

The Drug Information and Monitoring System (DIMS) in the Netherlands: implementation, results, and international comparison.

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Published

2011

Publisher

Drug Testing and Analysis

Type

Journal article

Volume

3

Issue

9

Page(s)

621-34

Abstract

The Ministry of Health in the Netherlands has made illicit drug testing for drug users possible since the 1990s, in order to prevent serious health hazards associated with unexpected dangerous substances. This system of illicit drug testing is called the Drug Information and Monitoring System (DIMS). In nearly two decades, more than 100 000 drug samples have been handed in at DIMS testing facilities. This review describes the DIMS methodology and overviews results of the three main psychostimulant drug markets that have been monitored, i.e. ecstasy, amphetamine (speed), and cocaine. Additionally, monitoring results of hallucinogens are also described for the first time. For comparison, alternative international monitoring systems are described briefly alongside some of their results. Finally, drug monitoring is discussed from the perspectives of policy, prevention, and the drug users themselves.

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