

Crime prevention policy	
EU- priority	Drug related crimes
Country	Hungary
Year	2019

1. Overview of the field

National drug laws

The new Criminal Code came into force on 1 July 2013. The drug control sections are organised to cover trafficking, possession, incitement of minors to use drugs or similar substances, assisting production, precursors, new psychoactive substances (NPS) and performance enhancement (doping).

http://thb.kormany.hu/download/a/46/11000/Btk_EN.pdf

(Act C of 2012 on the Criminal Code, Chapter XVII)

Consumption was reintroduced as a criminal offence, punishable by up to two years in prison (it had been deleted from the 2003 Criminal Code). Possession is still punishable by up to two years in prison if it involves small quantities, but other penalties are now one to five years for a basic offence, increasing to two to eight years if the offence is committed under certain circumstances, and 5-10 and 5-15 years if the offence involves a larger quantity of drugs. Similar sentence ranges are available for supply offences, although they increase to 5-20 years' imprisonment if they involve certain circumstances and life imprisonment if large quantities are involved. Various lower maximum penalties for offences committed by drug users, introduced in 2003, were repealed in 2013; however, the court may take the perpetrator's drug use into consideration when imposing punishment. The option to suspend prosecution in the case of treatment is available to offenders committing drug law offences that involve only small quantities of drugs (production, manufacture, acquiring, possession for personal use); this is not available within two years of a previous suspension.

To control NPS in Hungary, a government decree set up a formalised rapid assessment in 2012. This allowed the inclusion of NPS in Decree 55/2014 of the Minister of Human Capacities. Inclusion means a temporary control for one year with the possibility of an extension of one year (or until new information emerges). Accordingly, a new section of the 2013 Criminal Code provided for a punishment of up to three years in prison for manufacture and (since January 2014) one to five years for supply and up to three years for possession of more than a small amount of NPS ('small amount' was reduced from 10 g to 2 g in 2017). The section penalising the incitement of minors to use 'a substance or agent that has a narcotic effect but is not classified as a drug' has been retained, although the maximum penalty has been reduced from three to two years.

Assessment of trends and developments

In Hungary, cannabis is the most commonly used illicit substance among the general population and its use is concentrated among young adults aged 18-34 years. The most recent data point to a decrease in last year cannabis use among young adults. Against this background, use of MDMA/ecstasy, cocaine and amphetamines increased in 2007-15.

Following the emergence of new psychoactive substances (NPS) in the Hungarian drug market, these substances, which mainly belong to groups of synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones or amphetamine derivatives, have become as popular as established illicit drugs, in particular among young adults.

Drug use among students is reported in the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD). This study has been conducted among 16-year-old students in Hungary regularly since 1995. The results of the 2015 ESPAD study confirmed that cannabis remains the most commonly used drug among this group, albeit at a lower level than in 2011, and that lifetime use of cannabis among Hungarian students is somewhat lower than the ESPAD average (35 countries). The prevalence rates of lifetime use of illicit drugs other than cannabis and NPS are similar to the ESPAD averages. In contrast, more Hungarian students reported use of alcohol in the last 30 days, and the reported frequency of heavy episodic drinking was also higher than the average for all countries.

High-risk drug use and trends

Studies reporting estimates of high-risk use can help to identify the extent of the more entrenched drug use problems, while data on first-time entrants to specialised drug treatment centres, when considered alongside other indicators, can inform an understanding of the nature of and trends in high-risk drug use.

In the Hungarian context, high-risk drug use is currently linked mainly to injection of stimulants and NPS. There were an estimated 6 707 current injectors in 2015 (0.98 per 1 000 population). Studies carried out in recent years indicate that there has been a shift from injecting established drugs (heroin and amphetamines) to injecting NPS (largely synthetic cathinones), which has been confirmed by toxicological analyses of residues on injecting paraphernalia. According to data on clients of needle and syringe programmes, the proportion of drug users injecting heroin who attend these facilities has decreased significantly over the last decade.

The data from specialised treatment centres in Hungary indicate that there has been a continuous increase in the numbers of clients seeking treatment services for NPS and a decrease in heroin treatment demand since 2010. Cannabis was the primary substance most frequently reported by first-time clients entering treatment in 2016, most of whom entered treatment as an alternative to the criminal justice system.

Injecting remains the primary mode of drug use among those entering drug treatment as a result of the use of heroin. Approximately 1 out of 10 clients entering treatment are female.

The most significant change over the last years is that the possibility of purchasing drugs and NPS on the dark net has increased.

Recent overview of statistics and research

http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/countries/drug-reports/2018/hungary_en

2. Crime strategy and coordination

Objectives of the crime strategy

Hungary's National Anti-Drug Strategy 2013-20, entitled 'Clear consciousness, sobriety and the fight against drug crime', focuses on illicit drugs and was adopted in 2013. It is based on five core values: the right to life, human dignity and health; personal and community responsibility; community action; cooperation; and an evidence base. The strategy addresses three areas of intervention: (i) health development and drug prevention; (ii) treatment, care and recovery; and (iii) supply reduction. The strategy outlines indicators for monitoring its implementation and the organisations responsible for collecting information. The related policy programme is an action plan that supports the implementation of the strategy and was adopted by the government by a decree in 2015.

Like other European countries, Hungary evaluates its drug policy and strategy using ongoing indicator monitoring and specific research projects. In the past, external interim and final evaluations of the first national drug strategy, for 2000-09, have been undertaken.

Role of prevention in the crime strategy on state/regional/local level

Drug abuse prevention is one of the main priorities of the Police within the field of crime prevention. The toolbox of the Police contains education programs, presentations in schools and advisory services. The 16/2016. (VII.21.) order of the National Police - about the coherent implementation of the child protection programmes – sets the responsibilities of the central, regional and local authorities.

Implementation of the policy (which level is responsible for the implementation and how is the implementation coordinated?)

The Hungarian National Anti-Drug Strategy 2013-20 prioritises drug prevention activities and defines 10 main settings where they should be carried out: local communities, families, general education, child protection institution systems, higher education, peer groups, the media, workplaces, prisons and institutions providing treatment as an alternative to criminal proceedings.

In Hungary, prevention activities are mainly financed by the state-supported annual grant system.

Stakeholders (working groups, specialised agencies, partners, etc)

National coordination mechanisms

The Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee on Drug Affairs advises the government and is chaired by the Secretary of State for Social Affairs and Social Inclusion. It includes representatives from all relevant ministries and national institutions, and the Council on Drug Affairs includes representatives of civil society. The National Drug Prevention Coordination Unit is part of the Department for Social and Child Welfare Services. It is responsible for operational and strategic coordination at the national level and the implementation of the drug strategy. Since 2017, the Department for Creating Opportunities has included the Department for Drug Prevention Programmes. The Directorate-General for Social Affairs and Child Protection supports the activities of the Coordination Forums on Drug Affairs, which are tasked with operational and strategic coordination at local level. It assists the coordination forums with programmes in the area of prevention and facilitates drug-related research and information dissemination.

Participation in European/ international networks, working groups, etc.

The Hungarian Police participate in the work of EUROPOL EMPACT and EMCDDA.

3. Good practices

Overview of recent good practices, prevention programs, etc.

After years-long break in 2018 the Hungarian Police joined the international day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. They sent out almost 8000 thousand brochures about party safety through their Public Electronic Crime Prevention Information System. In the two week long campaign they reached out to 37 500 people who were participating in drug prevention lectures and learned about assistance. The campaign had a broader coverage in the media that led to wider publicity.

1. Kindergarten Police Officer programme

The main goal of the programme is to reach out efficiently to the youngest by taking into account the audience's characteristics and to provide age-appropriate crime prevention content for them. Hopefully the programme helps them develop a safety-conscious behaviour.

2. DADA programme

The programme was developed for primary school pupils until the age of 14. The programme aims to teach children to be able to differentiate positive and negative influences and to efficiently solve their conflicts and to recognise and avoid dangerous situations. The programme contains situational and role-play games as well as guided conversations.

3. ELLEN-SZER programme

This programme is for students in the 9th or 10th grade in different secondary schools (grammar schools and vocational schools). The main aim of the programme is to

teach the children how to think independently and critically and how to behave in groups, to show them where individual responsibility lies, and to develop decision-making skills and systematic thinking as well as their social skills, empathy and emotional intelligence. The basic principle of the programme is to enhance the security level of young people regarding the most serious deviancies, criminal activities and use of drugs. In addition to the above, the programme aims to raise awareness of the measures to be taken against criminal offences.

4. Crime Prevention Advisors at schools

This nationwide available program for crime prevention advisors aims to reach the youth especially adolescences between 14-18 year thus it has been implemented in middle-schools. The main goal is to have school advisers (professionals/police officers who participated in a 3 week-long course) who are permanently available in 3 schools within the area of their responsibility (within the territory of their police headquarters). Advisers must spend 80% of their working time at schools. Since only 300 institutions have the chance to participate in this program we need to sort them. The selection is based on the schools' criminal records and the information linked to child protection. While at school the advisers wear civilian clothes to gain trust among youth. They help the teachers' everyday work and hold lessons by using the ELLEN-SZER modules.

5. Drug abuse prevention network

In 2014 the Police started a programme that willing to include parents in the prevention of drug abuse. The programme is based on the National Anti-Drug Strategy and the National Crime Prevention Strategy and aims to provide -at least one occasion a year- when parents can ask and get direct information about the risks of drug use and the related justice procedures. In order to promote the programme the participating police officers present themselves on the monthly occasions of the 'We deliver safety' programme where citizens can approach them directly.