



POLICE ANTI-NARCOTICS REPORT

2023



FOREWORD

As we stand at the brink of a new era in policing, it is important to take stock of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

“The world is changing rapidly, and law enforcement must adapt to new realities and technologies if it is to effectively protect and serve the public.”

This report offers a comprehensive look at the future of policing, exploring trends and innovations that will shape the field in the years to come.

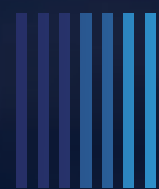
Dubai Police’s work in drug trafficking provides a major contribution to the international fight against drug trafficking and abuse. The department’s dedication to this issue shows how vital it is for law enforcement, government, and the community to work together to find solutions to this pressing problem. The efforts of the Dubai Police in the war against drug trafficking and misuse are recognized herein. They work tirelessly to make Dubai a more secure and safe place to live and visit.

The World Police Summit is a leading forum for global police and security experts. It offers an inspiring opportunity to promote better policing and explore, discover, and share the latest developments in the field. With six distinct conferences covering Crime Prevention, Forensics Science, Anti-Narcotics, Police Innovation and Resilience, Drones, and K9, the Summit offers a chance to learn best practices from the front line and meet the sector leaders shaping next-generation policing.

As we embark on this exciting journey, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to justice and the principles of fairness, equality, and respect for all. The future of policing holds great promise and with the right leadership, collaboration, and vision, we can create a law enforcement system that is just, effective, and trusted by all.

H.E. LT. GEN. ABDULLA KHALIFA AL MARRI
Commander-in-Chief





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The illegal trade in narcotics is a continuous global problem that has repercussions for every nation, particularly on the economic and social fronts. The success of future efforts to combat the illegal drug trade will be contingent on the degree to which the world's principal police forces are able to adapt to new technological developments and modernize their operations. This report will explore three main areas: the challenges of modernizing anti-narcotic enforcement for main police forces, the identification and utilization of emerging technologies for improved anti-narcotic efforts, and the role of international cooperation in strengthening anti-narcotic enforcement.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the need for primary police forces

to modernize their anti-narcotics efforts. This occurs as a result of greater availability of drugs in a variety of countries as well as an increase in the health hazards and social difficulties linked with their consumption. Subsequently, it is absolutely necessary for police agencies and law enforcements to embrace contemporary methods and approaches in order to effectively battle the proliferation of narcotics.

In addition, it is imperative to guarantee that the rules and regulations that control the execution of anti-narcotics policies are kept up to date and are successfully implemented. This will ensure that law enforcement agencies are able to effectively respond to the constantly shifting dynamics of the illicit drug trade. Ultimately, modernizing anti-drug

enforcement for key police forces is a complex and difficult undertaking, but it is one that is required in order to ensure the safety of communities.

In particular, the application of data and statistics to anti-drug campaigns has the potential to increase the efficiency of drug law enforcement as well as the process of formulating drug policy. Data and statistics can help inform the formulation of comprehensive and evidence-based drug policies that address the several facets of the drug problem by offering insight into the prevalence and distribution of drugs.

Further, data and statistics can be utilized to locate regions with high rates of drug usage and provide guidance for the deployment of targeted

enforcement activities. This can assist in minimizing the number of people who are exposed to drugs, as well as the number of resources that are required to address the problem of drugs.

In further advancing agencies' database, it can be utilized in the process of informing the development of public health initiatives and programs, such as medication-assisted treatment and other types of drug education and prevention. Overall, the utilization of data and statistics in anti-drug initiatives has the potential to transform the way we approach the problem of drugs, and it can ultimately contribute to the development of a society that is both safer and healthier.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Drug trafficking and abuse is a global issue that affects the health and security of individuals and communities worldwide. Police forces and government agencies have made concerted efforts to combat drug trafficking and abuse, but the challenge remains. In the future, anti-narcotics will be critical for global health and security.

Many people who have been diagnosed with mental difficulties also have substance use disorders, which are more often referred to as SUDs. The first instances of what we now refer to as drug misuse were documented around the year 5600 B.C. and can primarily be traced back to Armenia, Ancient Greece, China, and Rome. This is when people began habitually using alcoholic beverages and hallucinogens.

This led to them falling into the trap of addiction, which in turn perpetuated the cycle. As evidenced

by history, the usage of narcotics is not something that has emerged in recent times. Opiates, belladonna, reserpine, senna, and ephedrine were also previously employed as sources for these drugs.

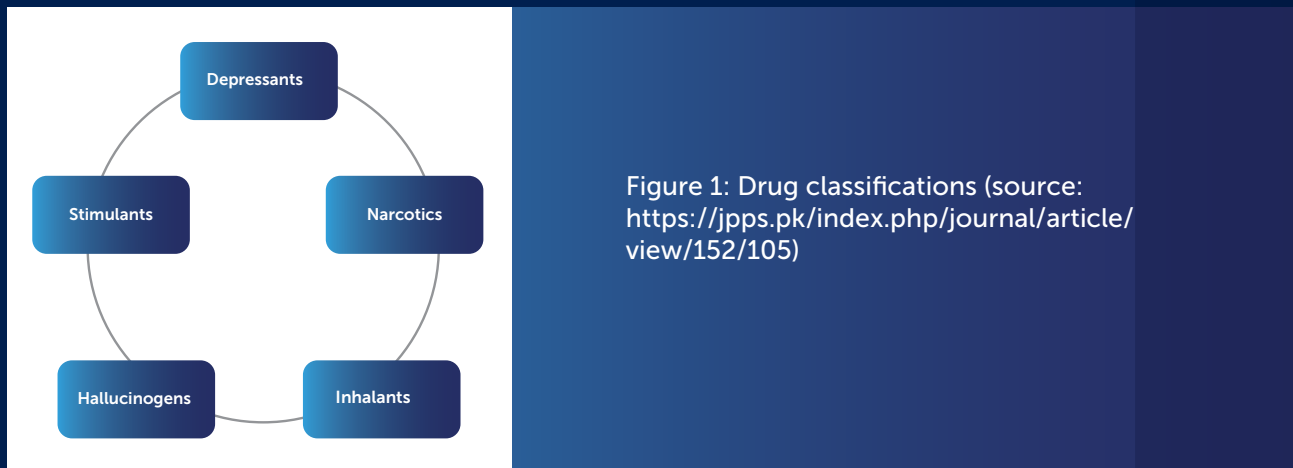
The discipline of medicine was successful in accomplishing this goal. It is typically permissible to manufacture it in today's world but doing so is subject to a number of regulations due to the negative effects that it has on society. The chemical properties of medications are used to categorise them according to the sort of effects they have on both the mind and the body (Figure 1). Some of them make the users sluggish and lethargic, while others leave them feeling rejuvenated and concentrated. Currently, it is estimated 36 million people suffer from drug-related cases.

Scientist and author Judith Grisel is well-known for her ground-breaking work in the study of addiction and substance abuse. Her research has helped shed light on the ways in which genetics, environment, and behaviour all play a role in the development of addiction and substance abuse. Addiction is a chronic and recurrent disease that impacts the brain's reward system, motivation, and impulse control, according to Dr Grisel's research, which contradicts previously held assumptions about the disease. Grisel's contributions to the field of addiction studies have been invaluable. Her studies have shown that the complex interplay of elements that contribute to addiction calls for a multidisciplinary approach to treatment that include both biological and psychological therapies. Addiction sufferers can recover with the correct help, and Dr. Grisel's work has shown them that this is feasible.

An investigation that was carried out by O. Omelchuk, V. Kopanchuk, B. Orlovskiy (Omelchuk et al., 2021) shed light on the ways in which developing technology can be utilized to enhance efforts to combat drug usage. The authors were able to discover trends in how technology is

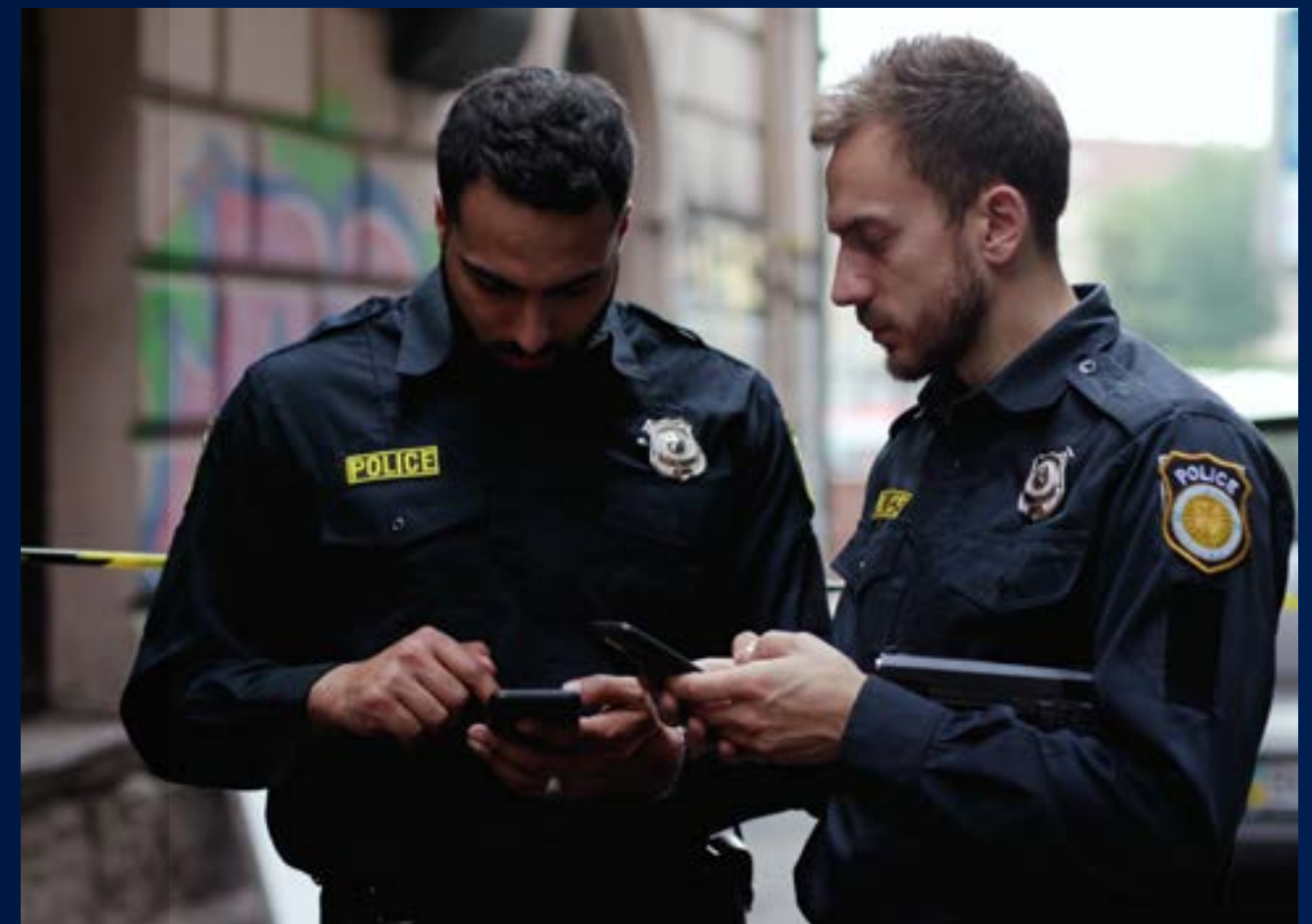
being employed in the fight against narcotics by conducting an analysis of five distinct research studies and applying their findings together. The authors concluded that recent developments in technology, such as predictive analytics, artificial intelligence, and biometrics, are becoming an increasingly vital component in the war on drugs. The authors specifically emphasise that predictive analytics can be used to locate prospective drug trafficking routes, and it can even help predict when drug seizures may take place. This framework sets the precedent which this report will adopt and examine – in particular, to acme the efficiency of measures to combat the use of narcotics, it is essential to maintain research into and implementation of newly developed technology.

In addition, artificial intelligence can assist in recognizing patterns in behaviour related to drugs, which subsequently enables law enforcement to make more informed decisions. Biometrics may be used to identify people who sell drugs as well as people who consume them, which enables law enforcement to direct its efforts more precisely.



According to the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Ghada Waly, "lower perception of the risks associated with drug use has been linked to higher rates of drug use," and the findings of the 2021 World Drug Report also highlight the need to close the gap between perception and reality in order to educate young people and protect public health. In 2015, there were a total of 307,400 deaths attributed to SUD, with 137,500 of those deaths being due to alcohol, 122,100

deaths being related to opioids, 12,200 deaths being related to amphetamines, and 11,100 deaths being tied to cocaine. In 2019, almost 200 million people around the world used cannabis, which is equivalent to 4.4 percent of the population. Meanwhile, the number of people abusing opioids increased by 62 million. There are approximately 20 million cocaine users across the globe. This equates to 0.4 percent of the overall population of the world using the drug, resulting in the loss of life, disruption of family life, and economic damage to communities.





FUTURE OF ANTI-NARCOTIC TRAFFICKING EFFORTS

The essential contribution that international cooperation has made has been a considerable help in facilitating the expansion of anti-drug enforcement actions. Not only is it essential to collaborate internationally in order to share information and resources, but it is also necessary in order to develop a common understanding of the role that each state plays in the fight against the illegal distribution of narcotics. This is why international cooperation is so important.

For instance, countries can work together to create a unified system of laws and regulations that prevent the trafficking of narcotics across international borders, and they can share detailed approaches to target and disrupt the activities of transnational drug cartels. In addition, countries can collaborate to create a unified system of laws and regulations that prevent the trafficking of narcotics across international borders. Additionally, international collaboration can serve to increase law enforcement capacities

by providing access to specialized training, technological advancements, and other resources that otherwise would not be available. This is because such resources would not be available without international cooperation.

Assisting law enforcement in acquiring the information and tools they need to successfully target drug traffickers and destroy their operations is made possible through this method. It is absolutely necessary to engage in international cooperation in order to make possible the transfer of information and evidence across national boundaries, as well as the formulation and execution of multi-jurisdictional strategies for dealing with the pervasive drug problem that exists throughout the world. These aspects of international collaboration, taken as a whole, have the potential to make a significant contribution to the fight against the unlawful distribution of narcotics, which is now being waged.

1

USE OF ADVANCED ANALYTICS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Increasingly, police departments may use advanced analytics and AI to identify patterns and relationships that may be indicative of drug trafficking and to forecast future trends in drug use and distribution. This can assist law enforcement

agencies in more effectively targeting their resources and in taking preventative measures before issues become problematic in the community.

2

INCREASED USE OF DRONE TECHNOLOGY

The use of drones allows for the monitoring of areas that are difficult to access as well as the locating and tracking of suspects. In addition,

medical supplies, such as antidotes for drug overdoses, can be delivered to remote areas by means of drones.

3

GREATER COLLABORATION AND INFORMATION SHARING BETWEEN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

It is possible for law enforcement agencies to be more successful in locating and dismantling transnational drug trafficking networks if they

share information with one another and work together across jurisdictions.

4

INCREASED FOCUS ON PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

It is likely that there will be a greater emphasis placed on efforts aimed at drug abuse prevention and treatment in addition to the role that law enforcement actions will continue to play in the fight against the illegal drug trade. Early

intervention programs, community education, outreach initiatives, and support for people battling drug addiction are included in this category.

5

USE OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Tracking drug supply chains and lowering the risk of them being tampered with or diverted can also be accomplished with the help of emerging

technologies such as blockchain and the Internet of Things (IoT), which police departments may start using soon.

CASE STUDIES

THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The UAE has long been a pioneering force in the fight against the trafficking and usage of illicit drugs at both domestic and regional levels. The country has been effective in reducing the incidence of narcotic drugs in the region by placing a priority on proactive operations and regulatory efforts.

The government has achieved as education and awareness campaigns, as well as regulation and enforcement, treatment substantial headway in addressing its anti-narcotics initiatives. The UAE, specifically the Government of Dubai, has implemented a comprehensive plan to tackle the severe issue of drug usage and trafficking in the country. A number of legislative acts and decrees were issued to combat this issue more effectively. These include the Federal Law No. 14 of 1995 Concerning Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the Federal Law No. 15 of 1995 Concerning Combating Drug Abuse, and the Federal Law No. 15 of 1998 Concerning Combating Money Laundering (The United Arab Emirates' Government portal, 2023). Furthermore, the government has established a number of specialized government agencies to plan and implement their anti-narcotics initiatives. Some of these agencies include the Ministry of Interior, the National Anti-Narcotics Council, the Drug Control Department, and the Anti-Narcotics Federal Prosecution. Positive outcomes have been observed as a result of the UAE's adoption of an all-encompassing strategy for addressing the major issue of drug usage and trafficking.

To combat the spread of illegal substances, the government has enacted a number of deterrents, such as stringent laws and regulations, improved security measures, and public awareness programs. Romdoni (2019) found that the UAE has created a comprehensive national plan to combat drug misuse. This strategy reportedly involves a multi-agency approach as well as large

investments in drug treatment and rehabilitation programs. Also, the government has formed specialist anti-narcotics units within the police force. These units collaborate closely with international organizations to keep track of the flow of illicit drugs and to apprehend those responsible for their distribution. In addition, the UAE has formed relationships with other nations in the region as well as international organizations to facilitate the exchange of information and the pooling of resources in the battle against drug misuse. In spite of these measures, drug misuse continues to be a major problem in the UAE, primarily in Dubai, which is a major worry given that the country serves as a transit hub for the transportation of drugs from adjacent regions. As a result, the government will continue to put money into anti-drug initiatives so that it can guarantee the health and safety of the people living under its jurisdiction.

In order to tackle the growing issue of drug usage that is plaguing the country, the UAE has been actively developing steps to prevent drug trafficking. According to the findings of a statistical study that was carried out by F. Barbone et al. (1998), the number of drug-related arrests grew from 129 to 1,562 between the years 1987 and 1995, indicating that there was a significant increase in law enforcement activities against drug trafficking. In addition, the study discovered that the percentage of drug-related mortality reduced from 2.2% in 1985 to 0.3% in 1995, which suggests that the efficiency of the country's drug trafficking policies in lowering the harmful impact of drug addiction. However, the study also emphasized the necessity for continuous efforts to combat drug trafficking, as drug-related arrests and seizures in the UAE were found to be lower than in adjacent nations. This finding highlights the need for continued efforts to combat drug trafficking.

The authors advocate the implementation of a comprehensive drug control strategy, which would entail strengthening the legislative framework, expanding international collaboration, enhancing public awareness, and increasing the resources given to initiatives to combat drug abuse. In general, the statistical analysis suggests that even though the UAE has made significant progress in combating drug trafficking, there is still room for improvement, and continued efforts are required to address the problem.

Through actions that are both broad and multi-faceted, the UAE has demonstrated a strong commitment to combating the trafficking and abuse of narcotics. Plan 2023 is a government-led anti-drug initiative that was recently introduced, providing current evidence of the government's dedication to the cause. This plan aims to raise people's knowledge of illegal drug activities and reinforce the legal framework in order to minimize the availability of illicit substances in the country. Additionally, this plan intends to improve citizens' access to information regarding these activities. Beyond this, new strategies



(Photo source: Dubai police arrests 166, blocks 15 websites in drugs fight, Arabian Business News, 2020, <https://www.arabianbusiness.com/gcc/uae/437195-dubai-police-arrest-166-blocks-15-websites-in-drugs-fight>)

such as increased prevention efforts, rehabilitation of those whose lives have been affected by drug abuse, and investment in scientific and research institutions should be considered in order to ensure a successful future for the fight against narcotics in the UAE long term.

Overall, the UAE has taken considerable measures to strengthen police innovation and resilience in its fight against the illicit drug trade. These measures have included the development of specialized task forces, the implementation of tougher laws and penalties, the use of advanced technology and data analytics, the introduction of community-based initiatives, and the development of better relationships between police forces and the communities they serve. By taking these steps, the UAE can continue to make progress in its fight against the illicit drug trade and ensure the safety of its citizens.

1. SPECIALIZED UNITS

The Dubai Police Department has formed specialized units that are specifically designed to fight against the trafficking and abuse of illegal substances. These teams have access to cutting-edge equipment and have undergone intensive training, which enables them to recognize drug-related activity and target it effectively.

2. INTELLIGENCE-LED POLICING

UAE law enforcement bodies utilize processes that might be classified as intelligence-led policing in order to gather and examine data concerning drug-related behaviour in the city. By making use of this information, they are able to identify significant individuals and organizations that are involved in the drug trade and then target those people and organizations.

3. EDUCATION OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Enforcements also run education campaigns for the general public in order to raise awareness about the dangers involved with the usage of drugs and to encourage members of the community to report drug-related activities.

4. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The Dubai, Sharjah, and Abu Dhabi Police work closely with other authorities and organizations, both within the UAE and internationally, to coordinate their efforts to combat the trafficking and misuse of illegal drugs. These collaborations include the exchange of information and resources, as well as the coordination of their activities.

5. REHABILITATION AND TREATMENT

Recognizing the importance of addressing the underlying causes of drug misuse, Dubai Police works to provide rehabilitation and treatment programs for people who are battling addiction. These programs aim to assist individuals in overcoming their dependency on drugs.

One of the many initiatives includes the UAE being party to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Drugs of 1988 and implementing a strict policy to combat the illegal trade of narcotic substances – the UAE is a signatory to the convention.

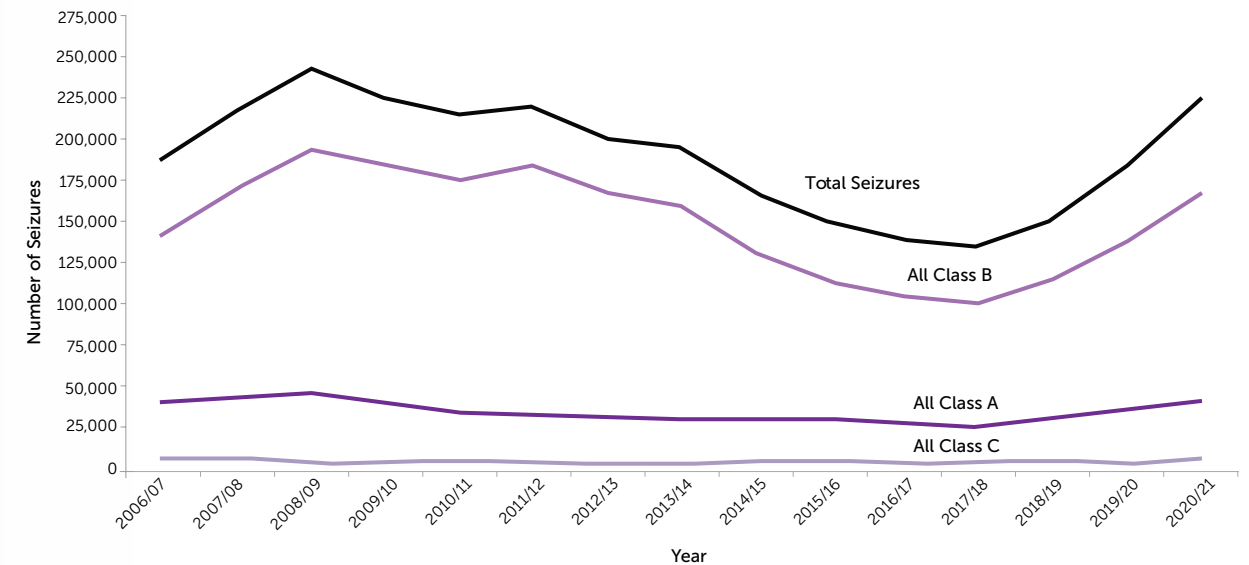
Moreover, enhanced border security, expanded interdiction operations, and increased inspections of cargo containers are only some of the measures that have been implemented to decrease the availability of illicit substances in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). As a direct consequence of these actions, substantial quantities of illicit substances like heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, and cannabis have been taken into custody. The United Arab Emirates has also boosted its attempts to share intelligence with other countries as a means to discover and disrupt networks that are involved in drug trafficking.



THE UNITED KINGDOM

The UK is facing an epidemic of narcotic use that is growing each year and has caused a significant strain on the economy, the public health sector, and the criminal justice system. It is implicitly vital to assess the current anti-narcotics efforts in the UK and explore potential solutions to enhance them. The UK government's anti-narcotics efforts from 2012 to 2022 have been significant.

According to the Home Office, there were a total of 223,106 drug seizures in England and Wales, "with a 21% increase compared with the previous year (183,646); this is the third consecutive annual increase in seizures, reversing a downward trend since year ending March 2012" (GOV.UK, 2021). The most commonly seized drugs were cannabis, cocaine, MDMA, heroin.



(Number of seizures of Class A, B and C drugs, police forces and Border Force, years ending March 2007 to 2021. Source: National statistics - Seizures of drugs in England and Wales, financial year ending 2021)

According to how much harm their usage causes to the user or to society, the MDA (Misuse of Drugs Act 1971) separates substances into three categories: Classes A, B, and C. Class A drugs are considered to be the most hazardous. Data on NPS (new psychoactive substances) are also included in this finding (NPS).

Between the fiscal years ending in March of 2020 and 2021, law enforcement agencies saw a 17% rise in the amount of Class A drugs they seized. While law enforcement agencies and the Border Force were able to seize 6% less cocaine in the year ending March 2020 compared to the previous year, the quantity seized jumped by 161% (6,874kg), from 4,274kg to 11,148kg.

Since the fiscal year ended in March of 2020, crack seizures by police and the Border Force have grown by 2%, reaching an all-time level not

seen since the fiscal year ended in March of 2008. A 43% drop in crack seizures was reported. And finally, there was a 21% increase in Class B drug seizures during the fiscal years ending in March of 2020 and 2021, with cannabis accounting for 95% of all Class B drug seizures (GOV.UK, 2021). From research, there are four umbrella factors that have spiked substance abuse in the UK, and arguably, globally. Its root is the COVID-19 pandemic. First, increased demand for drugs: the epidemic and the attendant lockdowns have led to increasing levels of stress, worry, and sadness, which can lead people towards the use of drugs. As a result, there has been an increase in the demand for such substances. Because so many people are confined to their homes, drug use has become more prevalent and is now much simpler to conceal (Volkow, 2020). Second, the increased rise of dark web drug trade: as the implementation of lockdowns and other social distancing measures began to take effect,

many drug users have resorted to using online drug markets as a means to obtain narcotics. As a result of these tactics, there has been a rise in the utilization of anonymous payment methods and cryptocurrencies, such as bitcoin (United Nations Office on Drugs and Labor, 2021).

Third: changes in the drug market, the pandemic has caused changes in the medication markets, which has led to certain types of pharmaceuticals becoming more popular while others have become less popular. For instance, as a result of the closure of nightclubs and bars, there has been a reduction in the use of cocaine and MDMA, but there has been an increase in the use of cannabis and prescription medicines (Global Drug Survey, 2020). And the final contributing factor: border closures and restrictions on movement. According to the European Drug Report published in 2020, we can deduce that closure of borders and movement restrictions have resulted in interruptions in the supply chain for drugs, which has led to an increase in the cost of these substances as well as the introduction of new trafficking routes. In addition, the police have a more difficult time discovering and intercepting drug shipments as a result of the limits placed on transportation (United Nations Office on Drugs and Labor, 2021).

Having consolidated the major key players to the spike in drug trade and its subsequent seizing by the UK police force, the government has been implementing various programs to reduce drug-related harm, including drug treatment programs and harm reduction initiatives such as the provision of needle exchange programs. These programs have been successful in reducing drug-related deaths and hospital admissions.

According to a report that was compiled by the UK's Anti-Substances Coordinator, the government has formulated a strategy to combat the use of illegal drugs that will continue for a period of ten years, named 'Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain: The Government's Ten-Year Strategy for Tackling Drugs Misuse' (2000). The plan included a number of different initiatives to reduce the supply and demand of drugs, such as combating the county lines gangs, providing comprehensive education on the dangers of drugs to children, and introducing stricter penalties for drug users. These are just some of the initiatives that were included in the plan. The government also pledged to make investments in the criminal justice system in an effort to cut down on the number of drugs that are available in prisons as well as the number of inmates who use them.

The World Drug Report 2021 provides a comprehensive analysis of global drug markets, including the market in the UK, in terms of the facts and statistics that are currently accessible. It is estimated that there are more than 300,000 people in England who are addicted to heroin or crack, and it is believed that these individuals are responsible for almost half of all burglaries, robberies, and other acquisitive crimes. According to the findings of the survey, the annual cost of drug abuse in the UK is currently estimated to be around £20 billion. Also, the use of illegal narcotics is directly responsible for the deaths of around 3,000 people in England and Wales each year (United Nations Office on Drugs and Labor, 2021).

The government has committed to investing in early interventions to prevent young people from being dragged into a life of drugs and crime, as well as investing in the workforce of health professionals in order to provide the necessary treatments to assist people in overcoming addiction. Additionally, the federal government is looking at the prospect of decriminalizing marijuana and expanding access to naloxone, which is an antidote that can reverse the symptoms of a heroin overdose and save the life of a patient.

In general, the government is taking a proactive approach to the problem of illegal drugs and has pledged to invest in a wide variety of programs that aim to reduce both the supply of illegal substances and their demand.

It is likely that contemporary technologies will have a substantial impact on attempts to combat the use of illegal drugs in the UK between the years 2022 and 2030. It is anticipated that technological advancements such as the development of facial recognition software driven by artificial intelligence and tools for predictive analytics would be increasingly utilized to detect and identify perpetrators and victims of narcotics-related crimes.

Because of this, law enforcement will be able to target potential drug traffickers more effectively, as well as construct suspect profiles more accurately. In addition, the proliferation of mobile and online payment methods, such as cryptocurrencies, will make it even more challenging for drug dealers to conceal the origins of their illicit profits (Carhart-Harris and Goodwin, 2017).

Developments in DNA and forensic technology will make it possible for law enforcement to identify illegal substances in a more accurate manner. These developments are anticipated to

assist law enforcement in better monitoring and prosecuting individuals involved in activities linked to narcotics, as well as in reducing the frequency of drug-related criminal activity in the UK.

Data analytics is one of the most important technology developments that law enforcement organizations in the UK use in their fight against illegal drug trade. Law enforcement authorities are able to uncover patterns and trends in activity related to drugs through the analysis of large quantities of data. These patterns and trends can then be utilized to target drug traffickers and their networks. The National Crime Agency (NCA) is responsible for the development of a specialized data analytics platform known as the National Data Exploitation Centre (NDEC). This platform offers sophisticated data analysis capabilities to assist law enforcement agencies in their work.

A variety of surveillance methods have been put into use by law enforcement organizations including the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the National Crime Agency (NCA) to follow the transit of narcotics and money, and to monitor the actions of drug traffickers. These tools include sophisticated CCTV surveillance systems, technology for clandestine audio and video recording, and specialized tracking devices.

In conjunction to these technologies, law enforcement agencies in the country have also utilized cutting-edge forensic analytical methods to bolster their efforts to combat the distribution of illegal drugs. For example, the Forensic Science Service offers extensive forensic analysis skills to law enforcement organizations across the UK. These capabilities can be utilized to identify drug samples and link suspects to certain drug-related crimes.

It is important not to undervalue the potential societal gains that could result from stronger anti-drug measures in the UK, especially in the next 8 years. According to the Office of National Statistics, during the 2018–19 fiscal year, the United Kingdom spent an estimated £15.1 billion on drug abuse. The majority of this amount was spent on the criminal justice system and on the health and social care services, such as treatment and rehabilitation (Office for National Statistics, 2022). It was reported that approximately 1 in 11 adults between the ages of 16 and 59 years (9.2%; approximately 3 million adults) and approximately 1 in 5 adults between the ages of 16 and 24 years (18.6%; approximately 1.1 million adults) used drugs in the past year in the year that ended in June 2022; there was no change from the year that ended in March 2020 (Jones, 2022). This heightens the necessity for enhancing anti-narcotics measures, which have the potential to lower the costs associated with drug misuse and



(Photo source: <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/crooks-behind-scotlands-drugs-deaths-25824159>)



improve the quality of life for people whose lives are touched by it.

It is also possible that from 2022 to 2030, stronger anti-narcotics activities may contribute to a reduction in drug-related criminality as well as improved health outcomes for those whose lives have been impacted by drug misuse. For instance, increasing investments in early intervention and prevention measures might contribute to a decrease in both the number of people who use drugs and the quantity of drugs that are trafficked and sold in the United Kingdom. Additionally, persons whose health and welfare are negatively impacted by drug abuse may benefit from easier access to treatment and rehabilitation facilities, which may assist to improve their health (National Health Service, 2021).

From 2022 through to 2030, the rising use of surveillance technologies in the UK's anti-drug activities is likely to have a significant impact on the country's broader security picture. According to a report published by the University of Cambridge in 2020, the use of such technologies can assist in reducing the manufacturing and trafficking of illegal substances, as well as the potential for illegal actions associated with their sale and consumption (Carhart-Harris and Goodwin, 2017).

Enhanced surveillance technology can also aid in identifying and monitoring prospective criminal activity sources, such as drug laboratories and distribution networks. In addition, surveillance technology can be utilized to discover and disrupt illegal activity associated with the sale and consumption of narcotics, including drug trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime. Because criminals will be aware that their activities are being monitored and logged, the deployment of surveillance technologies can help to provide an effective deterrence against potential criminals (Carhart-Harris and Goodwin, 2017). Therefore, the expanded employment of surveillance technology in the UK's anti-drug activities between 2022 and 2030 is anticipated to have a substantial positive impact on the country's overall security.

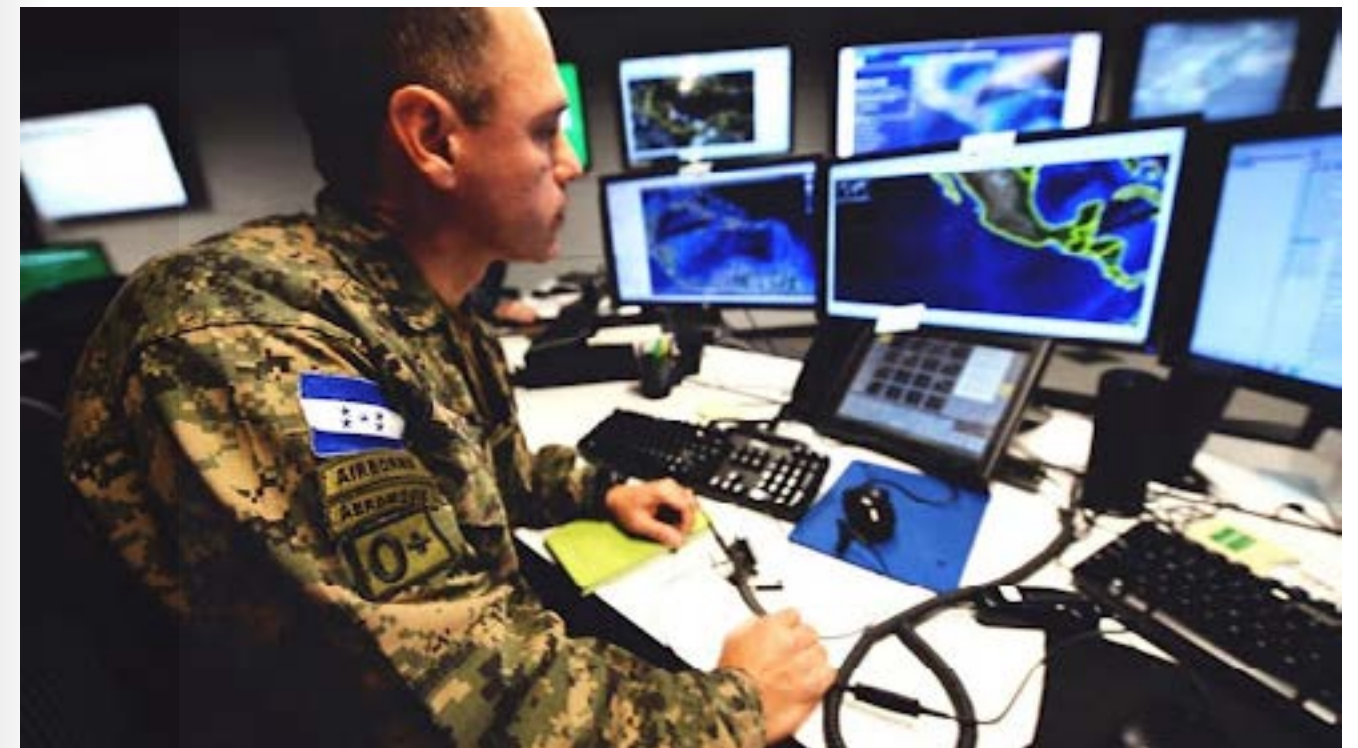
To conclude, the growing demand for narcotics in the UK, anti-drug initiatives and technology will continue to play a significant part in the years to come. The UK will be better positioned to deal with the problem of drugs with the introduction of new policies that are both more effective and innovative kickstarting in 2022 and continuing beyond it. These kinds of initiatives can include the tightening of regulations that are already in place, the dissemination of information, and the application of technology to monitor and trace the flow of narcotics. However, due to the nature of illegal narcotics, there is no one technique or piece of technology that will be enough on its own. The most successful results for tackling this societal issue come from using a holistic approach that incorporates numerous strategies together.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The fight against the drug trade in the United States has been waged with vast and complex efforts by law enforcement organizations such as the FBI and the NSA. Law enforcement agencies in the United States have been tasked with designing and implementing tactics to minimize drug-related crime as part of the ongoing war on drugs, which has been a focus for the government of the United States for several decades.

The National Use of Force Data Collection was established in 2015 by the FBI in conjunction with other law enforcement agencies for the purpose of providing countrywide statistics regarding the use of force by law enforcement. The purpose of

this data collection is to identify trends in the use of force by law enforcement agencies and to aid in making informed decisions on policy, training, and operations. The Department of Justice of the United States of America has initiated a number of initiatives, including the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign and the Drug-Free Communities Support Program, in an effort to reduce the quantity of drugs that are used by young people. Community coalitions get funding from the Drug-Free Communities Support Program, which enables these coalitions to develop and carry out evidence-based initiatives for the purpose of preventing and reducing substance use among young people.



(Photo source: "How FBI Intel Helps Task Force Stem Illegal Flow of Drugs", 2022, <https://fbi.gov>)

Taking on the problem of substance abuse in the US, the facts and figures that are presented in the Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health (2019) pertain to the level of substance abuse that is prevalent as well as the impact that this level of abuse has on society. Within the context of addressing the issue of substance misuse that plagues the nation, the report places an emphasis on the necessity of treatment alternatives, rehabilitation programs, and preventative initiatives. It also provides

advice as to how the economic and societal costs that are associated with substance use disorders can be decreased. If law enforcement agencies use proactive and intentional recruitment, hiring, and retention strategies, they will be able to overcome obstacles, promote reform, and make progress in reducing substance use and misuse.

Since the early 2000s, efforts have been made in the US to tackle the opioid problem by boosting the use of anti-narcotic technologies. Because the

problem has become more severe, determining whether these technologies are effective is becoming an increasingly pressing concern. It is imperative to evaluate a variety of criteria in order to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-drug technologies in the US. Recent research has shown that the implementation of technologies such as facial recognition, license plate readers, and GPS tracking has resulted in a reduction in the number of offenses associated to the distribution of illegal drugs. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that the installation of these technologies leads to faster response times from law enforcement as well as an increase in the number of people arrested for drug-related offenses. It has been demonstrated that the utilization of drug-detection technology such as drug-sniffing dogs, drug testing kits, and drug-detection equipment can successfully put a halt to drug trafficking.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to take into consideration the likelihood that these technologies will be abused in some way. Concerns have been expressed in reports on the possibility of false positives, the potential for the targeting of disadvantaged communities, and the possibility of a loss of civil freedoms. It is therefore vital, to accurately evaluate the efficacy of anti-narcotic technologies in the USA from 2022-2030, to assess both the potential benefits and drawbacks of these technologies.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has utilized a wide range of technologies to help its anti-narcotics efforts. These technologies include sophisticated data analytics platforms, complex forensic analysis tools, and specialized communication interception devices. For instance, the Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory program of the FBI offers state-of-the-art digital forensics capabilities to support investigations into organizations that are involved in drug trafficking. Moreover, the Intelligence Research Support Unit of the FBI has developed advanced data analysis tools to identify patterns and trends in activity that is related to drugs.

In a similar manner, the National Security Agency (NSA) has utilized cutting-edge technology to monitor and intercept communications related to drugs, including voice and data transmissions. The agency's capabilities for collecting worldwide signals intelligence enable it to collect and analyze large volumes of data, which may then be utilized to detect and destroy networks used for drug trafficking. In order to penetrate drug traffickers' networks and monitor their communications, the National Security Agency's (NSA) cryptologic capabilities, which

include sophisticated tools for breaking encryption, have proved essential.

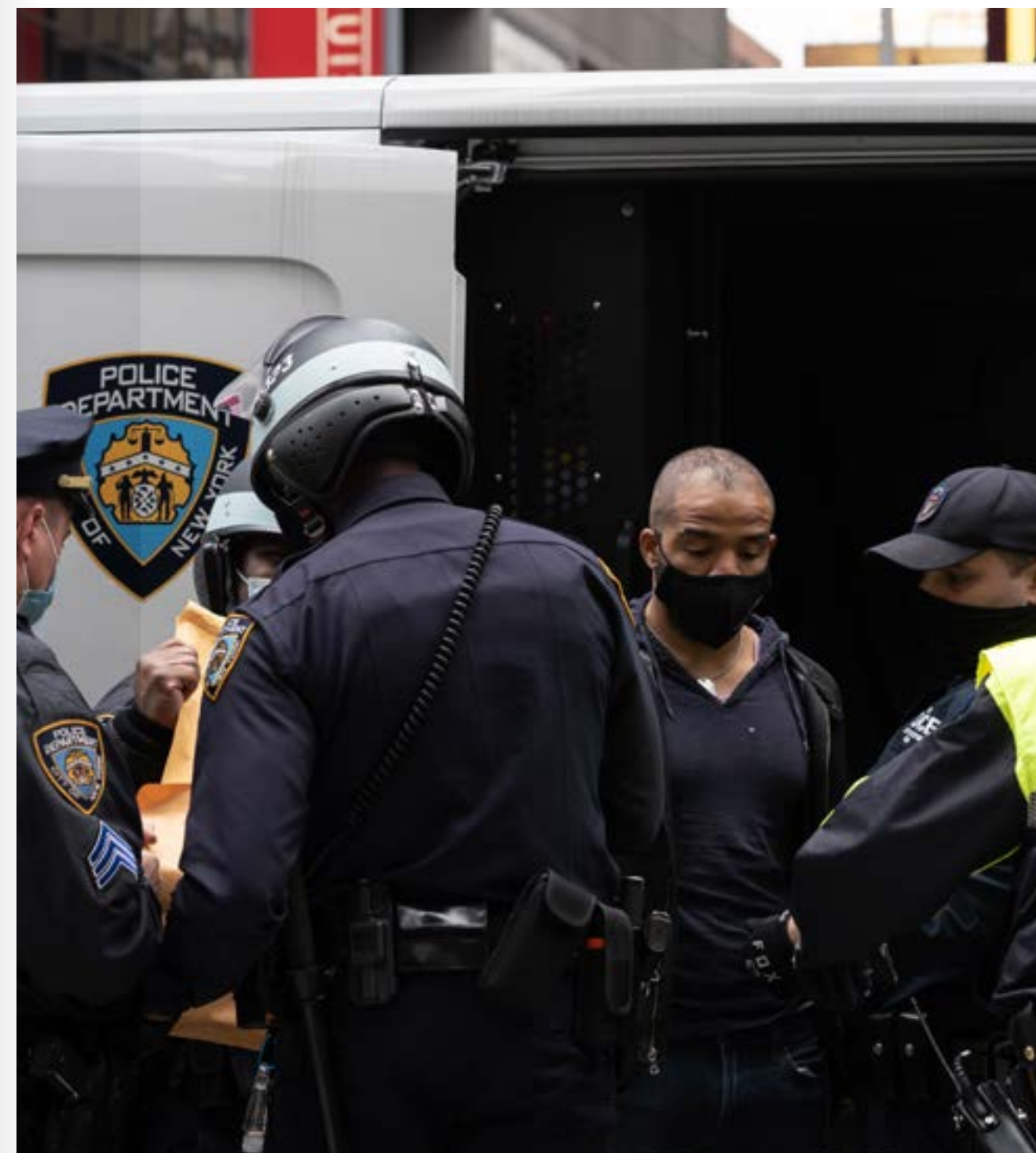
There is reason to be optimistic about the future of anti-drug initiatives and the technologies that will be put into place across the US beginning in 2022. The authorities will be able to better monitor and manage illegal narcotic activity if they make use of cutting-edge technologies such as surveillance and detection systems, integrated databases, advanced communication technology, and automated vehicle operations.

To cut down on the general availability of narcotic substances and the number of people who use them, more collaboration between federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to develop cohesive tactics for battling the illegal drug trade is going to prove to be essential. It is anticipated that successful reduction of drug use in public settings will also result from the creation of public education programs that emphasize the dangers of addiction as well as actions undertaken by law enforcements. If the investment that has been made in these applied initiatives proves to be successful, then the anti-drug measures that are planned to take place in the United States after the year 2022 will continue to be effective.

However, American law enforcement organizations are up against unprecedented challenges. The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has reported that substance abuse is a major issue in the US. In 2018 alone, there were more than 20 million people who abused illegal drugs. In addition, the implementation of anti-drug measures has always been complicated by a lack of trustworthy and complete data. This lack of data makes it difficult for law enforcement agencies to recognize the problem and respond to it.

The pandemic exacerbated these issues, as the resources of a significant number of the federal agencies that are responsible for combating drug abuse have been redirected to assist in the response to the global pandemic. It has been challenging for the federal government to continue its ongoing efforts to limit the prevalence of drug use and the damage it causes, as well as to expand upon the efforts that it has already made.

In order for law enforcement to effectively respond to these problems, they need to use proactive and intentional recruitment, hiring, and retention methods to remove barriers, drive reform, and make progress toward reducing the harms associated with drug addiction. Additionally, for the federal government to effectively implement anti-drug initiatives, it must coordinate and carry out a strategic national response to drug misuse, in addition to making progress toward lowering rates of drug misuse and the associated



harms. This includes providing greater direction on the role that states should play and how grant funding should be used within the national workforce system to support the employment and training needs of individuals whose lives have been impacted by substance use disorders.

The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) must increase its leadership and coordination of the broader national effort to combat the misuse of drugs. This includes establishing and publishing a comprehensive National Drug Control Strategy that

satisfies the requirements set forth by statute and effectively coordinates activities that are being made at the national level to combat the misuse of drugs. This plan should also contain estimates of the federal funds and other resources that are required in order to accomplish each of the strategy's long-term quantifiable goals. These estimates should be included in the appendix of the strategy.



CHALLENGES POSED TO THE FUTURE OF ANTI-NARCOTIC EFFORTS

There is a lack of clarity on the future of anti-drug efforts led by the primary police forces. There is still reason to have hope for progress in the War on Drugs, despite the fact that much of it rests on the resources that are made available and the continuous inventiveness of law enforcement agencies in their efforts to combat the ever-evolving drug market. It is vital to invest in improved intelligence, staff training, and equipment in order to have a real impact on the issue of global drugs trafficking. Innovation in communication and technology can help law enforcement and policy makers keep one step ahead of the drug networks. Law enforcement has the ability to ensure that the growing prevalence of drugs all over the world is satisfactorily addressed by making the necessary investments and maintaining their efforts.

The World Health Organization (WHO) predicted in 2022 that law enforcement will encounter

substantial obstacles in reacting to developing drug trends between 2020 and 2030. The global drug market is ever-changing, with new pharmaceuticals developing and existing drugs growing more potent and hazardous.

The role of pharmaceutical companies in the escalating abuse of pharmaceuticals is a significant contributor to the expanding problem of prescription drug abuse. According to research published in the American Journal of Public Health by A. Van Zee, pharmaceutical companies have played a significant role in the development of new medications, which has contributed to an increase in the likelihood that these medications will be abused or misused (Van Zee, 2009). It is common knowledge that pharmaceutical companies engage in extensive marketing efforts to encourage the use of their products, most notably through advertising campaigns directed directly toward end users.

These campaigns frequently have the goal of persuading customers to inquire about the medications that they advertise with their primary care physicians, regardless of whether or not the customer actually has a requirement for the drug. In addition, the companies are liable for blame because they failed to provide adequate warning to customers about the potential adverse effects of using their products, including the risks of addiction and overdose. Many people are unaware of the potential risks associated with taking these drugs, which has contributed to an increased risk of misuse. Thus, pharmaceutical companies have not provided adequate warnings, which has also contributed to this risk. They have a responsibility to ensure that their products are being used in a safe manner, and they should be held accountable for their role in the rising abuse of pharmaceuticals as a result of this responsibility.

The misuse of pharmaceuticals has had a significant influence on the fight against illegal drugs carried out on a global scale. Since the middle of the 2000s, there has been a steady increase in the number of people abusing prescription medications, as stated by AL Foster in the Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of American History (Foster, 2017). This increase has led to a corresponding increase in the number of deaths that have been caused by overdoses, particularly when the drugs are used for purposes that are not medically necessary.

This, in turn, has hampered global efforts to combat the use of narcotics because the drugs are difficult to track and exert control over. In

addition, the misuse of pharmaceuticals has led to a significant decrease in public trust in healthcare providers, who are increasingly seen as complicit in the distribution of these drugs. Because of this, efforts to curb the abuse of pharmaceuticals have been further hampered, as it is becoming increasingly difficult to establish effective interventions without the support of the general public. In conclusion, the misuse of pharmaceuticals has had a negative impact on the efforts that are being made around the world to combat the use of narcotics.

Nevertheless, this quick and unpredictable evolution of drug trends makes it exceedingly challenging for law enforcement to respond effectively. Improving intelligence collection capabilities to predict and respond to these developments is part of the challenge. This can be challenging and expensive, especially for smaller police forces. Inadequate resources also provide a challenge for law enforcement, making it difficult to keep up with the current developments. Moreover, in many nations, drug laws and regulations are out of date and cannot keep up with the evolving drug scene. This can hinder law enforcement's ability to effectively enforce the law. It is clear that there is a need for increased public education and knowledge regarding the dangers of drug usage and how to avoid them.

1 INCREASING SOPHISTICATION OF DRUG TRAFFICKING NETWORKS

The groups that deal in drug trafficking are growing more sophisticated and are employing new technologies in order to escape the authorities. For instance, some firms conceal their activities by relying on encrypting their

communication apps and utilizing blockchain technology (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2021). Because of this, it is difficult for law enforcement agencies to trace the activities of the criminal organization and interrupt its operations.

2 CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY

The effectiveness of measures to combat drug use and trafficking is significantly hindered by the pervasive presence of corrupt officials and the challenge of paying kickbacks. It is possible that law enforcement officers in some nations are involved in drug trafficking themselves or are willing to turn a blind eye to the problem

in exchange for bribes. According to a report produced by the United Nations, bribery and corruption pose substantial challenges to the effectiveness of efforts to combat the global narcotics trade, particularly in less developed nations (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2021).

3 NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES

New psychoactive substances, sometimes known as NPS for short, are man-made pharmaceuticals that are intended to simulate the psychoactive effects of more conventional narcotics such as marijuana, cocaine, and opiates. Because they are frequently offered legally, which makes it more difficult to regulate them, they present a substantial challenge to efforts to combat the use of illegal drugs. According to the United

Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), there were 893 newly discovered psychoactive drugs that were reported in the year 2020, and it is anticipated that this number will continue to rise (UNODC, 2021). The development of new regulatory frameworks that can successfully control the production, distribution, and sale of NPS should be the primary focus of anti-drug activities to solve this challenge (UNODC, 2021).

4 DRUG-RELATED VIOLENCE

The use of violence as a means to deal with drug problems is a big challenge in many regions of the world. Violence is frequently used by organizations involved in the trafficking of drugs in order to control drug markets and remove competing groups. According to the most recent United Nations World Drug Report, the number

of deaths that may be attributed to drug use has risen in several nations over the course of the past decade (UNODC, 2021). To overcome this challenge, anti-drug measures should concentrate on undermining the financial stability and physical infrastructure of drug trafficking groups (UNODC, 2021).

5 THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

The opioid epidemic has presented a huge challenge for anti-drug efforts in a number of different countries. For instance, in the United States, drug overdoses claimed the lives of more than 70,000 individuals in 2019, with opioids being involved in approximately 70% of those

deaths (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2021). This has resulted in increased demand on law enforcement agencies and healthcare systems, and it has forced several nations to re-evaluate their policy regarding drugs.



SOLUTIONS

TO COMBAT CHALLENGES POSED TO THE FUTURE OF ANTI-NARCOTIC EFFORTS



Utilizing multilevel, inter-agency initiatives is one way to improve the efficiency of law enforcement's anti-drug activities to overcome the obstacles connected with drug trafficking. All three levels of law enforcement, namely local, state, and federal authorities, should be able to recognize potential danger zones and honing on certain subgroups of individuals and communities that are very likely to be implicated in the drug trade. It is necessary to increase the level of cooperation amongst agencies by exchanging information, resources, and personnel in order to facilitate the development of an all-encompassing strategy for dealing with the issue. Let us now examine the solutions to the aforementioned challenges.

1. INCREASING SOPHISTICATION OF DRUG TRAFFICKING NETWORKS

Tracking and interdicting drug shipments can be accomplished with the use of cutting-edge technology and data analytics, which law enforcement authorities can use to confront the growing sophistication of drug trafficking networks. For instance, some organizations make

use of machine learning algorithms in order to recognize suspect packages by analysing patterns within the shipping data (IBM, 2019). This can help detect drug trafficking networks and stop their operations.

2. CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY

Increasing transparency and accountability around the activities of law enforcement authorities is one way to combat the problem of bribery and corruption. For instance, some departments use body cameras and other technologies to record encounters between police officers and

members of the public and to dissuade officers from engaging in misbehaviour. Government agencies can build internal systems for monitoring compliance with anti-corruption regulations and provide anti-corruption training for their employees.

3. NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES

Advanced laboratory testing equipment is one type of technology that law enforcement organizations may choose to implement in order to meet the challenge posed by new psychoactive substances (NPS). This device can assist in identifying the chemical composition of NPS and distinguishing them from other types of narcotics, which enables law enforcement to track and

stop shipments of these substances. In addition, some government organizations are making use of social media monitoring technologies and predictive analytics to recognize trends and patterns in the usage of NPS, which can assist in informing public awareness campaigns and preventative efforts (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2019).

4. DRUG-RELATED VIOLENCE

It is possible for law enforcement organizations to employ technologies that help detect and track firearms and other types of weapons in order to reduce violence that is associated with drug use. For instance, some law enforcement organizations make use of ballistics imaging equipment to identify firearms that have been used in crimes and

establish a connection between those firearms and other incidents or weapons. In addition, some organizations make use of gunshot detection systems that triangulate the position of gunshots and warn law enforcement in real time. This gives the authorities the ability to react fast and perhaps prevent subsequent acts of violence.

5. THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

In order to address the opioid epidemic, law enforcement agencies can collaborate with healthcare professionals and community organizations to offer help and education to people who are battling addiction to opioids. In addition, authorities have the ability to prioritize the targeting of high-level drug traffickers and suppliers in order to break the supply chain and prevent harmful narcotics from reaching communities that are vulnerable to their effects (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2021).

In essence, the war against the illegitimate trafficking of drugs is a continuous conflict for law enforcement agencies all around the world. Law enforcement must be flexible and creative in their approach if they are to be successful in their fight against the drug trade and its associated problems. The basis for these solutions includes increasing the use of technology, improving inter-agency cooperation and communication, and increasing public awareness and education about the risks associated with drug use.

Because it provides a mechanism to monitor and manage the flow of drugs in society, the role of technology in attempts to combat the use of illegal substances is becoming an increasingly crucial component of these efforts. Technology has the potential to make anti-drug programs more successful. For instance, technology can assist in the monitoring of drug-related crimes, the localization of regions with higher rates of drug use, the generation of warnings in reaction to shifts in the patterns of drug use, and so on. Additionally, technology may assist with the identification of drug suppliers and can also be used to intervene in the distribution of drugs. It can also be utilized to monitor the effects of pharmaceuticals on populations and give early warnings in the event that new drugs enter the market. Thus, such advancements can provide a wide variety of opportunities for anti-drug activities and has the potential to play a substantial role in reducing the number of drugs that enter the general population.

Cooperation and communication between different government agencies is an essential component of a successful disaster response. In a discussion with Tofiq Murshudlu, Head of Coordination at UNODC, enhanced cooperation and communication between different agencies leads to improved outcomes. These benefits include better information sharing, more efficient responses, improved collaboration, and inter-agency cooperation can contribute to the

prevention and mitigation of the drug trade. It is important to create clear standards to ensure all parties involved are aware of their respective duties and obligations.



(Photo source: "50 Years Later, a Majority of Americans Want the Drug War to End", Truthout, 2021, <https://truthout.org/articles/50-years-later-a-majority-of-americans-want-the-drug-war-to-end/>)

Increasing public awareness and education about the risks associated with drugs is a vital step towards reducing drug use. The dissemination of information to the general population is of crucial significance in situations where the use of drugs is widespread. The public should be given education in a holistic manner, which should include both educational materials and guidance that is applicable in real life.

According to J. Grisel (Grisel, 2020, pp.3–198), addiction is more than just a behavioural issue; rather, it is entrenched in the reward and motivation system of the brain. As a result, Grisel contends that in order to prevent addiction, one must address these fundamental mechanisms. The promotion of healthy coping strategies, the enhancement of social support, and the reduction of stresses that can contribute to addiction are all viable methods for accomplishing this goal. In addition, Grisel highlights the necessity of tailored therapy techniques that take into consideration individual variances in neurobiology and the experiences that each person has had in their

lives. This indicates that treatment should not be a cookie-cutter approach but rather one that is adapted to the specific requirements of the patient. Grisel emphasizes the significance of addressing co-occurring mental health concerns, such as anxiety and depression, which are frequently contributing factors in addiction and need to be treated simultaneously. When these concerns are addressed, treatment has the potential to be more successful and to contribute to an overall improvement in the individual's state of health.

In essence, neuroplasticity, or the brain's ability to change in response to experience, plays a significant role in the development and maintenance of addiction. The difficulties that relate to fighting the illegal drug trade can be overcome by employing a holistic strategy that is cooperative and combines both mitigation and prevention in order to make law enforcement activities as effective and productive as possible.

LOOKING AHEAD

Overall, improved anti-drug activities between the years 2022 and 2030 have the potential to lead to a range of societal advantages. This includes a decrease in criminal activity connected to drugs, an improvement in public safety, and better health outcomes for those whose lives have been impacted by drug usage. As a result, investments in early intervention and prevention methods, as well as increased access to treatment and rehabilitation services, should be prioritized in order to realize the full potential of improved anti-narcotics initiatives.

Law enforcement authorities from a wide variety of countries have been actively engaged in attempts to combat this issue for a number of years, during which time the struggle against the drug trade has been a challenge faced on a global scale. The UAE, UK, and USA have all leveraged a variety of technical developments to bolster their anti-drug initiatives.

In order to put an end to drug trafficking activities and bring those guilty to jail, law enforcement agencies in the UK have resorted to using cutting-edge data analytics, surveillance technologies, and forensic investigation tools. The National Crime Agency (NCA) is responsible for developing a specialized data analytics platform known as the National Data Exploitation Centre (NDEC). In the meantime, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the NCA have implemented a variety of surveillance tools to track the movement of drugs and money. Additionally, the Forensic Science Service provides advanced forensic analysis capabilities to identify drug samples and link suspects to specific drug-related crimes.

Targeting drug traffickers and disabling their networks has been made easier in the United States due to the employment of cutting-edge surveillance technology by law enforcement organizations such as the FBI and the NSA. This technology includes sophisticated data processing and monitoring tools. In addition, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has created specific forensics tools to assist with criminal investigations.

The law enforcement authorities in the UAE have also made use of advanced surveillance technology to monitor and follow the activities of drug traffickers. This technology includes facial recognition and automated license plate recognition systems, amongst other such systems. The forensics laboratory that the Abu Dhabi Police Department has created is state-of-the-art, and it is equipped with modern DNA analysis capabilities. These skills allow the police to identify suspects and link them to specific drug-related offenses.

In general, the utilization of technology has played a significant part in the anti-drug operations of these countries. This has enabled law enforcement agencies to locate and dismantle a number of drug trafficking networks, as well as bring those responsible to jail.

Anti-drug methodologies are continually advancing due to improvements in data gathering, information exchange, and system integration. These help the authorities in more effectively detecting, tracing, and destroying criminal networks that are involved in drug trafficking, as technology becomes increasingly ingrained in every aspect of law enforcement organizations' operations.



Tofiq Murshudlu

Head of Coordination, Border Management Branch
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Question 1: Are there any measures proposed by the UNODC to enhance cross-border communication channels given the existing limitations in information sharing across agencies and regions?

Answer: The main challenges in cooperation and coordination are due to the level of mistrust that exists between different agencies and nations. In some cases, law enforcement agencies can overcome this uncertainty and start communicating effectively. However, this can be hindered due to subjective reasons such as opposing personality traits. In other words, information sharing between institutions can depend on the personal relationships and trust established between members of the organizations such as law enforcement officers from different councils. While there is still room for improvement, international and regional cooperation can be feasible. Therefore, it is essential to leverage the approaches and tools available to build confidence and facilitate effective communication on a personal and institutional level.

Question 2: Can you share with us any future measures jointly agreed on with the GCC Criminal Intelligence Centre to Combat Drugs (GCC-CICCD) to protect the Gulf community from drug trade and abuse? If so, what are the immediate benefits that we can expect to see in the region?

Answer: The Gulf states have made impressive developments in combatting drug trade and abuse. For example, the World Police Summit in Dubai was a platform for global experts and consultants to provide the support, equipment and knowledge required in the region. A significant amount of people attending the Summit have expressed a distinctive willingness for cooperation and coordination, providing the right structure to fight organized crime. Today's speed of

technology and AI developments has also led to a promising demand for proper knowledge, education and training as criminals become more adept at using cryptocurrencies, the dark web and AI to facilitate their illicit drug trade. I have had the opportunity to work closely with a university in Saudi Arabia investing in criminal intelligence analysis, and this is precisely the type of training and education we need to equip law enforcement with to confront crime.

Question 3: According to the UNODC's World Drug Report 2021, there are 275 million drug abusers worldwide, signifying a long road ahead to combat this type of crime. Despite the advanced technologies in place, what solutions do you expect nations to employ to contain drug trade and abuse?

Answer: When addressing the challenges of drug crimes, it is important for nations to implement a combination of strategies including drug use prevention and disrupting drug supply chains. They should also consider innovative approaches to raising awareness within the population and ensuring the younger generation is not forgotten or neglected. Motivating young people to take part in sports or volunteer at NGOs can help them understand the impact they make in society and the significant role they play in shaping a better community. Drug abuse can start to surface when the younger generation feels bored, abandoned, and lacks a future perspective. Adolescents have a lot of energy and inspiring ideas which can also be harnessed within communities to address this issue.

KEY NOTES – ANTI-NARCOTICS

Session: Skills of Dealing with Drug Abusers and Proactive Detection

Session Type: Workshop

Speaker: Dr Ahmad Al-Shatti (President, National Awareness Project for Drug Prevention (Grass))

Key Notes: (Case study: Kuwait)

- The fight against hard drugs begins with smaller, more lenient cases of drug and substance abuse. In Kuwait, the number of cases involving hard drugs were derived from earlier abuse of marijuana and alcohol
- This creates a cycle, and a loop between different substances
- In Kuwait, 75% of overdose cases are Kuwaiti nationals
- Drug smuggling is on the rise, and are sometimes linked to weapon smuggling and trade
- To ensure solutions, community-based initiatives are essential. These have been introduced across the board in Kuwait. The responsibility becomes a cross-sector and community-wide one
- Community-based initiatives and campaigns need several factors to focus on
- Key areas for campaigns: the family, community, schools, healthcare services, workplace
- It's important to also look at minority groups and address the risk factors that contribute to increased drug usage

Session: Leveraging Neuroscience in the Police Response to Addiction

Session Type: Strategic Session

Speaker: Dr. Judith Grisel (Professor of Psychology, Bucknell University)

Key Notes:

- 90% of youngsters are exposed to drugs, alcohol, and other substances before the age of 18
- Young brains are more adaptable and prone to external influences, especially in this case, wherein the consequences of SUDs are far more significant and ever lasting
- Young brains' natural condition is 'plasticity' which equates to being more vulnerable – this is the most critical stage in a human's life.
- Dr Grisel reflects on her own personal experience in drug and substance abuse at her high school years – her life's work is based on her challenging youth experiences,

and focuses on drug implications in the field of neuroscience as a lesson to future young generations

- In Dr Grisel's research, boredom has been found to be the main catalyst in driving younger demographic into substance abuse
- Contingency management is proven far more effective than a punishment mechanism. A rewards dynamic may actually prove more useful and prevent backlash from the SUD abuser's populace

CAUSES FOR ADDICTION

GENES

- Risk taking
- Punishment insensitive
- Anxiety/depression/ADHD
- Liver enzymes
- Novelty seeking
- Reward sensitive

DEVELOPMENT

- Prenatal exposure
- Adverse childhood experiences
- Adolescent exposure

ENVIRONMENT

- Family
- Access
- Peers
- Random life events
- Neighbourhood/upbringing
- Stress
- Though influences are diverse, including everything from variation in molecular structures to targeted advertising campaigns, the best predictor of the addiction pandemic is addictive substances on brain development
- One-quarter who begin using any addictive substance before age 18 are addicted, compared with one in 25 who start using when they are 21 or older

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES:

PERVASIVE

- Includes inappropriate or absent parenting, violence, mental illness,
- SUDs or incarceration among family members



COMMON

- Most have at least one, and about 25% have three or more
- About 1 in 4 kids' lives with substance abuse in the home

PENETRANT

- Developmental plasticity leads to lasting impact
- Catalyse SUDs and other mental health disorders

Session: [Cross-border drug data and intelligence frameworks: how are leaders leveraging next-generation technology to disrupt narcotics supply chains?](#)

Session Type: Strategic Session

Speaker: [Lieutenant Raudha Ubaid Madani \(The General Department of Anti-Narcotics, Dubai Police\); Tofiq Murshudlu \(Head of Section, Deputy Border Control Branch, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime\); Ilana De Wild \(Director, Organized and Emerging Crimes, INTERPOL\)](#)

Key Notes:

- Undercover operations are a far more effective mechanism – this achieves reputational damage to dark drug marketplaces (these are predominantly online) thus estranging buyers and drives fear, uncertainty, and doubt between sellers affecting soft trade
- There is a mistrust between global agencies which affects information sharing
- The power of crypto-currencies and blockchain cannot be underestimated. The dark market is valued roughly between \$2-3bn
- Unanimously, global law enforcement agencies need to be proactive and not reactive
- This is the best method and structure to combat drug organisations
- Regions need to adopt information sharing procedures to strengthen their efforts against the drug trade and employ their advanced technologies to combat this growing predicament
- To do this, international law agencies' infrastructure needs to be benchmarked to draw the best solutions
- Agencies cannot operate in silos – emphasising the need for global collaboration

Session: [Drug abuse and the role of health and treatment institutions: policies and standards for a society immune and safe from addiction](#)

Session Type: Leadership Panel

Speaker: [Major General Dr Ahmed Abdul Haleem](#)

[Shaker \(Assistant, Professor of Forensic Science\); His Excellency Dr Ahmed Al Shatti \(Executive Director of the Awareness Project for Drug Prevention GHIRAS – Kuwait\); His Excellency Dr Amin Hussein Al-Amri \(Assistant Undersecretary for the Health Regulation Sector, UAE\)](#)

Key Notes:

[THE NATIONAL ANTI-NARCOTICS STRATEGY 2017 – 2021 INCLUDED:](#)

CURBING DEMAND FOR DRUGS

- Protecting school environment
- Social integration
- Treatment and rehabilitation
- Prevention and awareness

CURBING DRUG SUPPLY

- Seizing drugs
- Arresting drug promoters
- Arresting drug traffickers
- Suspected arrests for promoting and dealing drugs in the UAE (2012-2022) has an increasing trajectory from 19.5% in 2016 to 216.7% in 2021. It sits at 29.6% in 2022.

SIGNS OF ADDICTION:

- Extreme desire for the substance
- Inability to quit
- Depression
- Unstable mood
- Irritation and overreaction
- Social isolation
- Poor concentration
- Professional and academic instability
- Unstable personal and professional relationships
- Financial instability/filing for bankruptcy
- Previous criminal record and behaviour

KEY STATISTICS:

- 5.6% of world's population abuse drugs
- 230million people abuse drugs and other substances
- 12,000 individuals die annually because of syntenic narcotics
- 1 in every 200 people is a drug addict



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