

Cocaine Insights Report



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News

On 7 September 2021, Europol and UNODC introduced their new [Cocaine Insights Report](#). The report reveals a significant increase in cocaine supply to Europe. Cocaine is the second most commonly used drug in Western and Central Europe. Estimates this year suggest some 4.4 million past-year users.

According to the report, changes in Colombia's crime landscape (shift from few to many small crime groups) have also had implications for Europe, such as the diversification of the trafficking groups. New alliances among criminal groups are being forged, creating new opportunities for European criminal networks to establish new contacts with providers in South America. This has also led to an erosion of the oligopoly of the main criminal networks, such as the Italian 'Ndrangheta. Cocaine availability on the European consumer market has increased as a result. In addition, the report details a northward shift in the epicentre of the European cocaine market, consolidating the role of the Netherlands as a staging point.

On top of the increasing trade in cocaine, violence associated with the cocaine trade has also increased, e.g., assassinations, shootings, bombings, arson, kidnapping, torture, and intimidation. In view of the perspective for the European cocaine market, the report identified a twofold need:

- Intervention at source;
- The need to address the driving factors behind coca bush cultivation and the related, illicit economy in the source countries.

Measures to address these driving factors could include alternative development programmes, the promotion of sustainable livelihoods, the consolidation of governance structures, the presence of the state, and the rule of law.

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