

Crime prevention policy	
EU- priority	Drug related crime
Country	Latvia
Year	2018

1. Overview of the field

Definition of drug related crime

Criminal offences related to illegal circulation of psychoactive substances and precursors that are newly registered as narcotic, psychotropic, and psychotropic substances in Latvia.

- Unauthorised manufacture, acquisition, storage, transportation and forwarding of narcotic and psychotropic substances for the purpose of disposal and unauthorised disposal. Unauthorised sale of narcotic or psychotropic substances in small amounts.
- Unauthorised manufacture, acquisition, storage, transportation and forwarding of narcotic and psychotropic substances without the purpose of disposal.
- Unauthorised acquisition or storage in small amounts of narcotic or psychotropic substances without the purpose of disposal or committing unauthorised use of narcotic or psychotropic substances, if it has been committed by a person who has been warned regarding criminal liability for unauthorised acquisition, storage and use of narcotic and psychotropic substances.
- Bringing in of goods or other valuables into the customs territory of the Republic of Latvia or taking out thereof, by avoiding customs control or concealing such goods or other valuables from such control, or not declaring such goods or other valuables, or using false customs or other documents, or in any other illegal way (smuggling), if it is committed on a significant scale.
- Violation of provisions regarding the production, acquisition, storage, registration, dispensation, transportation and Forwarding of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances.
- Unauthorised dispensation of narcotic and psychotropic substances.
- Manufacture, acquisition, storage, transportation, forwarding and disposal of equipment and substances (precursors) intended for unauthorised manufacture of narcotic and psychotropic substances.
- Encouraging to use narcotic, psychotropic and new psychoactive substances.
- Administering of narcotic, psychotropic substances and new psychoactive substances against a person's will.
- Unauthorised sowing and growing of plants containing narcotic substances.
- Unauthorised manufacture, acquisition, storage, transportation and forwarding for the purpose of disposal of new psychoactive substances and sale.
- Unauthorised manufacture, acquisition, storage, transportation, forwarding of new psychoactive substances and unauthorised use of new psychoactive substances.

In Latvia, unauthorised use, acquisition and storage of small amounts of illicit drugs are administrative offences punishable by a warning or a fine of up to EUR 280. Possession of larger amounts for personal use (precisely defined in the law 'On the procedures for the coming into force and application of the criminal law') can lead to a criminal penalty of up to three years in prison.

Repeated unauthorised use, preparation, acquisition or possession of small amounts of illicit drugs within 12 months of a previous offence is a criminal offence, and is punishable by a short term of imprisonment of between 15 days and three months, or community service or a fine.

The court is able to impose treatment with a suspended sentence, or to release a drug user from criminal or administrative liability if the user has agreed to undergo treatment; however, no underlying control mechanism has been established.

Traffickers of any quantity may be sentenced to 2-8 years' imprisonment, increasing to 3-10 years if the offender is part of a group, or 5-15 years if a large amount of illicit drugs was trafficked or an

organized group was involved. Unauthorised sale of small amounts is punishable by imprisonment for up to three years.

In 2013, the Amendment of the Regulation on Narcotic Substances, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors to be Controlled in Latvia introduced the principle of a generic control system for new psychoactive substances (NPS). Furthermore, the amendments of the law 'On procedures for the legal trade of narcotic and psychotropic substances and medicinal products' introduced temporary control for a period up to 12 months, punishable by a fine. In 2014, these supply-related offences became criminal, punishable by up to two years in prison, or five years if causing substantial harm, and later that year personal possession of NPS became an administrative offence, punishable with a fine of up to EUR 280, with the possibility of a criminal charge if repeated within one year. Like the established drugs, the mode of punishment (administrative or criminal) for NPS-related offences depends on the amount of substance involved (small or large), except for drug-trafficking cases, which always incur criminal liability.

Assessment of trends and developments

Cannabis is the most common illicit drug used by the general population aged 15-64 years in Latvia. Drug use is mainly concentrated among young adults aged 15-34 years, and males generally report illicit drug use more often than females. In general, lifetime prevalence of cannabis use has remained stable among young adults in Latvia. Use of other illicit drugs is less common among the general population.

High-risk drug use in Latvia is mainly linked to the use of opioids and amphetamines. The estimated number of high-risk opioid users in 2016 was around 6 200 persons (around 4.9 per 1 000 adult population). The same study suggested that there were around 2 200 high-risk amphetamine users (1.8 per 1 000 adult population) in Latvia. Available data from other sources indicate that opioid use (including use of the home-made opioid called hanka) may have decreased, with some opioid users switching to amphetamine in the past decade.

Experimentation with new psychoactive substances emerged in 2011; however, use of these substances at the moment is uncommon as the result of actions taken. In 2013, the Amendment of the Regulation on Narcotic Substances, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors to be Controlled in Latvia introduced the principle of a generic control system for new psychoactive substances. Furthermore, the amendments of the law 'On procedures for the legal trade of narcotic and psychotropic substances and medicinal products' introduced temporary control for a period up to 12 months, punishable by a fine. In 2014, these supply-related offences became criminal.

Synthetic opioids that are entering the market have become a problematic issue. The effect of the substance is stronger than traditional opioids and the use of the substance more often ends with fatal outcomes.

Recent overview of statistics and research

Number of criminal offenses related to the illegal circulation of psychoactive substances and precursors introduced in the lists of narcotic, psychotropic, and psychotropic substances in Latvia

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 (Jan-Jun)

Unauthorised manufacture, acquisition, storage, transportation and forwarding of narcotic and psychotropic substances for the <u>purpose of disposal</u> and unauthorised <u>disposal</u> . Unauthorised sale of narcotic or psychotropic substances in small amounts.	586	695	603	533	329
Unauthorised sale of narcotic or psychotropic substances in small amounts.	27	30	20	24	10
Unauthorised manufacture, acquisition, storage, transportation and forwarding of narcotic and psychotropic substances <u>without the purpose of disposal</u>	699	704	784	787	415
Unauthorised acquisition or storage in small amounts of narcotic or psychotropic substances without the purpose of disposal thereof, or who commits unauthorised use of narcotic or psychotropic substances, if it has been committed by a person who has been warned regarding criminal liability for unauthorised acquisition, storage and use of narcotic and psychotropic substances.	1347	1562	1307	1100	542
Bringing in of goods or other valuables into the customs territory of the Republic of Latvia or taking out thereof, by avoiding customs control or concealing such goods or other valuables from such control, or not declaring such goods or other valuables, or using false customs or other documents, or in any other illegal way (smuggling), if it is committed on a significant scale.	106	619	368	158	239
Violation of provisions regarding the production, acquisition, storage, registration, dispensation, transportation and forwarding of narcotic and psychotropic substances.	0	0	1	0	0
Unauthorised dispensation of narcotic and psychotropic substances.	0	0	5	0	1
Manufacture, acquisition, storage, transportation, forwarding and disposal of equipment and substances (precursors) intended for unauthorised manufacture of narcotic and psychotropic substances.	1	3	1	3	2
Encouraging to use narcotic, psychotropic and new psychoactive substances.	1	2	0	0	1
Administering of narcotic, psychotropic substances and new psychoactive substances against a person's will.	0	1	2	0	1
Unauthorised sowing and growing of plants containing narcotic substances.	25	27	34	49	15
Unauthorised manufacture, acquisition, storage, transportation and forwarding for the <u>purpose of disposal</u> of	30	0	0	0	0

new psychoactive substances and sale.					
Unauthorised manufacture, acquisition, storage, transportation, forwarding of new psychoactive substances and unauthorised use of new psychoactive substances	1	0	0	0	0

Seizures of illegal drugs, psychoactive substances and precursors introduced in the lists of narcotic, psychotropic, and psychotropic substances in Latvia

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 (Jan-Jun)
Methamphetamines (g)	8972,62	29092,69	16742,39	11756,62 g ¹ , 49 pills, 4,92 mL	8107.39 g, 10.5 mL
Amphetamines (g)	7450,11	26716,39	1752,45	8813,91 g ² , 11 pills, 3,88 mL	41938.69
Cannabis herb (kg)	26,8 (dried), 11,5 (not dried)	58,4 (dried), 20,1 (not dried)	44,41 (dried); 50,41 (not dried)	42,8 (dried) ³ , 102,5 (not dried) ⁴	23.96 (dried); 10.78 (not dried)
Cannabis resin (g)	29502,59	1156504,49	2899	202170,9 ⁵	281.37
Heroin (g)	771,13	10085,07	150,92	163,69	27.64
Cocaine (g)	7863,43	5432,89	33826,0601	2273,52 ⁶	3858.40
New Psychoactive Substances	17596,26 g, 30 pills, 176 marks, 2 blotter paper, 2 capsules	8541,281 g, 70 marks, 122 pills	1739,5492 g; 215 marks; 187 pills; 91 mL	760010,87 g ⁷ , 125pills, 3,88 mL, 143 marks	478.98 g, 369 marks, 0.2 mL, 306 pills
MDMA or related substances	Substances containing MDMA (12,06 g), Pills containing MDMA in grams (331,01 g), Pills containing MDMA (119	MDMA (1038,13 g), Substances containing MDMA (1871,21 g), Pills containing MDMA in grams (44,29	877,92 g, 881 pills	27506,33 g, 3223 pills	2074.035 g, 1155.88 (pills - grams), 5081 pills

¹ Amount includes methamphetamine-containing mixture of substances, 6 seizures, 538,41 g

² Amount includes amphetamine-containing mixture of substances, 1 seizure, 171,29 g

³ Amount includes cannabis-containing mixture of substances, 75 seizures, 66,1 g

⁴ Amount includes cannabis-containing mixture of substances, 1 seizure, 4,11 g

⁵ Amount includes cannabis resin-containing mixture of substances, 1 seizure, 0,59 g

⁶ Amount includes cocaine-containing mixture of substances, 1 seizure, 72,29 g

⁷ Amount includes seizures of *Catha edulis* (*Khat*), 717,1 kg (700272,4 g dried, 16828 g not dried)

	pills)	g), Pills containing MDMA (205 pills)			
Medicine that includes narcotic, psychotropic substances	1262,66 g, 5352 pills, 498 mL	2634,69 g, 12991 pills	4752,13 g, 8354 pills, 0,5 mL	2870,15 g, 9085 pills, 1052,32 mL ⁸ , 61000 capsules	1210.221 g, 3249 mL, 5163 pills

More detailed information is available in the Drug Report 2018 of Latvia (http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/countries/drug-reports/2018/latvia_en).

This report presents the top-level overview of the drug phenomenon in Latvia, covering drug supply, use and public health problems as well as drug policy and responses. The statistical data reported relate to 2016 (or most recent year) and are provided to the EMCDDA by the national focal point.

2. Crime strategy and coordination

Objectives of the crime strategy

Latvia's National Programme on Drug Control and Drug Addiction Restriction for 2011–17 was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on March 14th 2011. It was developed in accordance with the Regulation for Development of Planning Documents and Impact Assessment, the Latvian Strategic Development Plan 2010–13 and also reflects the principles of EU drug policy. It sets out three main goals:

- to reduce the tolerance of illicit drug use in society;
- to reduce the harm caused to society through illicit drug use by making effective healthcare services available for drug users;
- to reduce the availability of illicit drugs.

The strategy is accompanied by an action plan built around four pillars:

- prevention of drug addiction and drug abuse (two policy impact indicators, four performance indicators, 10 actions);
- healthcare of addiction patients and drug users (two policy impact indicators, seven performance indicators, 15 actions);
- reduction of drug supply (two policy impact indicators, seven performance indicators, 12 actions);
- cross-cutting direction on policy coordination, monitoring, data collection and information analyses (16 actions).

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

Drug prevention is one of the key topics of several national planning documents. The National Development Plan 2014-20 emphasizes prevention of psychoactive substance use and other addictive behaviors. Prevention of drug use is one of the four pillars of the National Programme on Drug Control and Drug Addiction Restriction 2011-17, and is also an integral part of the Public Health

⁸ Amount includes seizures of liquid that contains pseudoephedrine and ephedrone (1 seizure) un ephedrone/pseudoephedrine-containing mixture of substances (1 seizure), together 27,4 mL

Guidelines 2014-20. In general, drug prevention activities are integrated into broader health promotion activities and are implemented in a decentralised manner. Districts and municipalities play a main role in planning and funding prevention activities implemented outside school curricula.

Prevention interventions encompass a wide range of approaches, which are complementary. Environmental and universal strategies target entire populations, selective prevention targets vulnerable groups that may be at greater risk of developing substance use problems and indicated prevention focuses on at-risk individuals. Environmental strategies in Latvia are mostly focused on restriction of smoking, including electronic cigarettes, and the consumption of alcohol among the general population. These include, for example, limiting the sale of alcohol in large-volume packaging, and a gradual increase of the tax on tobacco products. Universal prevention activities are mainly implemented in school settings. Health classes that also address substance use are integrated into the basic national curriculum within the subjects of 'social sciences' for grades 1-9 and 'health education' in secondary schools. The health education classes are optional for all secondary schools. Many schools involve medical doctors or other health promotion professionals, police officers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in their informational and educational activities. Peer education and life skills-based methodologies are mainly used in extracurricular activities. At community level, universal prevention activities primarily focus on the provision of alternative leisure activities involving family, training of professionals and organizing security services and video surveillance in schools.

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

The Drug Control and Drug Addiction Restriction Coordination Council is chaired by the prime minister and comprises seven ministers and several national experts. It is responsible for coordinating government agencies, municipalities and NGOs tasked with implementing the national drug strategy. In addition to supervising four ad hoc groups, which work on supply reduction, demand reduction, legal turnover and information analysis, the Council is tasked with developing drug programmes and their implementation and evaluation.

The Council Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day coordination of activities related to the Programme on Drug Control and Drug Addiction Restriction. Appointed by the Minister of Interior, the Head of the Council Secretariat functions as the National Drug Coordinator and is responsible for coordinating the work of the Council Secretariat and the Council's working groups. The Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, which houses the national focal point of the Reitox network, coordinates day-to-day monitoring work and the collection and dissemination of information on illicit and licit drugs.

According to Latvia's National Programme on Drug Control and Drug Addiction Restriction the State Police of Latvia is responsible for drug supply reduction and only partly for demand reduction (prevention of drug addiction and drug abuse is mostly a task for Ministry of Health).

Prevention in the State Police of Latvia is implemented at several levels. Crime prevention unit operates at the state level managing the analytical work, programs and interventions, developing and coordinating actions for regional and local-level tasks.

The structure of the State Police of Latvia is divided into 5 regions. There are 5 units responsible for regional interventions and solving problems that are relevant only to a particular region and coordinating local police station work at regional level.

At local level, there are 41 police stations and each police station is responsible for local prevention tasks.

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

- State Police of Latvia ensures management of the " Supply Reduction Task Force of the Drug Control and Drug Addiction Control Coordinating Council "
- In 2016, Crime Prevention Unit of the State Police of Latvia in co-operation with the Ministry of the Interior, launched a consultative network for organizations involved in the fight against

drugs. More than 30 organizations are taking part in this network. For example:

- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of the Interior
- The Ministry of Welfare
- Latvian Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (CDPC)
- Department of Addiction Control of the Riga City Council Social Welfare Department
- "Psychiatric and Narcology Center of Riga"
- NGO "DIA+LOGS" – Support Center for those affected by HIV/AIDS
- Etc.

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

- State Police of Latvia ensures fulfillment of tasks of the European Union's Policy Cycle for Combating Serious and Organized Crime 2018-2021. g. The 2018 Emergency Plan for the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Assets (EMPACT) Priority "Synthetic Drugs and New Psychoactive Substances".
- State Police of Latvia participates in the Joint Commission of the Republic of Latvia on the agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan on cooperation in the fight against organized crime, terrorism, illicit drug trafficking, psychotropic substances and precursor circulation.
- State Police of Latvia participates in the provision of the Latvian Presidency for the Special Task Force on Combating Organized Crime of the Baltic Sea Region, TASK FORCE.
- State Police of Latvia is participating in the annual Drug Supply Reporting Group of the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA).
- State Police of Latvia provides cooperation and information exchange with the UNODC, the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), and Europol on drug supply reduction issues.

3. Good practices

Overview of recent good practices, prevention programs, etc.

Solving local problems

In 2014 and 2015, representatives of the State Police of Latvia implemented the trainings of school methodologists on the various topics (State Police, drugs, Internet security, etc. security issues).

In order to reduce the risks of violent offenses in educational institutions as well as to improve the safety and ability of educational institutions to identify risks in a timely manner, a long-term prevention program was launched and implemented in 2015 – Safe School. The program includes school environment assessment, teacher training and school staff training and classes for students. A Safe School program includes various security topics, including drugs.

State Police officers whose duties include prevention of crime committed by juveniles visit schools every year in order to discourage young people from using drugs.

In these classes police officers are showing informative educational presentations such as: "Another experiment", "Unpredictable death", "Use in the crowd, die alone!", "Choice - Action - Consequences", "Drugs - No", etc.

In 2014 – 473 preventive interventions in schools were made.

In 2015 – 143 preventive interventions in schools were made.

In 2016 – 115 preventive interventions in schools were made.

In 2017 – 129 preventive interventions in schools were made.

Systematic information and education on security issues

2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Together with the specialists of the Drug Addiction Assistance Service, the State Police officers participated in the development of informative video material on drugs and drug related issues for juveniles. • Informative booklet on "The Facts You Need to Know about Drugs" were developed. Booklets are designed for adults to focus their attention on drug issue and remind them of essential security measures, as well as advice on how to improve their safety and safety of their children. They also include directions on where to look for help. Booklets are made in an easy-to-understand way, abundantly using icons and images, avoiding hard-to-understand and solid text. Also, booklets are designed with an informative educational function, both by presenting the reader with the latest, current statistics, and discovering so far unknown, interesting facts. The booklets are intended to be distributed at educational institutions, parental meetings, various events, etc. • Table (card) game "I say NO" was developed. This game is in inviting players (age 8-14) for discussion about drugs. The main task of the game is react fast on a card with an action. • Throughout Latvia (in each region), free informative educational seminars were organized - "Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances. New psychoactive substances. Signs and reasons for use; risk and protective factors ". Parents, teachers and other stakeholders were invited to the workshops. The purpose of the workshops was to educate the public on problems related to narcotic and psychoactive substances, with emphasis on new psychoactive substances. • The drawing contest "Another experiment" was organized in all regions of Latvia (the aim of the contest was to promote the possibility to operate positively without the use of addictive substances, as well as to promote the development of creative thinking). A total of 588 pupils took part in the contest. • On June 26, 2014, an anti-drug concert took place within the framework of the International Anti-Drug Day to promote positive ways of spending time and to report on the risks of drug use. • Information to various media (television, radio, Internet, newspapers, etc.) provided.
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Together with the specialists of the Drug Addiction Assistance Service, the State Police officers participated in the development of informative booklet on drugs and drug related issues for juveniles. • In collaboration with the Latvian Library for the Blind, brochures for the blind in Braille "Brochure for Adults and Children - Addictive Substances" were developed. • Informative booklert on "A youngster uses drugs - what to do?" were developed. Booklets are designed for adults to focus their attention on drug issue and remind them of essential security measures, as well as advice on how to improve their safety and safety of their children. They also include directions on where to look for help. Booklets are made in an easy-to-understand way, abundantly using icons and images, avoiding hard-to-understand and solid text. Also, booklets are designed with an informative educational function, both by presenting the reader with the latest, current statistics, and discovering so far unknown, interesting facts. The booklets are intended to be distributed at educational institutions, parental meetings, various events, etc. • Throughout Latvia (in each region), free informative educational seminars were organized - "Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances. New psychoactive substances. Signs and reasons for use; risk and protective factors ". Parents,

	<p>teachers and other stakeholders were invited to the workshops. The purpose of the workshops was to educate the public on problems related to narcotic and psychoactive substances, with emphasis on new psychoactive substances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information to various media (television, radio, Internet, newspapers, etc.) provided. • Infographics for children on several topics including alcohol, tobacco and drugs were developed.
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information to various media (television, radio, Internet, newspapers, etc.) provided.
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the campaign organized by the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on safe travel and the phenomenon of drug smuggling involving Latvian citizens. • Information to various media (television, radio, Internet, newspapers, etc.) provided.

Improving the effectiveness of the State Police prevention system

2014	<p>Seminars on drug issues were organized to improve the knowledge of juvenile inspectors in the field of drug demand reduction. These workshops prepared inspectors to manage lectures on drug theme and were conducted in the context of a complex drug demand reduction measure.</p>
2015	<p>In cooperation with the NGO "Go Beyond", training for juvenile inspectors "Acquiring methods for the prevention of addictive substances" was provided. Seminars on drug issues were organized to improve the knowledge of juvenile inspectors in the field of drug demand reduction.</p>
2016	<p>In cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, a network of preventive co-operation counseling partners was established.</p> <p>Participation in various conferences and experience sharing seminars, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar organized by NGO "DIA + LOGS" in collaboration with the Eurasian Harm Reduction Network "Preparing for UNGASS 2016: A Discussion of Common Understanding on Drug Policies"; • Workshop organized by Latvian Centre for Disease Prevention and Control on "The use of the European Drug Prevention Quality Standard (EDPQS) in the planning, implementation and evaluation of prevention programs". <p>Participation in the study organized by Latvian Centre for Disease Prevention and Control on the drug use in amusement places.</p>
2017	<p>In cooperation with the NGO "DIA + LOGS", a seminar was organized for State Police officers on the launch of the work on the new harm reduction mobile unit (syringe exchange) in Riga by NGO "DIA + LOGS".</p>