Prevalence of SPICE products in Finland



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, FINLAND



02/10/2012

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New psychoactive substances (NPS) – Legislation in Finland

- Two different laws are used to control NPS:
 - Medicines Act
 - Narcotics Act
- 28 June 2010: methylenedioxypyrovalerone (MDPV) was put under the Narcotics Act by special law
 - The classification was based on a national decision for the first time
 - → Further pressure to speed up the classification of NPS at the national level
- 1 June 2011:
 - The Narcotics Act was changed to allow national classification of NPS at the statutory level
 - The compounds have to be individually classified as prohibited drugs (there is no generic legislation)



New psychoactive substances (NPS) – Legislation in Finland (cont..)

- "The intoxicating properties and the dangers of the substances...shall be evaluated by the Finnish Medicines Agency together with the National Institute for Welfare and Health, the police and the Customs. The Finnish Medicines Agency shall send the evaluation to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and append it to it its proposal for action, which is based on whether the substance occurs or is likely to occur in Finland, before a decision can be made on making the substance subject to control measures"
 - » The Narcotics Act, section 3A

- 12 March 2012:
 - The first (7) compounds were classified using new statutory level legislation: JWH-018, JWH-073, JWH-081, methylone, bromodragonfly, mCPP, desoxypipradrol (2-DPMP)
- The Drug Policy Action Programme for 2012-2015 includes evaluation whether drugs could be banned by substance group



Classification of synthetic cannabinoids in Finland

Compound	Under the Medicines Act	Under the Narcotics Act
JWH-007	27 Sep 2010	No
JWH-015	27 Sep 2010	No
JWH-018	5 May 2009	12 Mar 2012
JWH-073	27 Sep 2010	12 Mar 2012
JWH-073-methyl derivative	27 Sep 2010	No
JWH-081	12 Aug 2010	12 Mar 2012
JWH-122	27 Sep 2010	No
JWH-133	27 Sep 2010	No
JWH-147	27 Sep 2010	No
JWH-200	27 Sep 2010	No
JWH-210	27 Sep 2010	No
JWH-398	27 Sep 2010	No



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Classification of synthetic cannabinoids in Finland (cont..)

Compound	Under the Medicines Act	Under the Narcotics Act
CP55,940	27 Sep 2010	No
HU-210	27 Sep 2010	No
HU-331	5 May 2009	No
SR144528	27 Sep 2010	No
WIN55212,2	27 Sep 2010	No
Levonantradol	12 Aug 2010	No
AM-694	27 Sep 2010	No
AM-2201	29 Nov 2011	No
RCS-4 (and its isomers)	14 Nov 2011	No
UR-144	3 Apr 2012	No



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Prevalence of SPICE products in Finland / Teemu Gunnar

Synthetic cannabinoids – seizures/findings of solid materials

- During the last years a total amount of seizures by the Customs and police authorities in Finland ~1000 kg (excl. khat, GHB and GBL)
 - Of which the most are different type of natural cannabis products
 - Of which ~100kg of amphetamine or methamphetamine
 - Of which up to ~10kg of MDPV
 - Of which ~1kg of heroine, ~3-4kg of cocaine
 - Of which tens of thousands of Subutex (buprenorphine) and ecstasy tablets
 - Of which highly variable amounts of synthetic cannabinoids (2009: >50 kg, 2010 ~1kg, 2011 ~50 kg...)
- Synthetic cannabinoid confiscations are mainly made at the border (by the Finnish Customs) from incoming mails
- Generally only small amounts (a few grams or less) are found, a few bigger findings (e.g. 21 kg of APICA was found in April 2012)
- JWH-018, JWH-073 and JWH-081 have been for years among the most prevalent ones → up-to-date (unofficial) Customs statistics show increase of AM-2201 and e.g. UR-144 (amount of seizures 2012 <2kg excl. APICA)



Synthetic cannabinoids in Finland (cont..)

- No systematic questionnaires have been conducted in Finland for evaluating prevalence of SPICE products
- In rehabilitation centres, hospitals, prisons etc. synthetic cannabinoids are generally known by the term "JWH", "Jehovas" etc.
- SPICE products are generally not very well-known among practitioners
- Synthetic cathinone MDPV and to a smaller extent "Daisy" (desoxypipradrol, 2-DPMP) are much better known
- Laboratory findings of synthetic cannabinoids in biological specimens are quite rare (traffic, clinical, prisons etc.)
- The classification of the most common JWH substances may have directed the use for other less well-known compounds

