

Illegal Drug Trade in Russia

A Research Project Commissioned by
the United Nations Office for
Drug Control and Crime Prevention

Letizia Paoli



Freiburg i. Br. 2001

Contents

Preface	VII
Introduction	1
The MPI Research Project: Methodology, Research Partners and Fieldwork Sites	2
I. Illegal Drug Demand and Supply Before 1991	9
1. The Growth of Illegal Drug Use in the Last Two Decades of the Soviet Regime	10
2. Drug Availability and Supply in the USSR	13
II. The Demand for Illegal Drugs After 1991	17
1. The Meanings of Illegal Drug Use in the Post-Soviet Era	17
2. Nationwide Data... ..	20
3. ...and Local Trends	24
4. Drug-Related Harm and HIV	30
5. Illegal Drug Users and Prevalence Rates	32
III. Drugs and Local Markets	41
1. The Growth and Geographical Expansion of the Russian Drug Market	41
2. The Diversification of the Drug Supply in the 1990s	46
Cannabis	47
Raw Opium and Poppy Straw	49
Heroin	52
Ephedrine and Other Stimulants	58
Cocaine and Party Drugs	60
3. Open and Closed Marketplaces	64

IV. Drug Production and Trafficking After 1991	69
1. Domestic Cultivation and Production of Illegal Drugs	69
2. Source Countries and Drug Smuggling	74
3. Drug Transit	84
V. Traffickers and Dealers	91
1. Russian Law Enforcement Agencies' Analyses and Statistics	91
2. Drug Dealing and Trafficking in Judicial Sentences	94
3. The 'Invisible Hand' of the Market	101
4. The Drug Trade and Organised Crime	113
VI. The Russian Policy Against Illegal Drug Trafficking and Abuse	123
1. The Legal Framework of the Fight Against Drug Trafficking	123
2. Interagency and International Co-operation	128
3. Drug Users: The Main Target of Counter-Narcotic Operations	134
4. More Prevention, Treatment, and Harm-Reduction	139
Summary	142
References	147
Judicial Sentences	163
Note on Interview Codes	165
Appendix	167