



CAMBODIA

Summary of major trends and emerging concerns

Methamphetamine

- The market for crystalline methamphetamine has continued to expand, with seizures of the drug once again reaching a record amount in 2021 (table 2). Government experts perceived the use of crystalline methamphetamine to have risen annually in the past five years and users of the drug represent the largest proportion of drug treatment admissions (table 1 and figure 2).
- The total amount of crystalline methamphetamine seized reached nearly one ton in 2021 and was predominantly seized (68 per cent) during the last quarter of the year, while seizures in the third quarter showed a significant drop in relation to the same period in 2020 (figure 4).
- Purity of both crystalline methamphetamine and methamphetamine tablets, as well as the price of methamphetamine tablets, remained stable in 2021 (table 3 and figure 5).

“Ecstasy”¹

- Drug treatment admissions for “ecstasy” remained low (figure 2). While seizures of “ecstasy” expressed in tablet equivalent declined in 2021, the amount seized remained significant and included 102 kg of MDMA found at a re-processing facility in July 2021, along with 1,144.3 kg of chemicals (table 2).²

New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) and other synthetic drugs

- Although there were no drug treatment admissions for ketamine in 2021, a record amount of the drug was seized within the year, nearly fifteen times the amount seized in the previous five years combined (table 2). A significant portion of the ketamine seized was uncovered at an industrial-scale clandestine ketamine laboratory dismantled in December 2021.³ Substantial quantities of chemicals were also found at the site.⁴

Other drugs

- The amount of heroin seized in 2021 is comparable to the record amount of 2020, indicating that the country continues to be targeted as a transit for heroin trafficking (table 2).
- After first being reported in 2020, seizures of “Erimin 5”⁵ were once again reported in 2021 (table 2).

1 “Ecstasy” tablets sold in the country may contain a range of substances in varying composition and quantities in addition or instead of MDMA.

2 Official communication with the National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD), March 2022.

3 Ibid.

4 See the NPS and other synthetic drugs section in the regional chapter.

5 “Erimin 5” is a proprietary product of Sumitomo corporation, and its licit production has been discontinued since 2015. The proprietary product contains nimetazepam, a benzodiazepine, which is controlled in Schedule IV of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971. It is probable that current “Erimin 5” seizures are manufactured illicitly and may or may not contain nimetazepam as well as a range of other substances.

Key facts and figures

Drug demand indicators

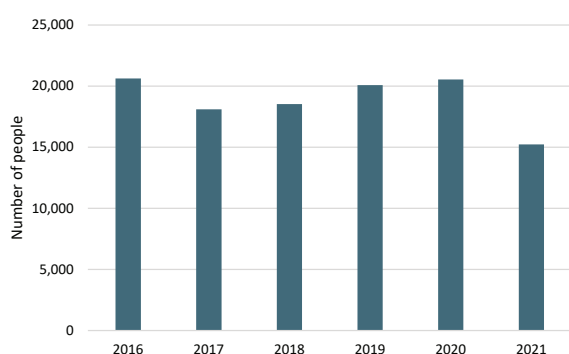
Table 1. Trend in use of selected drugs in Cambodia, 2016-2021

Drug type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Methamphetamine tablets	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑
Crystalline methamphetamine	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
“Ecstasy”	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑
Cannabis herb	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓
Cocaine	↑	↓	●	↓	↓	↑
Heroin	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓
Ketamine	●	↑	●	↑	↑	↑

Sources: Drug Abuse Information Network for Asia and the Pacific (DAINAP); Official communication with the National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD), March 2022.

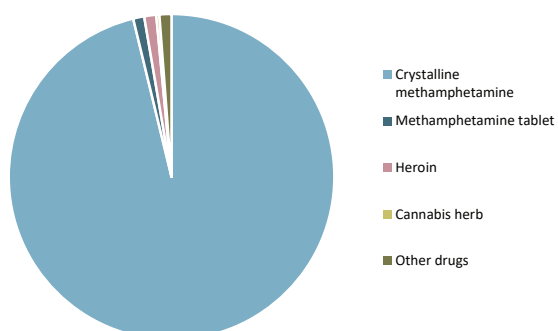
Note: Based on expert perception provided by NACD; ↑ = Increase, ↓ = Decrease, ↔ = Stable, ● = Not reported.

Figure 1. Number of people who use drugs brought into formal contact with authorities in Cambodia, 2016-2021



Sources: DAINAP; NACD, “Latest situation on synthetic drugs and responses to the threats in Cambodia”, presented at the Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop, November-December 2021; Official communication with NACD, March 2022.

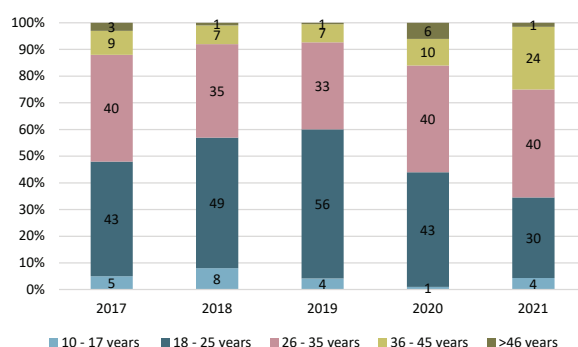
Figure 2. Drug treatment centre admissions in Cambodia, by drug type, 2021*



Sources: DAINAP; NACD, “Latest situation on synthetic drugs and responses to the threats in Cambodia”, presented at the Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop, November-December 2021; Official communication with NACD, March 2022.

Note: * Data in the table only cover for drug users admitted to temporary treatment centres; The total number of admissions for temporary drug treatment centres in 2021 was 3,049 and included those admitted for poly-drug use.

Figure 3. Drug treatment centre admissions in Cambodia, by age group, 2017-2021*



Sources: DAINAP; NACD, “Latest situation on synthetic drugs and responses to the threats in Cambodia”, presented at the Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop, November-December 2021; Official communication with NACD, March 2022.

Note: * Data in the table only covers drug users admitted to temporary treatment centres.

Drug supply indicators

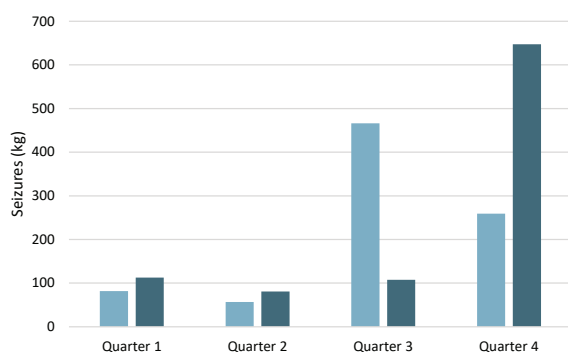
Table 2. Seizures of selected drugs in Cambodia, 2016-2021

Drug type	Unit	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Methamphetamine tablets ^a	tablets	490,689	371,556	77,000	483,444	43,222	63,130
Crystalline methamphetamine	kg	66.3	80.1	306.6	384.9	863.5	948
“Ecstasy” ^b	tablets	5,509	83,533	599,200	382,733	2,245,200	534,706
Cannabis herb	kg	37	116.3	74.0	102.9	292.2	135.1
Cocaine	kg	14	12.8	5.4	0.6	0.5	2
Heroin	kg	6.2	22.5	1.3	0.5	298.7	275.6
Ketamine	kg	1.1	6.3	36.3	33	112.5	2,782.8
Nimetazepam	kg	●	●	●	●	9.4	11.7

Sources: DAINAP; UNODC Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ) Cambodia for 2020 and previous years; NACD, “Latest situation on synthetic drugs and responses to the threats in Cambodia”, presented at the Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop, November-December 2021; Official communication with NACD, March 2022.

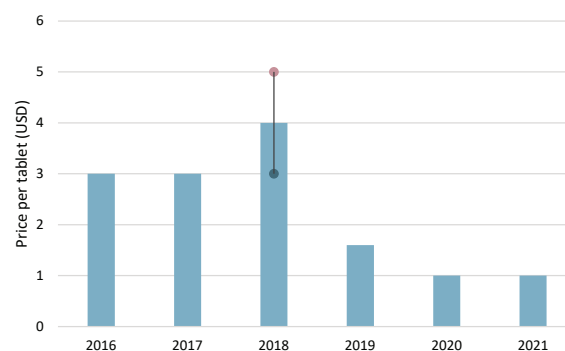
Note: ^a These figures include quantities reported as grams, all of which were converted into estimated tablet equivalent at 90 mg per tablet; ^b These figures include quantities reported as grams, all of which were converted into estimated tablet equivalent of 300 mg per tablet; ● = Not reported.

Figure 4. Seizure amounts of crystalline methamphetamine in Cambodia, by quarter, 2020-2021



Sources: DAINAP; Official communication with NACD, March 2022.

Figure 5. Retail prices of methamphetamine tablets in Cambodia, 2016-2021 (US\$)



Sources: NACD, “Latest situation on synthetic drugs and responses to the threats in Cambodia”, presented at the Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop, November-December 2021; Official communication with NACD, March 2022.

Note: * The high-low bars represent the upper and lower limits of the price ranges reported in addition to the typical price.

Table 3. Typical purity of selected drugs in Cambodia, 2020-2021 (percentage)

	2020				2021*			
	Number of samples analysed	Minimum	Average	Maximum	Number of samples analysed	Minimum	Average	Maximum
Crystalline methamphetamine	8,470	1.9%	64.5%	81%	4,580	1.5%	62%	80.5%
Methamphetamine tablets	75	7.9%	15.3%	20%	140	12.2%	17%	23.7%
“Ecstasy” tablets (MDMA)	83	14.9%	30.9%	50%	174	14.6%	29.1%	43.5%
Ketamine (powder)	192	0.7%	34.3%	78.4%	171	5%	25.9%	68%

Sources: DAINAP; NACD, “Latest situation on synthetic drugs and responses to the threats in Cambodia”, presented at the Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop, November-December 2021; Official communication with NACD, March 2022.

Note: * Data covers the first ten months of the year. Data in this table refer to the weight/weight (w/w) % expressed as the base form of these substances.