca-Cola. However, as early as 1906, the addition of cocaine to beverages and over-the-counter medicines was declared illegal in the USA. Cocaine use sharply increased during the 1920s, but decreased in the 1930s when amphetamine emerged. The production of amphetamine is easier and cheaper and the psychological effects of amphetamine last longer than those of cocaine.

LSD-trips

Chemical information

Lysergic acid-diethylamide, a semi-synthetic preparation of the ergot drug, is a colourless, tasteless and odourless substance. In general, LSD is generally marketed in the form of paper trips (blotting paper), microtablets ("micros"), tablets and capsules. When the substance is put onto blotting paper or tablets, the dose may vary considerably. On average, a paper trip contains 80 micrograms of LSD.

Legal Framework

LSD is subject to the Narcotic Drugs Act. In particular, the acquisition, possession, production, import and export, transfer and supply to others (distribution, sale) is a punishable offence and may result in fines or imprisonment.

Mechanism of action

The chemical structure of LSD is similar to the neurotransmitter serotonin and affects specific serotonin receptors in the brain in a way that disrupts the natural selection mechanism of the brain, which protects human beings being exposed to an excessive amount of impressions and perceptions, i.e. sensory overload. Situations in real life can then no longer be assessed in a normal way. Perceptions, moods and thoughts are intensified and distorted and the borderline between reality and fantasy is muddled.

History

LSD-25 was first synthesized in the mid-1930s by chemist Albert Hofmann as part of a large-scale study on ergot alkaloids. However, the psychoactive effect of LSD-25 only became evident for Hofmann in April 1943, when he resynthesized the substance. The chemical company Sandoz, Hofmann's employer, promoted LSD-25 for use in psychotherapy and psychiatry for several years. In the 1960s, LSD became more widely known through Timothy Leary, professor at the renowned American Stanford University, and played an important role in the hippie and 1968 movements. After a number of incidents occurred, some of them fatal, which were attributed to LSD consumption, the United States and European countries included LSD in their respective narcotic drugs regulations.

Ecstasy (MDMA)

Chemical information

Ecstasy is the street name for a series of amphetamine derivatives, molecules that differ from amphetamines ("speed") in small variations of their chemical structure. Originally, only methylene dioxy-methyl-amphetamine (MDMA) was named ecstasy. Over the last ten years, a number of additional amphetamine derivatives with a similar effect have emerged on the black market, and today MDA, MDE, MBDB and other compounds are subsumed under the term ecstasy. Chemical analyses carried out by international organisations have, however, revealed that often completely different substances, such as speed and non-psychoactive substances such as medicines and placebos, are sold as ecstasy. They include substances that present a major health risk such as atropine or methadone. Ecstasy is taken through the mouth or nose in the form of tablets, capsules or powder. The duration of action depends on the dosage, the route of administration and personal factors such as body weight, gender or previous food intake. The effect of an average dose of ecstasy lasts from 3 to 6 hours, the effect of an average MDA dose up to 12 hours.

Legal Framework

Ecstasy is subject to the Narcotic Drugs Act and its penal provisions on psychotropic substances. In particular, the acquisition, possession, production, import and export, transfer to and procurement for others (distribution, sale) is a punishable offence and may result in fines or imprisonment.

Mechanism of action

After being absorbed into the bloodstream, part of the substance enters the brain where it affects specific areas. Ecstasy primarily causes an increased release of the neurotransmitter serotonin, resulting in reduced hunger and thirst, increased alertness, body temperature and blood pressure, as well as intensified feelings and moods such as happiness and euphoria. When ecstasy ceases to affect the serotonin system after a few hours,

the physical and psychological states are reversed. Addicts report fatigue, exhaustion, confusion, sadness and depressive moods. It takes the human brain up to four weeks to rebuild its natural serotonin level.

History

MDMA was first produced in 1898 by the German Ph.D. candidate Haber and patented in 1914 for the German chemical company E. Merck. There have been a multitude of reports stating that the substance was developed as an appetite suppressant and was first synthesized by E. Merck, but these were unmasked as an unprecedented collection of scientific false reports by the authors Fromberg and Seymour. Aside from animal experiments carried out by the U. S. Army in the early 50s, the substance sank into oblivion until 1965, when it was resynthesized by the chemist Alexander Shulgin, a teacher at the University of California at Berkeley. In the seventies, MDMA was used by some thousands of therapists in the USA in a psychotherapeutic setting due to its effect of intensifying emotions, empathy and self-acceptance. It was reportedly successful in the treatment of post-traumatic stress syndrome, bulimia, couple therapies and care for terminally ill patients. Around 1976, the first articles on the effect of MDMA were published in medical journals and in the late 1970s, MDMA surfaced under the name of „Ecstasy“ or „X“ outside of psychotherapeutic settings, in bars and pubs in the USA. For a short period, ecstasy was reported to have been available in Dallas and Austin in bars by credit card payment. On 1 July 1985, following media coverage of the „new drug“ in Texas and first medical incidents, MDMA was included in the „most dangerous“ category I by the American Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) for a trial period of one year, a decision, which was confirmed by the US authorities in 1988. In 1986 MDMA was included in the WHO Convention on Psychotropic Substances on the initiative of the USA, a categorization recommending to subject MDMA to the strictest legal scrutiny in all WHO member states. In the ensuing years, MDMA was incorporated in all European countries in their respective narcotic drugs laws. Around 1987, ecstasy came from the USA to the United Kingdom and the Netherlands via Ibiza and became an essential element of the techno and rave movements of the following years.

Speed - amphetamine/methamphetamine

Chemical information

Amphetamines are fully synthetic, i.e. artificially produced substances with a chemical structure that is similar to natural ephedrine (Ma Huang). Speed is a white or pink crystalline powder, which contains amphetamines or methamphetamines and is distributed as tablets or, more often, as capsules. The effect of methamphetamine (piko, yaba, shabu) is similar to that of amphetamine, it is merely longer and stronger. Speed is taken orally or, less frequently, smoked or injected. Crystal meth (ice, crystal) is a crystalline, smokable form of methamphetamine that produces euphoria for several hours and has a very high addictiveness. Typically, amphetamine is diluted with other substances before being sold on the black market.

Legal Framework

In the 1950s, the WHO demanded prescription requirements for amphetamines. In 1972, amphetamine was included in the Convention on Psychotropic Substances and is now subject to the Narcotic Drugs Act and its penal provisions. In particular, the acquisition, possession, production, import and export, transfer to and procurement for others (distribution, sale) is a punishable crime and may result in fines or imprisonment.

Mechanism of action

Amphetamines reach the bloodstream through the mucous membranes (of the mouth or nose), the stomach or through inhalation and injections. Amphetamine is fat-soluble, i.e. it passes the blood-brain-barrier and affects the brain. Amphetamine causes an increased release of the neurotransmitters norepinephrine and dopamine in the brain by pushing them out of the storage vesicles and into the synaptic gap. Both norepinephrine and dopamine belong to the catecholamines like adrenaline. Depending on the dosage, they bring about a number of physical and mental distortions. Once speed has been degraded in the body, it does no longer influence the neurotransmitters. The brain now needs a few days to restore neurotransmitter balance. During this period, the effects of speed are reversed: users, who were previously full of energy now feel tired and weak, who were strong and convinced of themselves are now irritated, dissatisfied and lacking in concentration.

History

Amphetamine was first synthesized in 1887. Between 1910 and 1930, it was discovered step by step that the chemical structure and the physical and psychological effects of amphetamines are similar to those of the hormone adrenaline. In medicine, amphetamine was subsequently considered a panacea. It was used for the treatment of neuroses, depressions, alcoholism, epilepsy and obesity. Housewives and businessmen used it as a mood barometer, and soldiers during World War II were given it to combat fatigue and to improve performance. When the

side effects and addictiveness of amphetamines became known in the 1960s, the non-medical use of the substance continued as before. In competitive sports, amphetamine was used as a doping agent. In the heyday of rock'n'roll in the 1950s, amphetamine was mostly consumed in combination with alcohol, and in all subsequent youth cultures, from beatniks, mods, hippies and Northern soul to punks, speed has played a special role. The deaths of John Belushi from the Blues Brothers and of Elvis Presley are attributed to excessive speed consumption.

Psychotropic Substances

Chemical information

The term psychotropic or psychoactive substance is a collective term for all substances contained in medications and narcotics that exert an influence on the psyche through the central nervous system. Such an influence may be subliminal and be experienced positively as stimulation, relaxation or pleasant change of mood. However, it can also have a far-reaching effect on the consciousness and lead to seizures, disturbances of consciousness, or - in the worst case - to coma.

Mechanism of action

Due to different structures, the substances bind to different receptors in the brain, where they set off signals. Such an influence may be subliminal and be experienced positively as stimulation, relaxation or pleasant change of mood. However, it can also have a far-reaching effect on the consciousness and lead to seizures, disturbances of consciousness, or - in the worst case - to coma.

Legal Framework

In Austria, the use of psychotropic and psychoactive substances as narcotic drugs, such as their acquisition, possession, production or import and export, is restricted. The restrictions are regulated in the Narcotic Drugs Act and in the appendent implementing provisions (Narcotic Drugs Regulation, Psychotropic Substances Regulation).

History

In Austria, the narcotic drugs law was essentially shaped by three international conventions: the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1954 as amended by the Protocol of 1972, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 (Vienna Convention).

Drug precursor substances

Chemical information

New psychoactive substances are also known as research chemicals, legal highs or designer drugs. Many of them are research chemicals, often waste products from drug research. What they have in common is that they are produced on a large scale mainly in Asian laboratories.

Legal Framework

Penal provisions for drug precursor substances and illegal handling of drug precursors are regulated in section 32 of the Narcotic Drugs Act.

Drug precursor substances are internationally defined by the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Businesses are required to contact the competent authority when an order of a recorded substance appears suspicious and it is assumed that it might be misused for the production of narcotic drugs.

New psychoactive substances (NPS)

Chemical information

New psychoactive substances are also known as research chemicals, legal highs or designer drugs. Many of them are research chemicals, often waste products from drug research. What they have in common is that they are produced on a large scale mainly in Asian laboratories.

Mechanisms of action

Psychoactive drugs affect the human nervous system. They influence subjective experience and behaviour. Consumption of psychoactive substances results in a distortion of consciousness, mood and thought. These changes may be sedative or activating.

Psychoactive drugs alterate mechanisms in the brain that regulate mood, thoughts and memory. Distortion of consciousness may lead up to seizures and coma. So-called intoxicating drugs all have mind-altering effects and can, therefore, be considered psychoactive substances.

Legal Framework

The New Psychoactive Substances Act (NPSG) came into force on 1 January 2012, prohibiting the production, import and export of many research chemicals, their transfer to and procurement for others with a view to material benefit.

APPENDIX

TABLES AND DIAGRAMS



Figure 37: Development of felonies and misdemeanors in Austria between 2008 and 2017

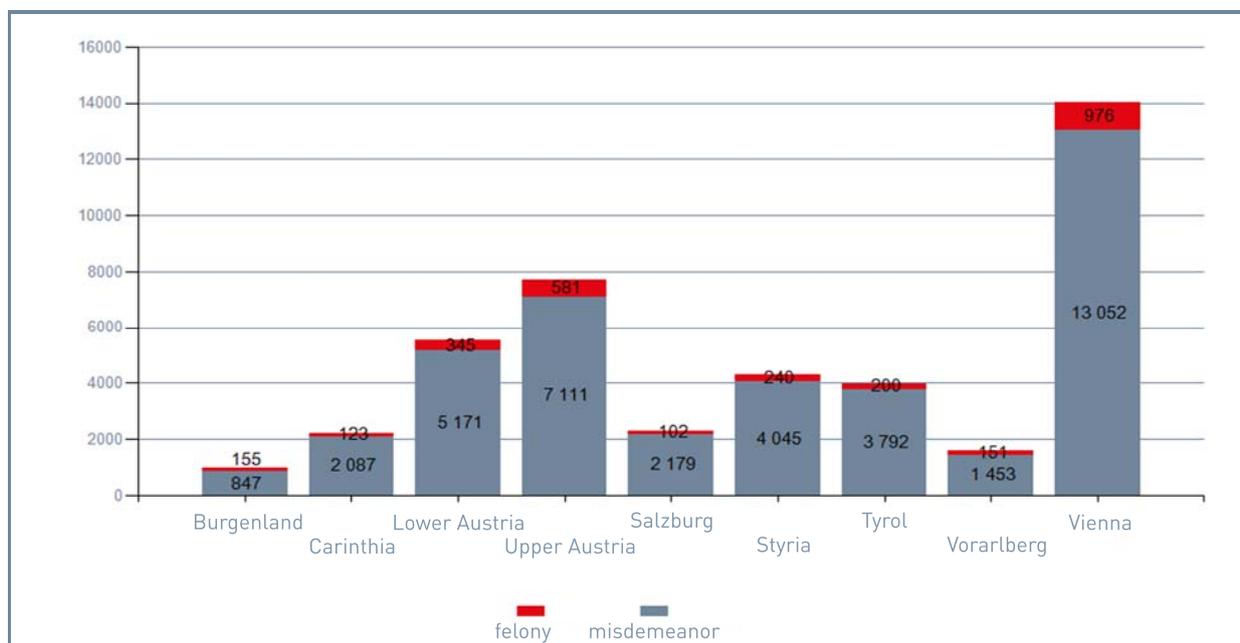


Figure 38: Situation in the provinces broken down by felony and misdemeanor offences in 2017

Province		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Tendency	Tendency%
Austria	Total	20 043	22 729	23 853	25 892	23 797	28 227	30 250	32 907	36 235	42 610	6 375	17,6 %
	Crime	1 460	1 656	1 721	1 877	1 586	1 746	1 788	2 221	2 159	2 873	714	33,1 %
	Misdemean.	18 583	21 073	22 132	24 015	22 211	26 481	28 462	30 686	34 076	39 737	5 661	16,6 %
Burgenland	Total	891	967	735	831	701	851	780	858	897	1 002	105	11,7 %
	Crime	159	150	129	205	154	162	91	98	113	155	42	37,2 %
	Misdemean.	732	817	606	626	547	689	689	760	784	847	63	8,0 %
Carinthia	Total	1 156	1 384	1 547	1 466	1 194	1 496	2 005	1 640	1 659	2 210	551	33,2 %
	Crime	36	69	91	119	71	73	88	96	91	123	32	35,2 %
	Misdemean.	1 120	1 315	1 456	1 347	1 123	1 423	1 917	1 544	1 568	2 087	519	33,1 %
Lower Austria	Total	2 655	3 233	3 075	3 041	2 771	3 205	3 672	4 079	4 188	5 516	1 328	31,7 %
	Crime	154	188	150	134	157	168	153	207	224	345	121	54,0 %
	Misdemean.	2 501	3 045	2 925	2 907	2 614	3 037	3 519	3 872	3 964	5 171	1 207	30,4 %
Upper Austria	Total	3 297	3 999	3 840	3 839	3 776	4 545	5 100	5 136	6 060	7 692	1 632	26,9 %
	Crime	213	302	319	300	242	324	307	336	366	581	215	58,7 %
	Misdemean.	3 084	3 697	3 521	3 539	3 534	4 221	4 793	4 800	5 694	7 111	1 417	24,9 %
Salzburg	Total	1 034	1 108	1 130	1 462	1 167	1 373	1 507	1 763	2 114	2 281	167	7,9 %
	Crime	68	100	101	122	92	127	94	117	114	102	- 12	-10,5 %
	Misdemean.	966	1 008	1 029	1 340	1 075	1 246	1 413	1 646	2 000	2 179	179	9,0 %
Styria	Total	1 387	1 710	1 648	1 927	1 933	2 491	3 280	3 256	3 377	4 285	908	26,9 %
	Crime	110	107	102	134	109	102	141	224	191	240	49	25,7 %
	Misdemean.	1 277	1 603	1 546	1 793	1 824	2 389	3 139	3 032	3 186	4 045	859	27,0 %
Tyrol	Total	2 029	2 647	2 791	3 175	2 645	3 987	3 554	3 970	4 023	3 992	- 31	-0,8 %
	Crime	127	195	150	155	101	171	141	202	197	200	3	1,5 %
	Misdemean.	1 902	2 452	2 641	3 020	2 544	3 816	3 413	3 768	3 826	3 792	- 34	-0,9 %
Vorarlberg	Total	988	1 047	1 182	1 153	1 417	1 271	1 413	1 313	1 527	1 604	77	5,0 %
	Crime	146	127	171	101	120	128	150	125	122	151	29	23,8 %
	Misdemean.	842	920	1 011	1 052	1 297	1 143	1 263	1 188	1 405	1 453	48	3,4 %
Vienna	Total	6 606	6 634	7 905	8 998	8 193	9 008	8 939	10 892	12 390	14 028	1 638	13,2 %
	Crime	447	418	508	607	540	491	623	816	741	976	235	31,7 %
	Misdemean.	6 159	6 216	7 397	8 391	7 653	8 517	8 316	10 076	11 649	13 052	1 403	12,0 %

Figure 39: Development of offences under the Narcotic Drugs Act broken down by felony and misdemeanor offences in Austria and in the provinces between 2008 and 2017

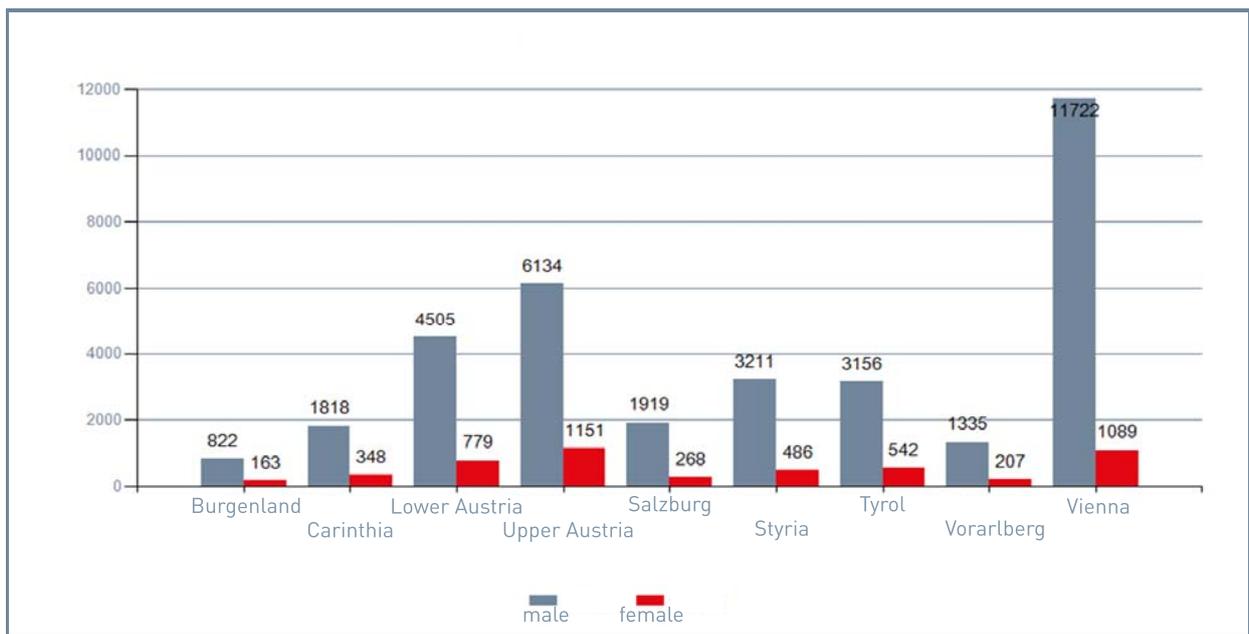


Figure 40: Narcotic drug crime reports by gender in the provinces in 2017

Non-Austrians	Austrians	Asylum-seeker	Province	Percentage Non-Austrians
14612	25042	6200	Austria	36.8%
184	801	31	Burgenland	18.7%
442	1723	121	Carinthia	20.4%
1076	4208	301	Lower Austria	20.4%
2008	5277	722	Upper Austria	27.6%
826	1361	257	Salzburg	37.8%
1154	2543	511	Styria	31.2%
1377	2321	436	Tyrol	37.2%
463	1079	129	Vorarlberg	30.0%
7082	5729	3692	Vienna	55.3%

Figure 41: Identified domestic and foreign suspects and suspect asylum seekers by provinces in 2017

2017	Total	Felonies	Misdemeanours	2016	Total	Felonies	Misdemeanours
Afghanistan	2025	98	1927	Nigeria	1896	105	1791
Nigeria	1614	79	1535	Algeria	1281	56	1225
Serbia	955	263	692	Afghanistan	1103	84	1019
Germany	940	50	890	Morocco	850	27	823
Turkey	892	115	777	Serbia	837	217	620
Algeria	636	51	585	Germany	790	51	739
Morocco	566	36	530	Turkey	780	68	712
Bosnia-Herzegovina	535	73	462	Bosnia-Herzegovina	470	45	425
Romania	461	30	431	Russia	365	15	350
Russia	427	11	416	Romania	330	22	308

2015	Total	Felonies	Misdemeanours	2014	Total	Felonies	Misdemeanours
Nigeria	1346	84	1262	Germany	746	48	698
Germany	864	48	816	Turkey	727	107	620
Serbia	813	227	586	Serbia	667	140	527
Turkey	764	65	699	Afghanistan	591	41	550
Algeria	757	41	716	Algeria	519	43	476
Afghanistan	688	52	636	Nigeria	477	58	419
Morocco	530	35	495	Bosnia-Herzegovina	421	38	383
Bosnia-Herzegovina	357	27	330	Morocco	379	43	336
Russia	325	10	315	Romania	299	20	279
Romania	305	18	287	Russia	294	7	287

2013	Total	Felonies	Misdemeanours	2012	Total	Felonies	Misdemeanours
Turkey	697	53	644	Turkey	601	48	553
Germany	650	48	602	Serbia	577	95	482
Serbia	590	89	501	Germany	547	30	517
Nigeria	471	56	415	Nigeria	373	69	304
Algeria	388	28	360	Bosnia-Herzegovina	346	32	314
Bosnia-Herzegovina	379	19	360	Algeria	257	36	221
Afghanistan	345	34	311	Russia	237	3	234
Marocco	297	31	266	Kroatia	186	15	171
Romania	236	11	225	Morocco	186	26	160
Russa	227	8	219	Romania	179	11	168

2011	Total	Felonies	Misdemeanours	2010	Total	Felonies	Misdemeanours
Turkey	688	65	623	Nigeria	575	61	514
Germany	596	42	554	Turkey	575	47	528
Serbia	529	69	460	Serbia	492	45	447
Bosnia-Herzegovina	444	37	407	Germany	490	35	455
Nigeria	431	67	364	Bosnia-Herzegovina	422	32	390
Algeria	374	31	343	Algeria	241	17	224
Kroatia	240	29	211	Morocco	228	20	208
Morocco	235	17	218	Kroatia	226	25	201
Russia	194	1	193	Gambia	209	30	179
Romania	178	19	159	Russia	192	3	189

2009	Total	Felonies	Misdemeanours	2008	Total	Felonies	Misdemeanours
Nigeria	598	105	493	Serbia	578	98	480
Turkey	547	58	489	Turkey	497	37	460
Serbia	502	84	418	Nigeria	447	95	352
Germany	484	56	428	Germany	368	32	336
Bosnia-Herzegovina	367	36	331	Bosnia-Herzegovina	330	22	308
Algeria	240	32	208	Gambia	206	31	175
Morocco	206	28	178	Morocco	192	19	173
Gambia	192	26	166	Algeria	172	34	138
Russia	171	4	167	Kroatia	158	20	138
Kroatia	161	15	146	Russia	127	3	124

Figures 42 to 51: Top 10 of foreign suspects broken down by nationality in 2008 to 2017

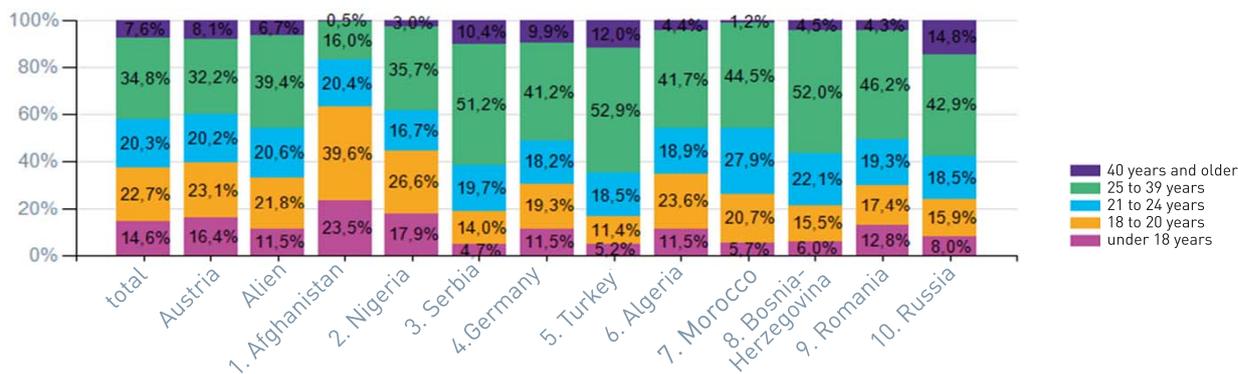


Figure 52: Identified domestic and foreign suspects by age groups in 2017



Figure 53: Development of crime reports in respect of Austrians suspected of offences under the Narcotic Drugs Act in Austria between 2008 and 2017

Heroin

Province	§ 27 Narc. Act	§ 28 Narc. Act	§ 28 Nar. Act	Total
Burgenland	8	0	7	15
Carinthia	187	8	28	223
Lower Austria	208	14	36	258
Upper Austria	276	7	97	380
Salzburg	51	5	10	66
Styria	29	1	6	36
Tyrol	26	0	10	36
Vorarlberg	67	2	31	100
Vienna	1 024	21	349	1 394
Total	1 876	58	574	2 508

Cannabis-herb

Province	§ 27 Narc. Act	§ 28 Narc. Act	§ 28 Nar. Act	Total
Burgenland	754	14	79	847
Carinthia	1 573	27	60	1 660
Lower Austria	3 805	53	199	4 057
Upper Austria	5 457	69	384	5 910
Salzburg	1 597	41	63	1 701
Styria	3 567	49	180	3 796
Tyrol	2 334	32	111	2 477
Vorarlberg	1 177	11	81	1 269
Vienna	9 145	61	363	9 569
Total	29 409	357	1 520	31 286

Cannabis-plants

Province	§ 27 Narc. Act	§ 28 Narc. Act	§ 28 Nar. Act	Total
Burgenland	15	10	12	37
Carinthia	32	5	8	45
Lower Austria	108	16	35	159
Upper Austria	89	6	15	110
Salzburg	30	4	2	36
Styria	71	7	7	85
Tyrol	51	4	3	58
Vorarlberg	13	8	3	24
Vienna	101	24	22	147
Total	510	84	107	701

Amphetamine

Province	§ 27 Narc. Act	§ 28 Narc. Act	§ 28 Nar. Act	Total
Burgenland	63	3	25	91
Carinthia	100	8	5	113
Lower Austria	442	16	63	521
Upper Austria	726	14	166	906
Salzburg	165	17	26	208
Styria	241	11	54	306
Tyrol	167	6	32	205
Vorarlberg	85	1	11	97
Vienna	373	13	76	462
Total	2 362	89	458	2 909

Cocaine

Province	§ 27 Narc. Act	§ 28 Narc. Act	§ 28 Nar. Act	Total
Burgenland	25	0	27	52
Carinthia	234	9	41	284
Lower Austria	333	25	60	418
Upper Austria	376	12	100	488
Salzburg	198	15	33	246
Styria	129	4	48	181
Tyrol	390	5	73	468
Vorarlberg	148	2	54	204
Vienna	1 260	27	312	1 599
Total	3 093	99	748	3 940

Cannabis-resin

Province	§ 27 Narc. Act	§ 28 Narc. Act	§ 28 Nar. Act	Total
Burgenland	20	1	10	31
Carinthia	65	2	5	72
Lower Austria	221	14	18	253
Upper Austria	198	4	29	231
Salzburg	125	6	10	141
Styria	64	7	10	81
Tyrol	959	8	50	1 017
Vorarlberg	69	2	20	91
Vienna	709	6	67	782
Total	2 430	50	219	2 699

XTC

Province	§ 27 Narc. Act	§ 28 Narc. Act	§ 28 Nar. Act	Total
Burgenland	54	0	18	72
Carinthia	99	3	7	109
Lower Austria	274	15	34	323
Upper Austria	218	6	63	287
Salzburg	84	6	10	100
Styria	203	5	43	251
Tyrol	130	2	20	152
Vorarlberg	57	0	8	65
Vienna	410	2	64	476
Total	1 529	39	267	1 835

Methamphetamine

Province	§ 27 Narc. Act	§ 28 Narc. Act	§ 28 Nar. Act	Total
Burgenland	16	1	62	79
Carinthia	23	0	1	24
Lower Austria	159	7	33	199
Upper Austria	462	6	76	544
Salzburg	36	4	5	45
Styria	33	1	5	39
Tyrol	34	1	3	38
Vorarlberg	15	0	1	16
Vienna	141	1	28	170
Total	919	21	214	1 154

Figures 54 to 61: Crime reports in Austria and in the provinces broken down by substances and severity of offence in 2017

2017	Typ	Outdoor	Indoor	Total
Burgenland	Micro-Plantation - 1 to 5 plants	6	4	10
	Mini-Plantation - 6 to 49 plants	7	15	22
	Small-Plantation - 50 to 249 plants		4	4
	Medium-Plantation - 250 to 499 plants		1	1
	Total	13	24	37
Carinthia	Micro-Plantation - 1 to 5 plants	5	15	20
	Mini-Plantation - 6 to 49 plants	10	31	41
	Small-Plantation - 50 to 249 plants		5	5
	Total	15	51	66
Lower Austria	Micro-Plantation - 1 to 5 plants	27	37	64
	Mini-Plantation - 6 to 49 plants	34	73	107
	Small-Plantation - 50 to 249 plants	5	18	23
	Medium-Plantation - 250 to 499 plants		6	6
	Large-Plantation - 500 to 999 plants		5	5
	Industrial Plantation - 1000 plants and more		1	1
	Total	66	142	208
Upper Austria	Micro-Plantation - 1 to 5 plants	28	39	67
	Mini-Plantation - 6 to 49 plants	17	83	100
	Small-Plantation - 50 to 249 plants	1	14	15
	Total	47	137	184
Salzburg	Micro-Plantation - 1 to 5 plants	10	5	15
	Mini-Plantation - 6 to 49 plants	4	25	29
	Small-Plantation - 50 to 249 plants		3	3
	Total	14	33	47
Styria	Micro-Plantation - 1 to 5 plants	23	26	49
	Mini-Plantation - 6 to 49 plants	16	54	70
	Small-Plantation - 50 to 249 plants	3	3	6
	Medium-Plantation - 250 to 499 plants		1	1
	Total	42	84	126
Tyrol	Micro-Plantation - 1 to 5 plants	21	23	44
	Mini-Plantation - 6 to 49 plants	12	28	40
	Small-Plantation - 50 to 249 plants	1	6	7
	Total	35	58	93
Vorarlberg	Micro-Plantation - 1 to 5 plants	7	8	15
	Mini-Plantation - 6 to 49 plants	6	20	26
	Small-Plantation - 50 to 249 plants		2	2
	Medium-Plantation - 250 to 499 plants		2	2
	Total	13	32	45
Vienna	Micro-Plantation - 1 to 5 plants	6	11	17
	Mini-Plantation - 6 to 49 plants	7	64	71
	Small-Plantation - 50 to 249 plants	1	30	31
	Medium-Plantation - 250 to 499 plants	1	5	6
	Large-Plantation - 500 to 999 plants		12	12
	Industrial Plantation - 1000 plants and more		4	4
	Total	16	126	142
AUSTRIA		261	687	948

Figure 62: Cannabis plantations identified in Austria in 2017 broken down by type and size

PUBLICATIONS, CONTACT DETAILS AND EDITORIAL

FURTHER PUBLICATIONS 2018

Crime statistics
Smuggling of human beings
Money laundering
Cultural property crime
Crime prevention
State protection
Trafficking in human beings
Cybercrime Security Report

CONTACT

Would you like to contact us or do you have any questions on the report? We are looking forward to receiving your email. Please write us: bk.presse@bmi.gv.at

EDITORIAL

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Note

This report has been produced with great care and commitment. Nevertheless, there may be errors and mistakes that escaped our proofreading. We ask for your understanding.

