



Workstream 3

Online survey among NPS users

Netherlands national survey report

TRIMBOS Institut, DIMS

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Table of contents

Key findings and summaries	4
1. Methodology	6
2. Socio-demographic profile of the respondents.....	7
3. The pattern of the use	10
3.1 NPS in the context of other psychoactive substances.....	10
3.2 Declaration of use of various NPS.....	12
3.3 The last NPS used by respondents: description.....	12
4. Mode of purchase.....	22
5. Information about NPS	24

Tables

Table 1 Declaration of use of NPS	7
Table 2 Sex of the respondents	7
Table 3 Age of the respondents	7
Table 4 Education of respondents.....	8
Table 5 Position of respondents on the labour market	9
Table 6 Place of residence of the respondents	9
Table 7 Declaration of use of various psychoactive substances	10
Table 8 Declaration of use of various psychoactive substances for the first time.....	10
Table 9 Declaration of use of various psychoactive substances over last 12 months	11
Table 10 Declaration of use of various psychoactive substances over last 30 days	11
Table 11 Declaration of use of selected NPS over last 12 months.....	12
Table 12 The frequency of use of selected NPS during last 12 months / 30 days	12
Table 13 Last NPS used by respondents.....	12
Table 14 The frequency of use of selected NPS during last 12 months / 30 days	13
Table 15 The circumstances of last NPS used	13
Table 16 The circumstances of last NPS used	13
Table 17 The circumstances of last NPS used	14
Table 18 The circumstances of last NPS used	14
Table 19 The typical way of administration	14
Table 20 The typical way of administration	15

Table 21 The typical way of administration	15
Table 22 The typical way of administration	15
Table 23 Indented effects.....	16
Table 24 Indented effects.....	16
Table 25 Indented effects.....	17
Table 26 Indented effects.....	17
Table 27 Declaration of feeling anything unpleasant after use of NPS.....	18
Table 28 Description of unpleasant feeling after use of NPS.....	18
Table 29 Description of unpleasant feeling after use of NPS.....	19
Table 30 Description of unpleasant feeling after use of NPS.....	20
Table 31 Description of unpleasant feeling after use of NPS.....	20
Table 32 Declaration of looking for medical attention	20
Table 33 Information about the last used NPS	21
Table 34 Reason for use of selected NPS	21
Table 35 Mode of purchase of selected NPS.....	21
Table 36 The frequency of ordering of NPS from online shops	22
Table 37 Money spent on NPS	22
Table 38 The quantity of NPS ordered from online shops	22
Table 39 The quantity of NPS received from the last online purchase.....	22
Table 40 The website, where NPS are purchased	23
Table 41 The popular online shops	23
Table 42 Criteria of selection of online shops	23
Table 43 The number of online shops used by respondents	24
Table 44 The source of information about NPS	24
Table 45 General opinion about NPS	24

Key findings and summaries

Summary

In total, 287 participants filled out the survey, of which 266 completed all questions. The average age was 25.8 years and 77% were male. Most attained a higher secondary or lower to higher vocational education level. Most had employment and about a quarter were fulltime employed. The distribution between residents of metropolitan areas and small scaled municipalities was almost fifty/ fifty and one third was still living at home with their parents. The majority had used a NPS that they bought as research chemical/ designer drug and under its scientific name.

Almost all had experience with alcohol, tobacco and cannabis in their lifetime, but also ecstasy (approximately 90%). LSD, cocaine and amphetamine also were popular drugs used by this group. About 50% indicated to have ever used a NPS. Past year or past month use was highest for alcohol, cannabis and ecstasy and LSD. Past month use of NPS was about the same level as LSD (one quarter of respondents). This finding also suggests that there was a relative high proportion of hallucinogen users (or “psychonauts”) in this group, considering that LSD use is only marginal in the general population or even frequent partygoers.

By far the most frequently used NPS in the past 12 months was 4-fluoroamphetamine (44.3% of respondents). This was followed by 6-APB, methoxetamine and methylone (all approximately 15%). 4-fluoroamphetamine, 6-APB and methoxetamine were also the last NPS used by the majority of users. Most of the substances were used in a social context in a club or at home, although methoxetamine was also used alone at home. Most of these substances were orally ingested, except for methoxetamine which was primarily snorted. One-third of all NPS indicated to use in order to change perception of reality or visual perception, once more indicating that many were likely to be hallucinogenic enthusiasts. To relax and to get high were two other frequently mentioned reasons for NPS use.

83 respondents also reported adverse effects when using NPS. Sweating, nausea, palpitations, agitation and muscle ache, jaw clenching were among the most frequently mentioned adverse effects, with sweating, muscle ache and agitation mostly associated with 4-fluoroamphetamine and sweating and palpitations mostly associated with 6-APB.

Legality was not an important issue to consider NPS use, probably because most NPS that were mentioned are not controlled in the Netherlands. Most users obtained NPS (25%) via an online webshop, only few bought them from dealers or offline shops. 55 (19%) of those buying through online webshops indicated to have purchased 2-5 times in the last 12 months and 27 (9%) did only purchase a NPS once. About 40 answered to have purchased from just one webshop and another 40 from multiple webshops. Their main indications for buying at those particular shops were advice from other users (through fora for example) or previous experiences with those shops. The median amount that was spend was 50 euro’s and for this they purchased about 2.5 grams of substance. Much less frequently, capsules or tablets were purchased. The vast majority of respondents bought NPS via a website that offered them under their official chemical names or abbreviations (i.e. 6-APB and not “Benzofury” or methoxetamine and not “mexxy”). Almost all respondents refrained from answering the question from what webshop they bought their NPS. This may be the result of suspicion being aroused concerning the exact goal of this question (inspection, surveillance?).

Users reported to be generally well-informed about NPS, but users were least confident about their knowledge on health risks of NPS. Most users indicated that they used a NPS out of curiosity or its effects. Most users (n=173: 60%) reported gaining information about NPS from fora, but friends were also mentioned by a third of respondents (n=102). Most respondents did not believe NPS are less harmful or less addictive than illicit drugs, but a larger proportion of them did subscribe to the statement that NPS were generally of better quality than illicit drugs.

Key findings, short:

- 50% of 287 respondents indicated to have ever used a NPS
- The majority of Dutch respondents had used a NPS that they bought as research chemical/ designer drug and under its scientific name
- Past month use of NPS was about the same level as LSD (one quarter of respondents).
- The most frequently used NPS in the past 12 months was 4-fluoroamphetamine (44.3% of respondents). This was followed by 6-APB, methoxetamine and methylone (all approximately 15%)
- Most of these substances were orally ingested, except for methoxetamine which was primarily snorted
- 83 respondents reported adverse effects when using NPS, mainly sweating, nausea, palpitations, agitation and muscle ache, jaw clenching
- Legality was not an important issue to consider NPS use
- Most users obtained NPS via an online webshop
- Their main reason for buying at those particular web shops were advice from other users (through fora for example) or previous experiences with those shops
- The median amount that was spend was 50 euro's and for this they purchased about 2.5 grams of substance
- Users reported to be generally well-informed about NPS, but they were least confident about their knowledge on health risks
- Most users reported gaining information about NPS from fora, but friends were also mentioned by a third of respondents
- Most users indicated that they used a NPS out of curiosity or its effects
- Most respondents did not believe NPS are less harmful or less addictive than illicit drugs

1. Methodology

The I-trend survey was put online between August and November, the welcome text was translated and it was made clear in the description and outline of the text that it was part of a trans-European research project to investigate the prevalence of use of new psychoactive substances (NPS), their effects and context of use. It was made clear that filling out the survey was completely anonymous and results would only be used for research purposes. The remainder of the text stated a declaration of consent and publication of results could be found in the summer of 2015.

Participants

Participants for the on-line survey were recruited via various channels on the internet. . If people had any experience with NPS, they were asked to fill out the survey. First of all, the Trimbos-institute social media were utilized, so Trimbos on Facebook, linkedin, twitter and the website itself. Then, a notification was placed on the DIMS website and Unity, a peer-education project in the Netherlands for alcohol and drugs from a harm-reduction point of view. Finally, a few Dutch drug-related fora were contacted with the query if this survey could be placed within the forum. Actually, the two most general fora were contacted for this purpose: www.partyflock.nl and www.drugsforum.nl. The first forum is the largest nightlife forum in the Netherlands with almost 400,000 active visitors and it is mainly focussed on nightlife activities, large dance events and music. The survey was promoted within the drugs section and the science section of the forum. It was promoted by reposting and following replies for one day on two different times, the first in August and a second time in October. On drugsforum.nl it was only promoted the first time in August.

Evaluation of methodology

In the beginning of the month August, response showed an upward curve, with on average about thirty responses a week. Respondents seemed enthusiastic and the survey was often seen as interesting and new. During September, however, responses dropped significantly, and some respondents also indicated there was “too much surveying” going round on internet about drugs. This might have something to do with a few other surveys that were done by the Trimbos and also by some research institutes for mental health. The reactions to the Trimbos social media quickly dropped in August and there were not many re-tweets. It does not seem to be a wise decision to use the Trimbos for surveys like this, because people know it as national institute and not necessarily in a positive capacity among drug users. The response via the fora was much better, but this also dropped. People on those media are used to surveying and polls and the Global Drug Survey also targets the Netherlands, so it seems this fatigued users in filling out yet another large survey. Another hampering factor was the nature of questions, which was an inherent issue involved with the construction of the survey. Many questions did not seem very logical to the users and used overt repetition of previous questions. Many users got bored with this and fell uncertain of what was asked and began wondering also why it was asked. This was very apparent in the comments they gave in the open spaces and many respondents quit the survey prematurely. Almost nobody answered the questions on where they bought their NPS, this only confirmed that they were beginning to doubt why certain things were asked in repetition.

In conclusion, the construct of the questionnaire seems too much a compromise between various countries to generate uniform data, but this didn't serve the clarity of the survey or the response rate. And many users in the Netherlands are kind of survey-fatigued, they are over-asked by too many institutions already. And using the Trimbos name to disperse the survey certainly wasn't very productive.

Results

2. Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

Q. 1 Have you ever used a psychoactive substance that was (*several answers are possible*)?

	Frequency	Percent
Referred to as 'legal highs' or 'designer drugs'	160	55.7
Sold as a "research chemical" (RC)	182	63.4
Sold under a fanciful marketing name (e.g. NRG-3, Benzofury, Funky, Cocolino etc.)	82	28.6
Sold as a "bath salt", "incense", or "good not intended for human consumption (collector goods)"	49	17.1
Meant to be imitating the effects of existing illegal drugs, but definitely not being one of them	111	38.7
Sold online	113	39.4
Sold in a head shop or a smart shop	60	20.9
Was apparently new on the market	92	32.1

Table 1 Declaration of use of NPS

Q. 2 You are...

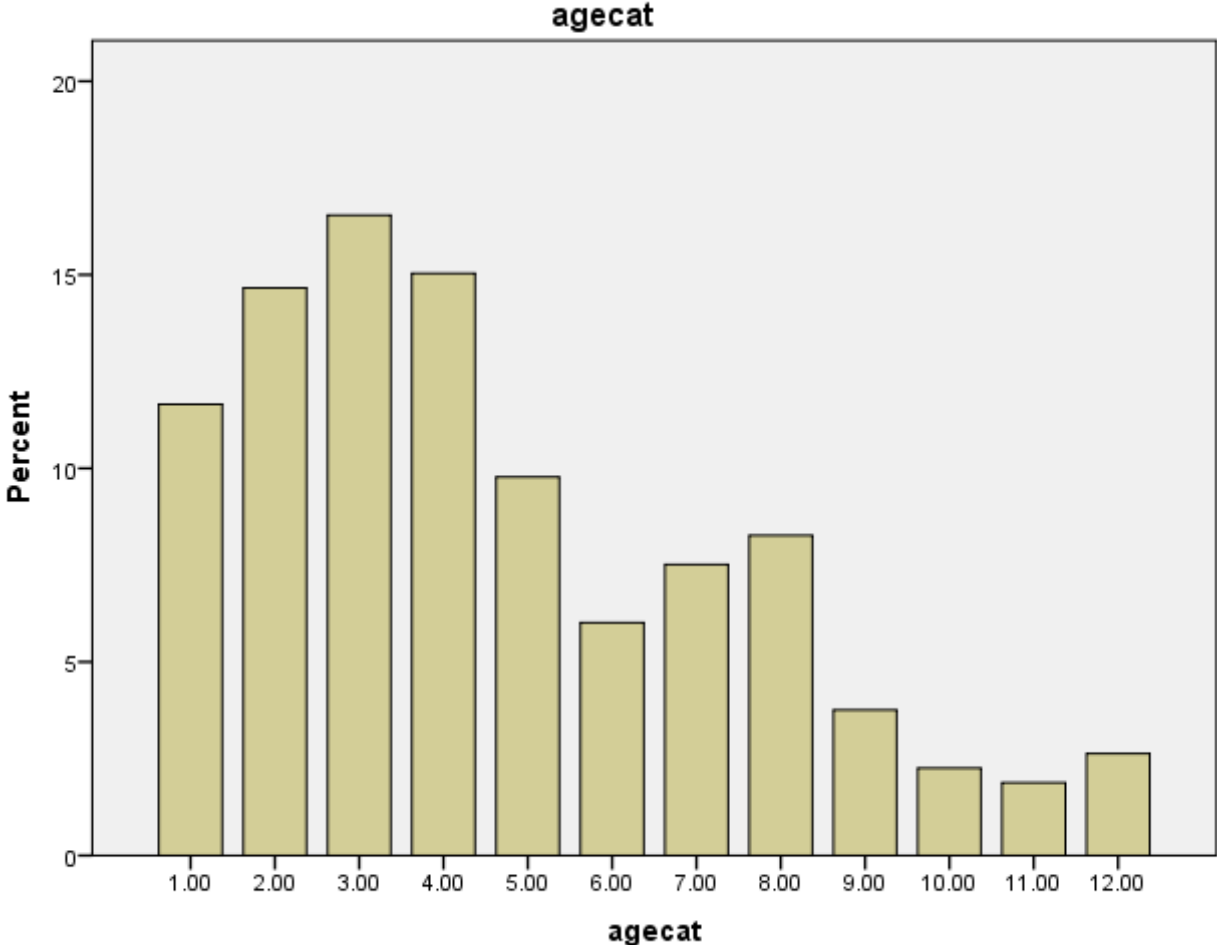
	Frequency	Percent
A man	205	77.1
A women	61	22.9
Total	266	100

Table 2 Sex of the respondents

Q. 3 What is your year of birth?

	age	S.D.
	25.8	8.4
	Frequency	Percent
16-18	31	11.7
19-20	39	14.7
21-22	44	16.5
23-24	40	15.0
25-26	26	9.8
27-28	16	6.0
29-30	20	7.5
31-35	22	8.3
36-40	10	3.8
41-45	6	2.3
46-50	5	1.9
<51	7	2.6
Total	266	100

Table 3 Age of the respondents



Q. 29 What is your highest academic education attained?

	Frequency	Percent
<i>Categories specific for each country</i>		
Primary school	4	1.6
Lower secondary	8	3.2
Middle secondary	15	5.9
Higher secondary	63	24.9
Lower vocational	49	19.4
Higher vocational	60	23.7
University	49	19.4
Other	5	2.0
Total	253	100

Table 4 Education of respondents

Q. 30 Currently, what is your position on the labour market?

	Frequency	Percent
Employed , fulltime	68	26.9
Self-employed (licence holder, businessperson)	13	5.1
Freelance, parttime	11	4.3
Employed, parttime	37	14.6
Temporary employee	49	19.4
Unemployed – registered at the Job´s Office	9	3.6
Unemployed – not registered at the Job´s Office	27	10.7
Other	39	15.4
Total	253	100

Table 5 Position of respondents on the labour market

Q. 31 How would you describe your place of residence?

	Frequency	Percent
A large city (>100,000 inhabitants) or its close suburb (less than 30 minutes transport)	86	45.3
An average city (20,000-100,000)	42	22.1
Small city (5,000-20,000)	40	21.1
A village (<5,000 inhabitants) far from a large city (more than 30 minutes transport)	22	11.6
Total	190	100

Table 6 Place of residence of the respondents

Q. 32 Living situation

	Frequency	Percent
Alone (with or without kids)	46	24.2
Together with partner (with or without kids)	40	21.1
Together with friends	19	10.0
Student housing	23	12.1
With parents	62	32.6
Total	190	100

3. The pattern of the use

3.1 NPS in the context of other psychoactive substances

Q. 4 In your life, which of these substances have you already used?*

	Frequency	Percent
Alcohol	244	98.4
Tobacco (including hookah / shisha)	213	85.9
Marijuana/hashish	225	90.7
Ecstasy pills or MDMA powder	227	91.5
Cocaine	155	62.5
Amphetamine (speed)or Methamphetamine (Ice)	181	73.0
LSD or psilocybin mushrooms / magic mushrooms	186	75.0
Heroin or Buprenorphine in (Subutex, Suboxone,), Opium	24	9.7
GHB/GBL	86	34.7
Ketamine	113	45.6
Herbal extracts (Salvia, Kratom)	85	34.3
New Psychoactive substances, synthetic cannabinoids included (Spice, etc.)	131	52.8
Other	81	32.7

Table 7 Declaration of use of various psychoactive substances

* Possible answer yes or no. Frequency of yes-answers.

Q. 4A When did you try this product for the FIRST TIME in your life

	Mean
Alcohol	14.3
Tobacco (including hookah / shisha)	16.2
Marijuana/hashish	16.2
Ecstasy pills or MDMA powder	20.2
Cocaine	21.0
Amphetamine (speed)or Methamphetamine (Ice)	22.1
LSD or psilocybin mushrooms / magic mushrooms	20.3
Heroin or Buprenorphine in (Subutex, Suboxone,), Opium	22.5
GHB/GBL	22.6
Ketamine	23.2
Herbal extracts (Salvia, Kratom)	21.4
New Psychoactive substances, synthetic cannabinoids included (Spice, etc.)	23.1
Other	-

Table 8 Declaration of use of various psychoactive substances for the first time

Q. 4B Did you use it during the last 12 months*

	Frequency	Percent
Alcohol	231	80.5
Tobacco (including hookah / shisha)	156	54.4
Marijuana/hashish	172	59.9
Ecstasy pills or MDMA powder		
Cocaine	99	34.5
Amphetamine (speed)or Methamphetamine (Ice)		
LSD or psilocybin mushrooms / magic mushrooms	136	47.4
Heroin or Buprenorphine in (Subutex, Suboxone,), Opium	7	2.4
GHB/ GBL	46	16.0
Ketamine	23	8.0
Herbal extracts (Salvia, Kratom)	12	5.0
NPS, synthetic cannabinoids included (Spice, etc.)	107	37.3
Other	-	-

Table 9 Declaration of use of various psychoactive substances over last 12 months

* Possible answer yes or no. Frequency of yes-answers.

Q. 4C Did you use it during the last 30 days*

	Frequency	Percent
Alcohol	211	73.5
Tobacco (including hookah / shisha)	141	49.1
Marijuana/hashish	138	48.1
Ecstasy pills or MDMA powder	106	36.9
Cocaine	41	14.3
Amphetamine (speed)or Methamphetamine (Ice)	33	11.5
LSD or psilocybin mushrooms / magic mushrooms	73	25.4
Heroin or Buprenorphine in (Subutex, Suboxone,), Opium	4	1.4
GHB/GBL	19	6.6
Ketamine	17	6.0
Herbal extracts (Salvia, Kratom)	4	1.4
NPS, synthetic cannabinoids included (Spice, etc.)	63	22.0
Other	-	-

Table 10 Declaration of use of various psychoactive substances over last 30 days

* Possible answer yes or no. Frequency of yes-answers.

3.2 Declaration of use of various NPS

Q. 5 Did you use any of the following new psychoactive substances in the last 12 months?*

	Frequency	Percent
<i>(please show the list of NPS, which were selected for 5% of respondents at least)</i>		
3-MMC	20	7.0
4-Fluoroamphetamine	127	44.3
4-MEC	14	4.9
6-APB	51	17.8
Methylone	41	14.3
Mephedrone	20	7.0
Methoxetamine	52	18.1
DMT	32	11.1
2C-I	24	8.4
Other	48	16.7

Table 11 Declaration of use of selected NPS over last 12 months

* several answers were possible, but no more than 10, if respondent use more then 10, he or she was asked to select the 10 which use most often

Q 5.1 During the last twelve months, on how many days have you taken a NPS? *

Q 5.2 During the last 30 days, on how many days have you taken a NPS? **

The usage during last 12 months (modal)	The usage during last 30 days (modal)
1-3 days	1-3 days

Table 12 The frequency of use of selected NPS during last 12 months / 30 days

* Possible answers: 1 to 3 days; 4 to 9 days; 10 to 19 days; 20 days or more

** Possible answers: I didn't use a New Psychoactive Substance this last month; 1 to 3 days; 4 to 9 days; 10 to 19 days; 20 days or more

3.3 The last NPS used by respondents: description

Q. 6 What was the new psychoactive substance you used last time?

	Frequency	Percent
<i>(please show the list of NPS, which were selected by 5% of respondents at least)</i>		
4-Fluoroamphetamine	73	44.5
6APB	25	15.2
MXE	23	14.0
AMT/DMT	15	9.1
Methylone	12	7.3
3-MMC	6	3.7
25C/I/B-NBOMe	10	6.1
Total	164	100

Table 13 Last NPS used by respondents

Q 8.1 During the last twelve months, on how many days have you taken (list the name he/she provided)?*

Q 8.2 During the last 30 days, on how many days have you taken (list the name he/she provided)? **

	The usage during last 12 months (modal)	The usage during last 30 days (modal)
4-Fluoroamphetamine	1-3 days	-

Table 14 The frequency of use of selected NPS during last 12 months / 30 days

* Possible answers: none, 1 to 3 days; 4 to 9 days; 10 to 19 days; 20 days or more

** Possible answers: I didn't use a New Psychoactive Substance this last month; 1 to 3 days; 4 to 9 days; 10 to 19 days; 20 days or more

→ the mode of taking of NPS

Q. 9. Last time when using the substance which you selected, what were circumstances? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
Alone at home	25	15.4
With friends at your or their home	47	29.0
Alone in a club, pub or at a party	2	1.2
With friends in a club, pub or at a party	72	44.4
Alone outside/in the countryside	-	-
With friends outside/in the countryside	9	5.6
At school/work	-	-
Other circumstances	7	2.4

Table 15 The circumstances of last NPS used

Q. 9a. Last time when using 4-FA, what were circumstances? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
Alone at home	2	3.0
With friends at your or their home	14	21.2
Alone in a club, pub or at a party	2	3.0
With friends in a club, pub or at a party	47	71.2
Alone outside/in the countryside	-	-
With friends outside/in the countryside	1	1.4
At school/work	-	-
Other circumstances	-	-

Table 16 The circumstances of last NPS used

Q. 9b. Last time when using 6-APB, what were circumstances? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
Alone at home	3	12.5
With friends at your or their home	6	25.0
Alone in a club, pub or at a party	-	-
With friends in a club, pub or at a party	15	62.5
Alone outside/in the countryside	-	-
With friends outside/in the countryside	-	-
At school/work	-	-
Other circumstances	-	-

Table 17 The circumstances of last NPS used

Q. 9c. Last time when using MXE, what were circumstances? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
Alone at home	7	31.8
With friends at your or their home	9	40.9
Alone in a club, pub or at a party	-	-
With friends in a club, pub or at a party	5	22.7
Alone outside/in the countryside	-	-
With friends outside/in the countryside	1	4.3
At school/work	-	-
Other circumstances	-	-

Table 18 The circumstances of last NPS used

Q. 10. Last time when using the substance which you selected, what were the typical ways of administration for you? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
Smoking	5	1.7
Waterpipe	1	0.3
Bong	1	0.3
Vaporizer	1	0.3
Chasing the dragon	1	0.3
Sublingual	-	-
Ingestion	123	42.9
Snorting	42	14.6
Rectal	3	1.0
Injection	1	0.3
Sublingual	-	-

Table 19 The typical way of administration

Q. 10a. Last time when using 4-FA, what were the typical ways of administration for you? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
Smoking	-	0.0
Waterpipe	-	0.0
Bong	-	0.0
Vaporizer	-	0.0
Chasing the dragon	-	0.0
Sublingual	-	0.0
Ingestion	64	87.7
Snorting	6	8.2
Rectal	-	0.0
Injection	-	0.0
Sublingual	-	-

Table 20 The typical way of administration

Q. 10b. Last time when using 6-APB, what were the typical ways of administration for you? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
Smoking	-	0.0
Waterpipe	-	0.0
Bong	-	0.0
Vaporizer	-	0.0
Chasing the dragon	-	0.0
Sublingual	-	0.0
Ingestion	22	88.0
Snorting	6	24.0
Rectal	1	4.0
Injection	-	0.0
Sublingual	-	-

Table 21 The typical way of administration

Q. 10c. Last time when using MXE, what were the typical ways of administration for you? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
Smoking	-	0.0
Waterpipe	-	0.0
Bong	-	0.0
Vaporizer	-	0.0
Chasing the dragon	-	0.0
Sublingual	-	0.0
Ingestion	3	13.0
Snorting	19	82.6
Rectal	-	-
Injection	-	0.0
Sublingual	-	-

Table 22 The typical way of administration

→ Indented effects

Q. 11. What are the most important intended effects that you seek when you used the substance which you selected? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
To bond with others, to socialize	43	15.0
To get high	66	23.0
To provide me with energy (sexual performances not included)	32	11.1
To improve sexual intercourse	3	1.0
To increase the positive effects of another drug	10	3.5
To reduce the negative effects of another drug	6	2.1
To modify perception	93	32.4
To soothe pain	3	1.0
To escape reality	8	2.8
To allay or alleviate anxiety	2	0.7
To fight sleeplessness	2	0.7
To fight tiredness	25	8.7
To relax	64	22.3
To stimulate the brain activity for learning or work others	3	1.0
	24	8.4

Table 23 Indented effects

→ Indented effects

Q. 11a. What are the most important intended effects that you seek when you used 4-FA? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
To bond with others, to socialize	25	34.2
To get high	23	31.5
To provide me with energy (sexual performances not included)	25	34.2
To improve sexual intercourse	1	1.4
To increase the positive effects of another drug	4	5.5
To reduce the negative effects of another drug	2	2.7
To modify perception	34	46.6
To soothe pain	3	4.1
To escape reality	1	1.4
To allay or alleviate anxiety	-	0.0
To fight sleeplessness	1	1.4
To fight tiredness	18	24.7
To relax	25	34.2
To stimulate the brain activity for learning or work others	3	4.1
	5	6.8

Table 24 Indented effects

Q. 11b. What are the most important intended effects that you seek when you used 6-APB? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
To bond with others, to socialize	6	24.0
To get high	11	44.0
To provides me with energy (sexual performances not included)	2	8.0
To improve sexual intercourse	-	-
To increase the positive effects of another drug	2	8.0
To reduce the negative effects of another drug	1	4.0
To modify perception	15	60.0
To soothe pain	-	-
To escape reality	2	8.0
To allay or alleviate anxiety	1	4.0
To fight sleeplessness	-	-
To fight tiredness	2	8.0
To relax	10	40.0
To stimulate the brain activity for learning or work	-	-
others	2	8.0

Table 25 Indented effects

Q. 11c. What are the most important intended effects that you seek when you used MXE? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
To bond with others, to socialize	1	4.3
To get high	14	60.9
To provides me with energy (sexual performances not included)	1	4.3
To improve sexual intercourse	-	-
To increase the positive effects of another drug	2	8.7
To reduce the negative effects of another drug	2	8.7
To modify perception	15	65.2
To soothe pain	-	-
To escape reality	-	-
To allay or alleviate anxiety	-	-
To fight sleeplessness	-	-
To fight tiredness	2	8.7
To relax	10	43.5
To stimulate the brain activity for learning or work	-	-
others	2	8.7

Table 26 Indented effects

→ Unpleasant effects

Q. 12 Did you feel anything unpleasant after you used the substance last time?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	83	28.9
No	78	27.2

Table 27 Declaration of feeling anything unpleasant after use of NPS

Q. 13. Did you feel anything unpleasant after you used the substance last time? What were the unpleasant feelings after you used the substance? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
No effect	3	1.0
unpleasant, intensive hallucinations, delusions	11	3.8
strong craving to use more	11	3.8
depression, dejection	11	3.8
strong paranoia, fear, anxiety	12	4.2
aggression	2	0.7
extreme agitation and excitement, sleeplessness	16	5.6
fatigue, exhaustion, sleepiness	12	4.2
muscle ache,, cramps, jaw clenching	19	6.6
tremors	12	4.2
seizures	2	0.7
could not control my muscle, I have problems with moving	10	3.5
headache	20	7.0
nausea, vomiting	24	8.4
strongly increased heart rate, palpitation, chest pain	17	5.9
breathing difficulty, dyspnea	6	2.1
sweating	34	11.8
overheating	5	1.7
dehydration and/or diarrhea	6	2.1
problems of sight	9	3.1
itches , skin changes , changed colour, spots, blisters, rash etc.	1	0.3
other	34	11.8

Table 28 Description of unpleasant feeling after use of NPS

Q. 13a. Did you feel anything unpleasant after you used 4-FA last time? What were the unpleasant feelings after you used the substance? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
No effect	-	0.0
unpleasant, intensive hallucinations, delusions	3	4.1
strong craving to use more	4	5.5
depression, dejection	3	4.1
strong paranoia, fear, anxiety	3	4.1
aggression	-	0.0
extreme agitation and excitement, sleeplessness	13	17.8
fatigue, exhaustion, sleepiness	3	4.1
muscle ache, cramps, jaw clenching	13	17.8
tremors	3	4.1
seizures	-	0.0
could not control my muscle, I have problems with moving	3	4.1
headache	11	15.1
nausea, vomiting	9	12.3
strongly increased heart rate, palpitation, chest pain	3	4.1
breathing difficulty, dyspnea	1	1.4
sweating	17	23.3
overheating	3	4.1
dehydration and/or diarrhea	3	4.1
problems of sight	1	1.4
itches , skin changes , changed colour, spots, blisters, rash etc.	-	0.0
other	34	11.8

Table 29 Description of unpleasant feeling after use of NPS

Q. 13b. Did you feel anything unpleasant after you used 6-APB? What were the unpleasant feelings after you used the substance? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
No effect	2	8.0
unpleasant, intensive hallucinations, delusions	2	8.0
strong craving to use more	2	8.0
depression, dejection	1	4.0
strong paranoia, fear, anxiety	3	12.0
aggression	-	0.0
extreme agitation and excitement, sleeplessness	1	4.0
fatigue, exhaustion, sleepiness	2	8.0
muscle ache, cramps, jaw clenching	3	12.0
tremors	2	8.0
seizures	-	0.0
could not control my muscle, I have problems with moving	2	8.0
headache	3	12.0
nausea, vomiting	3	12.0
strongly increased heart rate, palpitation, chest pain	5	20.0
breathing difficulty, dyspnea	1	4.0
sweating	9	36.0

overheating	-	-
dehydration and/or diarrhea	-	-
problems of sight	2	8.0
itches , skin changes , changed colour, spots, blisters, rash etc.	-	0.0
other	-	-

Table 30 Description of unpleasant feeling after use of NPS

Q. 13c. Did you feel anything unpleasant after you used MXE? What were the unpleasant feelings after you used the substance? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
No effect	-	-
unpleasant, intensive hallucinations, delusions	1	4.3
strong craving to use more	2	8.7
depression, dejection	1	4.3
strong paranoia, fear, anxiety	1	4.3
aggression	-	0.0
extreme agitation and excitement, sleeplessness	-	0.0
fatigue, exhaustion, sleepiness	1	4.3
muscle ache, cramps, jaw clenching	1	4.3
tremors	2	8.7
seizures	-	0.0
could not control my muscle, I have problems with moving	2	8.7
headache	2	8.7
nausea, vomiting	2	8.7
strongly increased heart rate, palpitation, chest pain	3	13.0
breathing difficulty, dyspnea	1	4.3
sweating	-	-
overheating	-	-
dehydration and/or diarrhea	1	4.3
problems of sight	1	4.3
itches , skin changes , changed colour, spots, blisters, rash etc.	-	0.0
other	-	-

Table 31 Description of unpleasant feeling after use of NPS

Q. 14. Because of unpleasant feelings from this substance, did you ever look for medical attention?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	4	1.4
No	79	27.5

Table 32 Declaration of looking for medical attention

→ Information about NPS

Q. 15. About the New Psychoactive Substance you used last time do you consider having enough information on the following aspects?

	yes	rather yes	rather no	No
On their legality or illegality	38.8	35.6	18.1	7.5
On their effects	45.6	43.8	8.8	1.9
On their risks to health	15.6	30.6	43.8	10.0
On the doses to take to get the required effect	40.6	45.0	11.9	2.5
On the safe dose to take	40.6	45.6	10.0	3.8
On the routes of administration	51.9	42.5	3.8	1.9

Table 33 Information about the last used NPS

→ Reasons for use of selected NPS

Q. 16. What are the most important reasons that make you use the substance you used last time? Please specify their importance for you?

	Not important	Rather important	Very important
The use was not forbidden	80.3	16.6	3.2
It was easy to get for me	43.9	41.4	14.6
It is difficult to detect during tests (urinary and saliva tests)	95.5	4.5	0.0
I had the opportunity (through friends, etc.)	57.3	32.5	10.2
Just for my personal curiosity	9.6	37.6	52.9
I like the effects (used it before)	20.4	41.4	38.2
It is less harmful	60.5	29.9	9.6
It is of better quality (much pure, less cutting agent)	44.6	38.2	17.2
Is not so much addictive	65.0	26.8	8.3
The effects are strong	73.2	20.4	6.4

Table 34 Reason for use of selected NPS

→ Mode of purchase of selected NPS

Q. 17. Thinking about the substance which you selected, how did you get it the last time?

	Frequency	Percent
been given it by someone for free	24	8.4
bought from a friend who is not a dealer	28	9.8
bought it from a dealer	18	6.3
bought it from a shop online	72	25.1
bought it from a classified ad online	-	-
bought it from a shop (not online)	4	1.4
I made it myself	-	-
other	10	3.5

Table 35 Mode of purchase of selected NPS

4. Mode of purchase

Q. 18. During the last 12 months, how many times have you ordered any new psychoactive substance from an online shop?

	Frequency	Percent
None	63	22.0
One time	27	9.4
2-5 times	55	19.2
to 10 times	9	3.1
11 to 20 times	1	0.3
More than 20 times	-	-

Table 36 The frequency of ordering of NPS from online shops

Q. 19. During the last online order, how much have you spent?

mean	78.3
Modal	-
median	50.0

Table 37 Money spent on NPS

Q. 20. During the last online order, how many different New Psychoactive Substance have you bought?

	Frequency	Percent
One	41	14.3
2-5	46	16.0
>5	5	1.7

Table 38 The quantity of NPS ordered from online shops

Q. 21. How much did you get for your money during your last online order (please fill in only one row for each form you purchased)?

	Mean	Median
g (only for powder)	4.50	2.5
pcs (capsule)	4.00	3.00
pcs (pill / tablet)	177.7	20.00
ml (only for liquid)	-	-
pcs (parts of blotter)	12.75	8.00

Table 39 The quantity of NPS received from the last online purchase

Q. 22. During the last 12 months, on which website did you order New Psychoactive Substance?
(several answers are possible)

	Never bought	1 time	2-5 times	6-10 times	>10 times
shops where New Psychoactive Substance are presented with branded names (Spice, Volcano, Dove, NRG-3 etc.) or as incense, fertilizer, cleaning agent, which sell mainly seeds, plants, accessories, natural products.	82.2	12.2	3.3	1.1	1.1
shop where New Psychoactive Substance are mainly presented with their chemical name (alphaPVP, 5-IT, 25C-NBOME, etc.), with sober design	8.9	33.3	46.7	8.9	2.2
Classified ads	-	-	-	-	-
Silk Road and similar	84.4	10.0	3.3	-	2.2
Other	87.8	6.7	4.4	-	1.1

Table 40 The website, where NPS are purchased

Q. 23 Can you list the name of the shops at which you bought during last 12 months*

	Frequency	Percent
Sense Aromatics	7	2.1
DrSmart	6	1.8

Table 41 The popular online shops

*Most respondents refused to answer this.

Q. 24. Which were the most important criteria for you when you selected the shops in the last 12 months? (no more than 5)

	Frequency	Percent
I followed the advice of other users	41	14.3
I had a good experience with the shop already	42	14.6
Its use the site of a Secure payment method	4	1.4
Good profile at pages where client share their experience (fe.; SafeOrScam)	25	8.7
It is specialized into one substance	3	1.0
This was cheaper than other online shops	19	6.6
The New Psychoactive Substance are of better quality than other online shops	15	5.2
The New Psychoactive Substance are shipped in discrete packets	23	8.0
The shipment was more reliable than other sites	13	4.5
The New Psychoactive Substance I was looking for was not available in other online shops	9	3.1
No online shop sends to my country the New Psychoactive Substance I was looking for	-	-
No specific criterion	8	2.8
Other	6	2.1

Table 42 Criteria of selection of online shops

Q. 25. During the last 12 months, on how many different online shops have you ordered?

	Frequency	Percent
1	43	49.4
2 to 5	42	48.3
5 to 10	2	2.3
More than 10	-	-

Table 43 The number of online shops used by respondents

5. Information about NPS

Q. 26. Where did you look for information about New Psychoactive Substance? (*several answers are possible*)

	Frequency	Percent
from an online shop	42	14.6
from a web forum	173	60.3
from friends / family / acquaintances	102	35.5
I don't need any information	1	0.3
from my dealer	17	5.9
from TV/radio	8	2.8
from newspapers, magazines	12	4.2
The whole of internet	135	47.0
I don't have any information	9	3.1
Other	13	4.5

Table 44 The source of information about NPS

Q. 28. Do you agree with the following statements?

	Yes, it's true for most of them	Yes, it's true for a few of them	No, it's not true	Adding comments
New Psychoactive Substance are less harmful than illicit substances	1.6	28.8	46.3	
New Psychoactive Substance are of better quality than illicit substances (much pure, less cutting agent)	20.4	42.4	37.2	
New Psychoactive Substance are less addictive than other illicit drugs	4.2	29.3	66.5	
The effects of New Psychoactive Substance are stronger than other illicit drugs	3.1	47.6	49.2	

Table 45 General opinion about NPS