



European Monitoring Centre
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

COVID-19 and drugs: Drug supply via darknet markets

(10)(2e)

6 July 2020
HDG online meeting



Drug markets and darknet



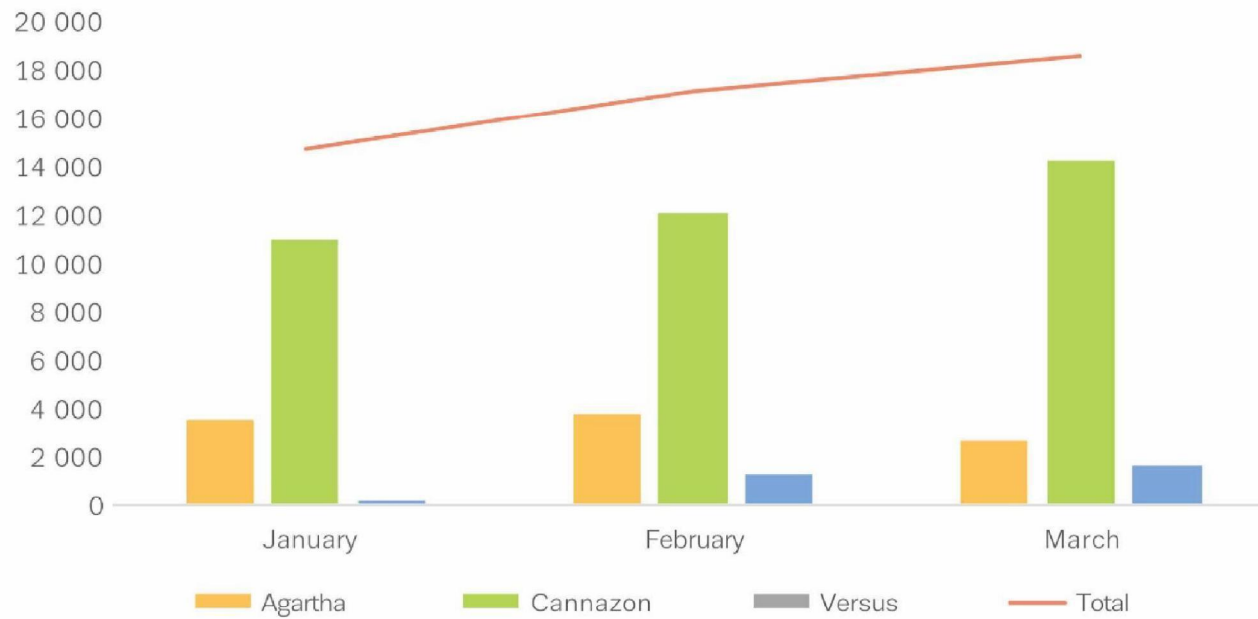
Methods: quantitative and qualitative data

- Regular crawls collected from 3 major markets and 8 discussion forums
- Quantitative data: 50 475 reviews
- Qualitative data: over 800 posts from online forums
- 1 January – 31 March 2020
- No causal relationship implied
- Allowed analysis of activity; estimation of volumes and value of cannabis; emerging themes

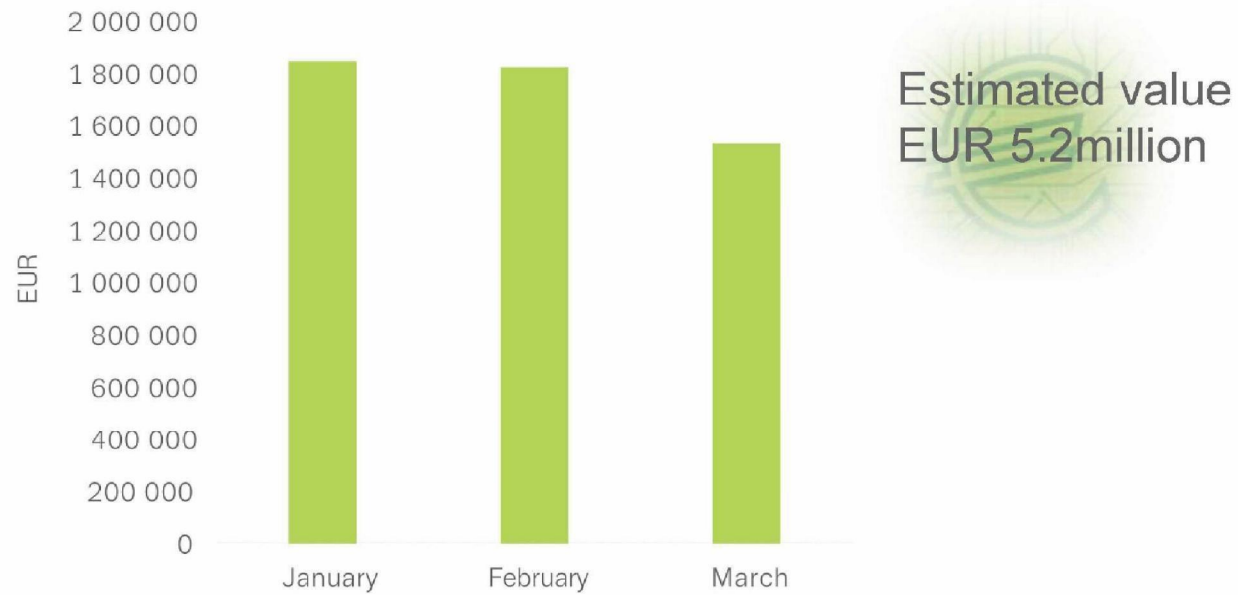
Rapid and preliminary analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on selected darknet markets



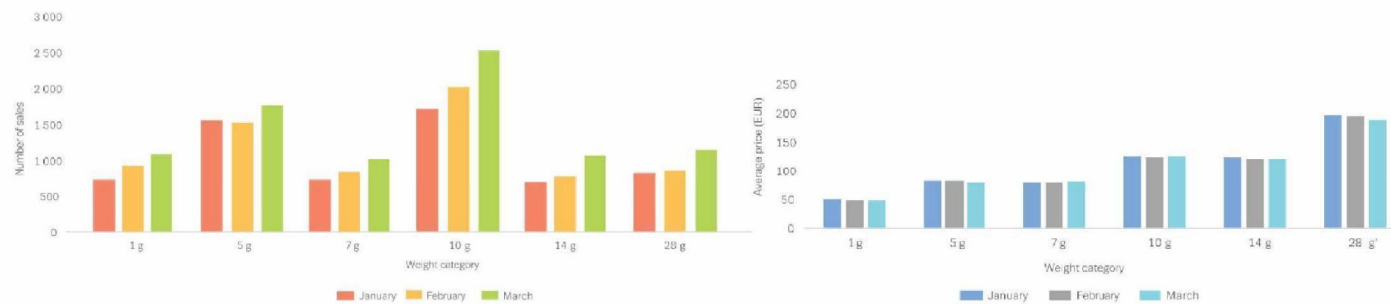
Number of drug-related reviews, January-March 2020



Monthly value of cannabis products, Cannazon January-March 2020



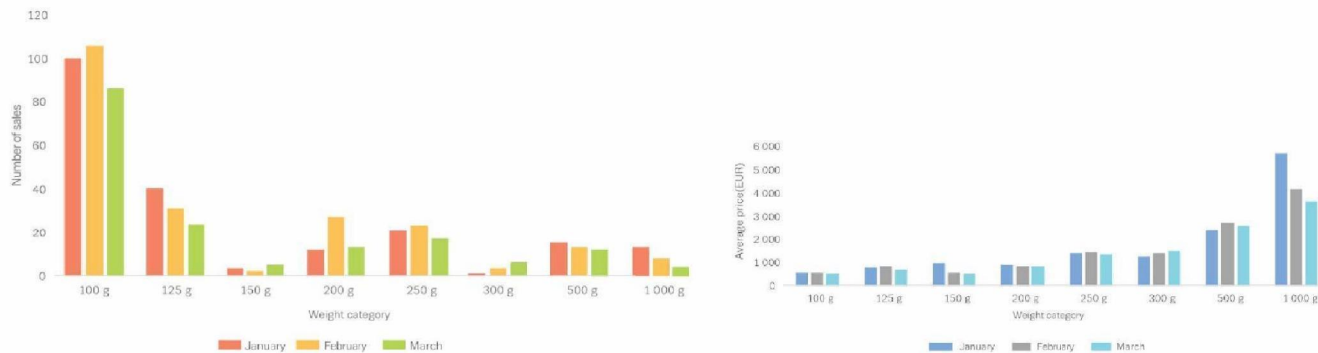
Number of sales for common retail-level weight categories, Cannazon, January-March 2020



- Increased activity of established and possibly new buyers purchasing for personal use
- Stable prices observed for these weight categories



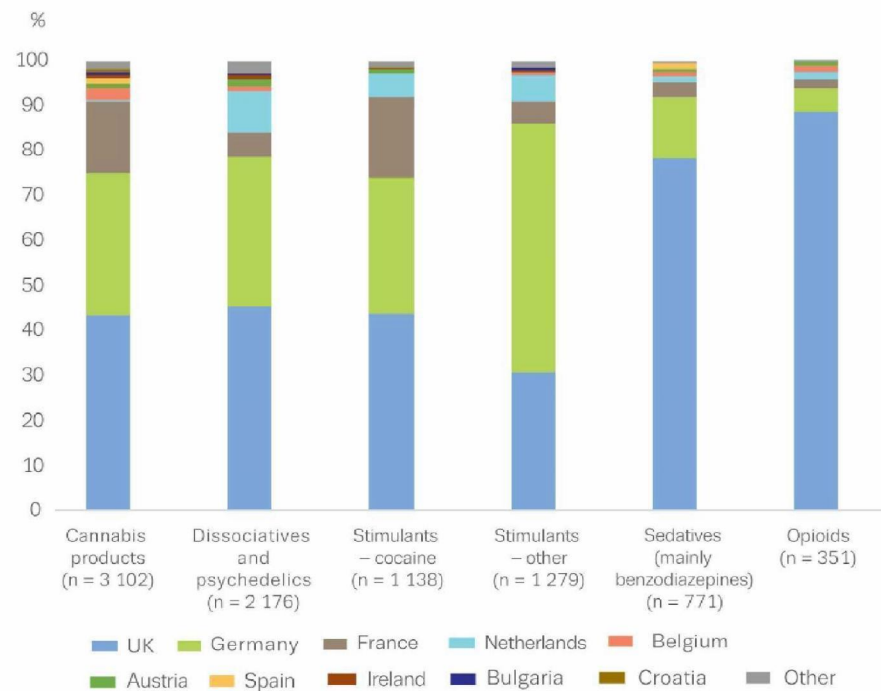
Number of sales for large weight categories, Cannazon, January-March 2020



- Purchases of resale volumes decline reflecting anticipated resale difficulties due to the social distancing measures
- Cannabis prices appear to be decreasing for large volume purchases



Main drug categories by reported shipping origin, Agarth, January-March 2020



Conclusions

- Early conclusions based mostly on observations from cannabis sales
- Cannabis data suggestive of two competing but related responses to the pandemic: those buying cannabis for physical re-sale reducing their activity, anticipating resale may be more difficult; established (or possibly new) buyers seeking cannabis for personal use increasing their activities on the market
- If the increase in darknet sales represents new users turning to this method of buying drugs, it may have consequences for the darknet market share in future





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Thank you

https://www.emcdda.europa.eu/system/files/publications/13042/EMCDDA-report_COVID19-darknet-final.pdf

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7282402/>

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