



While global markets for cocaine, heroin and cannabis declined or remained stable, the production and abuse of prescription opioid drugs and new synthetic drugs rose, according to the World Drug Report 2011 (www.unodc.org/wdr). Illicit cultivation of opium poppy and coca bush remained limited to a few countries. Although there was a sharp decline in opium production and a modest reduction in coca cultivation, overall, the manufacture of heroin and cocaine was still significant.

According to the report, which was launched on Thursday 23 June, globally, some 210 million people, or 4.8 per cent of the population aged 15-64, took illicit substances at least once in the previous year. Overall drug use, including problem drug use, (0.6 per cent of the population aged 15-64) remained stable. However, demand soared for substances not under international control, such as piperazine and cathinone. The effects of cannabis are also being mimicked by synthetic cannabinoids, or “spice

Cannabis remains by far the most widely produced and consumed illicit substance globally, although data on cannabis are limited. In 2009, between 2.8 per cent and 4.5 per cent of the world population aged 15-64 – between 125 and 203 million people – had used cannabis at least once in the past year.

While cannabis herb (marijuana) production is widespread, notably in the Americas and Africa, cannabis resin production (hashish) continues to be concentrated in just two countries: Morocco, supplying the West European and North African markets, and Afghanistan supplying the markets in South-West Asia. Cannabis resin was a far more profitable crop than opium poppy in 2010 in Afghanistan.

Speaking at the launch of the report, Mr Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), stressed the principle of 'shared responsibility' and the need to build national, regional and international efforts in a comprehensive strategy on the cultivation, production and trafficking of drugs. UNODC has spearheaded a number of regional mechanisms to confront the problem of Afghan opium, including the Paris Pact, the Triangular Initiative and the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre. These approaches could be models for other regions, such as South-East Asia or Central America, he said.

"Drugs cause some 200,000 deaths a year. Since people with serious drug problems provide the bulk of drug demand, treating this problem is one of the best ways of shrinking the market," he said.

In 2009, Member States reaffirmed the validity of the international drug control regime during the High-Level Segment of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. "This year is the 50th anniversary of the keystone of the international drug control system: the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. Its provisions remain sound and highly relevant, as does its central focus on the protection of health", said Mr. Fedotov.

Read the full report here: [UNDOC](#)