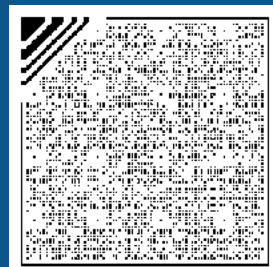


澳門禁毒報告書

Relatório da Luta Contra a Droga em Macau

Report on Drug Control in Macao



2022

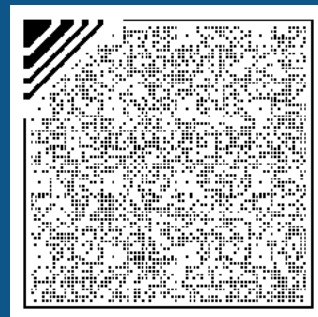


澳門特別行政區政府社會工作局
INSTITUTO DE ACÇÃO SOCIAL DO GOVERNO DA RAEM

Simplified version (Translated from the Chinese version)

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I. Drug Control Policy in Macao and the Situation of Drug Problem

I. Drug Control Policy in Macao and the Situation of Drug Problem

(1) Drug Control Policy in Macao

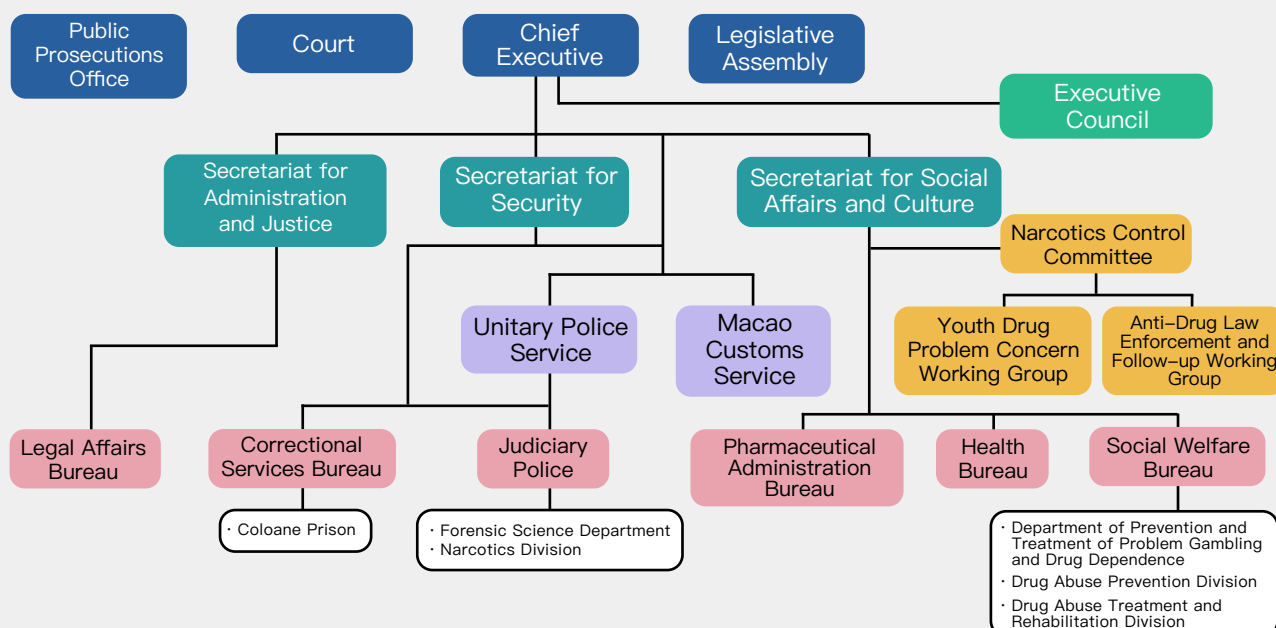
The work of fighting drug-related crimes and prevention and treatment of drug dependence in Macao is fully implemented by relevant government departments under the Secretariat for Security and the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture of Macao SAR Government. Through the cooperation of various anti-drug departments and the cooperation of the civil society, the measures for anti-drug abuse and prevention and treatment of drug dependence are implemented in an all-round manner. The legislation and enforcement of fighting drug-related crimes are strengthened in response to the world drug-related situation and the actual conditions of Macao. The promotion and development of outreach exchange and cooperation in drug-related affairs are highly emphasised.

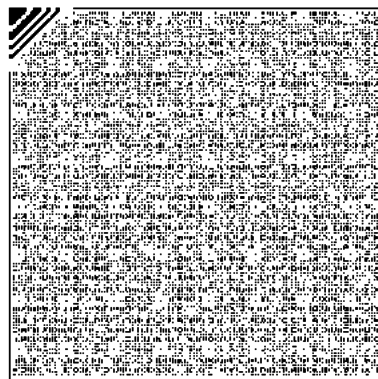
The Macao SAR Government continues to actively implement the three major anti-drug strategies by controlling the supply, reducing the demand and reducing the damage, establishing a comprehensive anti-drug system in aspects of legislation, justice, administration, health care, social services and education, etc., ensuring a continuous safe and healthy society.

Juvenile drug abuse in using new-types drugs is becoming constantly invisible these years, which is raising public concern. To tackle related problems, the Narcotics Control Committee and the two Working Groups (Youth Drug Problem Concern Working Group, Anti-drug Enforcement and Follow-up Working Group) have discussed about the countermeasures, actively optimize and implement the drug control works.

(2) Drug Situation in Macao

Structure Chart of Anti-drug Departments in Macao





1. Types of Drugs

According to the data from the "Central Registration System for Drug Abusers of Macao " (hereinafter referred to as the Central System), the overall number of drug abusers reported in 2022 is 85. Based on person–time statistics, the drug being abused the most by drug users was Methamphetamine (Ice) 27.1%, followed by Marijuana 17.6% and Midazolam (Blue gremlin) 15.3%; Triazolam (Blue gremlin) 5.9%, Heroin (White powder) 3.5%, Ketamine (K) 3.5%, Cocaine 1.2%, others 23.5% (of which alcohol accounts for 22.4%). Data shows that the average age of Heroin users is 53.7 years old; while Ketamine and Marijuana users are younger, with the average age being 27.1 years old respectively.

The main cases submitted for testing by the Judiciary Police in 2022 are Methamphetamine (Ice) predominated in the qualitative cases sent for testing, accounting for 37.7% of the total number of cases for the year, with 1,216.87g sent for testing. This was followed by Marijuana, accounting for 13.1%, with 836.09g sent for testing. Cocaine and MDMA (Ecstasy) each accounted for 8.2% . It was worth mentioning that, in recent years, there had been an emergence of marijuana products containing Δ -9-tetrahydrocannabinol in Macao, with 4.9% sent for testing in 2022.

With regard to new types of drugs, a case of cathinone derivatives occurred in Macao this year and it was found to contain N,N-Dimethylpentylone. There were 7 cases involving emerging psychoactive substances, in which ingredients of 2-FDCK and synthetic cannabinoid were detected. 2-FDCK is an analogue of ketamine. The synthetic cannabinoid mainly appears in the form of cigarettes and e-cigarette oil.

According to the data of Coloane Prison, among the prisoners imprisoned in 2022 who reported to have abused drugs, Methamphetamine (Ice) was the most common seized drugs, accounting for 68.8% of the total number of cases, then this was followed by Marijuana, accounting for 25%.

2. Current State of Drug Abuse

In 2022, according to the data from the Central System, the proportion of Methamphetamine (Ice) abuse continues to rank first, while the use of Marijuana has increased significantly and ranks second. The use of Cocaine continues to decrease, and the proportion of Heroin (White powder) remains stable. In particular, the abuse of Marijuana by teenagers deserves more public attention. Most drug users are rather "hidden" and 80% of them take drugs at their own home, friend's home or hotel. The overall number of reported drug abusers and the proportion of teenagers are decreasing year by year. It is believed that not only the "hidden" nature of drug abuse can affect reporting. Due to the COVID epidemic, reporting agencies have been shut down or provided only limited services, which has a certain impact on the reporting work as well.

According to the data from the Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Division of Social Welfare Bureau and two non-governmental drug treatment institutes, there were 409 drug abusers seeking for help, of which 55 were new cases. In terms of overall new cases, males accounted for 81.8%; in terms of composition characteristics, the age of 29 or less accounted for 27.2%; in terms of the type of drug, it mainly Methamphetamine 43.6% and alcohol 21.8%.

Statistics on voluntary detoxification in the past 5 years

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total of Cases	576	508	455	456	409
New Cases	115	95	95	91	55

Remarks: The cases of voluntary detoxification in 2018 are included those from the Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Division and two non-governmental drug treatment institutes (Christian New Life Fellowship in Macao “S.Y. Tribe Smart-Youth” and “We Point”).

3. Combating drug-related crimes

In terms of combating drug crimes, the Judiciary Police has continued to exchange intelligence and cooperated with police departments in surrounding regions in 2022, strengthening the investigation and analysis of postal parcels coming to Macao, and deepening a number of special tasks targeting drug crimes. A number of drug trafficking cases were uncovered. They were either carried out by postal parcels or by people in Macao controlled by drug gangs of surrounding regions. The action of police successfully prevented the spread of drugs in Macao communities.

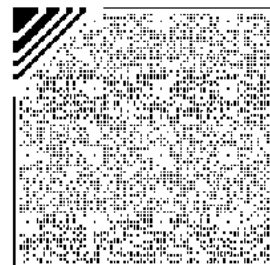
According to the data from Public Prosecutions Office of Macao SAR on drug cases in 2022, the intelligence exchange and cooperation between police departments in surrounding areas were strengthened, especially during the epidemic in Macao, 72 drug crime cases were investigated, which was 35% decreased from 111 in 2021. There were 134 charges in 2022, a fall of 28% compared to 186 charges in 2021.

Statistics on drug related cases recorded by the Public Prosecutions Office of Macao SAR in the past 5 years

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of cases opened	190	209	118	111	72
Count of charges	328	259	184	186	134

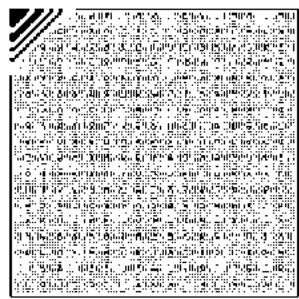
The Customs’ statistics gathered from all ports at Macao showed that the psychiatric medications became the most seized drug in 2022, the amount of seized drugs were reduced apparently compared with 2011.

I. Drug Control Policy in Macao and the Situation of Drug Problem



Types and amounts of drugs seized by the Macao Customs Service in the past 5 years

Types of Drugs	Unit	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Medicine (Alprazolam)	tablet	—	—	—	—	120
Medicine (containing ephedrine, caffeine, paracetamol)	tablet	—	—	—	—	120
Medicine (Farmacia da Luz) (containing chlordiazepoxide)	tablet	—	—	—	—	200
Medicine (AKAMON) (containing bromazepam, chlordiazepoxide and diazepam)	tablet	—	—	—	—	84
Medicine (CHLORDIAZEPOXIDE 2.5mg) (containing bromazepam, chlordiazepoxide and diazepam)	tablet	—	—	—	—	28
Medicine (DIAZEPAM 1mg) (containing bromazepam, chlordiazepoxide and diazepam)	tablet	—	—	—	—	84
White pills (ephedrine)	tablet	—	—	—	2,787	
Pink pills (ephedrine)	tablet	—	—	—	1,833	
Poppy seed	g	—	—	—	1,160	
Medicine (with bromazepam)	tablet	—	—	—	479	
Medicine XANAX 0.25mg(Alprazolam)	tablet	—	—	—	240	
Medicine (DIAZEPAM 2mg)	tablet	—	—	—	187	
Medicine (Zolpidem Tab 10mg)	tablet	—	—	—	120	
Medicine (DIAZEPAM TABLETS 5mg)	tablet	—	—	—	90	
Medicine (Zolpidem Tartrate 10mg)	tablet	—	—	—	83	
Medicine (Diazepam 5mg)	tablet	—	—	—	77	
Medicine (Stilnox Zolpidem 10mg) sleeping pills	tablet	—	—	40	60	
Poppy seed (containing the controlled substances – morphine, codeine and thebaine)	g	—	—	25,000	—	—
Codeina	ml	—	—	1,920	—	—
Akamon(Bromazepam)Tab. 1.5mg (BZO)	tablet	—	—	252	—	—
Rivotril(Clonazepam)Tab 0.5mg (BZO)	tablet	—	—	114	—	—
Domar(Bromazepam)Cap. 5mg (BZO)	tablet	—	—	90	—	—
Chlordiazepoxid Cap. 5mg (BZO)	tablet	—	—	84	—	—
Lorans(Lorazepam)Tab. 2mg (BZO)	tablet	—	—	60	—	—
Zolman(Zolpidem)F.C. Tab 10mg sleeping pills	tablet	—	—	60	—	—
Akamon(Bromazepam)Tab. 3mg (BZO)	tablet	—	—	30	—	—
Cocaine	g	60.43	3.29	—	—	—
Marijuana	g	—	0.46	—	—	—
Cough Medicine (containing codeine and ephedrine)	g	71	—	—	—	—
Heroin	g	18.78	—	—	—	—
Clonazepam	g	3.68	—	—	—	—
Methamphetamine	g	2.98	—	—	—	—
Nitrazepam	g	1.4	—	—	—	—



4. Situation of infectious diseases among drug abusers

Regarding the situation of HIV/AIDS infection among drug abusers in Macao 2022, with the sustained service project of methadone maintenance treatment and the establishment of non-governmental rehabilitation outreach centers, ideal results are yielded for rehabilitation seekers who need all kinds of medical examinations. The cases of various infectious diseases have been stabilized and the case of HIV/AIDS infection and transmission among drug abusers are effectively in control.

Statistics on HIV/AIDS infection in Macao in the past 5 years

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
HIV virus	37	66	51	56	39
AIDS	12	10	18	39	22
HIV infection by syringe sharing	0	1*	0	0	0
AIDS infection by syringe sharing	2	0	0	0	0

Remark: *imported case



II. Narcotics Control Committee

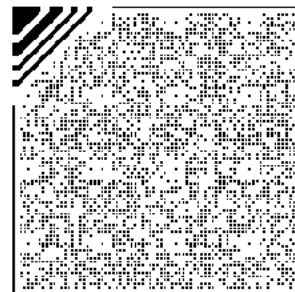
II. Narcotics Control Committee

In order to co-ordinate all sectors of the society, fighting drug-related crime and implementing drug abuse prevention, the Government of Macao SAR established Narcotics Control Committee (NCC) in 2008. According to Chief Executive's Order No.179/2008, the Committee includes antidrug-related governmental departments, representatives from non-governmental organizations and prominent figures in the society, working for two years as a term. The current Narcotics Control Committee has started operation since 18th September 2022. NCC is an advisory body with the aim of assisting the Macau SAR Government in formulating and implementing policies to combat drug abuse and to control drug dependence. In particular, it aims to implement the strategies and projects to facilitate anti-drug affairs in Macau through cross-sectoral and cross-disciplinary co-ordination. Therefore, NCC holds regular general meetings every year to collect comments and suggestions from the members on the above-mentioned anti-drug work and policies.

(1) Plenary Meeting

There were two plenary meetings held in 2022, the first plenary meeting was held on 2nd June, chaired by Mr. Hon Wai, the Vice-chairman of the Committee and the Director of Social Welfare Bureau. The first plenary meeting concluded reporting on the Committee's current working situation, introduced a work plan in 2022, information on recent drug-related crimes in Macao, 2021 statistics of the "Central Registration System for Drug Abusers of Macao", reporting on the work of "Youth Drug Problem Concern Working Group" and "Anti-Drug Law Enforcement and Follow-up Working Group", the draft resolution of the 65th session of United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and the information on coordinating work between NCC and other departments of Macao.

The second plenary meeting was held on 22nd November, chaired by Mr. Hon Wai, the Vice-chairman of the Committee and Director of Social Welfare Bureau. The main agenda of this meeting included: reporting on the Committee's current working situation and working plan in 2023, the data on "Central Registration System for Drug Abusers of Macao" from the first half of 2022 and related working situation, the work of "Youth Drug Problem Concern Working Group" and "Anti-Drug Law Enforcement and Follow-up Working Group", the work regarding the United Nations and Macao's follow-up work to the international listing of regulated substances.



The first plenary meeting on 2nd June 2022



The second plenary meeting on 22nd November 2022

(2) Meetings of the two Working Groups

1. Youth Drug Problem Concern Working Group

Two working sessions were held on 13th April and 25th October, 2022. Meeting content and follow-up matters include: priorities of drug abuse prevention work and special plans, introduction to healthy campus promotion for university students, vocational training for former drug addicts, and the "Loving Family" support programme of young couples who have drug-abusing experiences. Members of the Working Group recommended continuing to strengthen anti-drug education through multiple channels to frontline personnel, parents, primary, secondary school and university students, strengthening emotional support for young people, optimising the use of multimedia information tools, promoting professional anti-drug training and cooperation across the Greater Bay Area, and inviting different types of Macao organisations and enterprises to jointly promote anti-drug work.

2. Anti-Drug Law Enforcement and Follow-up Working Group

The first working meeting was held on 4th May, 2022. The second working meeting on 1st November was cancelled in order to cooperate with the SAR Government's epidemic prevention work. Meeting content and follow-up matters: judicial measures for referral cases, introduction of newly added internationally controlled substances and special plans, and an introduction to the latest drug trends. Members recommended continuing to promote legal education, focusing on improving the law-abiding awareness of people of different nationalities, strengthening collaboration and exchanges between the Government and local organisations, reviewing anti-drug laws in a timely manner, caring for the physical, mental and social needs of former drug abusers and providing support services.



(3) Participating in anti-drug activities and academic conferences

In order to cooperate with the SAR Government's epidemic prevention work, in 2022, members of the Committee and of the two working groups under the Committee participated in the Launch Ceremony of the "Anti-drugs art wall at the Healthy Life Education Centre" and the release of creative work, "Professional Symposium on Drug Abuse Prevention and the Launch Ceremony of 2022 International Day against Drug Abuse Series Events" and "2022 National Seminar on Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment." The Government and private professional groups have cooperated together, combining cross-profession assistance and community forces to jointly optimise the prevention and treatment of drug abuse.



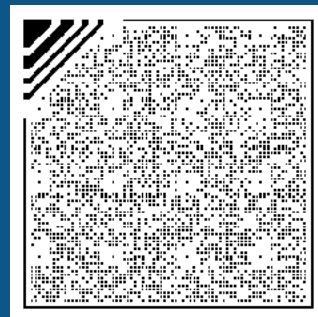
The Launch Ceremony of 2022 International Day against Drug Abuse Series Events



The Launch Ceremony (Macao) of 2022 National Seminar on Drug Abuse Prevention and treatment (17-18/11/2022)



The Launch Ceremony of the "Anti-drugs art wall at the Healthy Life Education Centre" (17/5/2022)



III. Anti-drug Work

III. Anti-drug Work

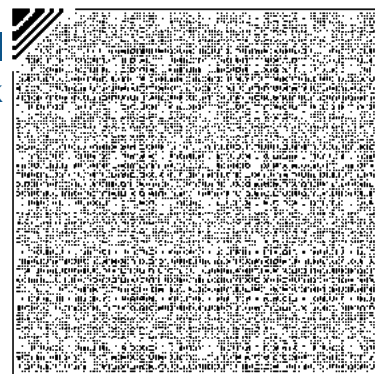
(1) The Judiciary Police

According to the stipulation of Paragraph 1 of Article 7 of Macao SAR Law no. 5/2006 “Organisation Law of the Judiciary Police”, the Judiciary Police has been granted the exclusive authority to investigate the trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; meanwhile, according to the stipulation of Article 7 of Macao SAR Administrative Regulation no. 9/2006 “the Organisation and Operation of the Judiciary Police”, the Narcotics Division, established under the Criminal Investigation Department, is specifically responsible for the prevention, combat and investigation of drug crimes stipulated in Law no. 17/2009 “Prohibition of illegal production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances”, which was amended by Law no. 4/2014, no. 10/2016, no. 10/2019, no. 22/2020 and no. 10/2021.

1. The Narcotics Division

In 2022, despite the implementation of stringent immigration policies in Macao and its neighbouring regions due to the epidemic, the Macao community had been repeatedly plagued by the epidemic; during this period, the Judiciary Police personnel attended to both prevention of the epidemic and combat of drugs.

In addition to making every effort to prevent the spread of the virus in the community, the Narcotics Division, as a specialised unit for investigation of drug crimes in Macao, has never let up its drug enforcement efforts. Even under strict entry–exit control, cross–border drug crimes had not disappeared but further extended to the Internet. Drug trafficking gangs promoted drugs unscrupulously on the Internet and social media. “Internet + courier”, a contactless transaction, had gradually become the mainstream drug trafficking means. The funds used for transactions were also going digital, with online bank transfers or the use of virtual currencies gradually replacing traditional cash transactions; the flow of drugs and drug proceeds became increasingly covert. The Judiciary Police was confident and capable of combating these crimes despite the increased difficulty in investigating each case. In 2022, as the Narcotics Division continued to strengthen the inspection and analysis of Macao–bound postal parcels, and intensified various special tasks on drug crimes, the Judiciary Police continued to crack a number of drug trafficking cases committed by post or by remote control of local members of drug trafficking gangs in neighbouring areas, thereby successfully disrupting the spread of drugs in Macao community.



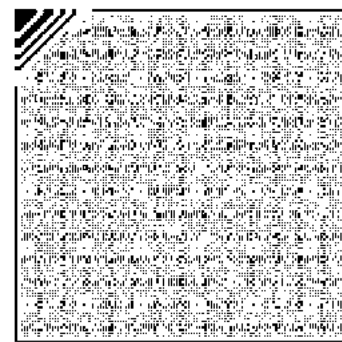
With reference to “United Nations World Drug Report” in 2022, which highlighted the impacts of the decriminalization of marijuana in certain regions of the world, and noted the increase in the seized amount of marijuana in recent years in Macao, the Judiciary Police emphasizes that abusing marijuana is harmful and addictive to the human body, while the cultivation, trafficking and consumption of marijuana also contravene the criminal law. In addition, marijuana is currently a controlled substance under the United Nations Convention and in most parts of the world. As such, Macao’s position on marijuana has always been consistent with that of our country, adopting a zero-tolerance attitude. The Judiciary Police was also aware that drug trafficking gangs, noticing a growing popularity of marijuana among young people in recent years, had mixed synthetic drugs (i.e. synthetic cannabinoids) that imitated the ingredients of marijuana into e-cigarettes for sale. The relevant substances are entirely synthesized by chemicals and are more harmful to the human body. In view of this, a variety of synthetic cannabinoids had been successively regulated in Macao in recent years, while in China, the entire category of synthetic cannabinoids was regulated on 1st July 2021. In recent years, some overseas merchants claimed to be able to extract the non-hallucinogenic active ingredient CBD in marijuana, with which making into daily necessities such as essential oils or aromatics for sale. Studies found that in addition to the THC (the hallucinogenic and controlled active substance in marijuana) produced during the processing of CBD, THC itself is difficult to be completely separated from CBD, resulting in the possibility of residual THC in CBD products available in the market. Therefore, all CBD products were also regulated in Hong Kong on 1st February 2023; while in Macao, the trafficking, possession or use of CBD products are also punishable by criminal laws due to possible presence of THC ingredients in them.

In response to the increasingly dynamic, complex and secretive development of drug crimes, the Judiciary Police adheres to the concept of intelligence-led law enforcement; strengthens intelligence exchange and cooperation with police departments in neighbouring areas, makes intelligence-led forward-looking deployment of drug enforcement efforts to target drug smuggling via postal parcels, which has gradually become the mainstream means of drug trafficking, continues to deepen cooperation with the Macao Customs Service, postal departments and logistics surrogate collection industry, so as to maintain a series of “constantly effective” combat efforts. Meanwhile, the Judiciary Police continues to implement the security policy of technology-enhanced policing, leveraging technological strengths as a strong backing for the criminal investigators to investigate and handle cases. With the operation of the fifth stage of “Eyes in the sky” system in the first quarter of 2023, it is believed that the surveillance coverage of high-risk locations for drug activities will be further expanded. In addition, the portable rapid drug testing device that this Division additionally acquired and the human body scanning x-ray machines installed at various checkpoints in previous years have already been applied to routine patrols and case handling, significantly enhancing the efficiency of this Division.

sion's personnel in handling cases; by combining the above-mentioned multi-faceted collection of criminal trajectories and the implementation of complementary internal and external intelligence, an anti-drug high wall has been built for Macao on all fronts to intercept any drugs from flowing into Macao.

Drugs, as a global scourge, from production to transportation to sales, the scope of the impacts has gone beyond the limits of national borders. Combating the scourge of drugs is not simply the responsibility of a single country, nor is it within the capacity of a single country, but a shared obligation of the whole world, especially in today's society, where there is constant breakthrough of science and technology and ever-changing environment of communication technology, every country should leverage the convenience of communication to initiate cooperation and communication. As such, despite the continued implementation of entry-exit control in Macao in 2022, the Judiciary Police maintained constant exchange with our international law enforcement partners. In addition to routine intelligence exchange and sharing, the Judiciary Police also designated personnel to participate in a number of international and regional key conferences virtually, including the "Interpol Global Conference on Illicit Drugs and Substances", "National Seminar on Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment" and "General Assembly of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs", in a bid to enable our drug enforcement-wise intelligence sharing and techniques aligning with international standards, and effectively fulfil Macao's obligations as a member of the international drug enforcement agency.

In addition to the above-mentioned deployments to intercept the flow of drugs into Macao, this Division has also made continuous efforts to fight against drug-related activities in the community; in times of economic downturn, in order to prevent non-resident employees from being lured by drug traffickers to engage in drug activities due to unemployment, it is necessary to carry out drug prevention and anti-drug publicity among relevant foreign communities and non-resident employees. To this end, this Division has promoted the prevention of drug crimes to people from Southeast Asian countries. Through the cooperation with civil charity organizations in the field of drug prevention, which have established close ties with the foreign communities, promoting seminars on drug prevention and eradication, thereby reducing the chances of foreign communities engaging in drug trafficking. Drug activities involving foreign nationals decreased in 2022.



2. Types and number of cases

In 2022, the Judiciary Police opened a total of 147 cases of drug crimes for investigation, which included 55 specialised investigations, 68 preliminary investigations, 23 requested investigations and 1 complaint (Chart 1).

Chart 1

Type of cases (no.)	2019	2020	2021	2022
Specialised investigation	47	31	69	55
Complaint	80	40	6	1
Preliminary investigation	122	83	87	68
Requested investigation	247	149	89	23
Annual total	496	303	251	147

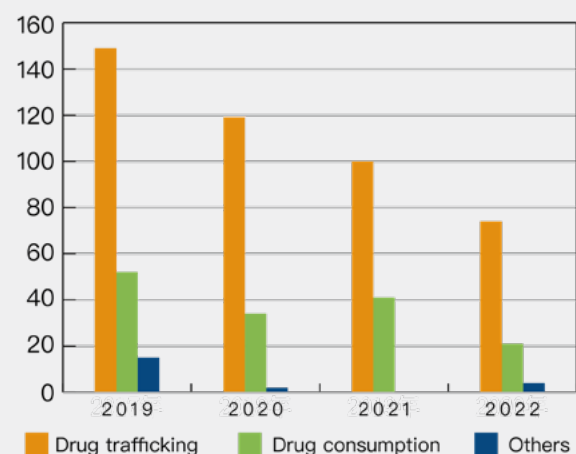


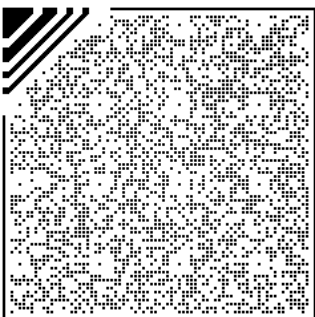
3. Number and nature of arrested persons

The Judiciary Police arrested a total of 99 suspects who were involved in drug crimes in 2022, of which 74 persons were arrested for drug trafficking, 21 for drug consumption, and 4 for illicit production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The total number of arrested persons decreased by around 30% when compared with the previous year, while that of arrested persons for drug trafficking decreased by around 26% compared with last year. The number of arrested persons for drug consumption declined by around 49% when compared with the previous year (Chart 2).

Chart 2

Year	Arrested suspects / nature (no. of persons)			
	Drug traf-ficking	Drug consumption	Others	Total
2019	149	52	15	216
2020	119	34	2	155
2021	100	41	0	141
2022	74	21	4	99





To classify the arrested suspects by three age groups: none of them was below the responsibility age of 16, none of them was aged between 16 and 18, four were aged between 19 and 21 (Chart 3). To classify them by gender, there were 74 male suspects and 25 female suspects, which respectively took up 75% and 25% of the total number of arrested persons (Chart 4).

Chart 3

Age	No. of arrested suspects
Under 16	0
16 to 18	0
19 to 21	4
Above 21	95

No. of arrested suspects

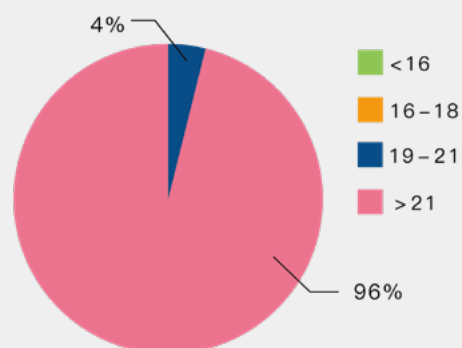
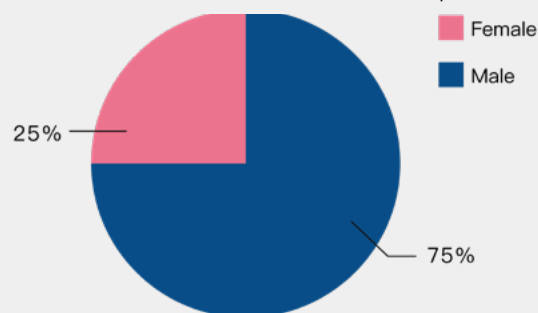
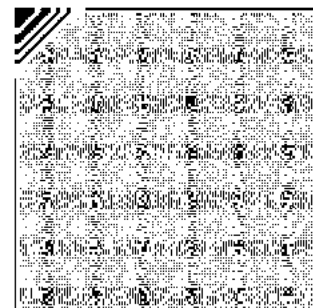


Chart 4

Gender	No. of arrested suspects
Male	74
Female	25

Gender ratio of arrested suspects



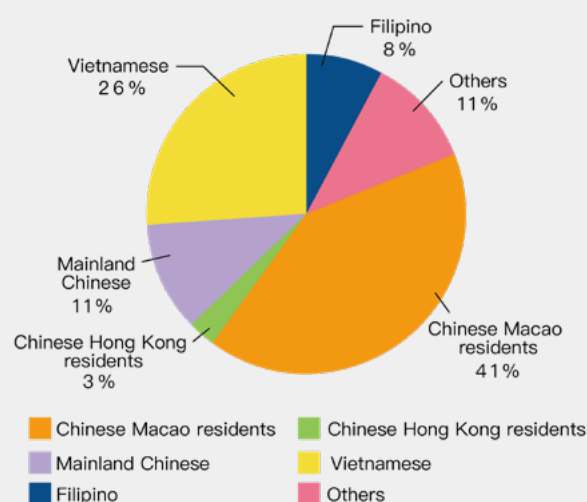


To classify the suspects by nationality, there were 40 Chinese Macao residents, 3 Chinese Hong Kong residents, 11 mainland Chinese residents, 26 Vietnamese, 8 Filipinos, 1 Nigerian, 4 Indonesians, 5 Tanzanians and 1 Cameroonian (Chart 5).

Chart 5

Nationality	No. of suspects arrested for drug trafficking and drug consumption
Chinese Macao residents	40
Chinese Hong Kong residents	3
Mainland Chinese	11
Vietnamese	26
Filipino	8
Others	11
Total	99

Nationality and proportion of suspects arrested for drug trafficking and drug consumption

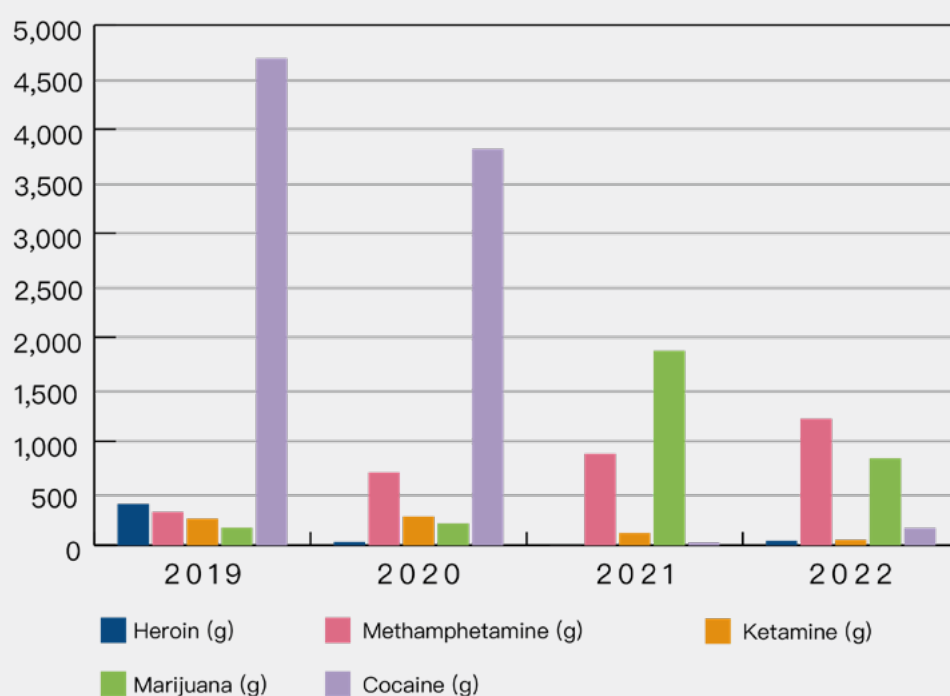


4. Types and Quantity of Drugs

Types of commonly abused drugs in Macao include heroin, methamphetamine (i.e. ice), ketamine, marijuana and cocaine. In 2022, the Judiciary Police cracked several large-scale drug trafficking cases, and uncovered a case of a drug trafficking gang allegedly renting an industrial building unit to set up a marijuana plantation for the first time, with seizure of 25 plants of marijuana being cultivated and well-equipped planting facilities. Due to the scale of the related plantation, this Division quickly formed a task force to arrest all members of the gang suspected of taking part in the setting up, planting and trafficking. It was believed that this drug trafficking gang, which attempted to cultivate and sell marijuana in a one-stop manner locally, had been dismantled; meanwhile, a number of drug trafficking cases via postal parcels were also busted, seizing various types of drugs including 660 grams of methamphetamine, GHB (i.e. date-rape drug) and over a thousand tablets of controlled substances (Chart 6).

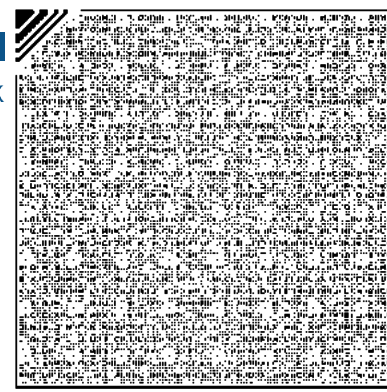
Chart 6

Year	Heroin (g)	Methamphetamine (g/tablet)	Ketamine (g)	Marijuana (g)	Cocaine (g/ml)
2019	397	318	254	169	4,678
2020	33	701	277	210	3,809
2021	0	881/5	118	1,869	26/7,475
2022	40.94	1,216.87/5	52.29	836.09	164.78



5. Conclusion and Prospects

In 2022, the Judiciary Police cooperated with relevant departments to discuss the regularization of legislative work, so as to expedite the local regulation of internationally controlled substances and emerging substances, and prevent drug trafficking gangs from taking advantage of the time lag in the legislative process, thus turning Macao into a lawless place for abusing emerging substances. The legislative work on the 8 types of internationally regulated substances newly added by the 64th session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs in 2021 has also entered the final stage, and the legislative work on international regulated substances newly added by the 65th session is currently being followed up. The Narcotics Division will, as always, continue to keep a close watch on the abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in Ma-



cao. If a significant increase in seizure of a certain type of substance is found within a short period of time, this Division will report the situation to the authorities and an urgent legislative procedure will be requested for regulation.

In conclusion, the economic environment of Macao was rife with challenges in 2022. With the gradual relaxation of entry–exit measures at the end of the year, Macao residents welcome a number of convenient customs clearance measures in 2023, including “Quota-free Scheme for Macao Private Cars Travelling to Guangdong”, mutual recognition of driving licences between Macao and the mainland, and quotas for private cars traveling to and from Hong Kong and Macao, with the one-hour living circle of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao further enhanced. The travel methods and even the living habits of residents in the three places will be changed. In addition, the recovery of tourism industry will undoubtedly bring about more frequent movement of people, which also entails latent problems to the public security control of Macao society. Therefore, while formulating anti-drug strategies, the Judiciary Police has to maintain a sense of crisis and beware of drug trafficking gangs taking advantage of the convenience of transportation in the three places as a condition to expand drug crimes from local to regional crimes; at the same time, it is also necessary to pay attention to possible emergence of new drug trafficking modus operandi, leading to greater challenges in the drug enforcement work undertaken by the Judiciary Police. The Judiciary Police will always keep a close eye on the changes in public security environment in Macao, and strengthen the intelligence exchange and cooperation with the police forces in Guangdong and Hong Kong, turning static intelligence collection to dynamic, and passive cooperation to active. When any changes in cross-border drug trafficking gangs are discovered, the areas involved in the activities will be notified immediately, so as to conduct joint investigation, joint prevention and joint control. Taking thorough consideration of the cases, optimizing the joint-action and communication mechanism of the three places, further developing toward the direction of the integration of tripartite intelligence and criminal investigation.

Addressing the complex and ever-changing landscape of drugs is a critical issue in the current combat of drug scourge in various countries. The Judiciary Police always believes that prevention efforts have to be taken to eradicate the scourge of drugs before the budding stage, which serves to be the most fundamental and core direction in curbing drug crimes. To this end, the Judiciary Police also keeps innovating its drug prevention publicity work, reaching out to the community and campuses, accessing the Internet to carry out anti-drug and anti-crime work, so as to exercise online and offline community-wide increased vigilance against the scourge of drugs, and at the same time continues to launch the Young Leaders for Community Safety Project, through which imparting anti-drug knowledge to the young trainees who will influence their peers by bringing back positive drug prevention ideas to their respective campuses. During the three-year epidemic, the incidence of drug-related cases among young people in Macao remained low, yet the Judiciary Police will continue to cooperate with Christian New Life Fellowship (in Macao) to launch the Drug Abuse Rehabilitation Support Program for Young People, formulating contingency plans and support measures to jointly promote publicity and education on drug-related prevention among young people, thereby enabling them to stay away from drugs, get back on the right track and reintegrate into society.

(2) The Judiciary Police — Forensic Science Department

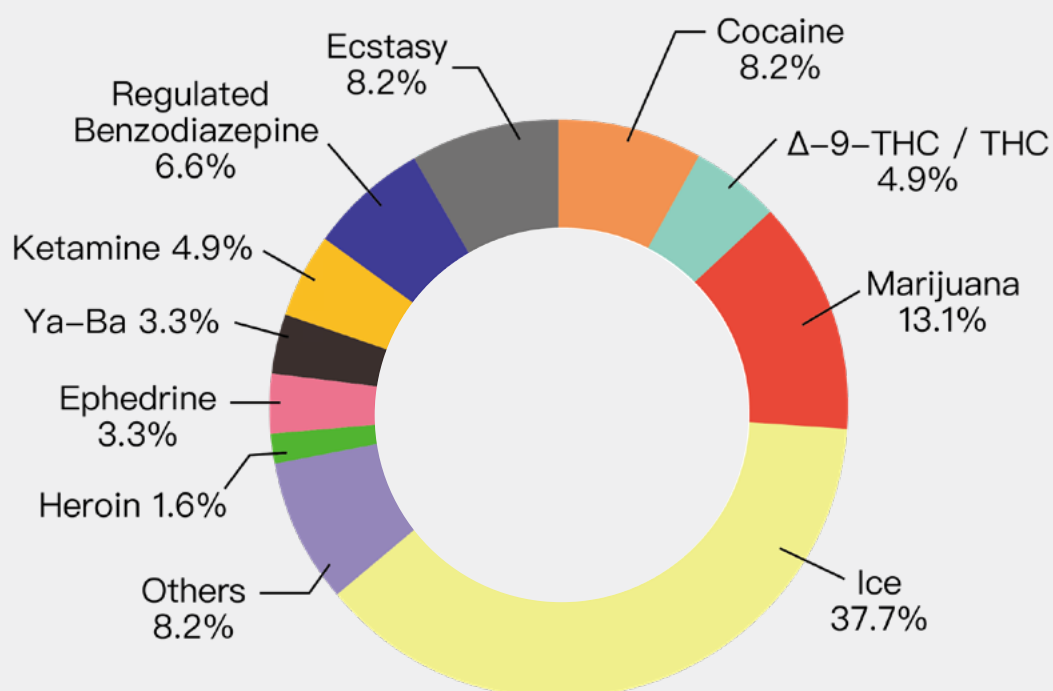
The Forensic Science Department is a department that enjoys technical independence under the Judiciary Police. Its main duties include: carrying out tests and collecting evidence at crime scenes, providing forensic examination on material evidence, offering criminal technical support, conducting technical research and development, etc. entrusted by investigating units. Forensic examination on drugs is one of the major tasks under the work of forensic examination on material evidence.

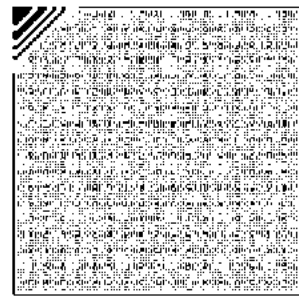
1. Overview of common drugs sent for testing

In 2022, the Forensic Science Department received a total of 123 drug-involved cases sent for testing, which was a 36% decrease compared to 2021. 91 of the cases were qualitative, whilst 32 were quantitative.

Methamphetamine (commonly known as “ice”) predominated in the qualitative cases sent for testing, accounting for 37.7% of the total number of cases for the year, with 1216.87g sent for testing. This was followed by marijuana, accounting for 13.1%, with 836.09g sent for testing. Cocaine and MDMA (commonly known as “ecstasy”) each accounted for 8.2% (see Figure 1 for details). It was worth mentioning that, in recent years, there had been an emergence of marijuana products containing Δ -9-tetrahydrocannabinol in Macao, with 4.9% sent for testing in 2022.

Figure 1 Percentage pie chart illustrating the common drugs sent for testing in Macao in 2022





In the past, cases sent for testing were mainly “ice”, cocaine and ketamine in Macao. Yet, in recent years, there has been a decrease in the percentage of cocaine and ketamine cases sent for testing. In 2018, there was a drop in cocaine, from 34.5% to 8.2%, and a drop in ketamine, from 7.9% to 4.9%. On the other hand, there was an increase in the percentage of marijuana and “ecstasy” cases sent for testing. In 2018, there was an increase from 4.2% to 13.1% in marijuana cases, as well as from 0% to 8.2 % in “ecstasy” cases sent for testing. Regarding methamphetamine, the percentage of cases sent for testing remained relatively stable. For the first time this year, marijuana cases surpassed cocaine and ketamine, becoming the second most frequently tested drug in Macao. (Please refer to Figure 2 and Table 1 for details).

In terms of drug quantity sent for testing, a total of 836.09g of marijuana were sent for testing in 2022. 610.58g of which mainly came from the case of marijuana cultivated in an industrial building. There was also a significant increase in the quantity of “ecstasy” sent for testing, with 1143 pellets of “ecstasy” in total this year. (See Table 2 for details).

Figure 2 Bar graph (sorted by percentage) illustrating cases of common drugs sent for testing from 2018 to 2022



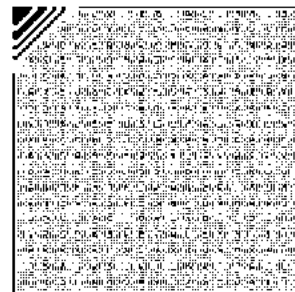
Table 1 Number of cases of drugs sent for testing from 2018 to 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
“Ice”	54	42	37	35	23
Ketamine	13	19	11	14	3
Cocaine	57	85	29	4	5
Marijuana	7	10	7	9	8
Heroin	5	5	2	0	1
Ya-Ba	9	5	0	2	2
Benzodiazepines	13	4	1	15	4
“Ecstasy”	0	4	1	9	5
Methadone	1	0	0	1	0
Codeine	2	0	4	0	0
LSD	0	0	2	1	0
Ephedrine	0	0	0	1	2
Others	4	0	1	10	5

Table 2 Weights and quantities sent for testing from 2018 to 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
“Ice” (g)	4,143.83	317.24	734.67	881.44	1,216.87
Ketamine (g)	722.66	253.80	292.99	117.73	52.29
Cocaine (g)	879.61	4,678.32	3,831.97	25.72	177.59
Cocaine (ml)	0	0	0	7,475	0
Marijuana (g)	22.07	169.19	210.44	1,869.30	836.09
Heroin (g)	2,859.36	396.53	33.29	0	40.94
Ya-Ba (pellet)	216	200	0	4	5
Benzodiazepines (pellet)	385	488	1	1,554	517
“Ecstasy” (pellet)	0	13	10	88	1,143
Methadone (ml)	9.2	0	0	1(pellet)	0
Codeine (ml)	3,906	0	9,940	0	0
LSD (piece)	0	0	10	21	0
Ephedrine (pellet)	0	0	0	2	4,738

In terms of drug purity, the purity of drug samples seized this year was as follows: heroin (24% ~72%), co-caine (71% ~ 86%), ketamine (30% ~ 85%), MDMA “ecstasy” (27% ~ 34%) and methamphetamine (18% ~ 80%).



2. Brief description of a special case

2.1 Macao's first “magic mushroom” case

In May 2022, the Judiciary Police busted the first “magic mushroom” case in Macao. 498.17g of white and black fungus, sent by the Forensic Science Department for testing, were detected to have contained ingredients of a controlled substance “psilocybin”. In addition, 9.920g of white dried mushrooms and 1,825.44g of black culture soil, which were sent for testing, were also detected to have contained ingredients of controlled substances such as psilocine and psilocybin respectively. (See Figure 3).



Figure 3 The case of “magic mushroom” sent for testing in 2022

2.2 Cultivation of marijuana in an industrial building

In September 2022, samples of a case involving marijuana cultivated in an industrial building were sent for testing. 25 marijuana plants grown in soil or hydroponically, as well as fragments of marijuana plants, weighing 610.58g in total, were sent for testing. (See Figure 4).



Figure 4 Case of marijuana cultivated in an industrial building sent for testing in 2022

2.3 Δ -9-tetrahydrocannabinol

In recent years, there have been an emergence of marijuana products, mainly in the form of gummies, chocolates and e-cigarette oil. Among the cases, 90 chocolates sent for testing this year contained Δ -9-tetrahydrocannabinol, with a weight of 883.60g in total. The percentage of Δ -9-tetrahydrocannabinol in these chocolates was between 0.09 to 0.11%. Besides, ingredients of tetrahydrocannabinol and Δ -9-tetrahydrocannabinol were also detected from the e-cigarette oil (weighing 0.959g in total) of two e-cigarettes sent for testing.

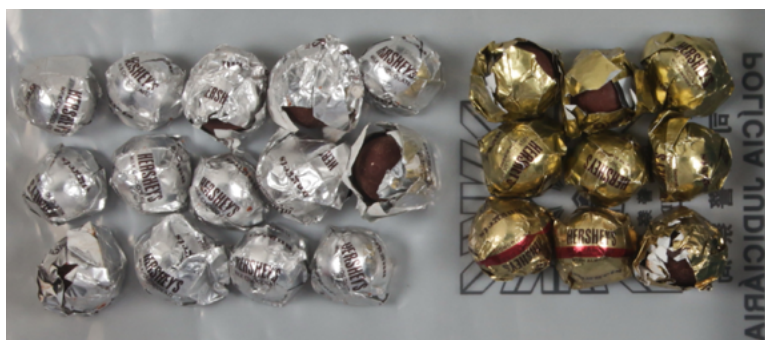


Figure 5 Δ -9-tetrahydrocannabinol was detected in the chocolates sent for testing

3. New drugs and emerging psychoactive substances

In 2022, there were no cases concerning the new drug “happy powder” sent for testing in Macao. This was the first time ever that no such substance had been sent for testing since 2010. As for “happy water” and piperazine derivatives, since 2017 and 2015, no relevant samples had been sent for testing.

This year, there was a case regarding cathinone derivatives in Macao, in which N,N-Dimethylpentylone was detected from 495 green tablets and fragments sent for testing.

There were a total of 7 cases involving emerging psychoactive substances, in which ingredients of 2-FDCK and synthetic cannabinoid were detected.

2-FDCK was an analogue of ketamine. This year, a total of 7 packs weighing 47.863g of white crystals sent for testing, contained 2-FDCK. There were a total of 6 cases of synthetic cannabinoids, mainly in the form of cigarettes and e-cigarette oil. MDMB-4en-PINACA was detected from 0.171g of cigarette plant fragments and 589.2ml of e-cigarette oil sent for testing respectively. In addition, ingredients of synthetic cannabinoid ADB-BUTINACA were also detected from 204 cigarettes (weighing 144.493g), 31 bottles of 303.1ml of liquid/oil and 292 e-cigarette oils sent for testing.



Figure 6 Derivatives of cathinone were detected in the tablets sent for testing

4. Conclusion

The Forensic Science Department will continue to monitor the movement of drugs or new psychoactive substances within and outside the country. In response to the trend of drug changes globally, standard reference substances for various types of new drugs will be procured early, thus enriching the existing spectral and mass spectral databases. The Forensic Science Department will keep on introducing and upgrading the testing techniques and capabilities, while continuing to exchange and collaborate with relevant institutions and experts in China and overseas, thereby getting well-prepared for the increasingly complex and insidious global drug trend, as well as providing technical support for combating drug-related crimes.



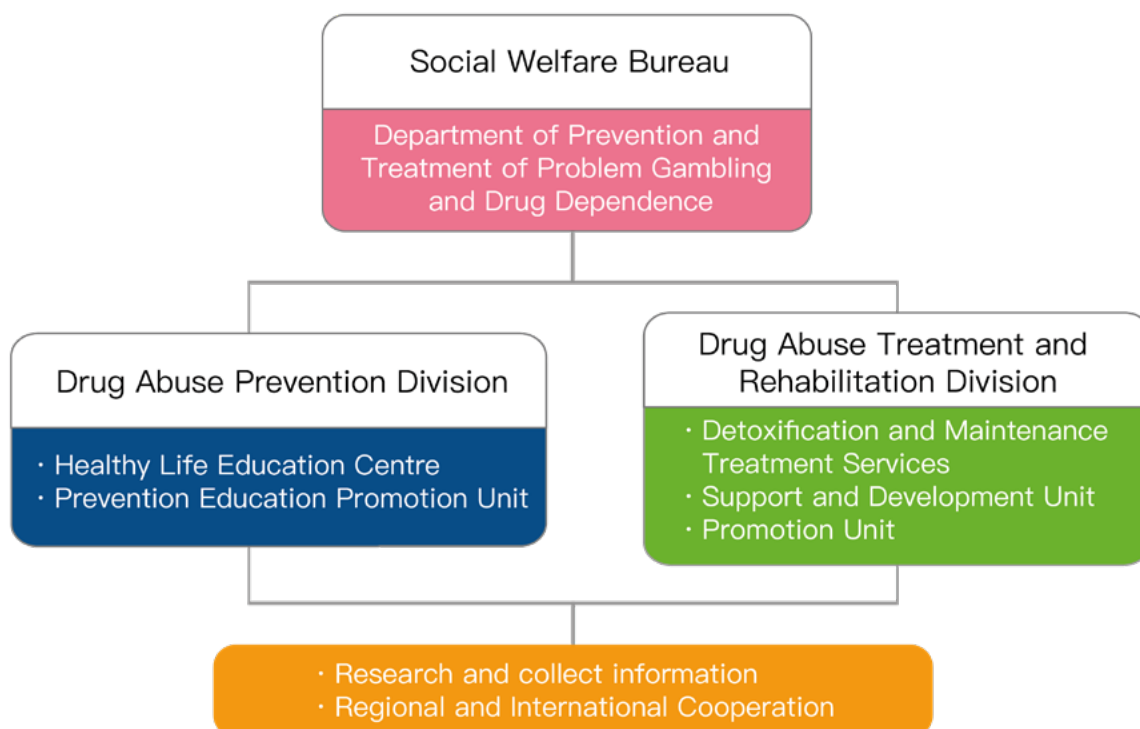
IV. Drug Dependence Prevention and Treatment

IV. Drug Dependence Prevention and Treatment

(1) Social Welfare Bureau – Department of Prevention and Treatment of Problem Gambling and Drug Dependence

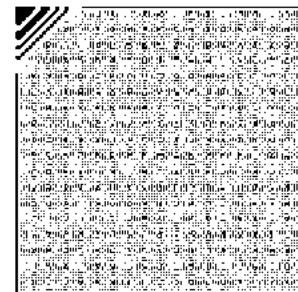
It is responsible for the work and services in relation to drug abuse prevention and treatment, it also serves as a secretariat unit of the Narcotics Control Committees to support the committee and its two working groups, as well as to execute drug abuse prevention tasks from different aspects as listed below:

- To promotes drug abuse prevention education.
- To provides drug treatment and rehabilitation Services.
- To supervise local drug abuse data and conduct investigation.
- To supports non-governmental drug abuse organizations.
- To enhances regional and international collaborations and exchanges.



1. Drug Abuse Prevention Services

Drug Abuse Prevention Division— It is mainly responsible for promoting anti-drug educational activities to schools, families and communities, providing services such as drug prevention seminars, trainings and anti-drug campaigns, so as to encourage organizations and other groups to organise anti-drugs related activities.



(1) Healthy Life Education Centre

The Healthy Life Education Centre is an anti-drug education facility under the Social Welfare Bureau of the Macao SAR. It is equipped with Healthy Life Education classrooms, theme experience zone, multifunctional hall, multimedia studio, information display zone and reading zone. Through different cultural, sports and arts activities, it promote the message of healthy lifestyle and anti-drug to Macao citizens, especially children, youth and their parents, in order to create a drug-free society.

Statistics of Activities in Healthy Life Education Centre in 2022

Type of activities	No. of Times	No. of Participants
Visits	2	86
Trainings	24	1,089
Integrated activities	127	2,668
Total	153	3,843

1.1 Adventure activities

The Theme Experience Area is equipped indoor adventurous facilities, including low-event adventure challenge, edge rope, rope course, zip wire tower, giant ladder and rock climbing, etc; In order to cooperate with local organisations to promote drug abuse prevention-themed adventure activities coaching, the "On-site Adventure Instructor Training Course" was held in October and 20 instructors in total were trained. In addition, in order to strengthen the skills of Adventure Instructors who have already obtained the second and third training stage, the day camp "Adventure Project Expansion and Adventure Lecture" was held for the first time in December. Anti-drug elements were added to the activity as examples , also some less commonly used and newly added adventure activities were introduced. The lecture was well received, totally 16 students were awarded certificates. A total of 53 adventure activities were held in 2022, with 1,208 participants (person per time) all together.



On-site Adventure Instructor Training Course



Adventure Project Expansion and Adventure Lecture

1.2 Training in shooting videos

The multimedia studio is equipped with software and hardware equipments for recording and post-production. In order to enhance young people's self-identity and cultivate their interests, promoting community concern and social participation, "Organic Teen" of YMCA Macao has organised "New Teen Video 2022" volunteer training activities. These include volunteering, short film shooting and production courses. In total, 48 high school and university students have completed the training and 28 activities were conducted. During this period, 24 videos with the featuring positive life attitude were produced and uploaded to social media platforms, wining a total of 38,769 clicks.



Introducing the skill of film shooting

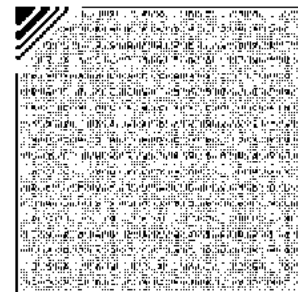
1.3 Visits and Interchanges



Students from Kiang Wu Nursing College of Macau (11/3/2022)



Livelihood Affairs Bureau of Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin (14/3/2022)



(2) Systematic Drug Abuse Prevention Course

2.1 Drug Education Programme for kindergarten and primary school – Healthy Life Education Programme

The Healthy Life Education Programme has started to provide service since 2000, with the aim programme is designed “To help children live a healthy life and prevent drug addiction”. It offers high quality drug education to students from kindergarten to Primary 6, allowing them to establish healthy lifestyle and positive values, enabling them to protect themselves and say “No” under certain circumstance.

Statistics of Drug Education Programme for kindergarten and primary school in 2022 “Healthy Life Education”

Programmes	No. of Classes	No. of Students	No. of Schools
Chinese Classes	424	12,944	60
English Classes	99	2,877	
Special Needs Classes	21	255	
Total	544	16,076	60

Remarks: The number of schools is considered as in sections

2.1.1 Online activities

During the epidemic from 2021 to 2022, in order to continue to promote the healthy life education, online activities for kindergarten to 6th grade were launched. The online activities for senior class in kindergarten to 3rd grade were quiz games in the form of comics and short videos, so that parents can interact with their children to learn about healthy living and drug abuse prevention. Those for 4th to 6th grade are mainly focused on practices and reinforcement courses, including knowl-



edges on drugs and human body, positive thinking, critical thinking and skills on rejections. In 2022, a total of 2,779 participants were attracted to join the online activities.

2.1.2 Courses promotion

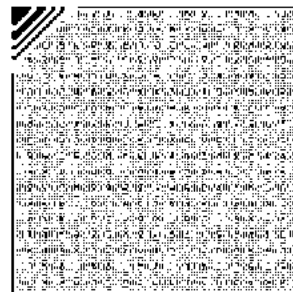
On-campus promotional activities are well-received in schools. In May 2022, the Healthy Life Education Programme was invited to visit Sacred Heart Canossian College (Kindergarten) . Through interactive activities and videos, the importance of a balanced diet and breakfast was introduced, allowing the students to cultivate healthy lifestyle, with about 320 students and teachers participated.



Students' interaction with Harold



Students answered questions actively



2.2 Drug Education Programme for Secondary School – "Thinking it Through"

Targeted at form 1 to form 5 students in secondary school, the course "Thinking it Through" is conducted in an interactive teaching method through animations, live videos and games, covering the negative effects of smoking, alcohol and popular drugs (such as cannabis and cocaine) on the body, clarifying the myths about drug abuse among teenagers and helping them understand the legal responsibilities related to drugs in Macao, so that young people can raise their awareness of crisis and strengthen their determination to refuse drugs.

Statistic of Drug Education Programme for Secondary School in 2022 "Thinking it Through"

Programmes	No. of Classes	No. of Students	No. of Schools
Clearing up Myths about Smoking (F1)	55	1,704	9
Be a Cool Teenager (F2)	42	1,334	9
No Fun without Drugs ? (F3)	37	1,151	10
Drug-free Fun (F4)	5	156	1
Stand Firm (F5)	12	363	3
Total	151	4,708	12*

Remarks : * Due to repetition the total number was not equivalent to the sum of each item.

2.2.1 Optimisation of courses

In response to the local state of drug abuse and feedback from school teachers and students, a new curriculum of the anti-drug course for secondary school students "Thinking it Through" was launched in September 2022 and was extended to cover five levels in total till high school years. The course enhances young people's ability to prevent drug abuse through small-class interactions, dispelling drug abuse myths, and social skills training.



The Drug Education Programme for Secondary School

In order to further enhance the resilience of young people against drugs, from September to December, Social Welfare Bureau cooperated with Bosco Youth Service Network to launch an online game as an extended activity to strengthen the effectiveness of drug abuse prevention, with a total of 2,963 people participating.



"Please find out the risk of drugs"
Online game

(3) Anti-Drug Education Activities

Statistics of Anti-Drug Education Activities in 2022

Types of Activities	No. of Times	No. of Participants
General prevention activities*	35	4,170
Parents prevention activities	10	313
Total	45	4,483

Remarks : * General prevention activities include school seminars, community seminars, seminars for professionals and training programmes.

3.1 Trainings and courses for teachers

Two teacher trainings were held in 2022. The trainings included lectures, videos, group discussions, experience sharing, etc. to help teachers identify the characteristics of drug abusers and understand the situation of youth drug abuse from multiple perspectives, as well as to learn how to help drug abusers seek services. A total of 63 teachers have participated.

Social Welfare Bureau has worked together with the Education and Youth Development Bureau and Bosco Youth Service Network to organise an online anti-drug abuse lecture for youth “Disassembling electronic cigarettes”. The lecture covers the myths and harms of e-cigarettes, the impact of e-cigarettes on young people, etc. More than 600 teachers, school counsellors and institutional staffs participated.



Teachers were discussing in groups about the situation of drug abuse in Macao



IV. Drug Dependence Prevention and Treatment



3.2 Training for law enforcement officers

Invited by Macao Academy of Public Security Forces, Social Welfare Bureau provided a training to security forces and security department personnel in November. In the course, instructors from the Drug Abuse Prevention Division and nurses from the Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Division explained the information of latest drugs, how to identify physical reactions after drug abuse, and the prevention and drug treatment services available; they have also visited drug abuse prevention facilities. A total of 30 relevant personnel participated in the training.



The information of latest drugs was explained by nurses

3.3 Anti-drug education among parents

3.3.1 Prevention activities for parents

In order to encourage parents to participate in anti-drug education, promote the concept of “Promise to fight against drug abuse starting from home”, and to work together in protecting children and youth from the harm of drugs, a total of 10 “Healthy Living Seminar and Parent-child activity” were held in Healthy Life Education Centre, it includes visiting, parent seminar and parent-child activity, which attracted 313 participants.



Parent seminar



Experience in Harold Parent-child Board Game



Introduction of Healthy Life Education Programme

3.3.2 Promotional series for parents

In order to send positive message for parents and raise awareness of prevention, 4-panel comics about anti-drug was monthly uploaded to social media, attracting nearly 260,000 views throughout the year.



Anti-drug comics

3.3.3 Parent-child board game

In order to encourage parents to teach their children to better understand emotions, to learn about correct attitudes towards the use of medication and healthy lifestyle, the "Harold Health Alliance" a healthy life parent-child board game was officially launched on 30th October in cooperation with the Sheng Kung Hui Macao Social Services Coordination Office. From November to December, 22 parent-child board game workshops were conducted, with a total of 385 parents and children participating.



Parent-child board game workshops



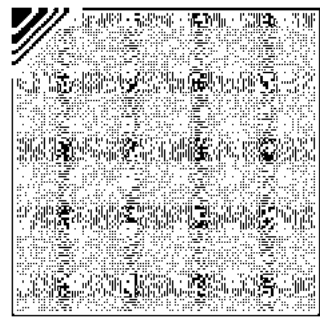
(4) Series Activities on International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking 2022

In response to the "International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking" on 26th June, with the slogan "Anti-Drug Action Starts from You" in 2022, Social Welfare Bureau promoted the anti-drug message to the community through a series of activities, including: a professional symposium on drug abuse prevention and the Launching Ceremony of 2022 International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking Series Events and "Anti-Drugs Genius" Talent Show. Because of the epidemic, most anti-drug activities originally planned during the summer vacation from June to August were changed to on-line or postponed. SWB also continued to organise and support relevant non-governmental organisations to promote anti-drug messages to the community.

4.1 Professional Symposium on Drug Abuse Prevention and the Launching Ceremony of 2022 International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking Series Events

In cooperation with Macao YMCA, the Professional Symposium on Drug Abuse Prevention and the Launching Ceremony of 2022 International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking Series Events were held on 31st May, attracting over 300 participants offline and online.

IV. Drug Dependence Prevention and Treatment



The symposium invited experts and scholars, government representatives and front-line personnel engaged in the prevention and treatment of drug addiction in Macao as guest speakers. The symposium was themed "Working together and not "alone" against drugs" and covered nine topics in the two areas (namely service groups and intervention methods), conducting in-depth discussions and experience sharing, and exchanging with colleagues in the field of drug abuse prevention and treatment based on the study on "Drug abuse trends, demands on treatment service and development planning". The symposium aimed to promote the career development of anti-drug professionals and strived to unite the efforts of the government and private organisations, responding to social changes and new drug trends with a spirit of shared responsibility, and responding to social needs with innovative service methods.



The Launching Ceremony of 2022
International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking Series Events



Professional Symposium on Drug Abuse Prevention

4.2 “Anti-Drugs Genius” Talent Show

“Anti-Drugs Genius” Talent Show was held together with Social Welfare Bureau, YMCA Macao, the Women’s General Association of Macao, Sheng Kung Hui Macao Social Services Coordination Office and Bosco Youth Service Network. There were preliminary rounds and finals to provide a platform for contestants to perform their talents and convey the anti-drug message to the public. The final was held on 18th September, selecting the winners of the Merit Award and the Outstanding Talent Award. The live broadcast on that day reached more than 4,000 people, enhancing the awareness among Macao citizens to jointly respond to the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.



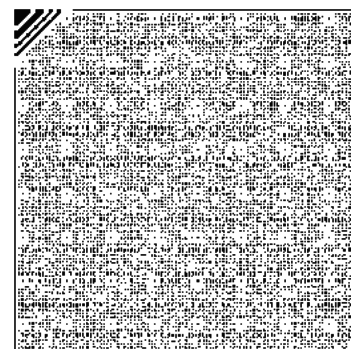
Brother and sister played as animated characters to demonstrate their anti-drug spirits



Youth band put their energy in singing



Group photo of contestants and guests



(5) 2022 National Seminar on Drug Abuse Prevention and treatment and the 21st Academic Conference of the Chinese Association for Drug Abuse Prevention and Control

Organised jointly by the Chinese Association for Drug Abuse Prevention and Control, Social Welfare Bureau Macao, the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and YMCA Macao, the “2022 National Seminar on Drug Abuse Prevention and Control and the 21st Academic Conference of the Chinese Association for Drug Abuse Prevention and Control” was held on 17th and 18th November online.

The theme of the Seminar was "New Opportunities, New Challenges and New Futures". There were nearly 100,000 participants from Macao, Hong Kong and Chinese mainland, including about 12,000 participants in the special meeting on "Drug Abuse Prevention and Control in the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area". During the meeting, experts from Hong Kong, Macao and the Mainland conducted heated discussions in the research field of drug abuse prevention and control, providing constructive suggestions for anti-drug work, and seeking new developments together.

In summary, a total of 350 experts, scholars and frontline workers in Macao have signed up to participate in this online conference. In addition, in order to encourage and promote the professional development of young colleagues in the field of drug abuse prevention and treatment, the organisers have specially set up outstanding papers of young colleagues. There were 17 papers from Macao. 12 were eligible to participate in the selection of outstanding youth papers in Macao. Among them, "Establishment and Application of Screening Scale for Youths at High Risk of Exposure to Drugs" won the first prize, while "Analysis of the Psychological Causes of Drug Abuse among Youth in Macao – Based on Perspectives of Self-Enhancement Theory and Macao Drug Prevention Policy" and "Reviewing Drug Abuse as a Tool for Experience Avoidance—Discussing the Application of Online Acceptance and Commitment Therapy in the Rehabilitation of Hidden Drug Abusers" won the second prize. In the special conferences and paper sharing sessions, representatives from Macao have shared on 14 themes and served as the keynote speaker at the summit forum.

The National Seminar on Drug Abuse Prevention and treatment is held in turn between Mainland China, Hong Kong and Macao. The conference this year announced at the closing ceremony that the next National Seminar on Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment will be held in Hong Kong in 2025.



Ms. Hoi Va Pou, Vice-director of Social Welfare Bureau had a speech in the launching ceremony



The launching ceremony was held by the representatives from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Macao

(6) Anti-drug Promotional Programs

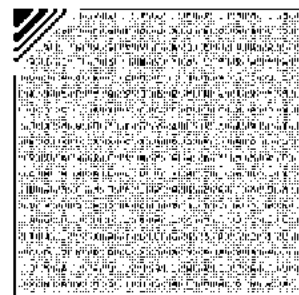
6.1 Activity Plan for Tertiary Students 2022

In order to strengthen the anti-drug protection network for university students, the YMCA Macao organised an activity plan for university students to raise their awareness of the drug abuse crisis and gambling disorder in various ways. Activities include: health checkpoints, distribution of life packages, skills training, life experience, online activities, information sharing, etc. 37 activities were held in 2022, with a total of 19,386 participants.

6.1.1 The launching ceremony of "Anti-Drugs Art Wall at the Healthy Life Education Centre" creative works

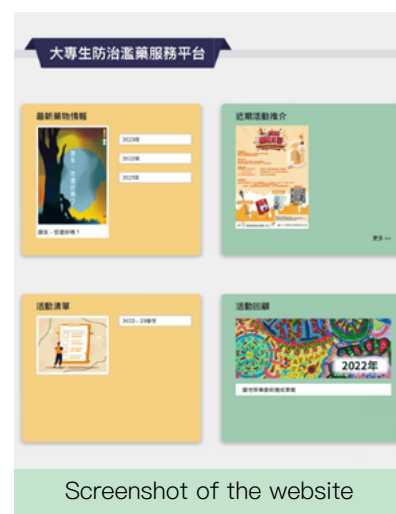
In order to strengthen the promotion of anti-drug education to university students, the Social Welfare Bureau jointly organised the launching ceremony of "Anti-Drugs Art Wall at the Healthy Life Education Centre" creative works with the YMCA Macao. An art team of 31 local university students led by local tutors created an art wall using circle painting to create anti-drug art wall paintings, injecting vitality and colour into anti-drug education.





6.1.2 "Drug abuse prevention service platform for tertiary Students "

Combining the strength of social service organisations, the " Drug abuse prevention service platform for tertiary Students " was launched on the Macao Anti-Drug Website to provide the latest drug information, event publicity and promotion, etc. It also creates opportunities for experience and practices for the future, allowing university students to demonstrate autonomy, growing up together, accumulating life experience, and connecting with society in the field of drug abuse prevention and treatment.



Screenshot of the website

6.2 “Know” Gambling “Know” Drugs—Bosco Youth Service Network Training Programme

In order to enhance college students’ knowledge on problem gambling, harm of drug abuse and addiction, “Know” Gambling “Know” Drugs—Training Programme and “GD know it or not” which were organised by Bosco Youth Service Network FREEland during May to June, it attracted 46 local tertiary students to participate.

6.3 “Guess my mind” Drug Abuse Prevention Workshop

In order to allow students to absorb anti-drug information, understand the dangers of drugs, and clarify the myths about various drugs, the "Guess my mind" Drug Abuse Prevention Workshop 2022 was co-organised with the Bosco Youth Service Network– FREEland on 4th April, 2022. Six workshops were held from April to December, with a total of 251 participants.



Experience in “Guess my mind” Board Game

6.4 GOGOGOAL and youth buddy programme

GO GO GOAL and youth buddy programme is organised by Bosco Youth Service Network–FREEland. Through the activities of the mobile APP "GO GO GOAL" and cooperation with social workers, participants can learn more about community resources and establish a healthy lifestyle. Throughout the year, a total of 2,595 people downloaded the APP, with 4,177 people completed tasks. The total number of tasks completed (per person per time) was 12,847, and 412 gifts were given out. The "GO GO GOAL and Youth Buddy Recognition Ceremony" was held online on 27th January to express gratitude to all the member businesses of "Friendly Enterprises Support Youth Development" and buddies who contribute to support youth. On that day, the live broadcast reached a total of 869 people.



Recognition ceremony

6.5 “Law as the Sun to Anti-drug” Online Quiz

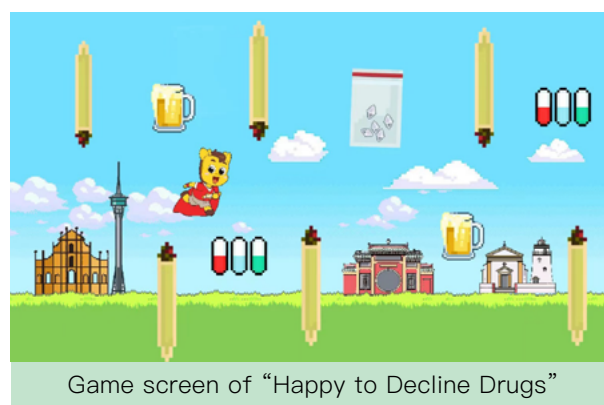
In order to enhance young people's understanding of Macao's anti-drug laws, from September to November, Social Welfare Bureau cooperated with Christian New Fellowship of Macao “We point” and organised the "Anti-Drug Publicity and Promotion" activity for Youth support programme "Knowing how to come back after being lost in drugs", which was conducted online and offline. A total of 36,656 people participated, including 71 winners. The publicity reached 56,433 people.



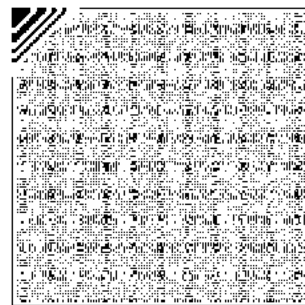
Campus booth

6.6 “Happy to Decline Drugs” Online Quiz

In order to increase the public awareness to the anti-drug message and establish the concept of resolutely rejecting drugs, the Community Youth Service Team of the General Union of Neighbourhood Associations of Macao organised the "Happy to Decline Drugs" WeChat mini game from October to December. A total of 17,287 people participated in the game, and over 200 gifts were given away to participants.



Game screen of “Happy to Decline Drugs”



6.7 Award Ceremony "Opening the Door to Inclusion" for Caring Enterprise

Social Welfare Bureau has also organised together with Noah Youth Development Centre the Award Ceremony "Opening the Door to Inclusion" for Caring Enterprise on 11th November. Multiple garment creations, sculptures and other works by the students were displayed. The students also put on the costumes designed and produced by themselves and performed dances to lift up the atmosphere; the instructors and students also have shared their life stories and explained how to return to employment and repair family relationships through the support of the programme. A total of 117 people attended the event and 114 people watched the live broadcast.



Group photo of the guests in the award ceremony

6.8 Promotion for foreigners

Be Cool Project launched a series of activities which were foreigners oriented, it attracted 8,962 participants in 64 sessions.

(7) Non-governmental organizations

The Social Welfare Bureau continues to encourage and motivate NGOs to participate in communal anti-drug activities through technical support and financial assistance, so as to strengthen the prevention of drug abuse in the community. SWB continued to work with Organic Teen of YMCA Macao, "Be Cool Project" of Macao Drug Addict Rehabilitation Association (ARTM), supporting operation and development of various services. The social service facilities/projects were regularly funded by the SWB focusing on activities themed on prevention of substance abuse and smoking hazard, as well as promoting youth development.

(8) Publicity

To promote the drug-prevention to public and communities, in 2022 Social Welfare Bureau produced the promotional film “Stay smart to reject new drugs” and leaflets about electronic cigarette and drug programme for secondary school. The SWB anti-drug videos had been broadcasting anti-drug promotional film via TV and Radio located at Government Services Centre, Public Information Centre, Centre for Higher Education Students, colleges, buses and Healthy Life Education Centre, also at the official Facebook and WeChat of Judiciary Police and the Student Blog of Higher Education Bureau to enhance anti-drug publicity within communities. At the same time, the anti-drug posters were publicised at various places, the anti-drug website www.antidrugs.gov.mo has been constantly providing the public with up-to-date anti-drug news and information. The anti-drug hotline 2878 1791 has also been providing counselling and helping services for all citizens.



Leaflet “Thinking it Through”



Promotional film “Stay smart to reject new drugs”



Leaflet “What is Electronic Cigarette ?”

2. Drug Abuse Treatment Services

The Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Division – Detoxification and Maintenance Treatment Services provides comprehensive rehabilitation and supporting services for voluntary help-seekers and their family members. Including treatment and rehabilitation services for the young and adult, guidance and follow-up on infectious disease prevention and treatment, methadone maintenance treatment, service for family members of drug addicts, body checks required for drug treatment, etc.

(1) Drug addiction clinic and rehabilitation services

In 2022, the number of people seeking help for drug rehabilitation at the Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Division was 222, of which 16 were new cases (Figure 1), and 62,949 services were provided. Among them, nursing services account for the most, followed by drug urine testing. During the epidemic, SWB continued to strengthen collaboration with civil drug rehabilitation institutions, optimised various emergency plans for epidemic prevention, provided special methadone distribution and support services for drug abusers in lockdown area and controlled rehabilitation centres, with 146 persons participated; at the same time, telephone counselling, outreach care and contact, donation of anti-epidemic materials, and transportation services were provided for those in need. Up until 2022, 1,097 probation cases had been transferred by the judicial measures for participating drug treatments, including 31 new referrals in 2022; themed seminars were launched and over 84 people participated in 22 lectures and group activities.

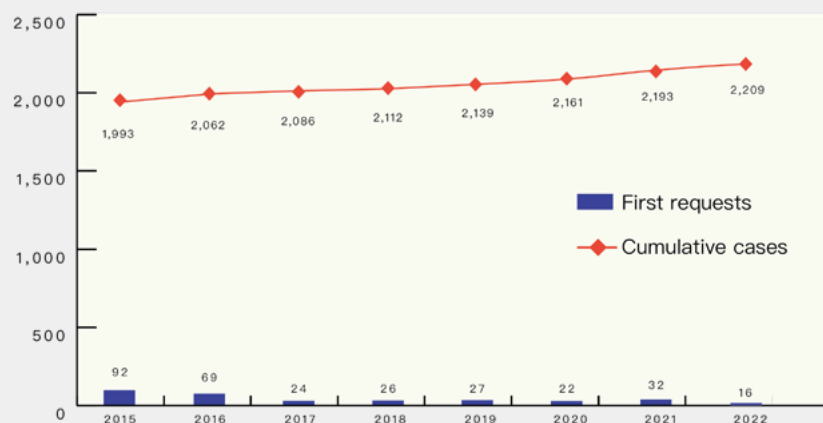


Special methadone distribution



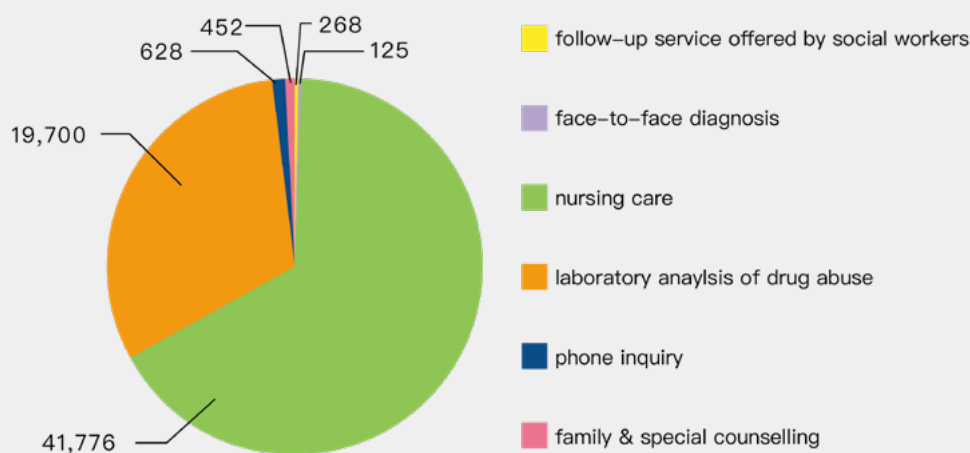
10 hours themed-seminar – Explore the impact of prescription drug abuse on individuals and society

Figure 1: Statistics of Cases by Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Division in Recent Years



Remarks: From October 1991 to December 2022, a total of 2,209 cases on drug treatment were registered by the Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Division.

Figure 2. Services provided by Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Division in 2022

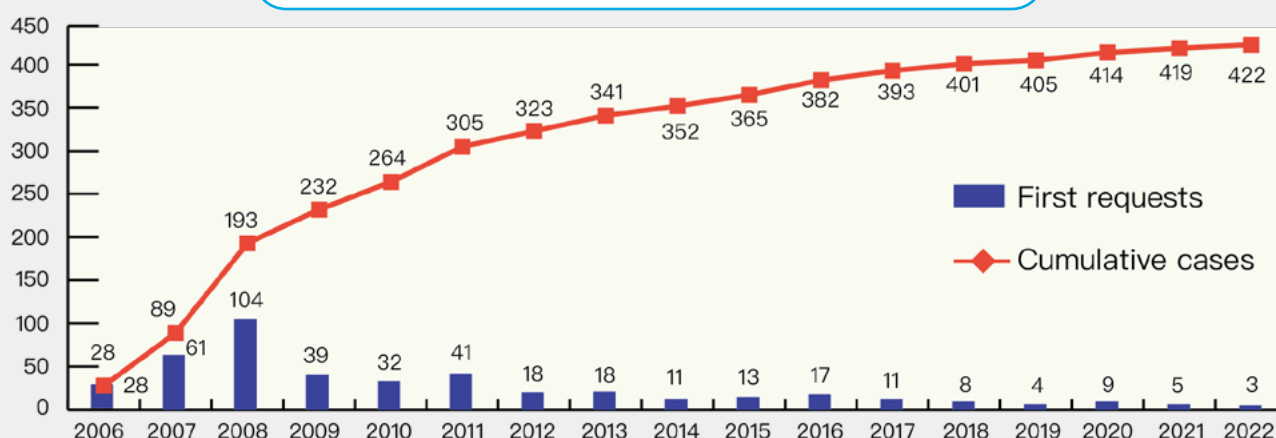


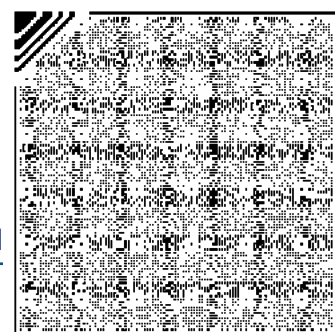
(2) Infectious Disease Prevention & Control and Damage Mitigation

In 2022, continually cooperated with Centro Hospitalar Conde de São Januário, followed 282 cases of infection. Through outpatient service, 199 of counselling and follow-up services were provided. AIDS counselling and education services were offered for 90 help-seekers; 163 person-times health education counselling were provided continually, 456 people participated in various sessions of trainings/activities related to various infective diseases conducted for front-line staff and trainees at drug rehabilitation hospitals.

In order to reduce damage, Social Welfare Bureau have supported non-governmental drug rehabilitation institutions to set up the plan of clean needles since 2008, more than 370,000 contaminated needles have been recycled till 2022; there were 422 persons participated in the methadone treatment services during 2005 to 2022; the help-seekers' high-risk behaviors were continually followed-up. Follow-up service has been provided for drug abusers infected with hepatitis C since August 2020. Up until 2022, a total of 52 cases were referred to infectious department, with over 200 physical examination being done and 20 people have completed hepatitis C medical treatment.

Figure 2: Cumulative number of people participated in the methadone treatment service





(3) Cooperating with non-governmental organizations to carry out multi-channel promotion work on drug rehabilitation service

The Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Division of Social Welfare Bureau, together with various government departments, medical and NGOs, has organised a number of drug treatment service promotion projects. In 2022, SWB continued to hold 27 "Smart Tips for you" training courses for law enforcement officers and front-line staff of social service organisations, with a total of 2,612 participants; the "Healthy Community Partners" were also held with a total of 502 people participated in 6 training courses; the on/off line seminar "A talk about Medicine Treatment" attracted a total of 1,002 participants, a lecture on "Anti-drug work for front-line medical staff" was held in cooperation with Kiang Wu Hospital and University Hospital, with 626 people participated; at the same time, SWB published anti-drug abuse related articles in the publications of Kiang Wu Hospital, University Hospital and Macao Federation of Trade Unions– Worker's Medical Clinic, carrying out drug education work continuously, disseminating correct health information and help-seeking methods.

SWB established an exchange platform for drug abuse prevention services and with other social service organisations, co-organising sharing sessions on drug abuse prevention services, with 21 directors and representatives from 18 organisations participating; SWB also organised the anti-drug activity "Chance. Life" in cooperation with civil organisations, which attracted a total of 150 people participated; in addition, SWB continually used the "Anti-Drug Information Station" mobile application, the "Smart Parent" WeChat official account, and the "Go Go Goal" mobile application to allow the public to acknowledge the harm of drugs and how to seek help, to promote drug abuse prevention information, and co-organised "The New TEEN Land" and "Drunken no Friends" online quiz to enhance public awareness of anti-drug law-abiding and prevention of alcohol abuse, together with a number of online promotion activities, it has reached a total of 58,491 persons.



"Smart Tips for you" training courses



"New TEEN Land" activity



Ceremony of "Drunken no Friends"
Alcoholic Abuse Prevention Video Competition



Healthy Community Partners– Tools
for measuring health condition



"Smart Parent" WeChat official account



"Love to Serve, Happy to Share" volunteer leadership training

(4) Work highlights throughout the year

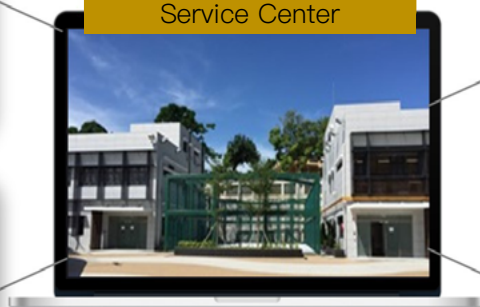
4.1 Establishing Centre for Comprehensive Drug Treatment Services

In response to the integration of resources on drug treatment service, the original drug treatment residential services were merged into comprehensive drug treatment services. In addition to inpatient services, the new Centre is committed to providing a safe and professional "therapeutic community" environment, providing different types of services to care for drug abusers and support family who are affected, providing short-term accommodation, vocational training and life planning services, as well as promotion of drug abuse prevention and treatment services. It has provided a total of 17,146 of services per person per time. In particular, it provides vocational internship, employment referral and social reintegration services for people after treatment.

Short-term accommodation



ARTM Ka Ho Integrated Service Center



Vocational training and life planning services

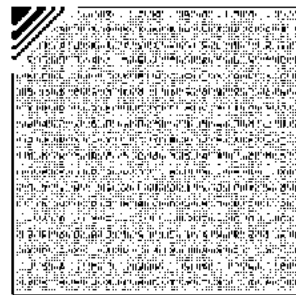


Preventive promotion in community



Family support





Promotional activity in community



Caring action

4.2 Building a database of help-seekers for drug treatment in Macao and continuing to strengthen vocational training services after drug treatment and rehabilitation

In order to fully understand and master the overall situation of drug treatment follow-up cases in Macao, a database for Macao help-seekers for drug treatment was constructed and improved in 2021 to analyse the severity of drug abuse cases and relevant service needs, adjusting prevention and treatment work in a timely manner, and providing them with appropriate therapy and inter-professional counselling services.

At the same time, in order to support the reintegration of former drug abusers into society, SWB has continued to strengthen follow-up and support through vocational training and providing job opportunities. An award ceremony of caring enterprise was held to encourage enterprises and organisations to continue to pay attention to and support the career development of former drug abusers. Two projects of vocational training and internship were organised in 2022, 26 training courses were provided for a total of 1,507 participants, of whom 46 participated in internships and 13 were successfully employed.



“Holding Hope” vocational training and internship



Vocational training in “Youth Development Center”

4.3 Enhancing methadone community support, deepening staff training and support packages

In response to the need of methadone maintenance treatment and further improve the quality of drug treatment service, in 2022, a number of lectures on methadone maintenance treatment and drug abuse prevention as well as harm reduction were held. "A Preliminary Study on the Physiological, Psychological and Social Profile of Methadone Maintenance Treatment Patients in Macao" was also published, which increased the knowledge of methadone maintenance treatment by medical staff and the industry, providing more appropriate ongoing follow-up, group and family support for cases. 5 groups activities took place (38 sessions in total) with a total of 270 participants; there were also 20 small activities with a total of 140 participants, and 5 sessions of online community support and counselling for help-seekers (15 hours in total), 4 online peer counsellor training sessions, etc.





(2) Health Bureau

1. Organizational Structure and Functions

1.1 AIDS Prevention and Control Commission

Established in 2005, the AIDS Prevention and Control Commission is tasked to plan and promote the prevention and control of AIDS in order to curb the spread of the disease. Chaired by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, the Commission is constituted by 27 members representing different governmental entities and non-government organizations from sectors of health, education, social welfare, security and anti-drug, with a standing secretariat under the Health Bureau.

1.2 Special Preventive Services Team

The Special Preventive Services Team of the Health Bureau is located beside Nossa Senhora do Carmo – Lago Health Centre in Taipa. It has a public AIDS hotline (28500600) which offers AIDS information and booking of free rapid HIV test for the general public. It also provides confirmative HIV test for suspected cases referred by non-government health institutions, and refers confirmed cases to Conde de São Januário General Hospital for follow-up treatment.

2. Major Achievements in 2022

2.1 Surveillance of Infectious Disease among Drug Dependents

As a joint effort between the Public Health Laboratory of the Health Bureau and the Department of Prevention and Treatment of Gambling and Drug Dependence of the Social Welfare Bureau, serology testing services were provided to drug abusers to detect hepatitis C, hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS and other major infectious diseases. The positive rates of infectious disease serology testing in the last five years are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 : Positive rates of infectious disease serology testing among drug users in 2018 – 2022

Positive rates	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
HCV antibodies	49%	37%	40%	28%	39%
HBV surface antigen	10%	11%	9%	13%	12%
HIV antibodies	0%	0%	3%	1%	2.7%

2.2 HIV/AIDS Situation in Macao

Among all previous HIV infected cases involving local residents, the most common routes of transmission were homosexual or bisexual contact (42.2%) and heterosexual contact (37.3%), followed by intravenous drug injection (11%). Since the introduction of Methadone Maintenance Treatment in 2005 and the launch of various harm reduction measures, the number of infections from drug injection among Macao residents has decreased significantly. Aside from 1 imported case in 2019, there has not been any new infection reported among local residents since 2015.

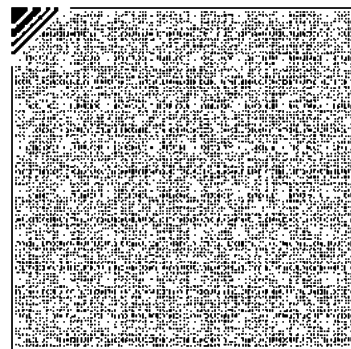
With a view to offering more testing options for the public, the Health Bureau actively expanded the testing channels. In addition to subsidizing non-governmental organizations to provide free HIV rapid testing to the public and the key groups, the "HIV Self-Testing Pilot Program" was launched in 2021 to encourage self-testing at home. The "HIV Self-Testing Program" was carried forward in 2022; by the end of December 2022, a total of 277 blood-based HIV self-test kits and 233 oral fluid-based HIV self-test kits have been sold, contributing to the successful detection of hidden HIV infections in the community. Besides, funding and support were allocated, with enhanced monitoring, to schools and associations of different fields to conduct publicity and education, and promotion of behavioural intervention measures.

3. Conclusion and Prospects

Working meetings convened by the AIDS Prevention and Control Commission in 2022 have brought about deliberations on various prevention and treatment measures for different key populations. In 2023, the Commission will continue to subsidize community groups to roll out integrated prevention and control projects against AIDS, such as "Dance together", for relevant population groups; provide free HIV and syphilis rapid tests; operate consultation hotlines, case counselling, online and on-site outreach at nightclubs, group activities and other comprehensive behavioural intervention work. In addition, the Commission will further improve its screening, serological surveillance and follow-up efforts for high-risk pregnant women as well as

their partners and babies, so as to interrupt the mother-to-child transmission of HIV, hepatitis B and syphilis.





(3) Coloane Prison of Correctional Services Bureau

1. Functions

Coloane Prison of the Correctional Services Bureau is committed to providing voluntary drug treatment and rehabilitation services for inmates with drug abuse history. In 1997, Coloane Prison established the Rehabilitation Unit, and its objectives include enhancing inmates' knowledge of prevention of drug abuse, relapse and recidivism through group activities, talks and counseling sessions, etc.; strengthening inmates' ties with the society, confidence and resistance to the temptations of drugs using social resources; as well as promoting the drug abuse prevention message among inmates who are not drug abusers in order to help them build healthy lifestyles.

In addition, for optimization of its drug treatment and rehabilitation services, Coloane Prison had been implementing the "Methadone Treatment Scheme" since November 2009, offering drug treatment to inmates already receiving the methadone maintenance treatment provided by the Social Welfare Bureau prior to imprisonment.

2. Our Work in 2022

2.1 Activities of the Rehabilitation Unit

2.1.1 Intervention and correctional services for inmates within the Prison

To promote drug prevention information among the entire prison population, further their understanding about the hazards of drugs and thereby achieve the effect of prevention and elimination of drug-related crimes, in 2022, the educational video on healthy lifestyle tips, titled "Shiny and Me", continued to be broadcast. The video broadcast served to deepen inmates' knowledge of substance abuse prevention, promote to inmates drug abuse prevention-related information, and strengthen the understanding of inmates on drug abuse prevention issues and relevant community resources. In addition, as part of their inter-departmental cooperation mechanism, the Correctional Services Bureau and the Social Welfare Bureau jointly implemented a youth support scheme named "Way Back Home". Under the scheme, through assistances from drug abuse prevention and treatment organizations in the community, support was especially provided to young drug abusers aged 18 or under and their family members, enhancing the abovementioned youngsters' ability to adapt to the life back in society, thereby lowering the risks of their recidivism.

2.1.2 Building social bond and safety network in the community prior to release

Under the COVID-19 pandemic, Coloane Prison continued to invite drug abuse prevention and treatment organizations, including the Christian New Life Fellowship in Macau, the Association of Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers of Macau, and the Young Men's Christian Association of Macau, to collaborate on the "Letters with Love" correspondence support scheme for inmates, which enabled the abovementioned organizations to communicate with the inmates with previous drug abuse experience through letters, helping the inmates undergo personal growth, rebuild self-identity as well as establish a social support network for their life after

rejoining the society. Such diversified approaches aimed to sustain and raise participating inmates' resistance to the temptations of drugs and reduce the possibility of their recidivism. A total of 20 male inmates and 6 female inmates were willing to participate in the abovementioned scheme.

2.1.3 Collaboration with the outside world on provision of guidance and education

As part of our continuous joint efforts with drug prevention and treatment organizations, substance abuse-related information was disseminated among inmates via audio broadcasts. Through the Unit's collaboration with drug prevention and treatment organizations, ex-offenders with drug abuse experience were arranged to share their psychological struggles on their social reintegration and rehabilitation journey as a way to let them feel empowered and educate the audiences. Topics of the audio broadcasts for the inmates covered the knowledge of drug abuse and HIV prevention. The purpose of the above arrangements was to provide useful information and education through diverse channels. In line with COVID-19 prevention measures, the format of some of the activities was changed from face-to-face to videos and broadcasts in an effort to continuously educate inmates and spread to them the message of substance abuse prevention.

2.2 The Methadone Treatment Scheme

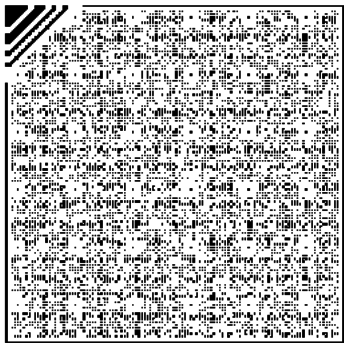
Since November 2009, Coloane Prison had been collaborating with the Social Welfare Bureau to conduct the Methadone Treatment Scheme on prison premises, with the methadone oral solution used in the Scheme provided by the Health Bureau. Under the Scheme, inmates already receiving methadone treatment prior to admission to the Prison were given continued treatment services.

There were no new participants of the Methadone Treatment Scheme in 2019 to 2022. From the launch of the Scheme to 31 December 2022, a total of 64 inmates—55 males and 9 females—had taken part in it. Among all participating inmates: 63 persons had completed the treatment and 1 person refused treatment; 94 percent were Macao residents, 5 percent were Mainland Chinese and 1 percent were of other nationalities.

3. Statistical analysis of inmates declaring drug abuse experience and sent to prison in 2022

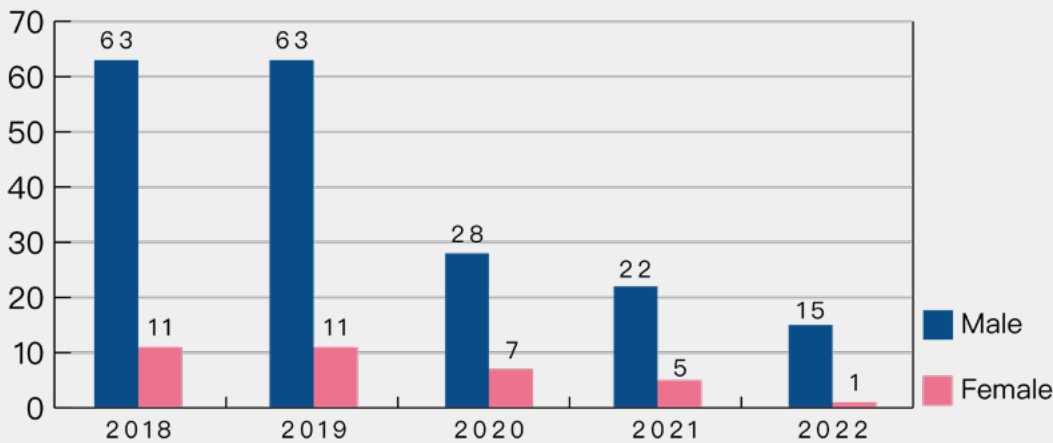
3.1 Analysis of inmates declaring drug abuse experience and sent to prison in 2022

According to the statistics compiled by Coloane Prison, there were 271 new inmates in 2022, 16 of whom declared drug abuse experience, accounting for 5.9 percent of the new inmate population of the year (in 2021, there were 403 new inmates, of whom 27, i.e. 6.7 percent, declared drug abuse experience). Based on the numbers, compared to 2021, 2022 saw a significant decrease in the number of individuals admitted to the Prison, with the percentage declaring drug abuse experience against the entire new inmate population declining by 0.8 percent.



Under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a noticeable decrease in the number of inmates who declared drug abuse experience on admission to prison in 2021 and 2022, compared to the past. In 2022, the majority of those who declared drug history on admission were male, whereas the number of female inmates with declared drug history saw a declining trend. (In 2022, 15 males and 1 female declared drug history on admission to prison).

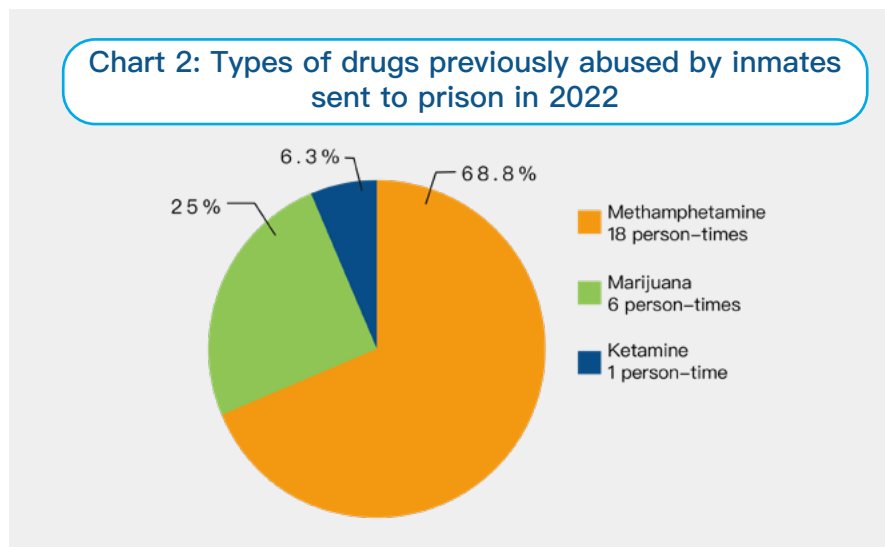
Chart 1: Comparison of the statistics of male and female inmates declaring drug abuse experience and sent to prison between 2018 and 2022



According to the data declared by Coloane Prison on the central drug abuse registration form, among the inmates declaring drug abuse experience on admission to prison in 2022, 7 persons, i.e. 43.8 percent, were unemployed (the figure in 2021 was 10 unemployed persons, taking up 37 percent of the drug-abusing new inmates). The figure indicated that Macao’s pandemic-related entry restrictions possibly contributed to the decline of the number of drug-abusing individuals admitted to the Prison in the year, while the ratio of unemployed individuals among them was higher than that in 2021. In addition, 39.5 percent of the individuals declaring drug abuse history and sent to prison in 2022 claimed they had turned to drugs for reducing stress or the feelings of suffering, defeat or boredom, while 18.8 percent and 12.5 percent of them declared the reasons for their previous drug abuse behavior to be peer influence and curiosity respectively.

3.2 Types of drugs that inmates sent to prison in 2022 declared to have abused (more than one type of drugs might be declared)

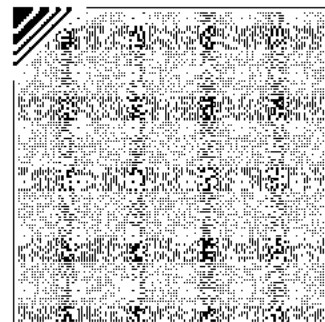
Concerning the types of drugs used by the inmates who declared drug abuse experience on admission to prison in 2022, methamphetamine was the most abused (by 68.8 percent), followed by marijuana (25 percent). (See Chart 2)



Based on the statistics of the drugs inmates declared to have abused during the three months prior to admission to prison, there was a rising trend of the use of methamphetamine and marijuana in recent years. The percentage of newly admitted inmates who previously abused methamphetamine rose from the 58.3 percent in 2020, to 66.7 percent in 2021, and to 68.8 percent in 2022. Similarly, the percentage of those who declared to have used marijuana during the three months prior to being sent to prison surged from 8.3 percent in 2020, to 22.2 percent in 2021 and to 25 percent in 2022.

Conversely, the percentage declaring previous use of cocaine saw a downward trend: 14 percent in 2020, 3.7 percent in 2021 and none in 2022.

The 1 female inmate who declared in 2022 to have previously abused drugs was a Macao resident; the drug she claimed to have used was methamphetamine. She attributed the reason for her drug use to family influence.

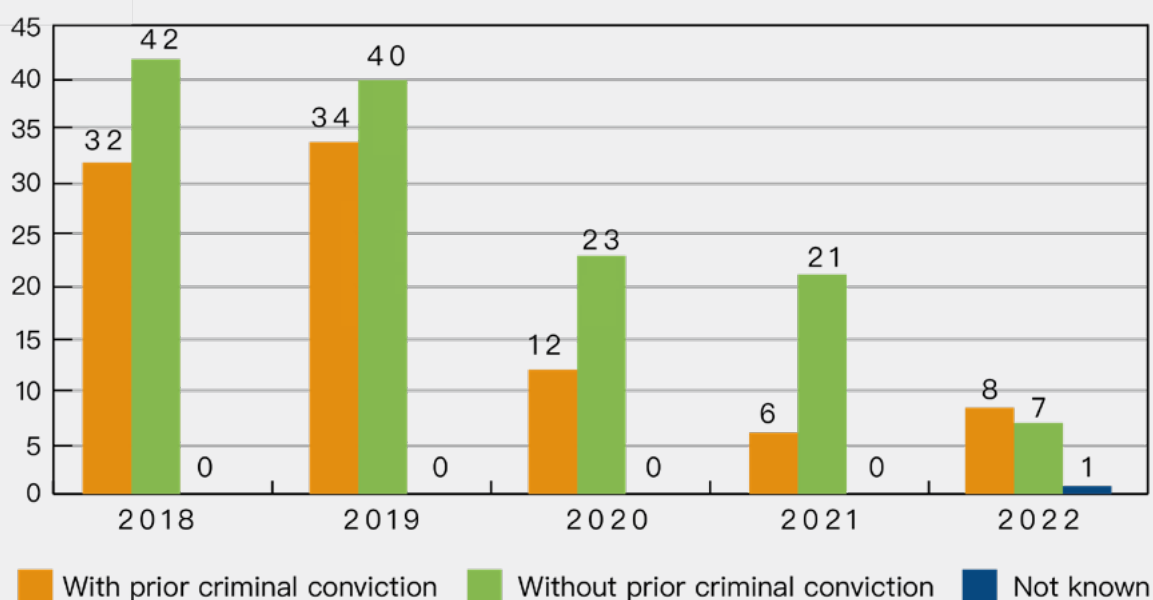


3.3 Statistics of prior criminal conviction of inmates declaring drug abuse experience and sent to prison in 2022

Among the inmates with declared drug abuse experience and sent to prison in 2022, 12 persons were Macao residents, and 4 were non-residents, whereas the same figure in 2021 was 15 Macao residents and 12 non-residents. 8 persons were without prior criminal conviction, 7 persons had a previous conviction and there was 1 person whose criminal history was not known.

Based on Chart 3, in recent years, the number of new inmates who declared past drug abuse experience but did not have a prior criminal conviction was always bigger than that of drug-abusing new inmates with a prior conviction. In 2022, the two numbers were roughly the same, indicating there was not a necessary positive correlation between prior convictions and drug history. The trend also reflected the need to step up the promotion of anti-drug information in the community.

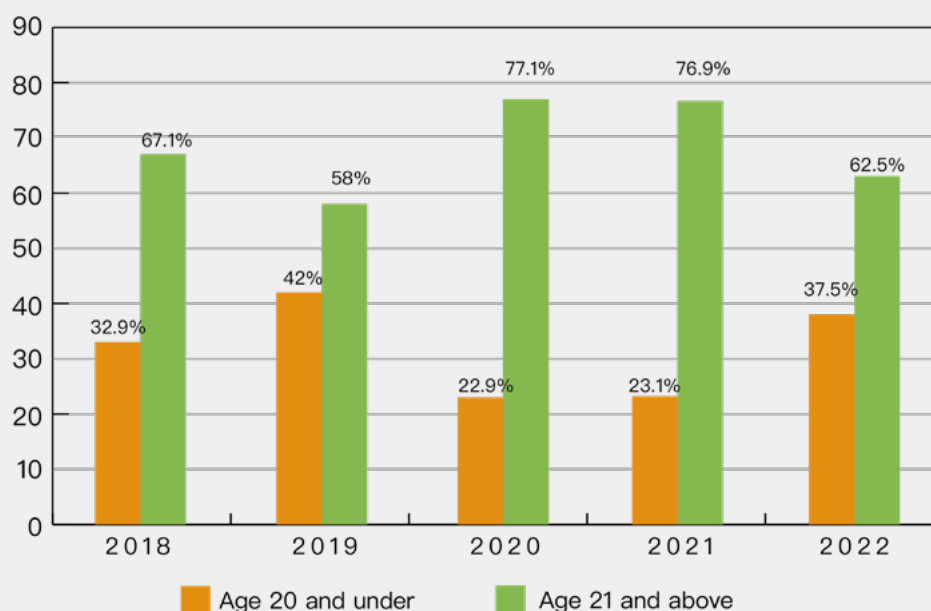
Chart 3: Comparison of the statistics of inmates declaring drug abuse experience on admission to prison in 2018 to 2022 by whether they had previous criminal conviction



3.4 Comparison of the age at which inmates sent to prison in 2022 declared to have first abuse drugs

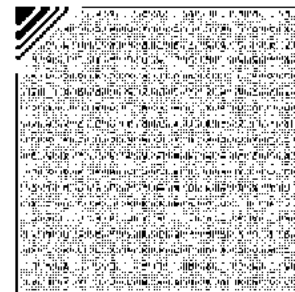
Of the 16 inmates declaring drug history on admission to prison in 2022, 37.5 percent had their first drug abuse experience at age 20 and under and 62.5 percent at age 21 and above. The ratio of the age group of 20 and under became slightly higher in the year.

Chart 4: Comparison of the statistics of the age at which inmates sent to prison in 2018 to 2022 declared to have first abused drugs



4. Conclusion and Prospects

According to the Macao tourism data released by the Macao Government Tourism Office, Macao recorded approximately 7.7 million visitor arrivals in 2021 and the figure plunged to 5.7 million in 2022. 403 persons and 271 persons were admitted to prison in 2021 and 2022 respectively. The figures showed a close relation between population movement and cross-border crimes. Due to Macao's unique geographical environment, narcotics in Macao were mainly imported. The restrictions of transportation routes under the pandemic hindered the circulation of drugs as some of the raw materials for drug production could not be exported from the place of origin, resulting in the temporary shortage of drugs supply. With the relaxation of the COVID-19 prevention and control measures, the free entry, departure and traffic to and from Macao resumed, meaning narcotics would once again be imported to the city and the types and supply of drugs would increase accordingly.



The reduced number of flights on a global scale during the pandemic resulted in inconvenience in entry to and exit from borders. The traditional mode of drug trafficking (body stuffing/packing or concealing drugs in luggage) gradually shifted toward international air mail; in an attempt to spread the drugs in the community, drug dealers then used pecuniary interest to lure people to act as recipients of the drug parcels. The convenience of the internet and chatting apps also made it easier for drug dealers to find youngsters to help traffic drugs. Furthermore, the operation of some gaming companies were impacted in recent years, causing a considerable number of Macao residents working in the gaming sector to become unemployed (the unemployment rate among Macao residents from November 2022 to January 2023 was 4.3 percent). Facing pressures in their daily life and finances, people might become drug dealers' targets of exploitation. To protect more people from the harms of drugs, raising drug prevention awareness among youngsters and individuals in the community and educating them on the addictive nature of drugs would be an urgent matter.

Despite the pandemic, Coloane Prison still continued to discover more social resources for inmates. The format of activities went from face-to-face to videos and broadcasts as the latter would be more flexible, providing inmates with opportunities of continuous learning in a more diverse way while compliance with COVID-19 prevention work was ensured. Going forward, Coloane Prison will maintain its collaboration with other government departments and social service organizations to continuously enhance the understanding of inmates with drug history concerning relapse prevention, comprehensively strengthen inmates' knowledge of the harms of drugs, and offer more diverse room or projects for inmates' development. Coloane Prison will also keep working to raise public awareness about the needs of inmates, destigmatize inmates and create more friendly and favorable conditions for their return to society.



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