

## Do people find witnessing drug-related activities in their district bothersome?

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52% of persons (aged 14 and over) who witness drug-related activities in their district say that they find such activities bothersome.

Among persons who see dealers and the waste associated with drug use, this figure rises to 82%. By comparison, just 36% of people who only see drug users say that it bothers them.

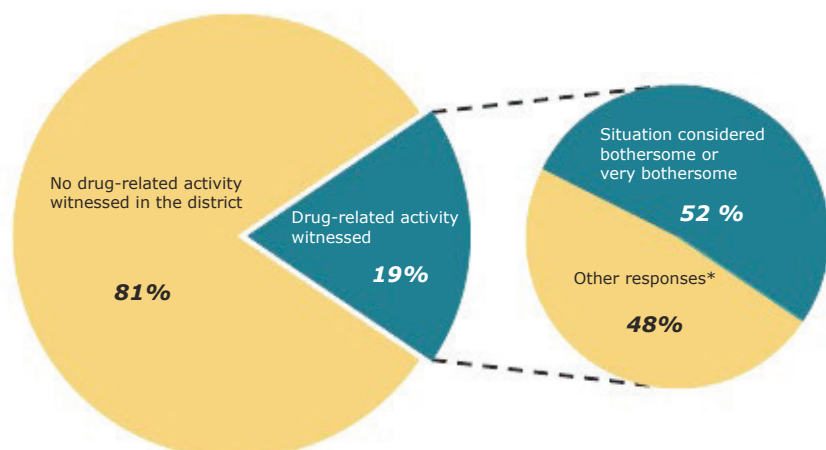
Among those who witness drug-related activities, it is in sensitive urban zones (SUZ) where problems are more entrenched and more frequently encountered. This would in part explain why 69% of these respondents say that these activities bother them, 18 percentage points more than among people living in urban areas situated outside SUZs.

And yet, young adults (persons aged 14 to 29), who constitute the age group that witnesses most drug-related activity, are not the group most bothered. The results of the study would indicate that for a given level of exposure, the youngest people are also less bothered by witnessing drug-related activity than people in other age groups.

Close to 98,000 people aged 14 and over provided responses to the six INSEE-ONDRP "Quality of Life and Security" surveys conducted from 2009 to 2014. This sample is representative of the 51 million people aged 14 and over living in metropolitan France over this six-year period.

Close to 19% of those surveyed indicated that they had witnessed drug consumption or trafficking in their district (or village) in the 12 months prior to the survey [1]. Half of these respondents (i.e. 9% of the population), indicated that they found the presence of dealers, consumers, and waste associated with such activities in their district or village bothersome or very bothersome.

### 1 Level of annoyance associated with observation of drug-related activity in the district



(\* ) There are four other possible responses: "A little bothersome", "Not at all bothersome", "Not applicable", and "Do not know".

Source: "Quality of Life and Security" surveys (2009 to 2014) - Sample: Persons aged 14 and over / Metropolitan France

## A level of annoyance that varies according to a number of factors

There is a link between the frequency with which drug-related activity is witnessed and the level of annoyance witnessing such activity creates. Close to two-thirds of respondents who witness such activity often find it annoying, while just one-third of those who witness it very rarely are annoyed [2].

One must remember that the level of a person's sensitivity to drug-related activities can influence their responses to the frequency of the same. Thus, the relationship between frequency and annoyance can be a two-way street.

There is also a link between the nature of the problem(s) observed and the level of annoyance felt. The use of space in the district for the use and dealing of drugs, as well as the waste left behind by drug users, were the three problems cited in the survey.

The first step is to divide situations up according to the multiplicity of problems encountered: observations of just one of the three problems, the observation of a combination of problems, i.e. a combination of different types of problems, and situations where no problem cited in the questionnaire is mentioned in the survey.

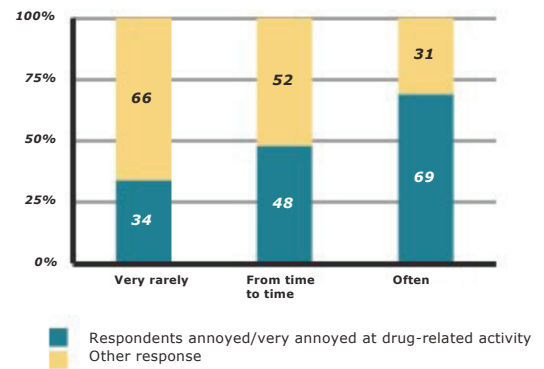
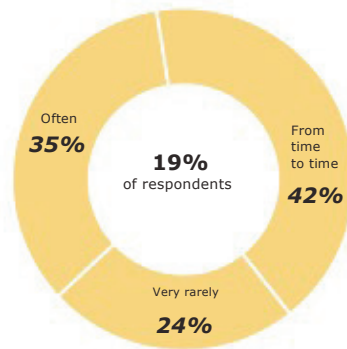
The proportion of persons who are annoyed varies greatly according to this division. 71% of respondents who observe different types of problems feel a degree of annoyance [3]. 41% feel annoyance when faced with one problem, while 22% feel annoyance when faced with none of the problems cited.

This distribution provides an interesting framework for analysis that we can refine further, by specifying the nature of problems faced and any combinations of the same.

With regard to the observation of multiple activities, 82% of individuals felt annoyance upon being confronted with drug dealers and waste associated with drug use, while 64%

of respondents felt annoyance upon witnessing the dealing of drugs or waste associated with their use, and drug use [4].

### 2 Level of annoyance according to frequency with which drug-related activity is witnessed



Source: "Quality of Life and Security" surveys (2009 to 2014) - Sample: Persons aged 14 and over / Metropolitan France

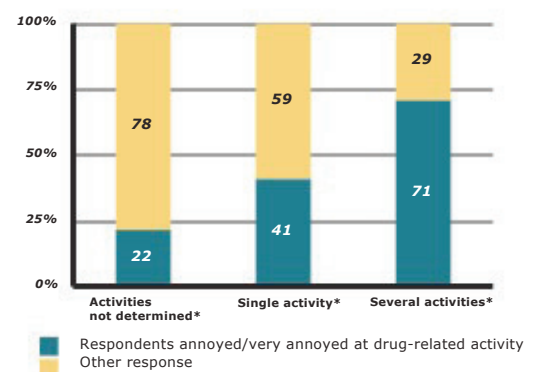
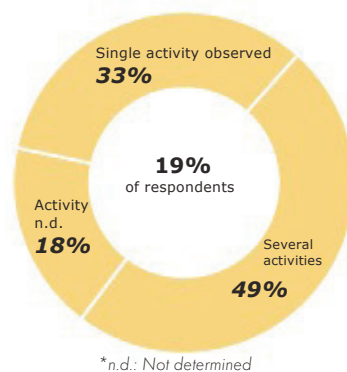
If observations relate strictly to one of the three problems, 55% of respondents felt annoyance upon observing drug dealers and the waste left behind by drug users, while 36% of respondents felt annoyance upon seeing drug users in their area.

In short, the level of annoyance felt is linked to the frequency and nature of the drug-related activity observed. This analysis raises a number of questions: Are each of the two factors given the same importance? Should one type of activity be given priority over another in order to analyse the factors that determine the levels of annoyance felt? What are the factors that intervene between the two levels of analysis?

The aim here is not to provide answers to these questions, but to provide the first elements for analysis according to the mere observation of differences seen between levels of annoyance, with these varying more according to the nature of observations made than frequency.

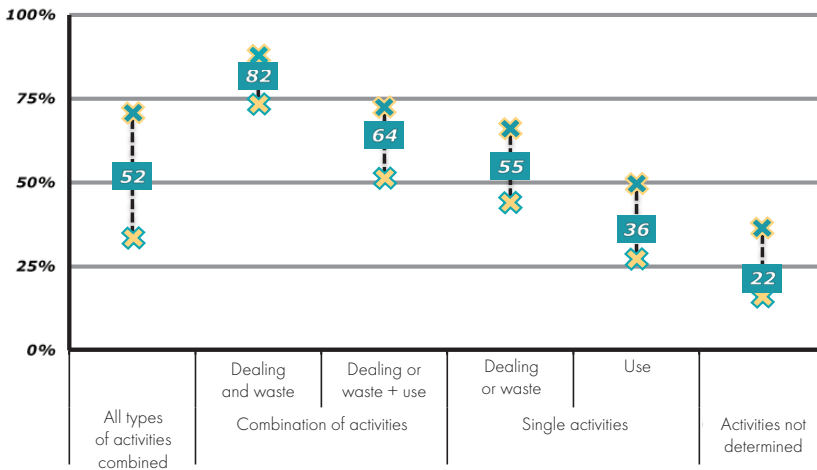
Compared with the types and combinations of activities observed, the frequency with which such activities are witnessed have little impact on annoyance. In other words, the different combinations of activity observed to a large extent "determine" the effect of the frequency of observation on the level of annoyance reported

### 3 Level of annoyance according to the multiplicity of drug-related activities observed



Source: "Quality of Life and Security" surveys (2009 to 2014) - Sample: Persons aged 14 and over / Metropolitan France

#### 4 Levels of annoyance according to the frequency and nature of activity



- Average level of annoyance
- ★ Level of annoyance among respondents who witness these activities often
- ★ Level of annoyance among respondents who witness these activities very rarely

**Note:** 82% of respondents who have seen drug dealers and the waste associated with drug use in their district expressed annoyance: among respondents who had witnessed these phenomena often the proportion was 86%, while among respondents who had witnessed them very rarely it was 74%.

Source: "Quality of Life and Security" surveys (2009 to 2014) - Sample: Persons aged 14 and over / Metropolitan France

## Higher levels of annoyance among residents of SUZs

Sensitive urban zones (SUZs) constitute a point of convergence between:

- A larger proportion of the population who has observed drug-related activities: the figure among residents of SUZs is 38%, while among residents of urban units outside these zones the figure is 21% and, in rural areas, 10%.
- More frequent observation: 53% of respondents stated that they often witnessed drug-related activity, compared with 32% of respondents outside SUZs.

Thus, they appear to have great exposure to drug-related activities.

The level of annoyance felt at these activities is automatically greater: 69% of people expressed annoyance at witnessing these activities [6]. This proportion is much greater than among residents of urban units outside SUZs who witness drug-related activities (51%).

The difference is even greater when compared to respondents living in rural areas who witness drug-related activities, 43% of whom expressed annoyance.

Multiple drug-related activities are more common in SUZs than in other areas. In particular, the proportion of drug-related activity observed that involved both dealing and waste associated with drugs (28%) in these zones is 10 percentage points higher than in other urban units, and 17 percentage points higher than in rural villages (11%). And yet, we have seen that the level of annoyance at this combination of drug-related activity is very high.

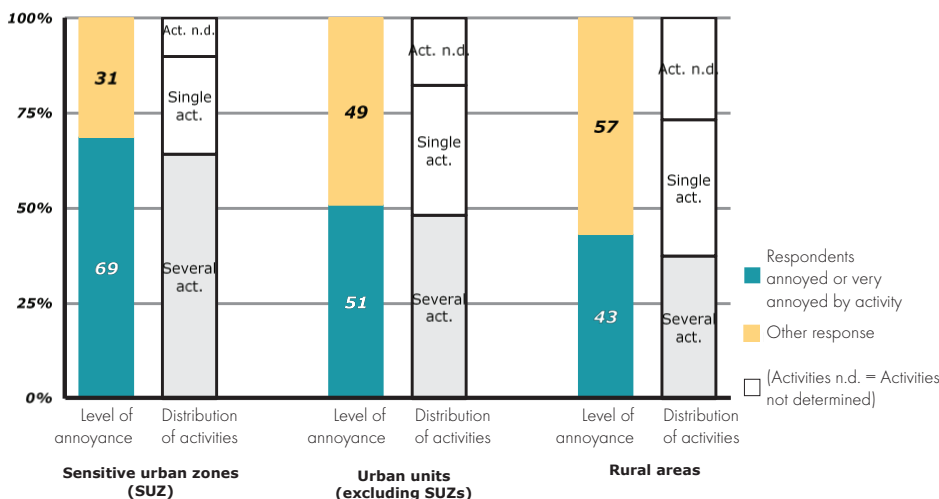
All else being equal, however, the level of annoyance felt in SUZs is greater than in other areas. Thus, there is a phenomenon unique to SUZs at play, a phenomenon that cannot be explained by the information contained here.

## Greater annoyance among females

A larger proportion of female respondents expressed annoyance at witnessing drug trafficking and use in their district than men (57%, compared with 48%) [6].

This difference is not the result of a difference in the frequency or nature of the activities in question. Rather, we believe that it is due to greater sensitivity towards such activities among women than men.

#### 5 Level of annoyance according to the frequency and nature of activity



Source: "Quality of Life and Security" surveys (2009 to 2014) - Sample: Persons aged 14 and over / Metropolitan France

## Less annoyance among young adults

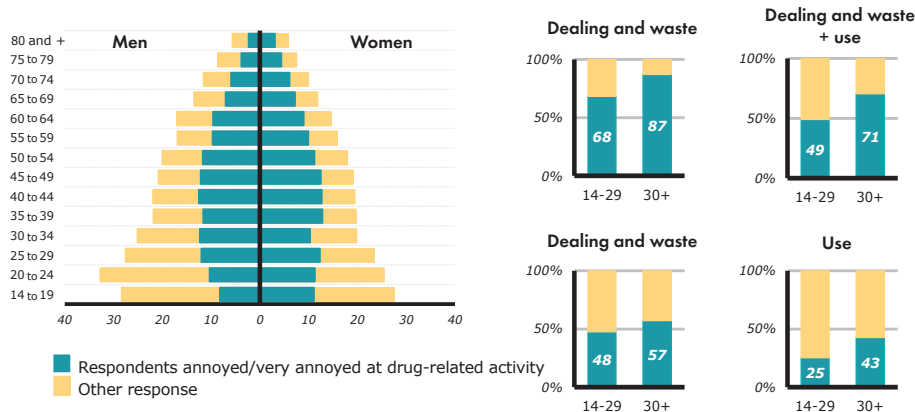
The age pyramid reveals an ever-greater proportion of people who observe drug use or trafficking in their district as we move down the age scale<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, whereas few respondents at the top of the pyramid said that they have witnessed drug-related activities in their district (6% of male and female respondents over the age of 80), a large proportion of respondents at the bottom of the age pyramid said that they had witnessed such activities (28% of males and females between the ages of 14 and 19).

Compared to people aged 30 and over, young adults (persons aged 14 to 29) are more likely to witness drug use alone, a behaviour that gives rise to less annoyance: it accounts for 30% of observations of drug-related activity among person aged between 14 and 29, and 22% of observations above this age group.

Apart from this initial consideration, something else is even more clear: irrespective of the nature of the activity, a smaller proportion of young adults are annoyed by drug-related activity than older people.

### 6 Level of annoyance according to sex and age of those who witness drug-related activities



Source: "Quality of Life and Security" surveys (2009 to 2014) - Sample: Persons aged 14 and over / Metropolitan France

In short, the lesser propensity of young adults to be annoyed can only be explained to a small degree by a type of activity that is unique to that age group. The results would appear to indicate that for a given level of exposure, the youngest individuals are less annoyed by drug-related activity than people in other age groups.

According to surveys conducted by INPES (the French national institute for prevention and health education) and the OFDT (the French monitoring centre for drugs and drug addiction), age would appear to be a very discriminating factor in levels of drug use<sup>2</sup>, with cannabis use particularly prevalent among young people. Thus, one may wonder about the relationship between the drug habits of young people and their different perceptions of drug use.

## Methodology

Please consult the Excel document associated with this publication for all methodological prerequisites to be met in order for this study to be carried out. The main elements are as follows:

- Due to an amendment made to the question relating to levels of annoyance in 2009<sup>3</sup>, the results of the first two surveys (2007 and 2008) cannot be added to those of subsequent surveys (2009 to 2014). As a result, the results of this study are based only on the last six surveys.

- To describe the factors that determine exposure of respondents to drug-related activity in their district, the results of the surveys for 2009 to 2014 have been added together, providing us with a sample of close to 100,000 respondents over six years.
- To identify individuals annoyed by drug-related activity and to make the results of this study easier to read, the categories "Very bothersome" and "Bothersome" have been lumped together into one category.

(1) Except for people between the ages of 20 and 24, the pyramid for men is comparable with that for women: the proportion of male respondents who have observed drug-related activity is largest among those aged 20-24 (33%), while the proportion of female respondents who have observed such activity is largest among those aged 14-19 (28%).

(2) <http://www.ofdt.fr/BDD/publications/docs/eisxfbv4.pdf> (french version).

(3) Due to the addition of the «Not applicable» option (no resale or consumption of drugs) to this question in 2009, the results of the first two surveys cannot be added to those of subsequent surveys. Therefore, in order to compare the results for this question with those of the question relating to the observation of drug-related activities, only the results of surveys conducted from 2009 to 2014 have been added together.