



Drug Related Deaths in Austria, Challenges and Responses

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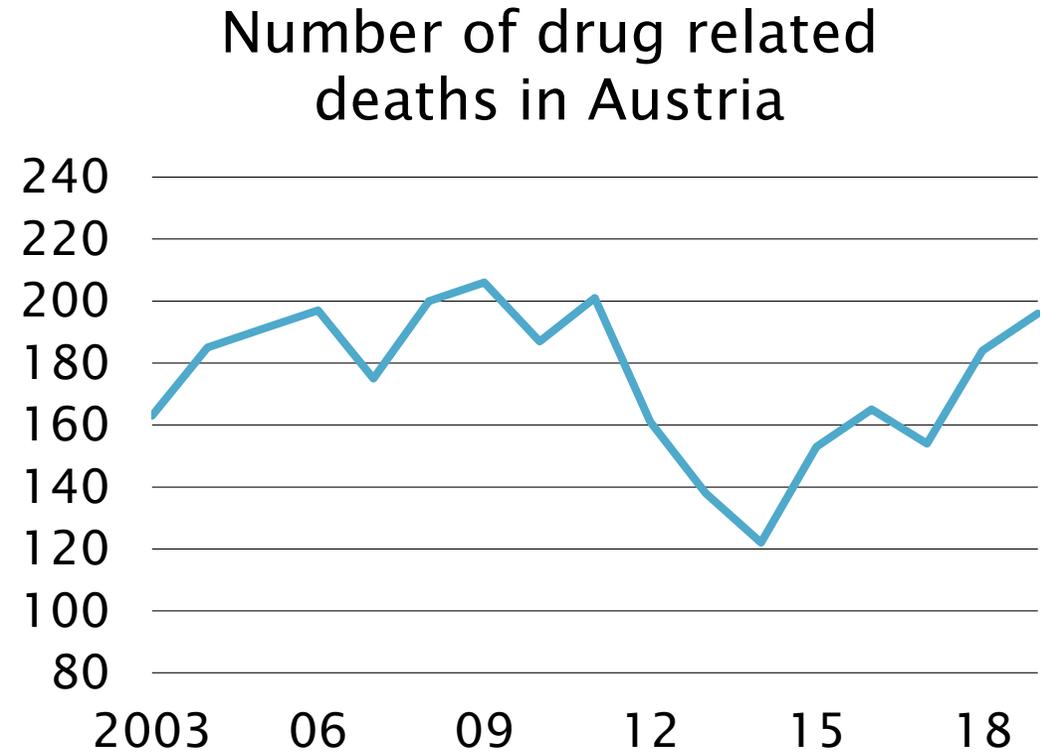
EMCDDA Webinar Drug related deaths in Europe, current challenges and implication for response

Gesundheit Österreich
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What is the current major concern around drug-related deaths in Austria?

Current Situation

- Between 2003 and 2011 the numbers were quite stable
- Followed by a decrease until 2014
- Followed by an increase until now



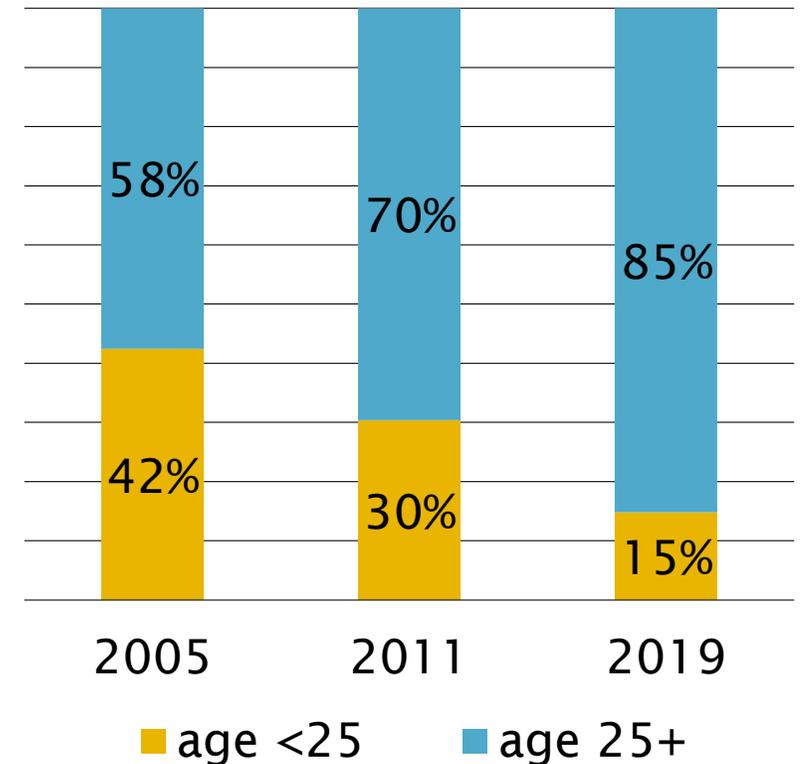
Source: Epidemiologiebericht Sucht 2020

Similar numbers but different age structure

2005 the proportion of DRD aged under 25 was **42 %**

2011 the proportion of DRD aged under 25 was **30 %**

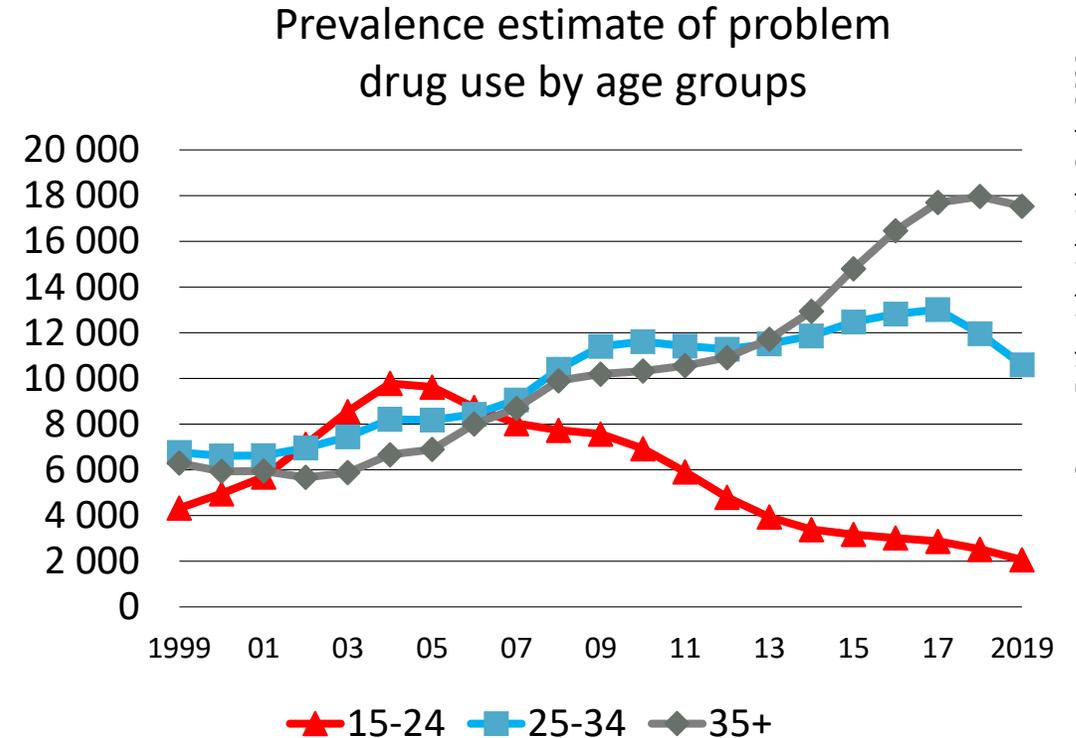
2019 the proportion of DRD aged under 25 was **15 %**



Source: Epidemiologiebericht Sucht 2020

Challenges of an aging population of drug users

- The good thing is: Drug users survive and get older!
- The good thing is: less young people start opioid use
- Different needs of „older“ drug users (do we know about them)?
- More than half are in opioid substitution treatment (OST) – ways to further improve in-treatment rate?
- Do we reach „older“ drug users with – especially with DRD-prevention?



What is being done to address the problem?



Measures to prevent drug related death implemented recently

- Peer-Naloxone projects in 3 of 9 provinces (including Vienna)
- Measures to improve in-treatment rate of opioid substitution treatment (OST)
 - Pilot project on OST with injectable morphine (planned)
 - Due to COVID-19 the control of prescription by the medical officers changed from personal to electronic way which makes OST easier to integrate into daily life – until now good experiences: no increase of misuse, new client groups reached

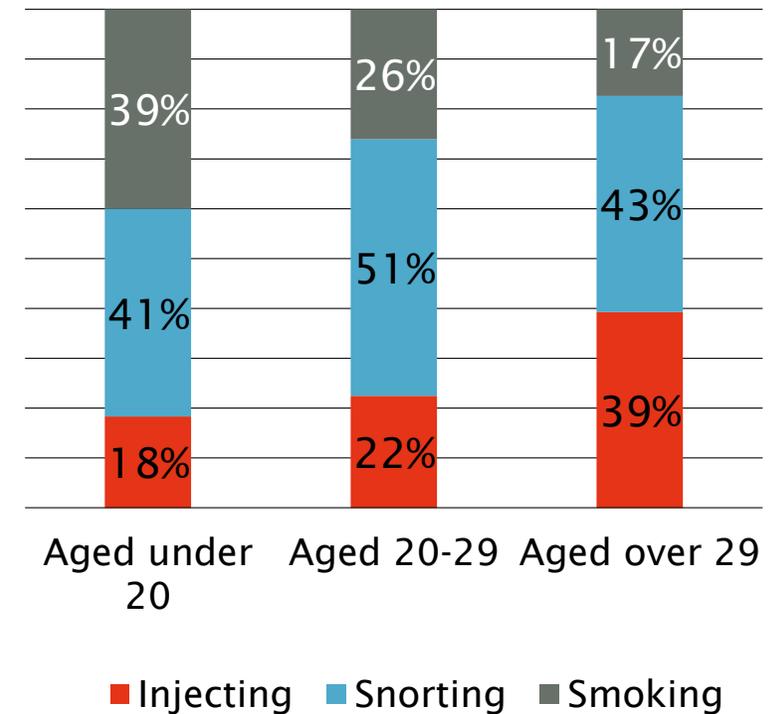
What are the most pressing challenges right now?
What are the implications for policy, practice? And
for research?



Challenges, implications and possibilities

- Extension of peer naloxone programmes to whole of Austria
- Improve in-treatment rate in OST
- Avoid change of route of administration to injection

Route of administration of heroin by age groups



Source: Bericht zur Drogensituation 2019