



CENTRE FOR DRUG RESEARCH

Findings on the use and users of herbal incense/ synthetic cannabinoids

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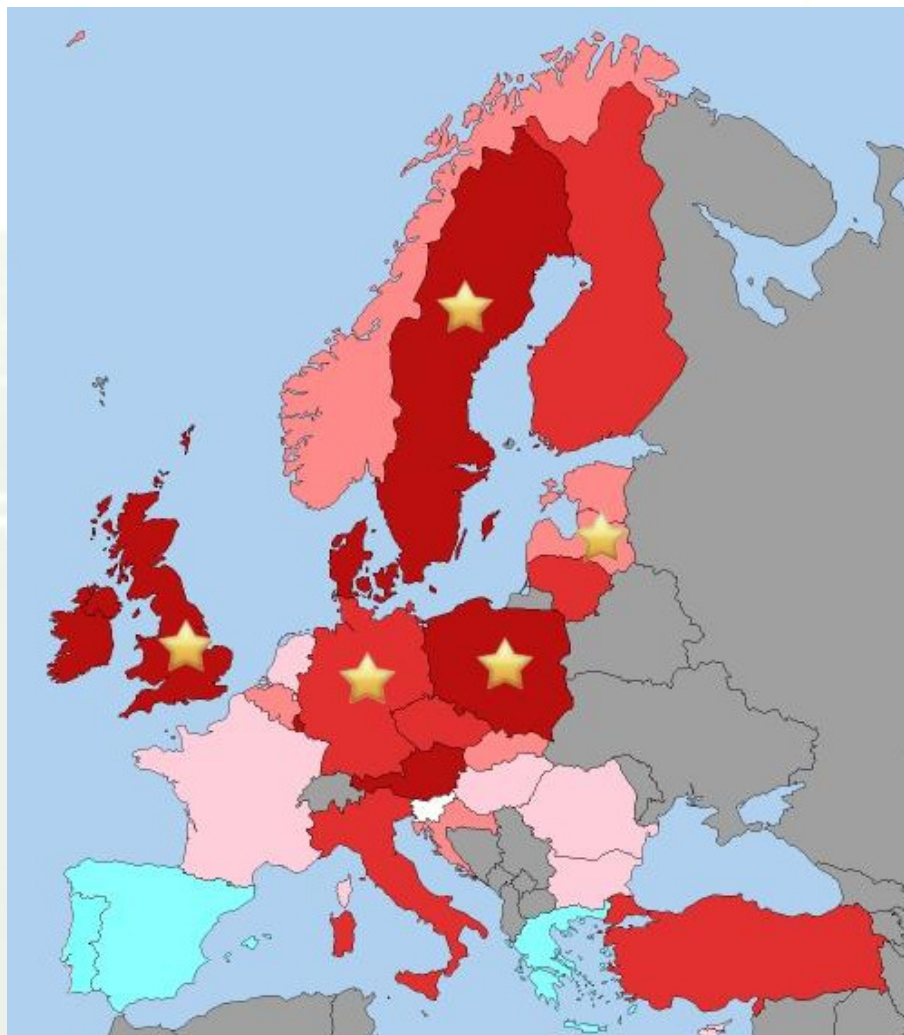
Frankfurt Spice study (pilot/ follow-up) *(funded by the City of Frankfurt and the German Ministry of Health)*

- carried out in mid-2009 (about ½ year after the German media hype)
- qualitative interviews with experts (headshop staff) and users
- media hype resulted in skyrocketing demand by mainly experimental users
- regular use of Spice mainly among young adults
- main motives for **regular** use:
 - non-detectability (traffic, treatment),
 - legality,
 - strong psychoactive effects

Legal status of synthetic cannabinoids in Europe

substances from this list:

- JWH-007
- JWH-015
- JWH-018
- JWH-019
- JWH-022
- JWH-073
- JWH-081
- JWH-098
- JWH-122
- JWH-147
- JWH-182
- JWH-200
- JWH-203
- JWH-210
- JWH-250
- JWH-251
- JWH-387
- JWH-398
- JWH-412
- CP 47,497 (& hom.)
- CP55,940
- CRA-13
- HU-210
- AM-694
- AM-2201
- MAM-2201
- WIN55,212-2
- RCS-4



Already illegal:

- 1-5 substances
- 6-9 substances
- 10-19 substances
- 20-24 substances

synth. cannabinoids not under legal control

no information

substantial Spice media hype took place

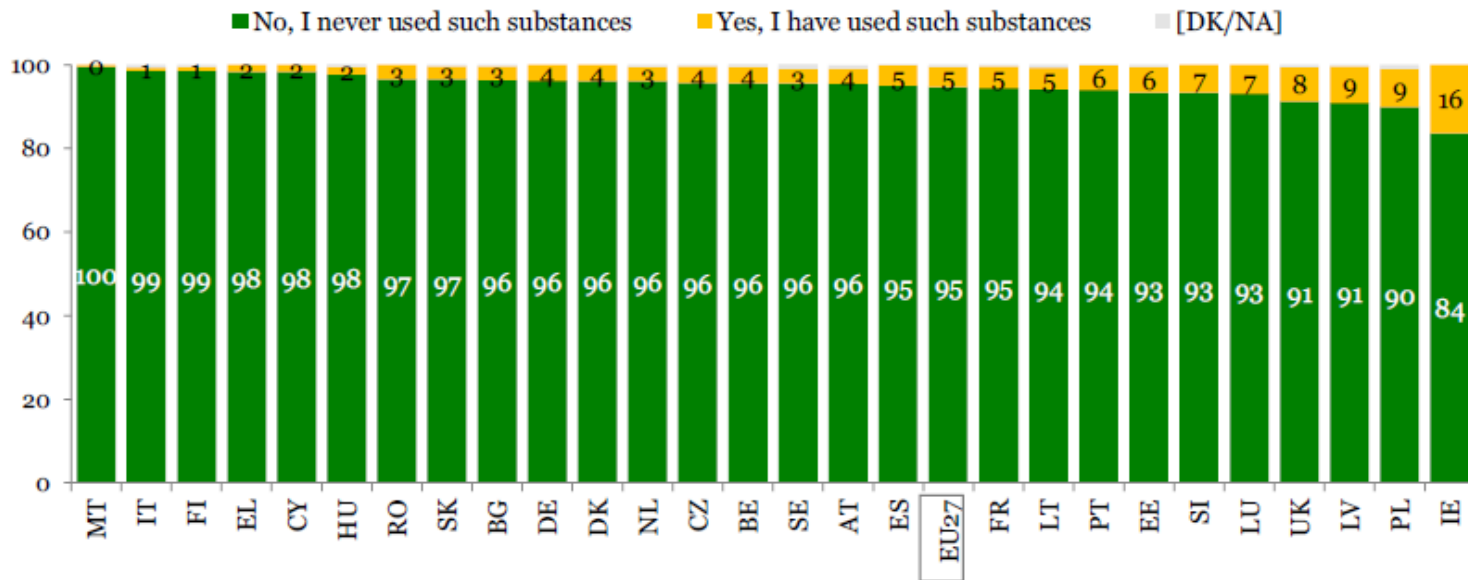


Representative data on the use of Spice products

Country	Adult population	Young adults
Germany (2009)	(18-64 years) LTP 0.8%, LYP 0.4%	(18-24 years) LTP 2.5%, LYP 1.9%
England & Wales (2010)	(16-54 years) LYP 0.2%	(16-24 years) LYP 0.4%
Switzerland (2011)		(18-20 years, male) LTP 1.4%, LYP 0.5%

Other representative data on legal highs use

Experience with legal substances that imitate the effects of illicit drugs 15-24-y-o



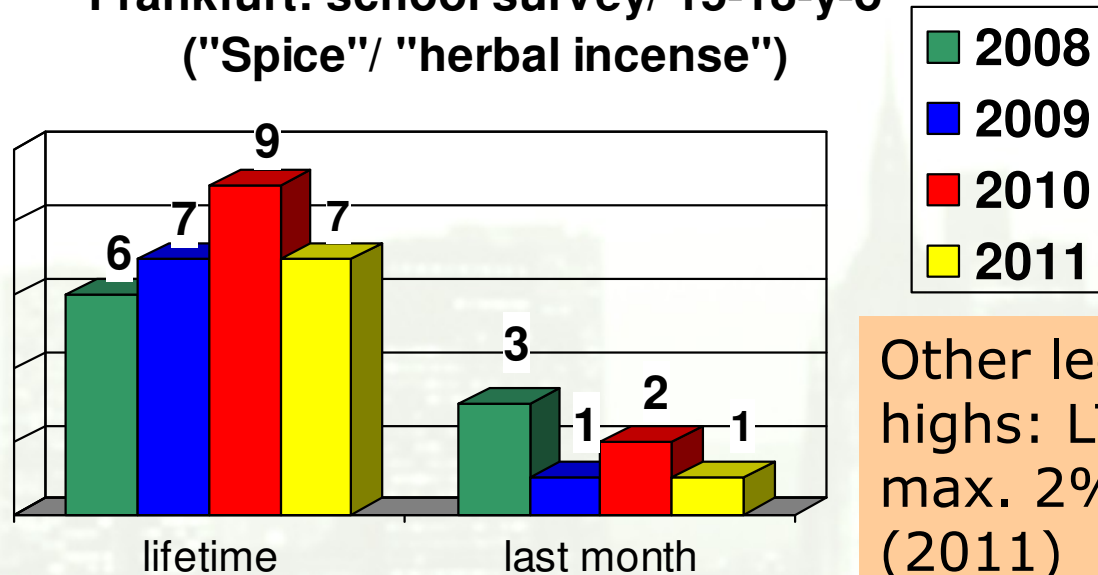
Q5. In certain countries some new substances that imitate the effects of illicit drugs are being sold as legal substances in the form of - for example - powders, tablets/pills or herbs. Have you ever used such substances?
Base: all respondents, % by country

© The Gallup Organization, 2011

Poland, adult population (15-75), 2009:
LTP: 6%, LYP: 5%, LMP: 4%
(„Dopalacze“ / „legal highs“)

Local representative data on Spice products

Frankfurt: school survey/ 15-18-y-o
("Spice"/ "herbal incense")



Other legal
highs: LTP
max. 2%
(2011)

Hamburg: school survey
(15-18-y-o), 2009:

"Spice": LTP: 6%, LMP: 1%

Vienna: general population
(over 15 y-o), 2011:

lifetime prevalence ("herbal incense
such as Spice, Lava Red etc.):
3%

Non-representative surveys on Spice products and/or other legal highs

Party/nightclub scenes (UK, Frankfurt):

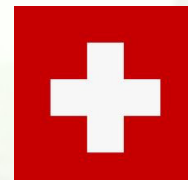
Some degree of lifetime prevalence, but hardly any use in nightlife settings

And: relatively low in comparison to mephedrone and some other NPS (particularly in the UK)

Generally, the use of „party pills“, „bath salt“ or other party drugs-like NPS seems to outweigh synthetic cannabis use in several countries, while, e.g., in Germany, cannabinoids are much more prevalent

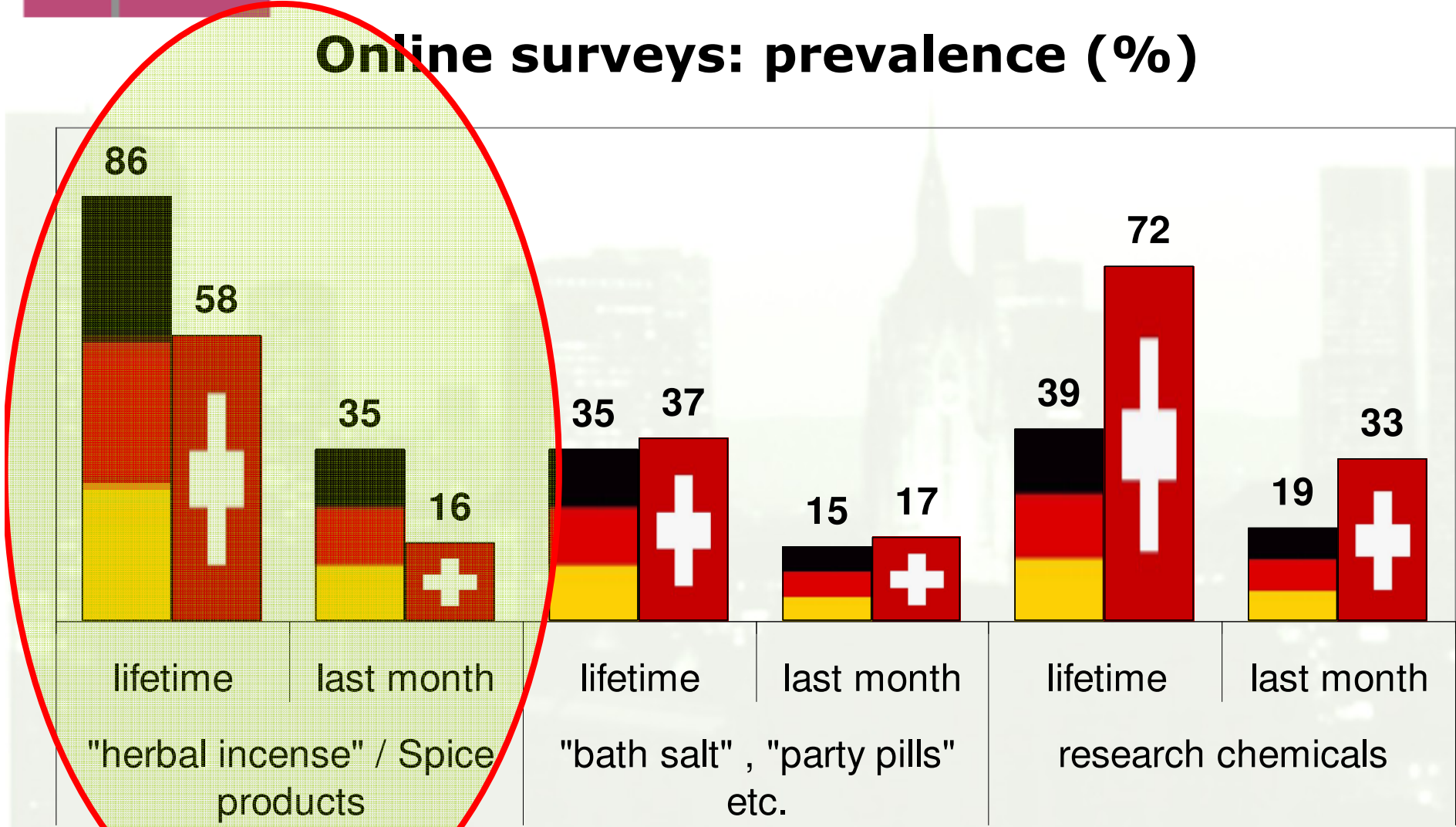
Online surveys on the use of new synthetic drugs/ legal highs in Germany and Switzerland: methods and sample

addressed to persons with experience in legal highs use, via internet resources



German Ministry of Health	Swiss Federal Health Office
June-September 2011	February-April 2012
n = 860	n = 120
<i>(completed questionnaire <u>and</u> legal highs lifetime prevalence)</i>	
89% male	79% male
age \emptyset = 24,2 y.	age \emptyset = 25,5 y.

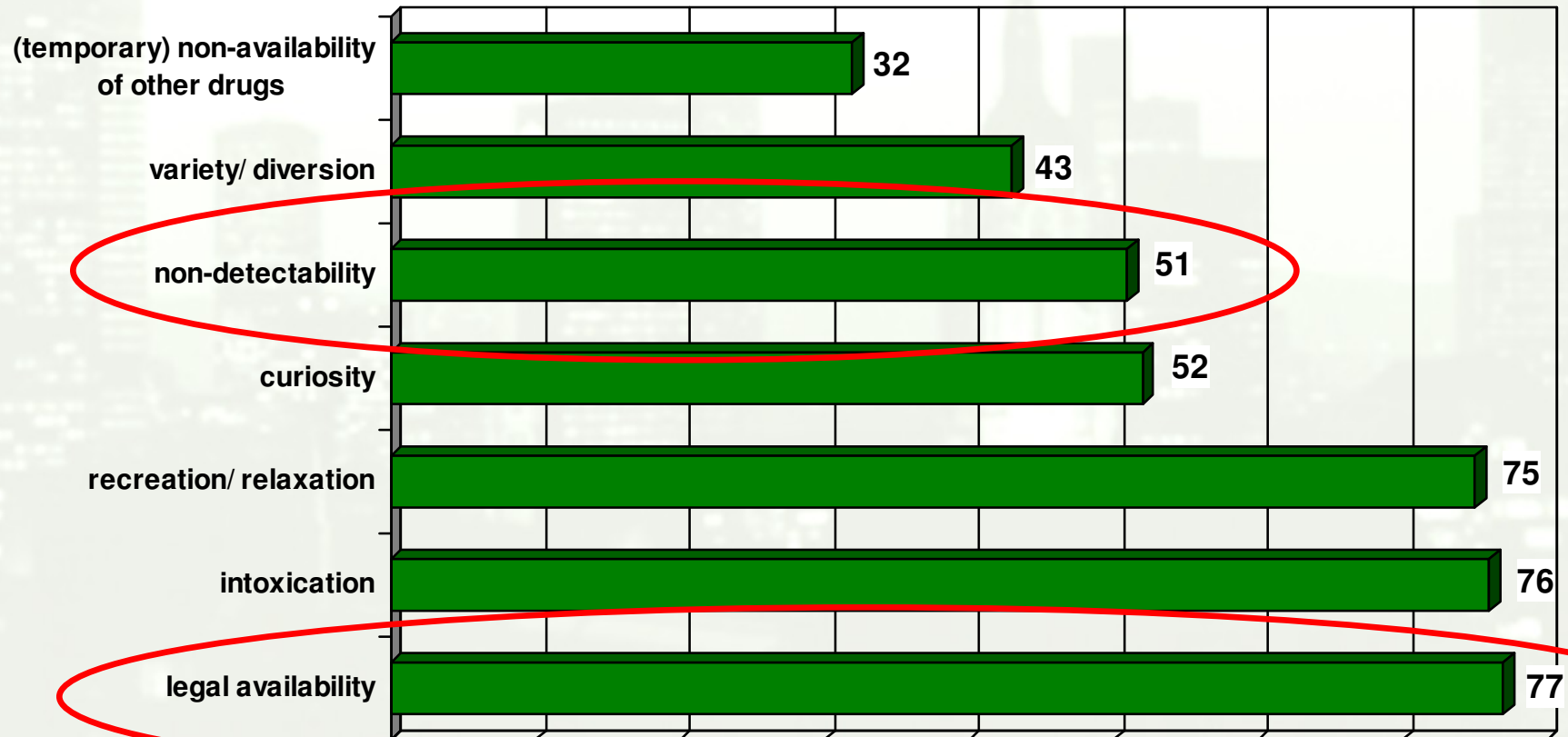
Online surveys: prevalence (%)



German online survey – prevalence

- Lifetime prevalence illicit drugs (all respondents): 99%; high rates of current use
 - **Current Spice users** show lower rates of illicit drug use than other respondents, but, still, a majority of them are also current **illicit drugs** users
- There are much less “pure” herbal incense users than expected

German online survey – most important motivations for use (only current users of Spice products, %)



Novel psychoactive substances/ „Legal Highs“: types of users

- experimental/ occasional users
- substitutors
- potheads 2.0
- specialist psychonauts (adventurous multiple drug users)
- omnivores (intensive multiple drug users)

Online survey – regional features

- Users from **Bavaria** were heavily overrepresented
- among those, the shares for current and frequent herbal incense users were significantly higher
 - Bavaria is known for its repressive approach in drug policy
- **availability** as a motive for legal highs use ranks higher than elsewhere among herbal incense users

Spice use and drug policy

- **repressive drug policy** seems to encourage the use of legal highs as 'substitute' or 'supplemental' drugs
- on the other hand, in countries with **easier availability** of **cannabis** products (e.g., NL or ESP), synthetic cannabinoids hardly play any role



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**Thank you very much for
your attention!**



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