

# Drug Related Deaths in Ukraine

**More details:**

**[Drug-Related Deaths in Ukraine: Overview of 2 Data Sets – August 2023](#)**

**Kyiv-2023**

## Available data sets:

1. State Statistics Service of Ukraine provides quantitative data on people who died as a result of using substances in terms of gender, age group and cause of death, according to the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems ([ICD-10](#)).

➤ Key limitations of this data set:

- Lack of more detailed breakdown of substances.
- Incomplete data for 2021 and unavailable data for 2022 due to russian aggression-related issues (e.g. [Law of Ukraine No. 2115-IX](#) "On Protection of the Interests of report providers during Martial Law or a State of War", allows individuals and legal entities not to submit statistical and financial reports).

2. Bureaus of Forensic Medical Examination provide data on deaths with the identified evidence of substances in the biological material (during the autopsy carried out only under the request of prosecutor's office investigator).

➤ Key limitations of this data set:

- Lack of human and financial resources for collecting and consolidating accurate statistics.
- Lack of reagents and other laboratory stuff for high-quality and accurate tests.
- Russian federation's aggression, i.e. occupation of part of Ukraine in 2014 and the invasion of Ukraine in 2022 resulted in failing to get data from a number of regional Bureaus.

## DRD trends in Ukraine

- ❖ Up to 2020, the general number of deaths had been growing, but in **2021 it decreased**. That can be explained with the incompleteness of data due to the war-related issues.
- ❖ Men's deaths go on making up the largest proportion of DRD.
- ❖ The largest number and proportion of deaths is in the **age group of 30-39 y.o.** At the same time, there observed a continuous increasing trend in deaths in the age group of 40-49 y.o.
- ❖ Deaths related to the drug-induced mental and behavioral disorders, as well as death related to substance poisoning are mainly due to **the opioid use** with a trend of significant increase in number of deaths related to **opioid poisoning**, and first of all, **methadone overdoses**.
- ❖ **Drug-containing medicines and opioids** are the leader substances detected in biological material of the dead with average proportions of 28,1% & 24,7%, respectively, followed by unidentified substances (14,8%) and poly drugs (13,0%).
- ❖ As of 2018, there is a trend of increase in number and proportion of deaths related to **poisoning by synthetic opioids**, as well as decrease in number and proportion of death related to poisoning by opium, codeine & morphine.
- ❖ In terms of intent, the most of overdoses are **accidental** (77,8% in average for 2017-2021).

# Analysis of 2 DRD data sets

## National Registry: State Statistics Service



## Forensic Registry: Bureaus of Forensic Examination



- Two data collection sources in Ukraine (State Statistics Service and Bureaus of Forensic Medical Examinations) provide data that differ by substances breakdown and number of death cases.
- Men's deaths are predominant (in average: 84,2% according to Bureaus, and 90,5% according to the Ukrstat).
- The largest proportion of deaths is in the age group of 30-39 (in average: 44,6% according to Bureaus, and 49,7% according to the Ukrstat).
- Opioid-related deaths are among the leaders (in average: 24,7% according to Bureaus, and 49,5% according to the Ukrstat).

Indicator	Data by Ukrstat	Data by Forensic bureaus
<b>Number of cases of deaths:</b>	565 cases	709 cases
<b>Substance: opioids</b>	58,8 % (332 cases)	19,5% (138 cases)
<b>Gender: men</b>	92,0 % (520 cases)	83,2% (590 cases)
<b>Age: 30-39 y.o.</b>	49,7% (281 cases)	42,9% (304 cases)

Note: \*Data for 2021 is analyzed due to the unavailability of Ukrstat data for 2022.