

**NARCOTICS - A MISFORTUNE UNDER A BEAUTIFUL SHADOW: A MIRAGE THAT DECEIVES SOCIETY**

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
<p>The article presents analyses of issues related to countering narcotic agents - one of the global problems of the modern world. The causes and consequences of their distribution are also considered, and scientific proposals and recommendations on measures to combat them are given.</p>	<p>Drug addiction, drugs, psychotropic substances, Afghanistan, Northern Route, persistent immunity, law enforcement agencies, prevention, international community.</p>

**Introduction**

**Combating drug addiction is the duty of every member of society**

Today, drug addiction has become one of the global problems of the 21st century. The plague and other catastrophes, which in the Middle Ages posed a serious threat to the life of mankind, have given their place to the evil of drug addiction in today's civilized times – this is no exaggeration.

Man strives for good in life and tries to turn away from evil. But the terms "good" and "evil" are defined differently by everyone. Life is beautiful with goodness. But sometimes evil casts a shadow over goodness. Drug addiction, which bears the name "plague of the century", is a deadly poison that causes cracks in the vulnerable life of man and subjugates his consciousness. It is such a weapon that leads the person who falls into its trap into a world of misery, and in this process man does not realize that he is losing his place in society.

As the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.M. Mirziyoyev emphasized, as difficult as it may be, we need to find our own and effective, up-to-date methods of educating the youth. It is necessary to protect our beloved children from destructive and harmful ideas, crime, drug addiction, indifference and moral poverty.

According to the report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the number of drug users worldwide has increased by 23 percent in ten years, from 240 million to 296 million people<sup>1</sup>.

It is noted that in the last three years (2021-2023), about 25,000 criminal cases have been initiated in this direction, and more than 17,000 people have been held criminally responsible. Of these, about

<sup>1</sup> 26 June - International Anti-Drug Day // <https://yuz.uz/news/26-iyun--xalqaro-giyohvandlikka-qarshi-kurash-kuni> .

5,000 (30 percent) were people under the age of 30. According to analyses, the number of young people committing drug offences is increasing from year to year. In particular, young people accounted for 23 percent of offenders in 2021, 24.6 percent in 2022 and 31.2 percent in 2023. On the Internet, 52 information resources have been identified that specialize in trafficking in psychotropic substances. Of these, 14 were websites and 38 were Telegram messengers. It is emphasized that about 120,000 users were reached through Telegram channels<sup>2</sup>.

It should be noted that several initiatives of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, aimed at solving global problems have been supported by the international community. In particular, one of the current proposals at the 76th session of the UN General Assembly in September 2021 was directly linked to the issue of combating drug addiction as a global problem<sup>3</sup>.

What is the essence of this initiative? The President of Uzbekistan called on the entire world community to show solidarity and cooperation in the fight against drug addiction.

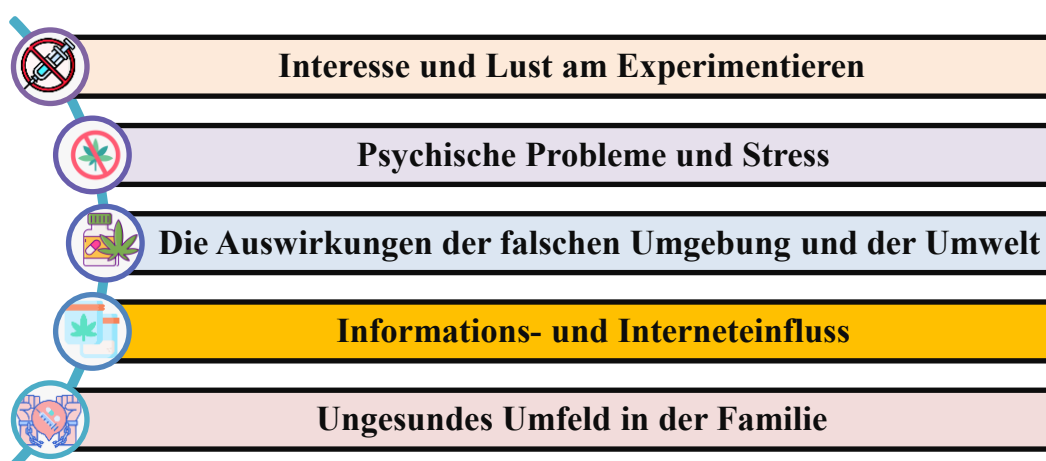
In particular, the fight against drugs among the youth, which is the basis of the third Renaissance, the uncompromising attitude, the formation of stable immunity, as well as the close acquaintance with the social and legal consequences that may arise, and the education of mentally and physically healthy and harmonious personalities are one of the most important and urgent permanent tasks of the world community.

The resolution, prepared at the initiative of our President, was unanimously approved and adopted by the UN General Assembly on June 4, 2024. It is not without reason that this resolution is entitled "The readiness of the Central Asian states to act and cooperate as a united front in order to effectively solve and eliminate drug problems".

As part of the comprehensive reforms carried out in the country, special attention is paid to promoting a healthy lifestyle in the population, forming their immunity to drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as work to ensure human health.

## Thematic Analyses

### What are the causes of drug addiction?



<sup>2</sup> It has been said that the number of young people who have committed drug abuse in Uzbekistan is growing every year // <https://daryo.uz/k/2024/06/13/ozbekistonda-narkojinoyat-sodir-etgan-yoshlar-soni-yildan-yilga-osib-borayotgani-aytildi>.

<sup>3</sup> Combating Addiction: Responding to National, Regional and International Initiatives// <http://nhrc.uz/uz/news/m13559>.

At this point, we should address the causes and consequences of drug addiction. The causes of their emergence consist of the following factors (Figure 1):

**Causes of drug addiction**

The consequences for drug users themselves and for society include:

Damage to physical health: disorders of brain function, cardiovascular diseases, drastic weakening of immunity, nervous system disorders, increased risk of serious diseases (HIV, hepatitis).

Mental decline: Drug addicts often experience depression, aggression, behavioral changes, memory loss, and loss of consciousness. Over time, they begin to alienate themselves from real life.

Social problems: family conflicts, loss of job or exclusion from education, increased propensity to crime, alienation from society and other negative conditions.

Therefore, the global tension and contradictions between the hegemonic states of the world, the struggle for survival, economic problems, legal crimes, the fact that new types of synthetic drugs and highly effective substances have emerged in recent years require that they be easily disseminated among the population, especially among young people, without human intervention via social networks on the Internet, the need to raise the activities of the competent law enforcement authorities in this area to a qualitatively new level, based on the priority "All efforts for human dignity".

It should be emphasized that the types of drugs and their use, as well as the demand, are increasing worldwide. In particular, according to information obtained from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the dynamics of the use of narcotics – one of the main types of drugs – will increase globally between 2000 and 2025 (Table 1).

**Analysis of specific trends by type of drug substance <sup>4</sup>**

No.	Types of drugs	2022 year	2023 year	Difference (million people)
		Consumers (in millions)		
1	Cannabis	228	244	16
2	Opioids	60	61	1
3	Amphetamines and stimulants	30	31	1
4	Cocaine	23	25	2
5	Ecstasy( and MDMA group)	20	21	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>21</b>

From the above data, it can be seen that in 2023, the number of users of drug substances, especially "cannabis", increased by about 16 million people, and the total number of all types increased by 21 million people.

Therefore, it is necessary for all people in the world to intensify the fight against this plague, prevention and educational work.

In Uzbekistan, as in all developed countries, the drug situation remains acute: the expansion of the illegal circulation of drug substances, in particular, the non-medical abuse of psychotropic and highly effective substances, the activation of existing transit channels of the so-called "Northern Route" of "Afghan" drugs and the formation of new channels are observed.

<sup>4</sup> Author development based on data from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime

In the republic, there are a number of important factors that directly affect the drug situation:

- The flow of Afghan narcotics from the opium and cannabis group does not stop and is continuously increasing;
- The smuggling of synthetic drugs and highly potent substances is increasing;
- Modern information technologies and the Internet are used for the dissemination and sale of drugs, psychotropic and psychoactive substances;
- As a result of the popularization of synthetic drugs and highly effective substances, their non-medical abuse is increasing;
- The presence of favorable agroclimatic conditions for the cultivation of crops containing drugs;
- The discovery of laboratories for the production of drugs in domestic conditions and with artisanal methods.

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-158 of 11 September 2023 "On the Strategy 'Uzbekistan – 2030'" and the Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 759/11 of 15 November 2024 "On the Approval of the National Programme for 2024-2025 on the Implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Drug Addiction and Drug Offences in the Republic of Uzbekistan" aim to: To achieve the priority goals, in particular, the timely prevention of the illegal circulation of drugs and psychotropic substances in our republic, the formation of "immunity" against their use in the population, the elimination of factors that negatively affect our gene pool, the organization of a medical treatment system for drug-addicted patients in accordance with world experience and the determination of promising directions of state policy in this area area, which requires the creation of a uniform technology by all law enforcement agencies in the fight against drugs. Let's look at the analysis of measures and activities that will be carried out in Uzbekistan in 2024-2025 to combat drugs (Table 2)

**Table 2 Analysis of measures and activities to combat drugs in Uzbekistan in 2024-2025**

T/R	Fixed Directions	Work carried out
1	<b>Drug/psychotropic/potent substances seized (2024)</b>	More than 2.3 tons of substances were removed from illegal circulation.
2	<b>Area of illegally grown drug crops destroyed (2024)</b>	Illegal crops on an area of 15,000 m <sup>2</sup> were destroyed.
3	<b>Drug and psychotropic substances seized in Tashkent (2024)</b>	In the city of Tashkent, more than 238 kg of drug/psychotropic substances were seized.
4	<b>Situation among young people and students (2024-2025)</b>	Teenagers and students are involved in drug courier activities and secret laboratories.
5	<b>Rule of law and prevention: publicity, education and control measures</b>	In 2024-2025, educational and prevention measures (schools, universities, mahallas, public) were carried out – about 40,000 events attended by almost 4 million people.
6	Legislation and strategy – a new phase	The National Strategy "Combating Drug Addiction and Drug Offenses" for 2024-2028 has been approved

As part of the anti-drug reforms in Uzbekistan, the National Strategy to Combat Drug Addiction and Drug Offenses for 2024-2028 has identified a number of tasks that need to be solved. These include:

The formation of "drug immunity" in the population, especially among women and adolescents, an uncompromising attitude towards the use of highly effective drugs among pupils and students, the introduction of new effective propaganda and educational-prevention mechanisms to prevent the spread of psychoactive substances in educational institutions;

The development of the system of high-quality narcological care of the population on the basis of new methods, the implementation of targeted measures for the fundamental improvement of the system of early prevention, diagnosis, treatment and medical-social rehabilitation of drug addiction and toxicomania;

The fight against new, in particular internet-based methods of illicit circulation of drugs, psychotropic and highly potent substances and precursor substances, the development of the complex of operational search, investigation and forensic-criminal measures in this area, primarily through digitalisation;

The control of the medical use practice of drug drugs by state and private medical institutions and pharmacies, as well as the creation of effective mechanisms to increase the responsibility of pharmaceutical companies and entities operating in the wholesale and retail trade of drug drugs;

The development of scientific research activities in the field of drug treatment and the fight against drug crime, the implementation of scientific research, conclusions, achievements and innovations in this field into practice, as well as their dissemination to the public.

## **Conclusions and proposals**

Based on the above information, as measures to combat drugs in Uzbekistan, we can emphasize that we need to start first of all in the family, and by reviving work in the following directions and introducing effective mechanisms into practice, we can achieve the goal of eliminating this plague.

Improving family control and education – Talking openly with children, supporting them and guiding them on the right path is one of the most powerful weapons against drug addiction.

Revival of education and awareness work – In schools, colleges and universities, it is important to promote a healthy lifestyle and to hold events that explain the harmful consequences of drug addiction.

Involvement in sport and creativity – The right organisation of leisure time, sports circles, music or art create a positive environment for young people.

Increasing the effectiveness of treatment and rehabilitation centers – Since drug-addicted citizens need specialized medical assistance, it is convenient to further improve the methods of their effective treatment with a long but correct approach.

Law enforcement cooperation – Effective use of the cynological service in the fight against drugs, efficient and targeted use of specially trained service dogs in service activities, use of advanced foreign experience in service dog training processes and their improvement is appropriate.

The drug plague is not only a medical problem, but also a social, moral and economic danger. The fight against this is a common task of every person, every family and society. By creating a healthy environment for children, supporting youth and increasing responsibility in the information space, we can reduce this disaster.

## References

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