

prevalence of that virus ranges from 12 per cent to more than 77 per cent.

722. Overall, the cocaine market in the European Union remained stable in 2013. The annual prevalence of cocaine abuse among the general population aged 15-64 remained high, at around 1 per cent, in Western and Central Europe. In some countries with high levels of abuse, such as Denmark, Italy and Spain, the prevalence of cocaine abuse has decreased since 2008. The demand for treatment for cocaine abuse in the region indicates an overall declining trend.

723. In many countries of Western and Central Europe, the abuse of amphetamines remained stable. EMCDDA estimates that 1.3 million (1.0 per cent) of young adults between 15 and 34 years of age have used amphetamine or methamphetamine in the past year. Methamphetamine abuse was predominant in the Czech Republic and, more recently, Slovakia, although there are also indications of increasing abuse of the substance in other countries. Between 2007 and 2013, the Czech authorities observed an increasing prevalence of high-risk methamphetamine abuse, including by injection. In 2014, an increase in amphetamine abuse was reported by Germany while stable or decreasing trends in amphetamine abuse were reported by Cyprus, Finland, Portugal and the United Kingdom.

724. It is estimated that some 1.8 million Western and Central European young adults between 15 and 34 years of age have used “ecstasy” in the past year. In 2014, a slight increase in “ecstasy” abuse was reported by Finland and Germany, while stable or decreasing trends were reported by Lithuania, Portugal and the United Kingdom. The demand for treatment for “ecstasy” abuse is not very high in Western and Eastern Europe, accounting for less than 1 per cent of reported first-time treatment entrants in 2013.

725. For a number of years the prevalence rates of hallucinogenic mushroom and LSD abuse in Europe have been low and stable; according to the latest national surveys, the past-year prevalence of abuse of both substances was estimated to be less than 1 per cent among young adults between 15 and 34 years of age.

726. Overall, estimating the prevalence of abuse of new psychoactive substances remains a challenge. A Flash Eurobarometer survey conducted in 2014, entitled “Young people and drugs”, showed that 8 per cent of 13,000 respondents between the ages of 15 and 24 in the European Union member States had used a new psychoactive substance at least once in their lives, compared to 5 per cent in 2011, 3 per cent having used the substance in the past year. The highest levels of past-year prevalence of use were

recorded in Ireland (9 per cent), Spain (8 per cent), France (8 per cent) and Slovenia (7 per cent).

727. Belarus reported that, in 2014, the number of individuals abusing cannabinoids increased by 9 per cent, mainly as a result of the increase in the number of persons using synthetic cannabinoids compared to the previous year. The main trend of 2014 was a significant increase in the number of persons abusing new psychoactive substances, mostly synthetic cannabinoids, and other psychoactive substances.

728. The number of persons who abuse drugs by injection residing in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe is estimated to be 2.91 million, which is 24 per cent of the global total number of persons who abuse drugs by injection.

729. The *World Drug Report 2015* suggests that in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, 1.27 per cent of the general population aged 15-64 years is estimated to use drugs by injection, a rate nearly five times the global average. The estimate for Eastern Europe is heavily influenced by the high prevalence of drug abuse by injection in the Russian Federation (2.29 per cent of the population aged 15-64 years). This high level of drug abuse continued to constitute a challenge to public health in the Russian Federation, despite a trend towards a stabilization of the situation. According to the State Anti-Drug Committee of the Russian Federation, in recent years the number of individuals abusing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances has reached about 6 per cent of the country’s population, or 8 million to 8.5 million people.

730. According to the EMCDDA report “Perspectives on drugs: injection of synthetic cathinones”, the abuse of synthetic cathinones by injection has emerged among high-risk drug abusers in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Poland, Romania, Spain and the United Kingdom, but is considered to be a relatively low-level and localized phenomenon.

## E. Oceania

### 1. Major developments

731. The region of Oceania is vulnerable to the trafficking, manufacture and abuse of a wide range of drugs, with countries reporting significant seizures of many substances, including cocaine, heroin, MDMA (“ecstasy”), and precursor chemicals. Cannabis continues to be the most trafficked and abused drug in the region, mainly due to domestic cultivation.

732. In its reporting period from July 2013 to June 2014, Australia recorded 93,000 drug seizures weighing more than 27 tons in total, the highest numbers on national record. Police and customs seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants in the country were also the highest on record. In 2014, New Zealand saw marked increases in seizures of certain substances, including cocaine. Countries in the region continue to focus on taking action to improve regional border security and the sharing of information on the flows and transshipments of drugs.

733. Although cannabis is the most widely abused drug, amphetamine-type stimulants, particularly methamphetamine, pose a serious threat to the countries of Oceania. The region has also seen strong increases in the abuse of new psychoactive substances. The role of regional joint operations has been critical to the success of large methamphetamine seizures.

## 2. Regional cooperation

734. The Oceania Customs Organization held its seventeenth annual conference in Koror, Palau, in June 2015, at which it addressed the region's border security challenges. The keynote address was delivered by the President of Palau, who spoke about the importance of coordinating efforts to secure national borders. Coordination was necessary, given the Pacific Ocean's usefulness as a route for drug trafficking. The members adopted a three-year plan for the period 2015-2017, which sets out the strategic direction of the Organization and helps members' administrations to align their activities with the best international customs standards and practices, in order to foster greater economic prosperity and increased border security.

735. In June 2015, the annual meeting of the Regional Security Committee of the Pacific Islands Forum was held in Suva. The Forum is a political group of States that works to promote regional cooperation and integration in the Pacific region. Also in June 2015, the Forum's Working Group on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime held a meeting for members to discuss trends in and patterns of transnational crime, including illicit drug trafficking in the region.

736. In December 2014, in Auckland, New Zealand, the UNODC Synthetics Monitoring: Analyses, Reporting and Trends (SMART) programme and the Pacific Islands Forum secretariat jointly hosted a forensic capacity-building training session that brought together law enforcement officials from the Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. The workshop included interactive and practical

sessions at which participants learned about methods for identifying drugs and precursors.

737. A major regional achievement has been the completion and opening of a narcotics laboratory on the premises of the Scientific Research Organization of Samoa in late July 2013, and the subsequent training sessions, in 2014 and 2015 for Samoan scientists in New Zealand. The training sessions, which focused on examining cannabis and using equipment for testing drugs, was led by the Institute of Environmental Science and Research and the University of the South Pacific. This regional project makes the investigation and prosecution of narcotics-related offences more efficient and has continued in 2015 with the aim of developing testing methods for other drugs such as methamphetamine.

738. The 2014 Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police Conference was held in Auckland, New Zealand. National police services of the Pacific island countries gathered to agree on a new strategic plan and to discuss regional issues, including illicit drugs and organized crime. In August 2015, the organization's forty-fourth annual conference was held in Alofi and hosted by the Niue Police Department.

## 3. National legislation, policy and action

739. On 5 March 2015, Australia adopted the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Psychoactive Substances and Other Measures) Act No. 12. The Amendment lays down measures to help the Government respond to new and emerging psychoactive substances by banning the importation of all substances, not banned or otherwise regulated, that have a psychoactive effect. The Amendment helps to ensure that new psychoactive substances cannot be imported until the Government has assessed their potential harmful effects and determined the appropriate controls to be applied. To prosecute an offence under the law, it will not be necessary to prove that a defendant knew or was reckless as to the particular identity of a substance or whether the substance had a particular psychoactive effect.

740. New Zealand has released its national drug policy for the period 2015-2020, which sets out the Government's approach to alcohol and drug issues. The aim of the policy is to minimize harm and promote and protect health and well-being. Harm minimization will be a central feature of drug classification measures, and the regulation of controlled drugs for legitimate purposes will be reviewed. In the period 2017/18, New Zealand will commence a review of the policy and operation of the Psychoactive Substance Act 2013. An ongoing feature of the Government's

actions will be to conduct the national cannabis and crime operation as well as to work with authorities in source and transit countries to break supply chains into New Zealand for precursor chemicals and drugs.

741. In 2014, New Zealand announced that its drug enforcement relationship with China will be strengthened further to help identify members of organized criminal groups in China and to reduce the supply of precursors and methamphetamine from China trafficked into New Zealand. The move follows the signing of a memorandum of arrangement on precursor controls between China and New Zealand in April 2013.

742. New Zealand has also taken action to improve regional border security through cooperation with the authorities of Fiji. In 2015, New Zealand established a training programme for the Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority and the Fiji Police Force to focus on border security by introducing drug detector dogs in Fiji. In 2015, the Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority announced that it aimed to further strengthen its partnership with both Australia and New Zealand in order to carry out joint operations and share more information about the flow of drugs in the region.

743. In 2013, the Government of New Zealand introduced the Psychoactive Substances Act to control the importation, manufacture and sale of new psychoactive substances in the country—with interim approvals for 47 products by 150 licensed retailers. In 2014, an amendment Act came into effect that banned the use of animal testing in clinical trials, effectively bringing the industry and product development to a standstill. Retail regulations due to come into force in November 2015 would allow for the licensing of the sale, both wholesale and retail, of psychoactive substances, and the licensing of retail premises. As of 1 June 2015, approximately 37 local authorities had adopted local approved product policies, which provided directions about where psychoactive products may be sold in a particular area.

## 4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

### (a) Narcotic drugs

744. Cannabis is the most trafficked and widely abused drug throughout Oceania. The Australian Crime Commission has reported that, despite illicit domestic cultivation, the quantity of cannabis seized at the border in the 2013/14 reporting period was the highest in the past decade. In 2014,

the number of cannabis seizures in New Zealand remained about the same as in 2013, with approximately 4,800 instances of cannabis herb being seized. However, at the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held in March 2015, New Zealand authorities stated that the previous 18 months had seen a resurgence in the visibility of cannabis. Data from the region also indicate that the potency of the available cannabis may be increasing.

745. Oceania in general, and Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu in particular, continue to be used as illicit transit areas for various narcotic drugs. In December 2014, for example, the Fiji Police Force reported a significant heroin seizure worth around \$15 million. The Force believed that the consignment was intended for onward trafficking to Australia or New Zealand.

746. Although the market for cocaine and heroin in Oceania remains limited, there are signs that trafficking in some countries may be increasing. Moreover, Oceania is considered a hub for the transshipment of cocaine. In 2014, New Zealand saw increases in both the quantity and the frequency of seizures of cocaine and heroin. Approximately 80 per cent of cocaine that was seized entered New Zealand by air, with about 59 per cent of that amount entering from Brazil. Therefore, in 2014, the cocaine market appeared to be expanding in New Zealand, with seizures more than doubling over 2013. The abuse of cocaine in New Zealand also has the potential to increase, at least partly because of the high market prices and profit margins, which can be an incentive for traffickers.

747. In Australia, one of the key findings in the 2013/14 reporting period was that the cocaine seized at the country's border had primarily come from Peru. Previously, the primary source country had been Colombia. Furthermore, for the first time an incident of heroin seized at the Australian border was identified as having originated in South America. Australia reported 3,121 domestic seizures of cocaine in the period 2013/14, a record number, although the total weight of the seizures had decreased by 70 per cent. While the number of seizures at the border had increased every year since 2009/10, in 2013/14 both the weight and number of border seizures of cocaine decreased.

### (b) Psychotropic substances

748. In response to the increasing threats and regional interconnections in the methamphetamine market, as well as extensive domestic manufacture in some countries of the region, New Zealand continues to implement its multi-agency initiative entitled "Tackling methamphetamine: an

action plan”, which has helped to improve resource targeting and thereby to gather more accurate data on methamphetamine abuse and trafficking. The increase in smuggling of small amounts of methamphetamine in 2014 may have occurred in response to increased law enforcement pressure on the diversion of precursors and on clandestine laboratories.

749. The Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority has emphasized the role of joint regional operations in large methamphetamine seizures. For example, in July 2015, a sea container sent from South America to Fiji contained 80 kg of methamphetamine and was intercepted in a joint operation of Australia, New Zealand and Fiji.

750. The Australian Crime Commission has also determined that, of all drug types, methamphetamine poses the greatest threat to the Australian public because of its increasing purity and the involvement of organized criminal groups. In its 2013/14 report, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service asserted that seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants had increased by nearly 19 per cent from the previous year. Most of the amphetamine-type stimulants were detected in cargo and in postal consignments. In the 2014/15 reporting period, the Service maintained its focus on detecting and seizing amphetamine-type stimulants in postal consignments, while the country’s law enforcement authorities expressed concern about the potential for transnational organized criminal groups to exploit the market for synthetic drugs.

751. In 2014, law enforcement authorities in Australia reported “ecstasy” seizures of several tons each. The Australian Crime Commission indicated that a seizure of almost two tons made in November 2014 was indicative of the resurgence of the “ecstasy” market in both the country and the region. The Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System reported that in 2014 the availability of “ecstasy” pills, powder, and capsules appeared to have increased significantly from 2013. In 2013, amphetamine-type stimulants, particularly methamphetamine, were the most detected drug at the Australian border.

### (c) Precursors

752. Strong demand for methamphetamine in the region and the involvement of organized crime in its manufacture have had the result that the majority of precursors seized have been pseudoephedrine and ephedrine. The Australian Crime Commission has reported that China and India are the primary source countries of several precursor chemicals but that precursors are also diverted from licit domestic trade. In the period 2013/14, the number of clandestine

laboratories detected nationally decreased to 744 compared with 757 in the period 2012/13, and although that was the third highest number on record, it is not indicative of abuse rates or availability. Methamphetamine was nevertheless the main drug produced in laboratories detected. Australia also saw a 10-ton seizure of benzaldehyde, a precursor used to produce methamphetamine. There were 1,035 detections of amphetamine-type stimulants precursors in the period 2013/14, a slight decrease from the detections in the previous reporting period.

753. New Zealand has reported that although it still sees a large amount of pseudoephedrine, it appears that ephedrine is now the precursor preferred by traffickers. Ephedrine continues to be the main precursor seized at the border. Seizures of those substances were on the decline for a couple of years, but the amounts seized in 2013 were significantly higher, attributable to interceptions of ContacNT and ephedrine by the Organised and Financial Crime Agency of New Zealand and customs officers during Operation Ghost in 2013. However, New Zealand saw more finished methamphetamine trafficked in 2014, possibly in response to increased law enforcement pressure on precursor imports and on domestic clandestine laboratories.

754. Although increasing methamphetamine abuse is of concern throughout the Pacific island States and territories, there is insufficient data region-wide on trafficking, transshipment and seizures of precursors and substances listed in Tables I and II of the 1988 Convention. Information on diversion of chemicals is limited despite the actions of transnational organized criminal groups in the region of Oceania. Moreover, only 1 of 16 countries in the region submitted form D (annual information on substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances) for 2014 to the Board by the annual reporting deadline of 30 June, thus affecting the Board’s ability to analyse regional precursor trends and patterns.

755. A comprehensive review of the situation with respect to the control of precursors and chemicals frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the region can be found in the report of the Board for 2015 on the implementation of article 12 of the 1988 Convention.

### (d) Substances not under international control

756. New Zealand has reported that it continues to see new psychoactive substances, including a large number of

synthetic cannabinoids and other substances. Detected blotter paper increasingly contains new substances and not the more commonly abused substances such as lysergic acid diethylamide, making them significantly cheaper for consumers. At the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, New Zealand reiterated that the presence of new synthetic psychoactive substances necessitated changes to national legislation in 2013 and 2014 in order to address the widespread availability and constantly changing composition of those substances. Drug analogues and new psychoactive substances also continue to increase in availability and popularity in Australia. The number of seizures of these substances in Australia in the period 2013/14 increased by more than 64 per cent from the previous period, comprising synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones and different NBOMe compounds.

## 5. Abuse and treatment

757. Data on the extent and patterns of abuse of most drugs, as well as treatment figures and therapeutic options, remain limited throughout most of Oceania. Governments are encouraged to increase data collection on the prevalence of abuse and availability of treatment options as part of the region's approach to drug abuse as a serious public health issue.

758. As the Board has previously noted, the high prevalence of abuse of cannabis remains stable throughout the region; however, data on its abuse are generally limited to Australia and New Zealand. In the latter country, data from the 2012/13 survey indicated that 11 per cent of adults aged 15 years and over had reported using cannabis in the previous 12 months, while 34 per cent of people abusing cannabis had reported consumption of the drug at least weekly in the previous 12 months. In New Zealand, the 2012/13 survey indicated that past-year abuse of amphetamines, including methamphetamine, among adults aged 16-64 years was 0.9 per cent, which was roughly the same as prevalence found by the 2011/12 survey. However, rates of amphetamine abuse appeared to have declined since 2003, when the past-year prevalence rate was 2.7 per cent.

759. The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre of Australia has released reports showing that deaths

involving methamphetamine have been steadily increasing since 2010 and that abuse of methamphetamine among injecting drug users has increased by 52 per cent over the past 10 years. With respect to opioid drugs, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has indicated that heroin is the most common opioid drug of abuse leading to treatment, with the number of people receiving treatment for opioid dependence almost doubling between 1998 and 2014. Survey data published by the Institute in 2014 show that about 3.3 per cent of Australians aged 14 years or older had used painkillers/analgesics for non-medical reasons in the previous 12 months, and 1.2 per cent had used heroin at least once in their lifetime.

760. The Australian Crime Commission has stated that the order of prevalence of drug abuse in the country is cannabis, MDMA and then methamphetamine—with the prevalence of abuse for all illicit substances remaining stable during the period 2010-2013. The 2013 National Drug Strategy Household Survey in Australia showed that 7 per cent of the Australian population aged 14 years or older reported abusing amphetamine or methamphetamine at least once in their lifetime. Recent analyses of wastewater compared with household survey data, however, have indicated that in regions of Australia methamphetamine was potentially abused to a much greater extent than suggested by household surveys alone. Treatment data in Australia generally show that people aged 20-29 years have the highest rates of acute and chronic harm related to amphetamine and methamphetamine abuse. The proportion of recent methamphetamine abusers that abused crystal methamphetamine increased from 22 per cent in 2010 to 50 per cent in 2013, along with the tripling, since 2010, in the level of purity of methamphetamine detected in some Australian jurisdictions.

761. In New Zealand, it was reported that in 2014 more than 41,000 people received drug abuse treatment for substances other than alcohol or tobacco, and that more than 37 per cent of those people were entering treatment for the first time. It is estimated that about 20,000 people inject drugs in New Zealand, and that 10 per cent of those injecting drug abusers had shared needles at the time they last injected. New Zealand has also indicated that as many as 57 per cent of injecting drug users are infected with hepatitis C and 20 per cent with hepatitis B due to drug abuse at some time in their past.