The Drugs Information and Monitoring System is a national network of testing facilities that aims at gaining an insight into the market of controlled substances.

Activities: DIMS examines the content of drugs, its associated health-related risks, and analyses trends.

Method: DIMS monitors the market in controlled drugs by offering consumers the possibility to have their drugs tested.

Application: The data collected are being used for education, prevention and policy interventions.

Education: The testing facilities serve a major educational purpose and provide information on effects and risks of drugs.

Warnings: DIMS occasionally warns on a national, regional or local level, or e.g. via social media for drugs involving extra risks.

What is DIMS?

How does it work?

DIMS affiliated organizations hold weekly consulting hours.

Here, users are able to hand in drugs for analysis, anonymously and discretely.

If the sample can be determined, the composition is passed on directly.

If not, the sample is sent to the laboratory for further analysis.

A week later, the drugs have been analysed and the results are communicated.

Sometimes the result is so disturbing, that a warning or Red Alert is issued.

Highlights 2019

Nationwide coverage
Since this year DIMS operates a testing facility in each province of The Netherlands, providing nationwide coverage.

Two new testing facilities
In 2019 two new testing facilities were opened: in Amersfoort and Goes. This results in a total of 33 testing facilities.

Highest visitor count ever
With 18,092 visitors, 2019 saw the highest number of visitors ever at DIMS.

No public campaigns or Red Alerts
In 2019 DIMS issued no Red Alerts, and only two internal warnings (within testing network). These concerned high-dose ecstasy tablets and a number of powders containing the substance eutylone.

Ecstasy tablets are submitted most frequently at DIMS
The overwhelming majority of the samples submitted to DIMS consisted of ecstasy tablets (61%).

More 2C-B samples in 2019
The number of 2C-B samples submitted to DIMS almost doubled.

High MDMA content in ecstasy tablets
The average MDMA content in ecstasy tablets reached an all-time high of 172 mg MDMA (free base).

4-FA samples in 2019 usually contain 4-FMA
4-FMA was found more frequently in 4-FA samples than 4-FA itself.

Frequent detection of a different substance in 2C-B samples
2C-B samples often contained 2-bromo-4,5-dimethoxyphenethylamine, rather than 2C-B itself.
MDMA is by far the most frequently submitted substance to DIMS. In 2019, 61% of samples consisted of MDMA in tablets (also called ecstasy), and 6% consisted of MDMA in powder/crystalline form.

Average price per tablet: € 4.10. Half of the ecstasy tablets cost between 3 and 5 euro. The average price of a gram of MDMA powder is € 19.30.

Ecstasy/MDMA in 2019

The majority of the samples submitted to DIMS are sold as ecstasy tablets: in 2019 this was 61% of the total number of samples.

Effects
• Sense of intimacy
• Increased energy

Risks
• Overheating
• Exhaustion
• Brain damage

Cutting agents
• Caffeine
• Amphetamine (very rare)
• mCPP (rare)
• PMMA (rare)

On average, a tablet contains 172 mg MDMA ( ). Half of the tablets contain between 150 and 197 mg MDMA ( ), a quartile less, and a quartile more than that.

The occurrence of extremely high-dose tablets (>210 mg) still increases.

Wherever applicable, contents in this report are calculated in free base form, not as salt.
In 2019, 7.7% of samples consisted of cocaine. Average price per gram: €50.30. Half of the cocaine powders cost between 45 and 60 euro.

Risks
- Dependency
- Cardiovascular problems
- Nasal mucosa
- Paranoia

Cutting agents
- Levamisole
- Caffeine
- Phenacetine

Effects
- Increased energy
- Confident feeling

Cocaine in 2019

Average cocaine concentration (%)

The average cocaine concentration in submitted powder samples has slightly risen to 69%.

Average amphetamine concentration (%)

While there is a lot of variation between individual powders, the average amphetamine concentration has been fairly stable over time (49%).

Speed in 2019

In 2019, 6.2% of samples consisted of speed. Average price per gram: €7.40. Half of the speed powders cost between 5 and 10 euro.

Effects
- Increased energy
- Delays fatigue
- Inhibits appetite

Risks
- Overheating
- Exhaution
- Brain damage
- Paranoia
- Heavy physical strain

Cutting agent
- Caffeine
In 2019, 4.2% of submitted samples consisted of ketamine.

**Risks**
- Bad trip (k-hole)
- Nausea, vomiting
- Respiratory disorders
- Muscle stiffening or paralysis

**Effects**
- Mind altering
- Out-of-body experience

**2C-B in 2019**

2C-B (4-bromo-2,5-dimethoxyphenethylamine) is typically submitted as tablets, but can also occur as powder. In 2019, 6.7% of samples submitted to DIMS consisted of 2C-B.

**Risks**
- Bad trip (k-hole)
- Effects stronger than expected/overdose

**Effects**
- At low dose: euphoria, increased energy
- At high dose: hallucinogenic

**Cutting agents**
- Caffeine

**Average 2C-B content (mg)**
- Average 2C-B content: 11 mg
- 2C-B content covering half of the 2C-B tablets: 8 mg

In 2019 nearly all 2C-B samples contained adulterations, and sometimes no 2C-B at all. It often contained a 2C-B analog: 2-bromo-4,5-dimethoxyphenethylamine.

**Average price per tablet:** € 4.40. Half of the 2C-B tablets cost between 3.50 and 5 euro.

**The average price of a gram of 2C-B powder is € 46.20.**

**Ketamine in 2019**

In 2019, nearly all 2C-B samples contained adulterations, and sometimes no 2C-B at all. It often contained a 2C-B analog: 2-bromo-4,5-dimethoxyphenethylamine.

**Risks**
- Bad trip (k-hole)
- Nausea, vomiting
- Respiratory disorders
- Muscle stiffening or paralysis

**Effects**
- Mind altering
- Out-of-body experience

**Average price per gram:** € 24.70. Half of the ketamine powders cost between 20 and 30 euro.

**Cutting agents**
- Levamisole
- Caffeine
GHB in 2019

In 2019, 0.9% of samples consisted of GHB.

- Addictive
- Potentially life-threatening if combined with alcohol
- Risk of overdosing
- Burns mouth/esophagus
- Unconsciousness

In 2019, only 0.9% of samples consisted of GHB. The average content was 456 mg/ml GHB.

- Effecten: Euphoria, Relaxation, Loss of control, Libido enhancing
- Risks: Addictive, Potentially life-threatening if combined with alcohol, Risk of overdosing, Burns mouth/esophagus, Unconsciousness

4-FA (4-fluoramphetamine) in 2019

In 2019, 4.2% of samples consisted of 4-FA.

- Effects of 4-FA: Increased energy, Euphoria, Talkative, Delays fatigue
- Risks: Exhaustion, Nausea, Headache, Palpitations, Brain damage

The average price per tablet was €5.60. Half of the 4-FA tablets cost between 4 and 7 euro.

- Cutting agents: 4-Fluormethamphetamine (4-FMA), MDMA, Amphetamine, Caffeine

Since 2017 (the year that 4-FA was scheduled), the number of 4-FA samples has continued to drop.

- Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 2018 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 2019

Frequently, 4-FA samples do not actually contain 4-FA, but instead the legal and comparable substance 4-FMA.
Most NPS seen by DIMS are substances like 2C-B that might not be regarded as “new”, but following the EMCDDA definition are still classified as NPS. The category “other” consists of 60 different NPS or mixtures of NPS. Many of these substances are so-called research chemicals, unlegislated psychoactive substances that are commonly used by a small subset of users. The majority of the NPS submitted to DIMS in 2019 were derivatives from one of three chemical families: phenethylamines, cathinones, or tryptamines.

A small proportion of the drugs submitted to DIMS were bought via the internet. Sometimes drugs are bought via regular webshops, sometimes also via the darkweb. The percentage of samples bought online has decreased in 2019.

LSD in 2019

In 2019, 1.7% of samples consisted of LSD samples.

Average price per blotter:
€ 5.70.
Half of the blotters cost between 4 and 7 euro.

Risks
• Bad trip
• Nausea
• Flash backs

Effects
• Hallucinogenic

Cutting agents
• LSD-like substances
• NBO/Mes

Effects
• Hallucinogenic

Online purchases

A small proportion of the drugs submitted to DIMS were bought via the internet. Sometimes drugs are bought via regular webshops, sometimes also via the darkweb. The number of samples submitted to DIMS that were bought on the darkweb has, after a marked increase in 2018, decreased slightly in 2019.

NPS in 2019