

‘the Walmart of legal OxyContin and illegal Heroin’

Radio personality Rush Limbaugh for

OxyContin[®]

**“OxyContin[®] helped me
deal with the pain of
living in a world that
just didn’t resemble
my perceptions
or my claims.”**



WARNING: This drug has been shown to cause sudden death in long-term abusers.

Three topics in OPIOIDS

1. Legal use prescribed : mainly USA – EU – Australia : Oxycontin, fentanyl, methadon, morfin , tramadol
2. Illegal use: mainly USA – EU – Australia : opioids, fentanyl, black-tar, cocaine, heroine
3. Chronical & palliative pain: uneven opioids distribution : HIC's versus LIC's & MIC's

WHO Treaties : Psychoactive drugs

- 1909 : opioids agreement – The Hague
- 1961 : ‘Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs control
- 1971: Convention on psychoactive drugs :
amphetamine-type stimulants, barbiturates,
benzodiazepines, psychedelics
- International Control: INCB ; UNODC, EMCDDA
- 4 different scheduled classes
- Obligation: universal access to the narcotic drugs to alleviate pain and suffering
- inexpensive and effective pain relief medicines:
millions of people suffer from pain without treatment
(tramadol)

Pain treatment worldwide

- **Pain treatment medications are not evenly distributed worldwide.**
- **89% of the total world consumption of morphine occurs in North America and Europe**
- **Low and middle income countries consume only 6% of the morphine used worldwide**
- **Low and middle income countries : half of all cancer patients and 90% of HIV infections**
- **However, inadequate pain management is also prevalent in developed countries.**

Failling pain management

- **governments fail in functioning drug supply**
- **Policies failure on pain treatment and palliative care**
- **poor training of healthcare workers**
- **unnecessarily restrictive drug control regulations and practices**
- **fear for legal sanctions for legitimate medical practice**
- **inflated cost of pain treatment**
- **failing controls: on all levels (Interpol – customs – governments - physicians – pharmacists)**

OxyContin Guilty \$634 Million Penalties

- guilty to charges of misbranding addictive and highly abusable drug OxyContin
- Purdue + 3 executives pay : \$634,515,475 in fines in 2007
- 4 year long criminal investigation (J. Kilgore)
- OxyContin : Schedule II prescription pain relief medication
- classified : highest potential for abuse (legally available drugs)
- 1996-2005: 228 individuals died in SW-Virginia from oxycodone overdoses
- criminally deceptive behaviour : corporate officers (no Sacklers!)
fraudulent marketing campaign
- Oxycontin as less addictive, less subject to abuse, and less likely to cause withdrawal
- No medical research to support the claims of less addictive without FDA approval of these claims
- falsely /misleadingly : patients doses < 60 milligrams p/d can discontinue abruptly without withdrawal symptoms...also no development of tolerance
- incorrect view: many physicians => OxyCodone weaker than morphine
- Purdue: OxyContin no buzz /euphoria, less addiction potential, less likely to be diverted than immediate-release opioids, could be used to weed out addicts and drug seekers
- Source: *COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA - Office of the Attorney General //press info // May 10, 2007*





A Philadelphia neighbourhood is the largest open-air narcotics market for heroin on the East Coast of the US. Addicts come from all over, and many never leave.

Mark got addicted to oxycodone after he was injured by an I.E.D. (Improvised Explosive Device) while on deployment in Iraq. A friend taught him to shoot up heroin because it was a lot cheaper than taking painkillers. And the heroin in Kensington (suburb of Philadelphia) was very cheap. As little as \$5 a bag. Mark was used to the high he got from drugs in Massachusetts, but this was different. “We thought it was real dope,” he said. But the heroin had been cut with fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that he had never taken before. The withdrawal was the worst Mark had ever gone through.

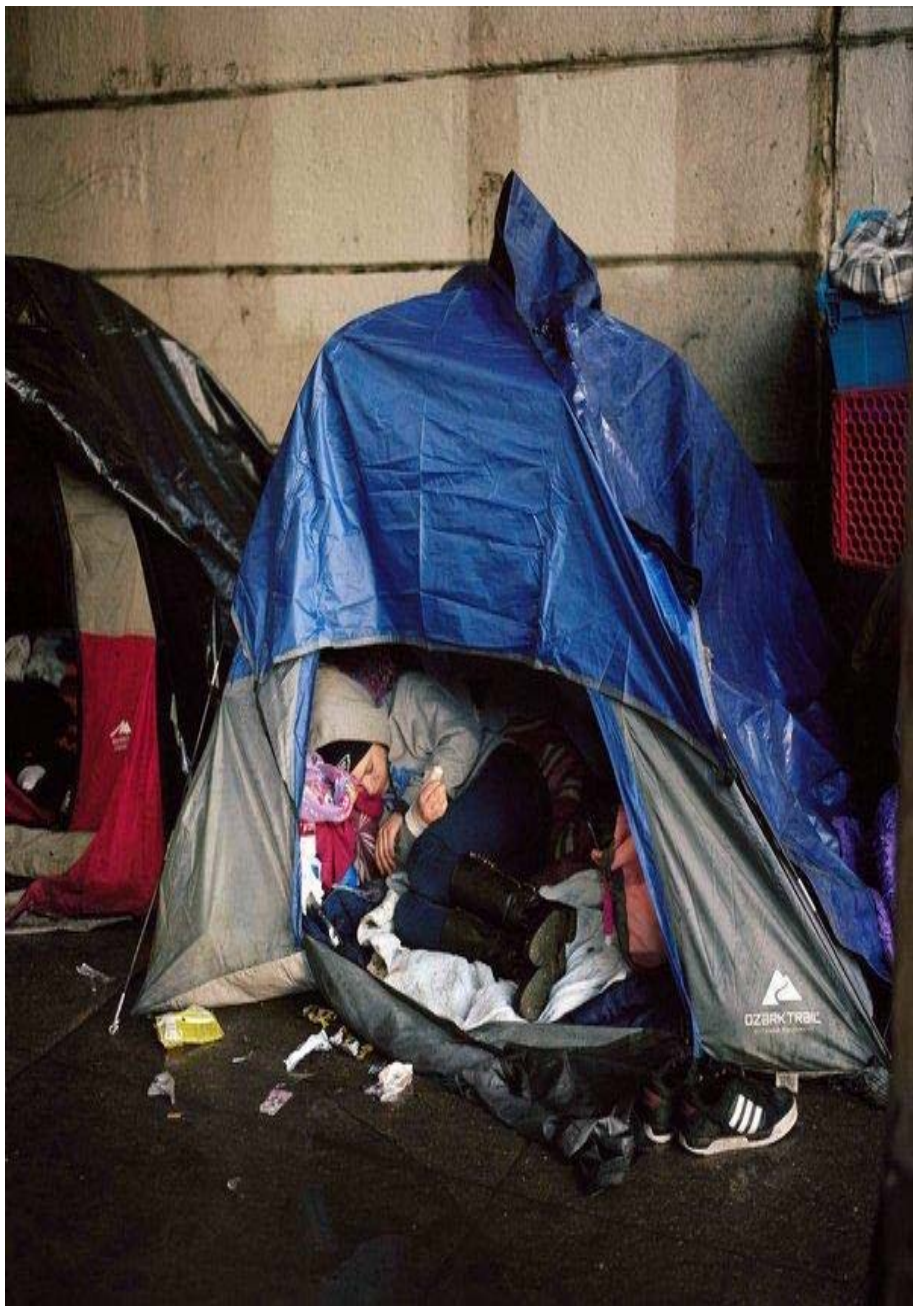
“I’ve never been so sick in my life,” Mark said. “It was like the alien in the movie was going to pop out of my chest, things I’ve never experienced going through detox before.” He tried dosing himself with Suboxone, a synthetic opioid that eases the pain of withdrawal. He had used it before to get sober. Now it wasn’t helping. The addiction was too powerful and the withdrawal too excruciating. “I knew then that I wasn’t going to leave,” he said. “That I couldn’t leave Philadelphia.”

A lot of people first came to Kensington because a car accident or surgery had left them addicted to painkillers. Later, when they could no longer afford them, they switched to heroin. Those deep in addiction were using 10 or more times a day. People cycled in and out of Kensington’s recovery houses, treatment canters and shelters. After years of this, women often ended up as prostitutes. They offered oral sex for \$25 so they could buy a few bags. They also had been raped, tied up and held up.

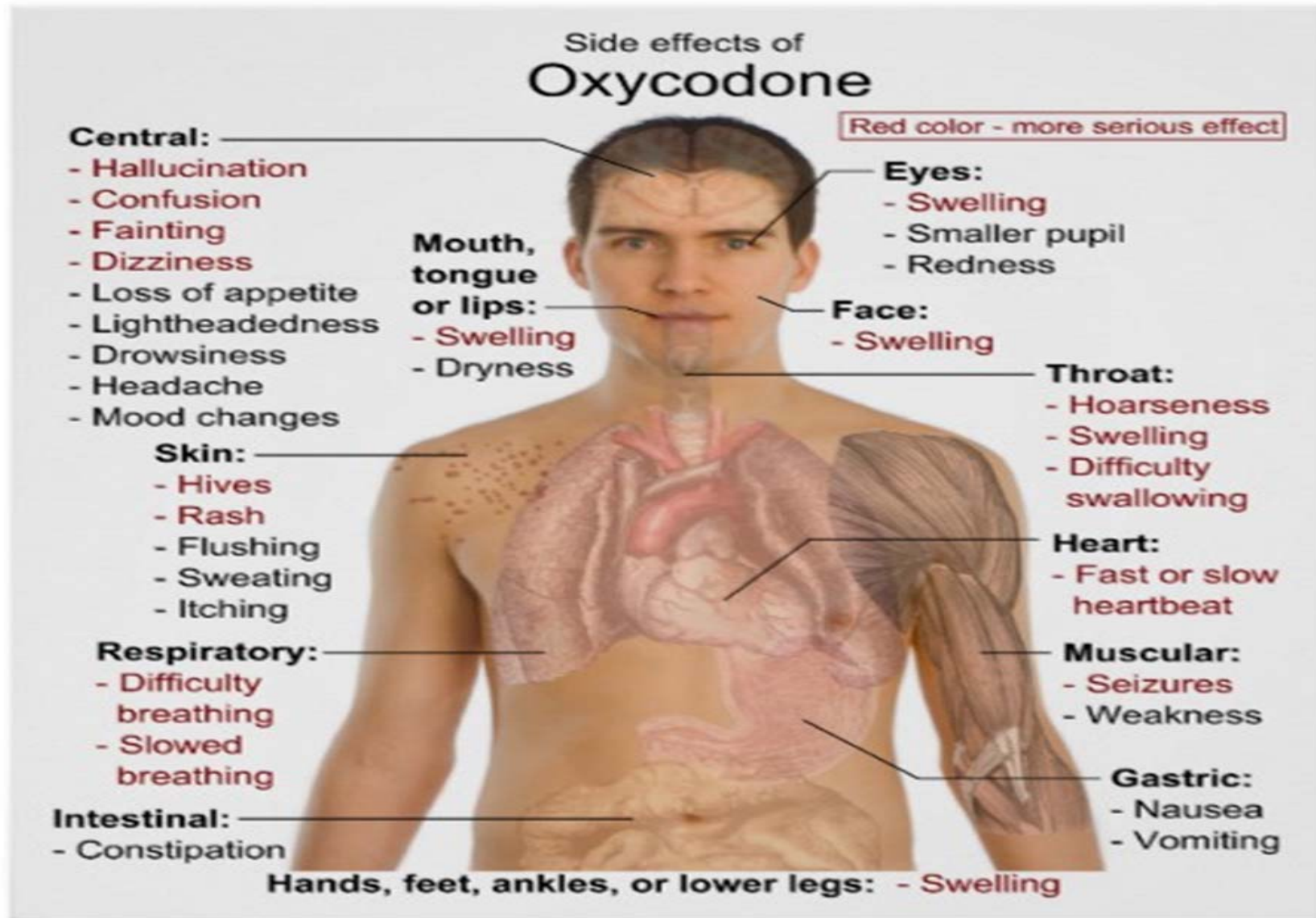


Philadelphia County (1.526.006 inhabitants in 2010) has the highest overdose rate of any of the 10 most populous counties in America. The city's Department of Health estimates that 75,000 (5%) residents are addicted to heroin and other opioids and each day many of them commute to Kensington to buy drugs. The neighbourhood is part of the largest cluster of overdose deaths in the city. In 2017: 236 people fatally overdosed there.

NYT story - by Jennifer Percy // Oct. 10th, 2018 https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/10/magazine/kensington-heroin-opioid-philadelphia.html?em_pos=large&emc=edit_ma_20181010&nl=magazine&nid=76504224edit_ma_20181010&ref=headline&te=1



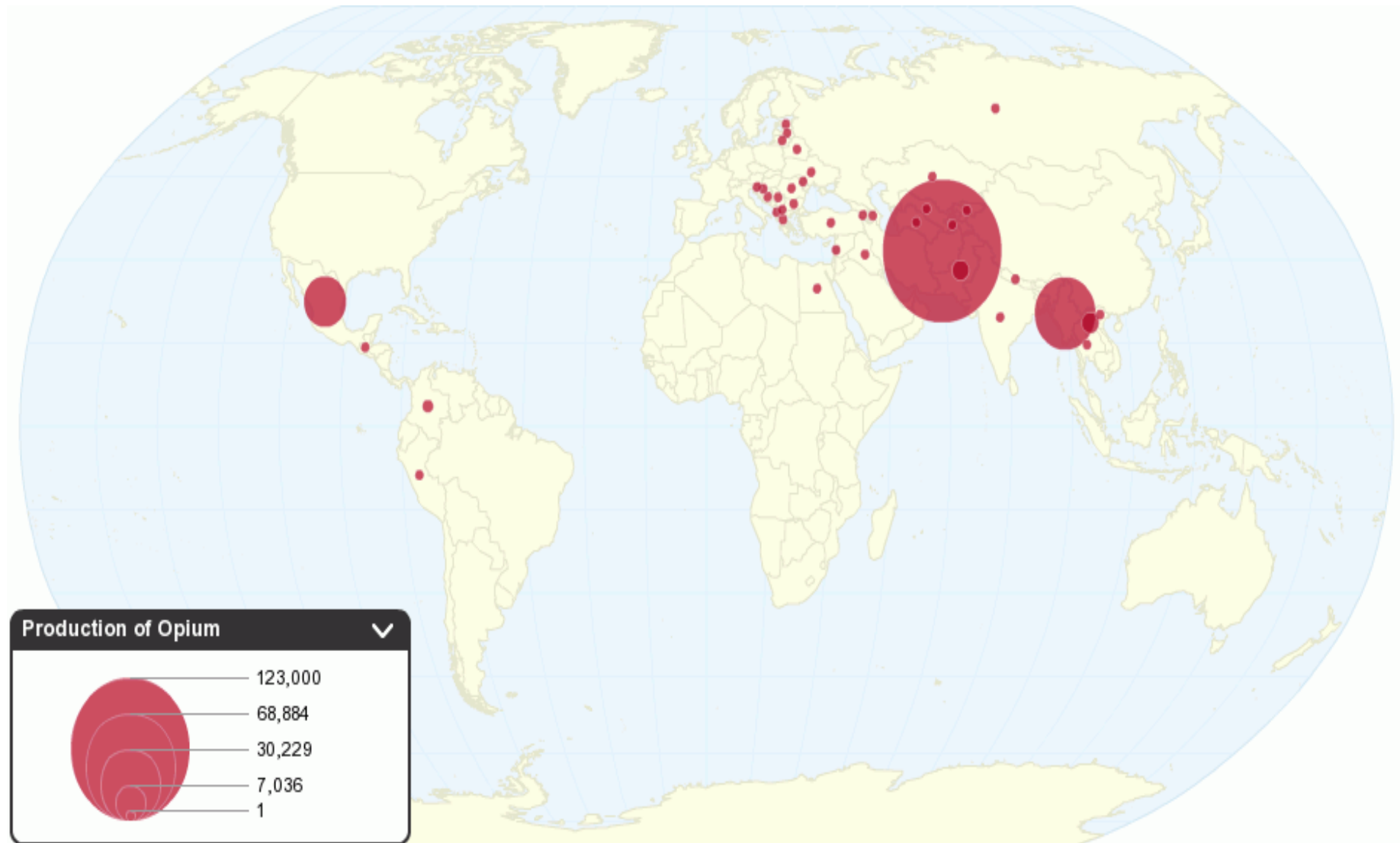
Side effects OXYCODONE



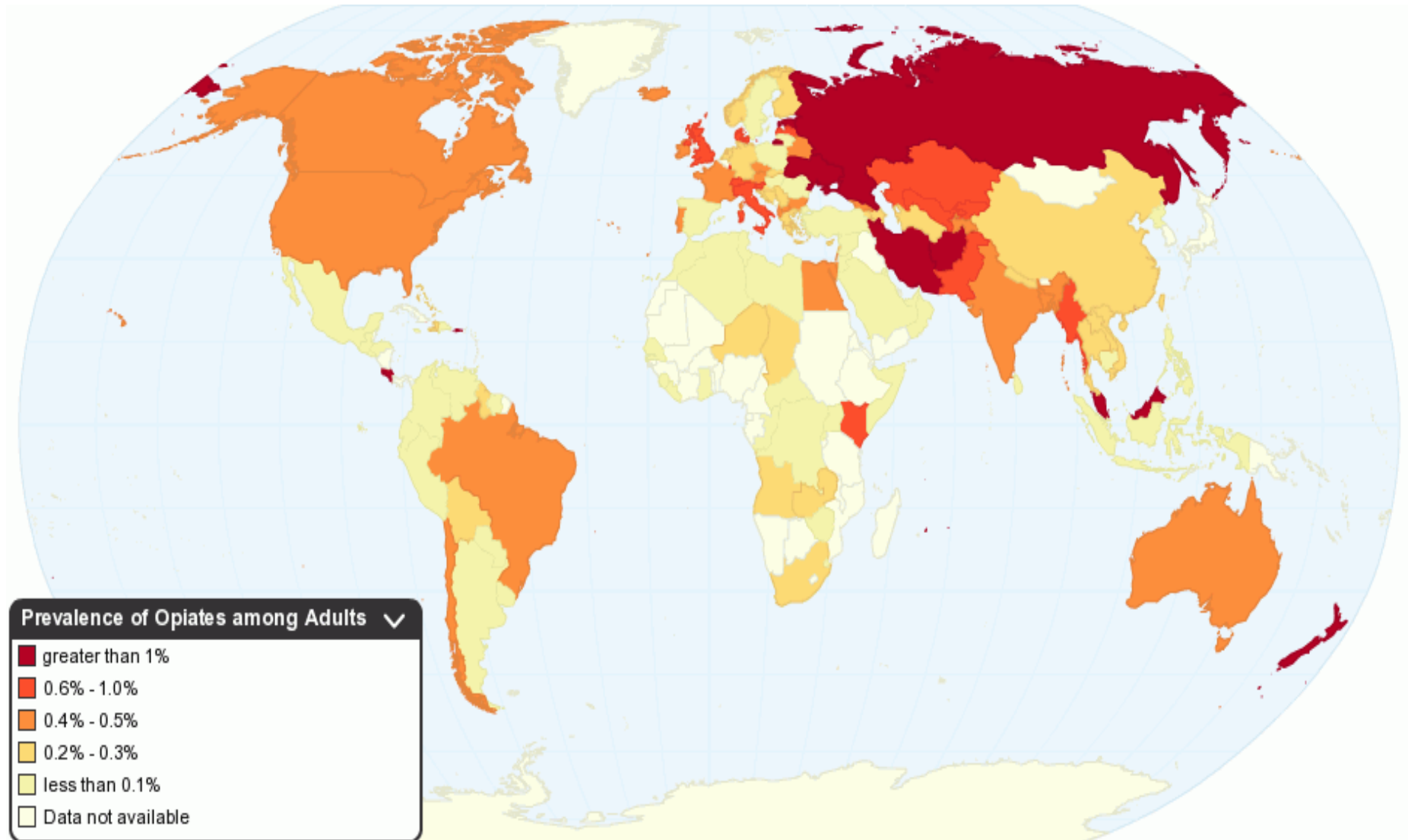
Drug use: 275 million worldwide (5.6 %) 15-64 in 2016

- 1.31 million : drug use disorders**
- 2.13.8 million (between 15-16): cannabis**
- 3.WHO: 450,000 people died drug use in 2015**
- 4.Overdose: 167,750**
- 5.Opioids : 76 % of deaths**
- 6.PWID (People Who Inject Drugs): 10.6 million worldwide 2016**
- 7.PWID : 5.3 million hepatitis C**
- 8.PWID: 1.3 million HIV.**
- 9.increase of opioids legal prescriptions US and Canada since 1996**
- 10.Habituation: stronger doses for ‘high’ + benzodiazepines**
- 11.In the long run many patients cannot afford paying the physicians fees and the drug costs, because no insurance. So to prevent the withdrawal effects they will turn to steal these drugs from family or friends, get them through postal pharmacy orders, etc.**

OPIOIDS PRODUCTION

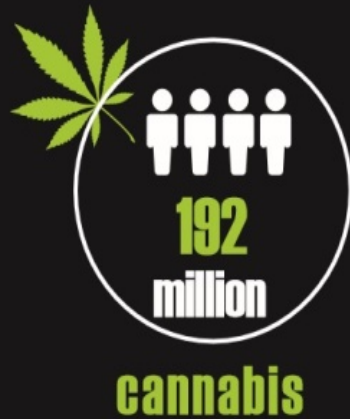


PREVALENCE of OPIOIDS

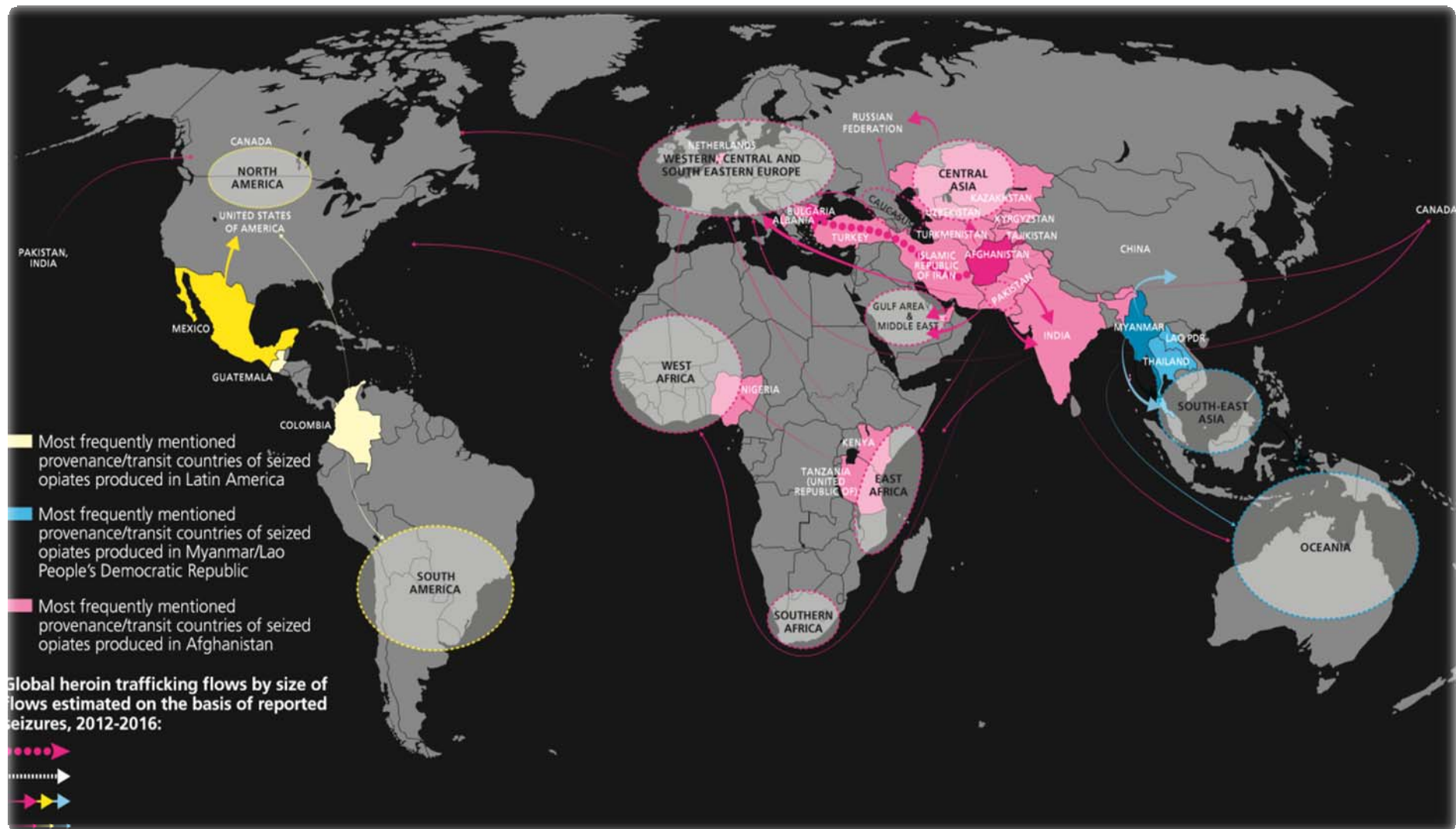


DRUG - use in 2016 -UNODC

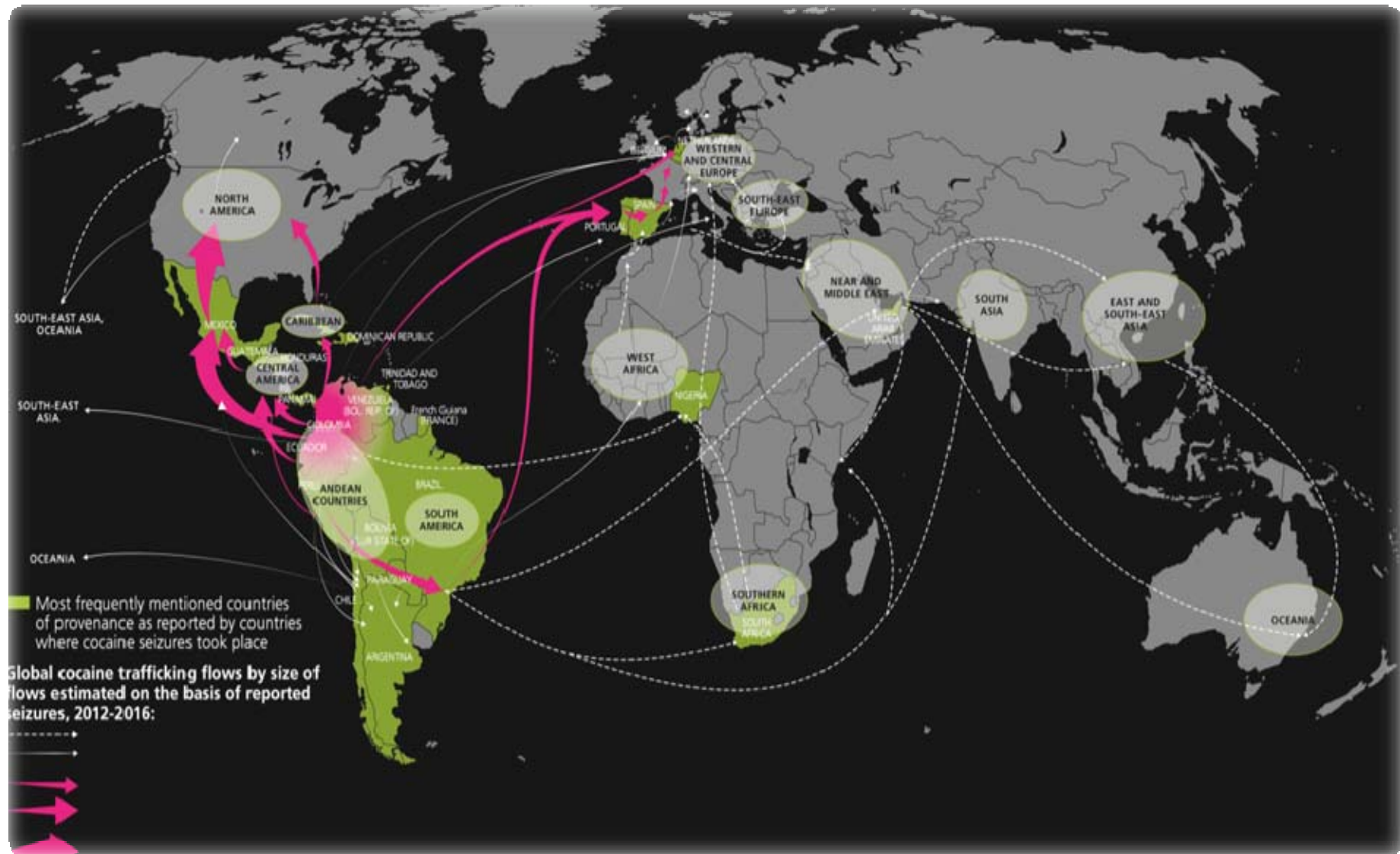
Number of past-year users in 2016



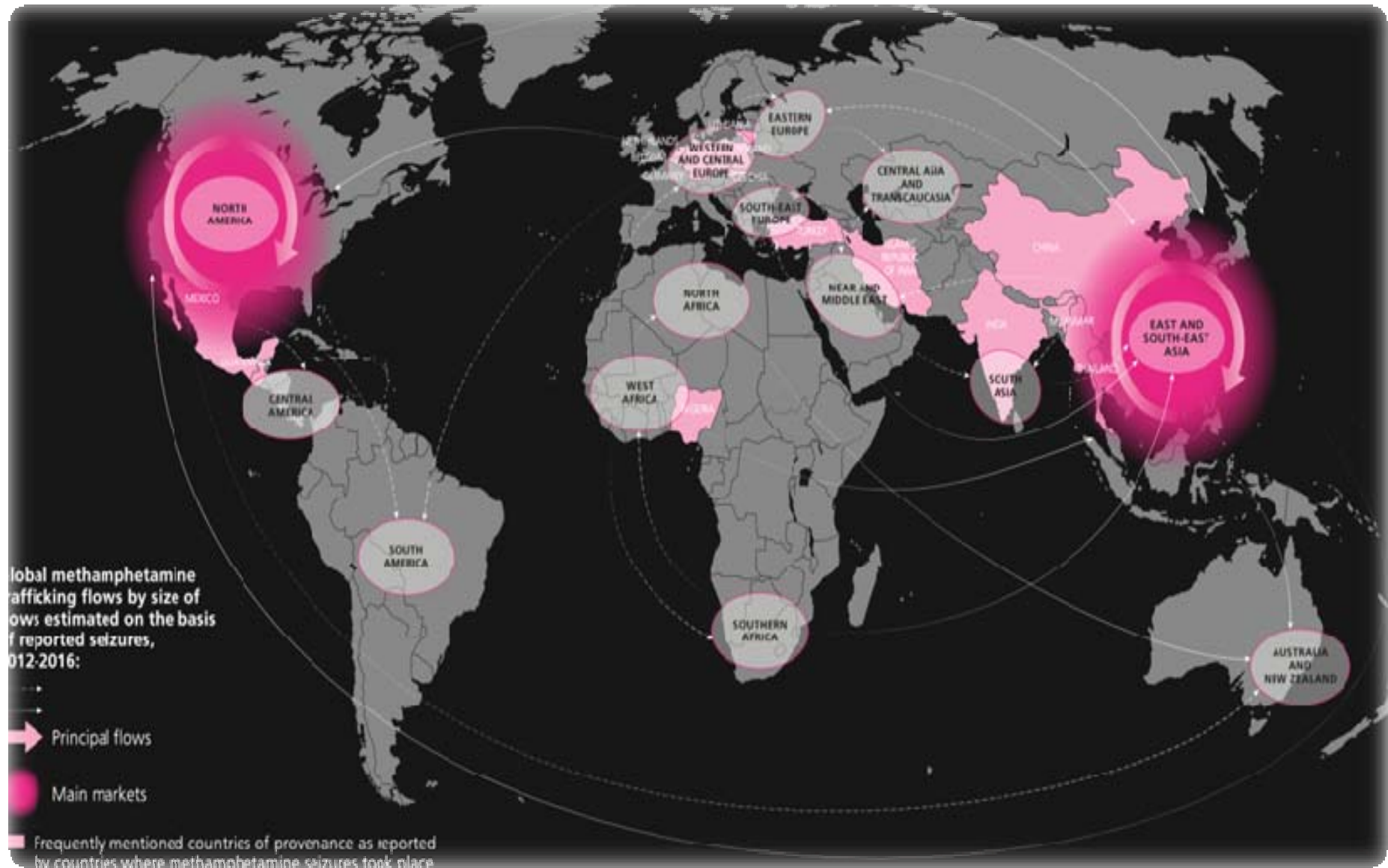
Main Heroin trafficking flows 2012 -2016

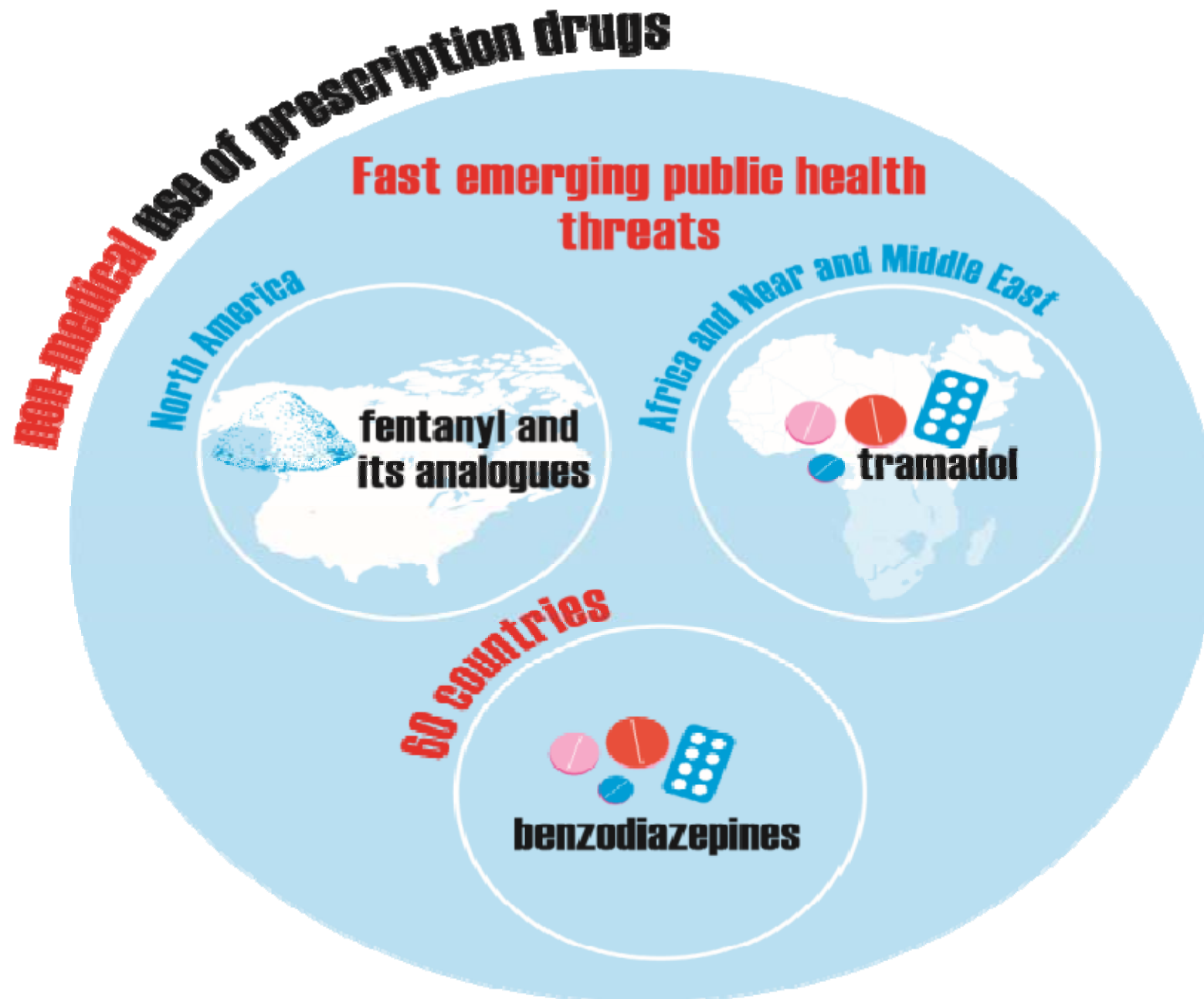


Main cocaine trafficking flows 2012 - 2016



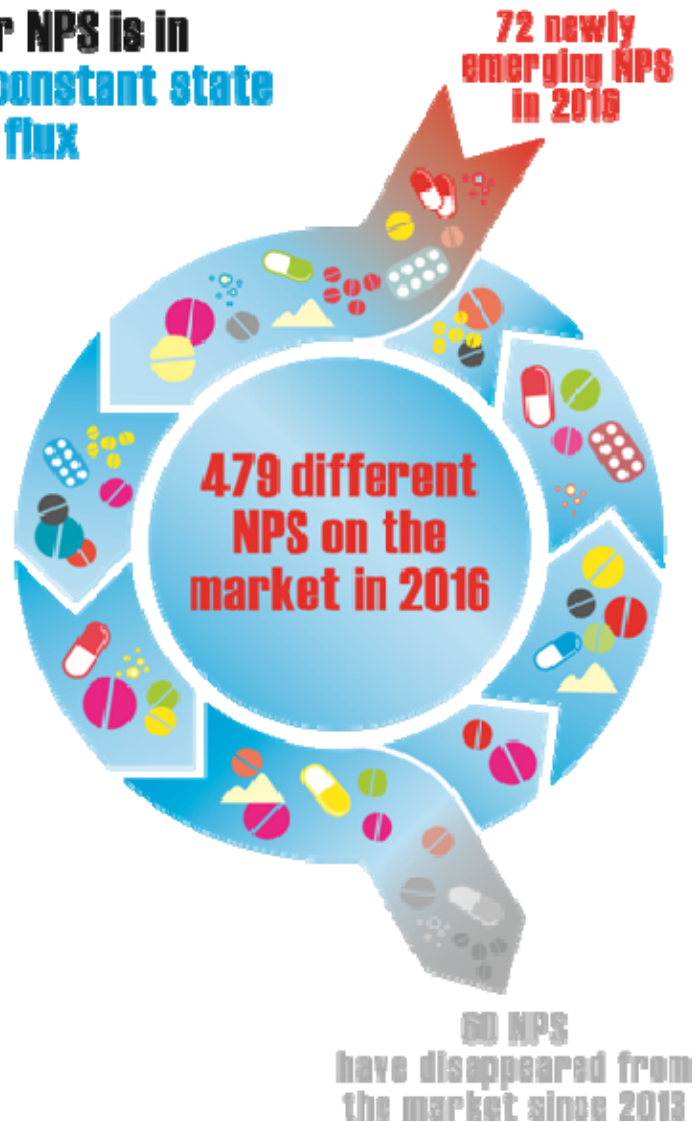
Main Methamphetamine trafficking flows



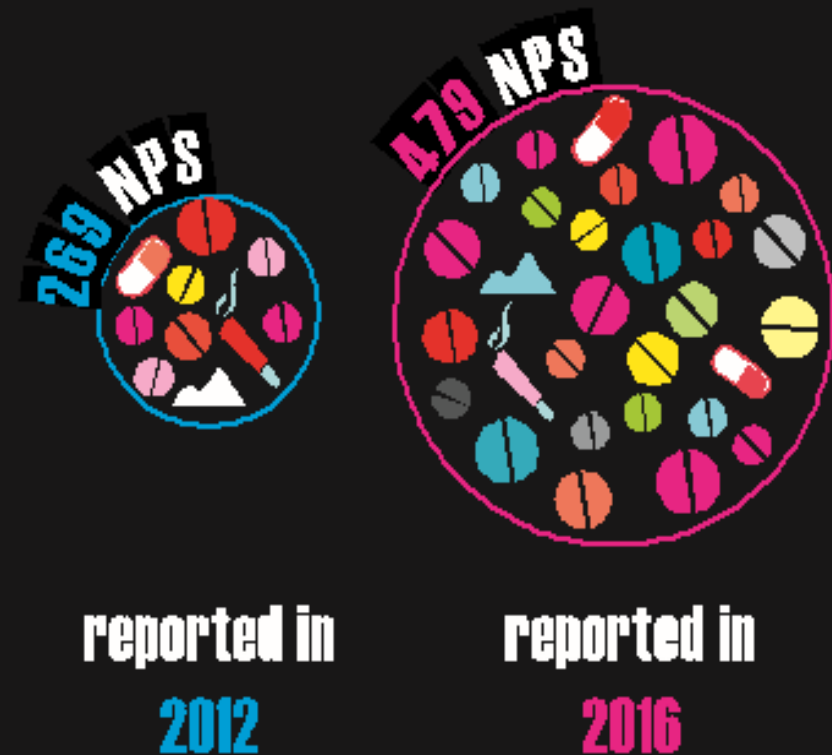


NPS (New Psychoactive Substances)

The market
for NPS is in
a constant state
of flux



Range of
new psychoactive substances
continues to grow



Illegal Markets & Consumers

- Cannabis US : € 55 billion
- Legal Cannabis Uruguay & Canada (17-10-2018)
- Canadian marijuana market : € 3,7 billion
- Cannabis Europa : € 115 billion
- Dutch illegal drugsmarket : € 18 ½ billion
- Illegal imports : sexual enhancers, weight loss medicines, pain killers and sedatives
- 3,3 % of Dutch population: on-line medicines
- Most medicines: Family, friends, dealers, under the counter
- A. Palmer - president of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police: “Fentanyl kills 11 Canadians a day”
- Rotterdam: 1 kg. Coke € 25.000
- EU consumption : 220 tons of COCAINE



OPIOID DEATHS USA



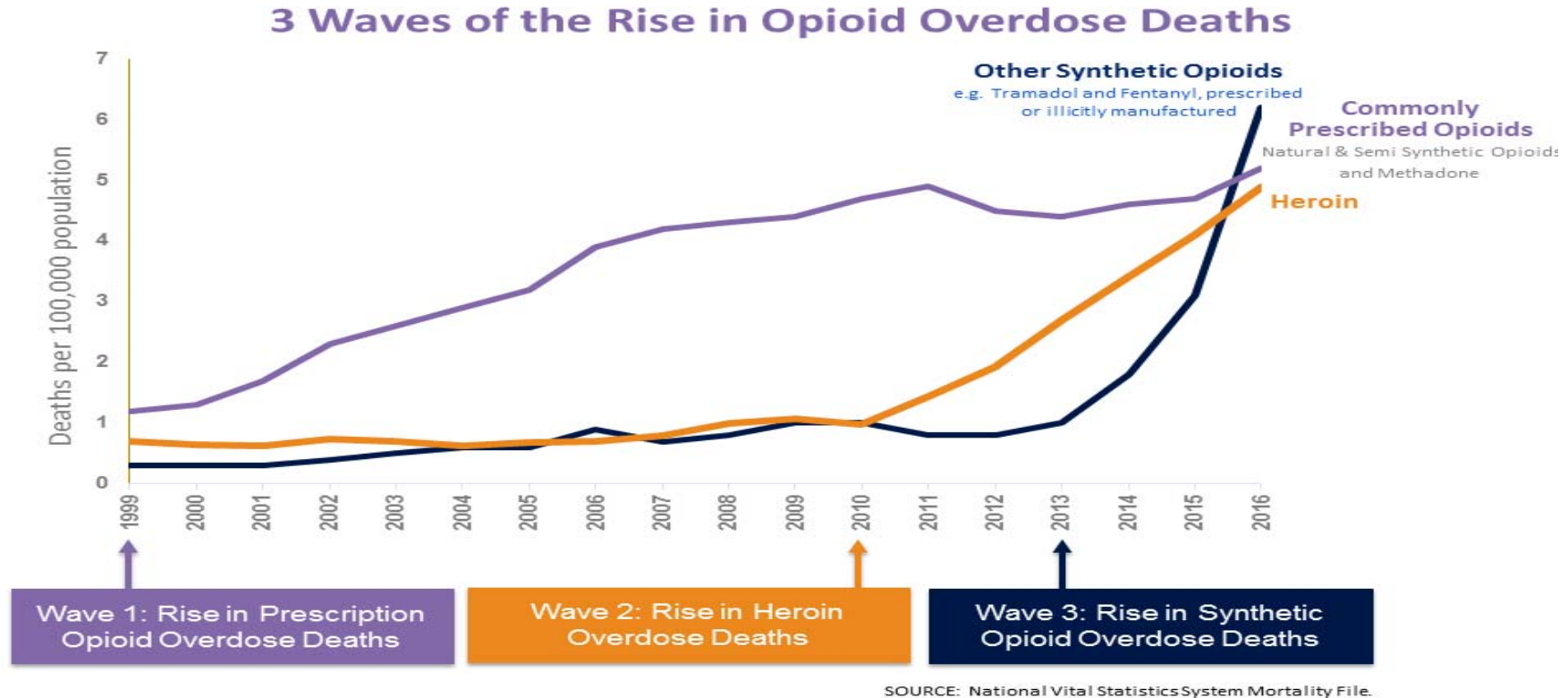
- 2016: **63,632** drug overdose deaths USA
- The age-adjusted rate of overdose deaths UP 21.5%
from 2015 to 2016 : **16.3 to 19.8** per 100,000
- Prescription and illicit opioids 2016: 42,249 overdose
deaths = **66.4%** of all drug overdose deaths

Overprescribing & delivering

- 2006 - 2016: 2 pharmacies in Williamson (West Virginia - 3,000 inhabitants) 21 million opiates
- 2007 - 2008: a pharmacy in Kermit (West Virginia – 392 residents) sold 9 million pills.
- 2007 -2012: 780 million **Oxycodone** and **Hydrocodone** were distributed in West Virginia
- 2007 – 2012: 1,700 people died to the overdose of these two substances.

- Source: 115th CONGRESS / 2d Session / H. R. 6491 / House of representatives / July 24, 2018

three waves of overdose deaths



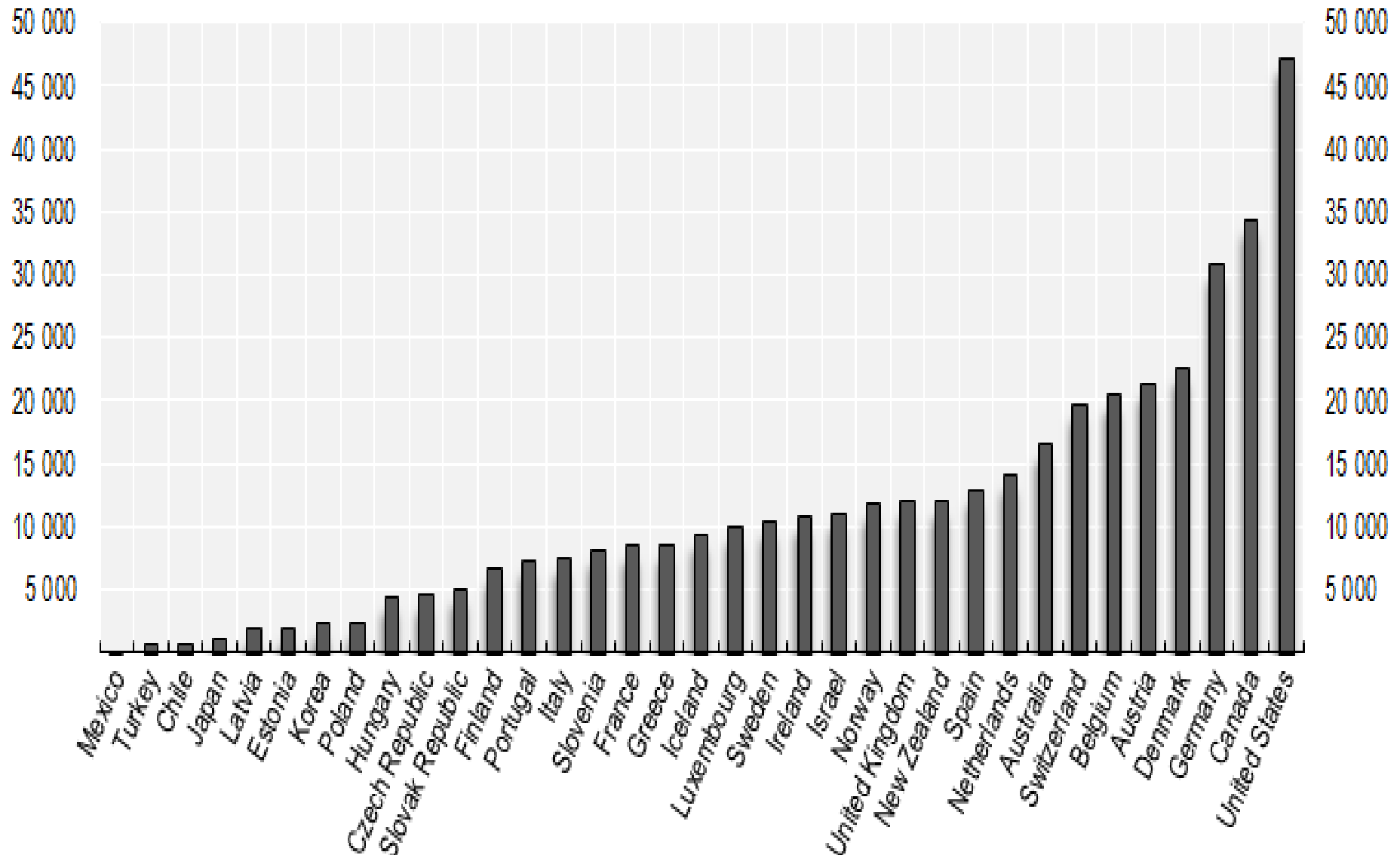
1999-2016, more than 350,000 people died from an overdose involving any opioid, including prescription and illicit opioids.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. State prescription drug laws. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/policy/laws.html>. Updated March 23, 2016.

Doctors know too little about risks Oxycodone & OxyContin

- **more than 536 thousand users (Netherlands) in 2017**
- **Klein Nulandt (KNMP-pharmacists-director) :
2,1 miljoen recipies in 2017 (Netherlands – 17million)**
- **Blokhuis (minister of healthcare): “No extra measures
necessary” (feb. 2018)**
- **Prof. Albert Dahan (University of Leiden): “little
knowledge about the risks of opioids”**
- **"many doctors believe that oxycodone can NOT be so
addictive"**
- **Prof. Frank Huygen (Erasmus MC - Rotterdam): “doctors
have little knowledge about pain treatment”**

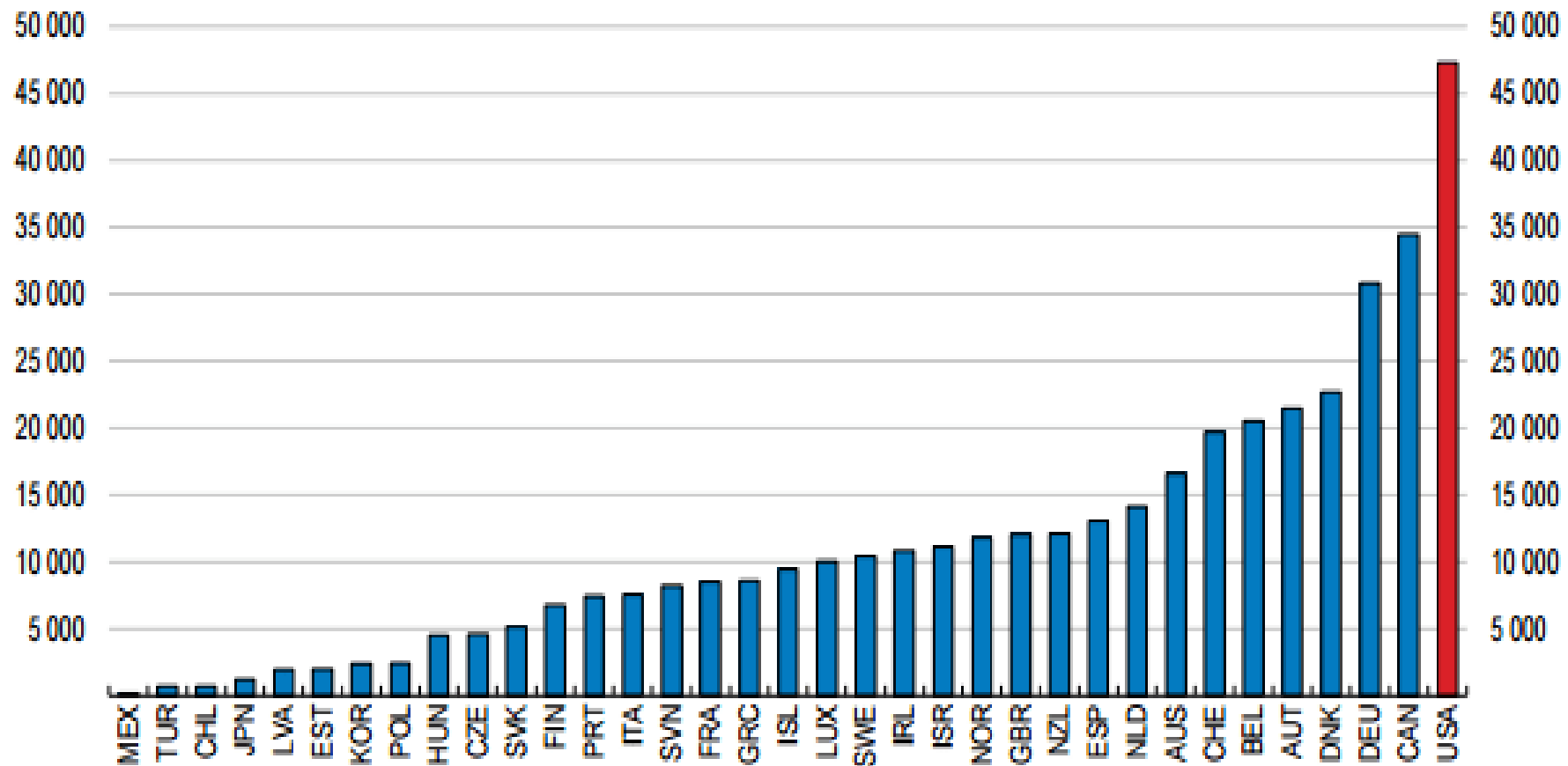
The prescription of opioids per capita



Source: OECD (2018), OECD Economic Surveys: United States 2018, OECD Publishing.

Opioid prescriptions (in millions)

Per million



Source: INCB.

Letter of U.S. Senate to EU - 2016

- 12 members of the US Congress wrote (May 2017) to WHO Director-General Margaret Chan to warn of an expanding international drug epidemic fueled by what they called a “reckless”, “greedy”, and “dangerous” organization (Mundipharma International & Perdue Pharma)
- The 2015 US death toll of **52.404** exceeds that attributable to HIV/AIDS in the peakyear of that epidemic
- Prescription opioid overdoses - quadrupled in 15-year
- Opioids: political contributions by Big-Pharma US \$ 880 million (2006 to 2015)
- Reasons: liberal attitude (80's); pain discussion (90's)
- “Mundipharma uses same deceptive and reckless practices abroad”

- Source: www.thelancet.com Vol 390 July 29, 2017

Pain - discussion

- **WHO: 5th standard physical dimension**
besides: temperature, heartbeat, pulse, bloodpressure
- **WHO : freedom of pain = universal right ('the Ladder')**
- **1986: 'Porter & Jick' < 1% narcotic addictions => untruh**
- **K. Foley & R. Portenoy: 'pseudo addictions' => higher dosis**
- **USA – Canada: from legal to illegal drugs**
- **EU: rising OxyContin use <=> rising harddrug users**
- **Postorder & illegal trade: increasing**
- **China: illegal Fentanyl production**
- **Palliative care: necessary**
- **LIC's & MIC's: availability lacking on a large scale**

New OPIOID – FDA approval sufentanil sublingual tablet (Dsuvia)

FDA Likely to Decide Friday (02-11-2018) Whether to Approve Super-Strong, Super-Dangerous Opioid Medication

FDA Advisory Committee Chair Warns Against Approval; Public Citizen Experts Are Available to Comment

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is to decide by the end of the day Friday whether to approve a highly controversial new opioid medication that even the agency's own advisory committee chair warned against.

Public Citizen experts will be available to comment when the decision is announced.

In an October [letter \(PDF\)](#) to the FDA, Dr. Raeford Brown, chair of the FDA's Anesthetic and Analgesic Drug Products Advisory Committee, joined Public Citizen in urging the agency to reject the medication, which is called sufentanil sublingual tablet (Dsuvia) and would be used to treat moderate-to-severe acute pain in a medically supervised setting.

If approved, Dsuvia will be abused and start killing people as soon as it hits the market, Public Citizen maintains.

Dsuvia is five to 10 times more potent than fentanyl and 1,000 times more potent than morphine. The advisory committee voted 10-3 in October for the medication to be approved. Brown could not attend the meeting. Joining Brown on the letter were Dr. Sidney Wolfe, founder and senior adviser of Public Citizen's Health Research Group; Dr. Michael Carome, director of the group; and Dr. Meena Aladdin, a health researcher.

U.S. Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) also [is calling](#) on the FDA to reject Dsuvia.

Nov. 1, 2018

Contact: Angela Bradbery, abradbery@citizen.org, (202) 588-7741
Don Owens, dowens@citizen.org, (202) 588-7767