

Latest emerging issues: Designer drugs in East and South-East Asia

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Designer drugs: an emerging threat

- Synthetic and prescription drugs
- Increasing number and diversity
- ‘Legal highs’
 - imitate controlled substances
 - evolve rapidly



Source: U.S. National Drug Intelligence Center



Source: EMCDDA

New substances

- Piperazines (BZP & TFMPP)
- Mephedrone
- 'Spice'
- Benzodiazepines



Source: Singapore Central Narcotics Bureau



Source: U.S. National Drug Intelligence Center



Source: Utah Dept of Public Safety

Why designer drugs?

- Evade law enforcement
- Substances not controlled
- Replacements for other substances
- Meet evolving demand

Key trends

- **Global**

- Rapidly increasing seizures
- In 2010: > 40 new substances identified in Europe

- **Regional**

- Viet Nam: Emergence of TFMPP, BZP, 'Sea Water'
- Philippines: BZP sold as 'mimic ecstasy'
- Thailand: Emerging in backpacker destinations

Challenges

- To public health and law enforcement
- Require improved monitoring and coordinated response
- Problems related to non-med use of prescription drugs
- Limited data
- Will designer drugs follow the Ketamine example?

Responses/ Recommendations?

- Key issues – commonalities & differences
- Future impact on drug use, responses, policies
- Increase forensic capacity



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