

Drug Policy and Use Situation in Finland

20.6.2023

Kim Kannussaari, Head of Unit
of the network for preventive
substance abuse work co-ordinated
by EHYT-Finnish Association for
Substance Abuse Prevention



Topics



- Drug related deaths in Finland, what's the situation and what we're planning to do with it.
- Latest study on Finnish drug use and attitudes.
- What is happening in drug policy here in Finland.

Drug related deaths in Finland



- In 2021 there were 287 drug related deaths in Finland.
- Majority of drug related deaths are related to the simultaneous use of several substances
 - in over 70% of deaths included opioids, mainly buprenorphine often mixed with benzodiazepines and also alcohol

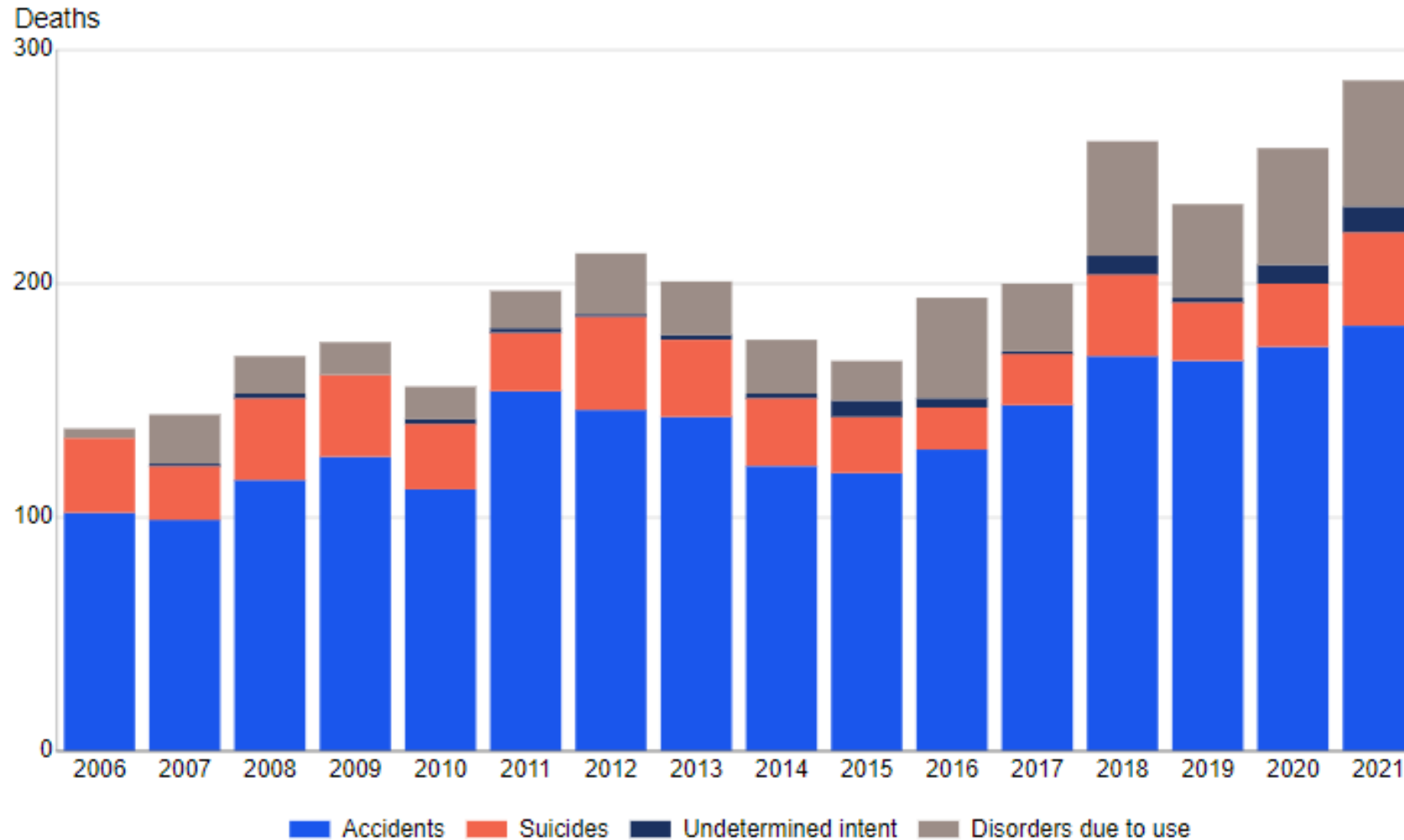
Drug related deaths in Finland



Typical profile

- Male, 33 years old
- Buprenorphine, benzodiazepines and alcohol
- Injecting use of substances
- At home while sleeping
- Mental health problems
- Divorced
- Long-term use of drugs, weak socio-economic status, income support/disability pension and low level of education

Drug related deaths 2006-2021 (EMCDDA's definition)



Drug related deaths in Finland

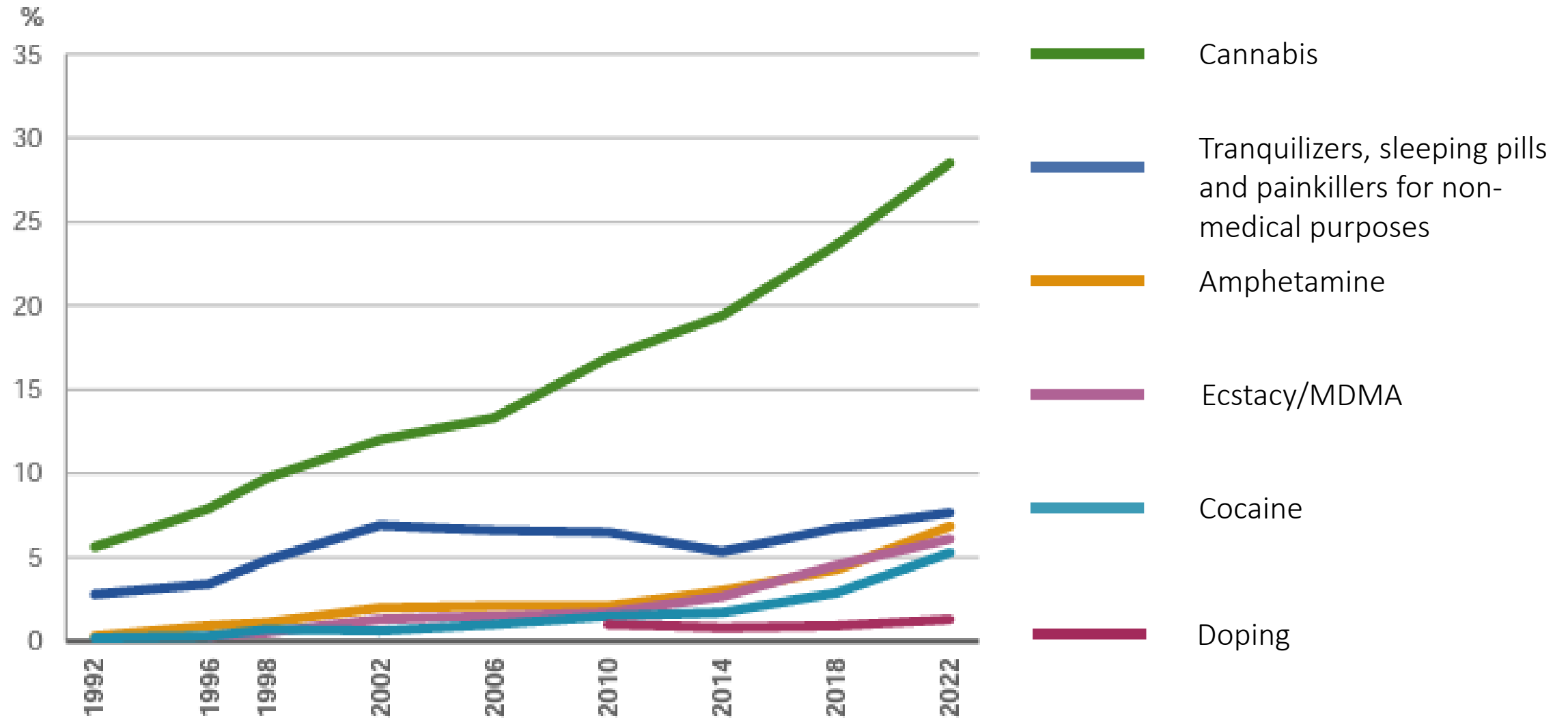


Expert group for the prevention of drug related deaths -> 7 targets

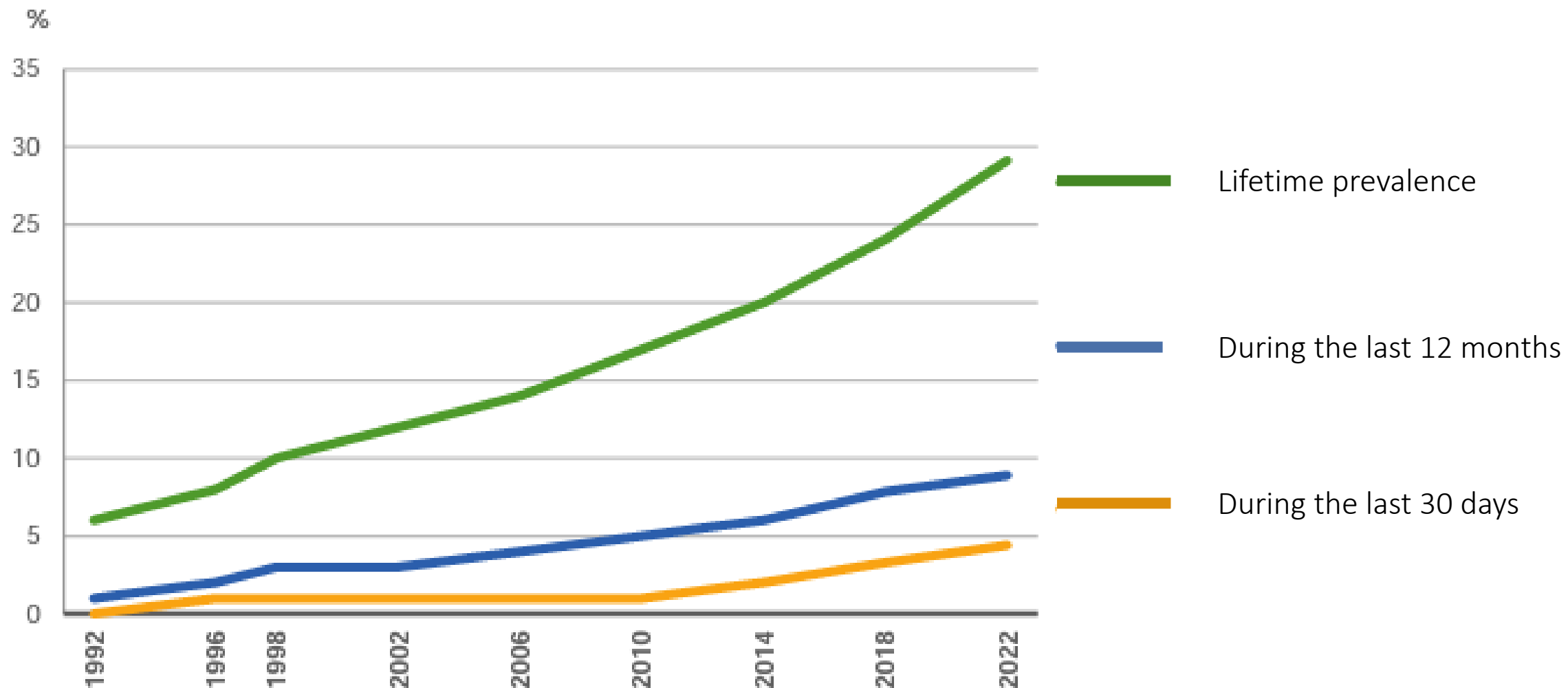
1. Opioid substitution treatment and other substance abuse services (speeding up and facilitating access to treatment, ensuring continuity of treatment)
2. Drug consumption room (at least experiment)
3. Needle and Syringe Exchange Programme "Health counseling" (adequate and comprehensive services throughout Finland)
4. Naloxone program (piloting of take-home naloxone in Finland)
5. Lowering the threshold to call help from emergency number
6. Information and campaigns to people who use drugs. (quick info about new drugs, first aid training)
7. Co-operation with the police. (encountering a person using substances and confirming referral to treatment)

In addition, all themes are also related to dismantling the negative stigma and strengthening the appreciative and humane encounter of the person using substances.

Proportions of those who have tried or used cannabis or other substances at some point in their lives in the Finnish population aged 15–69 in the years 1992–2022



Proportions of those who have used a drug sometime during their lifetime, during the last 12 months and during the last 30 days in the Finnish population aged 15–69 in the years 1992–2022



Attitudes among finnish population



- almost 2/3 thinks that DCR's are acceptable
- 53 % thinks that cannabis use should be decriminalized
- 24 % thinks that cannabis should be legalized

What's happening in drug policy



Citizen initiatives

- DCR experiment
- Cannabis to be legal, regulated and taxed

New government

- Not much to say about drugs.
 - Special attention is paid to the prevention of drug use among young people and the reduction of drug-related deaths among young people.
 - study about recovery programs

THC 0

- Few stores have started to sell Cannabis seeds and flowers which have no THC.
 - CBD is under medical legislation, so it's not allowed to sell

Sources



<https://www.stat.fi/en/publication/cl8slomfgpjyk0bw7wivrbxpa>

https://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/european-drug-report/2023/drug-induced-deaths_en#table1

<https://thl.fi/fi/web/alkoholi-tupakka-ja-riippuvuudet/huumeet/huumeekuolemien-ehkaisyn-asiantuntijaryhma>

<https://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/146435>

<https://www.kansalaisaloite.fi/fi>

<https://valtioneuvosto.fi/documents/10184/158702198/Neuvottelutulos+hallitusohjelmasta+16.6.2023.pdf/2febf7a7-d5a1-6f17-df2d-95561de7a6de/Neuvottelutulos+hallitusohjelmasta+16.6.2023.pdf?t=1686924779616>



THANK YOU

kim.kannussaari@ehyt.fi

050 597 7555

<https://twitter.com/KimKannussaari>

www.ept-verkosto.fi/en

www.ehyt.fi/en