

REPORTED ROUTE AND SOURCE OF PRIMARY DRUGS OF ABUSE BY PATIENTS ENTERING MEDICATION-ASSISTED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT IN EUROPE

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Introduction

- Personal characteristics and abuse behaviors reported by individuals entering medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for drug dependence provide insight about opioid addiction in a challenging population to study.
- We aim to describe respondent characteristics and primary drugs of abuse, including the routes of administration and source of drug acquisition, reported by patients enrolling in MAT programs in France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain, and the United Kingdom (UK).

Methods

- EUROPAD Program data from fourth quarter 2014 through third quarter 2015 were analyzed (N = 760).
- MAT patients (18-65 years) were surveyed to gather demographic information and primary drug of abuse, including route and source, in the 90 days prior to treatment intake. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data.

Results

- In all six countries, the most common source of primary drug acquisition was Dealer, ranging from 88.4% in the UK to 60.9% in Germany. The second most common source was Friend/Relative, ranging from 38.7% in Spain to 5.5% in the UK.
- The most common route of administration was smoked in Italy (48.8%), the UK (45.9%), France (42.7%), and Germany (25.7%). The most common route was injected in Norway (39.7%) and sniffed/snorted in Spain (33.87%).

Conclusions & Limitations

- Heroin was the most frequently endorsed primary drug of abuse, except in France where non-pharmaceutical THC/cannabis/marijuana was most endorsed.
- When focusing on prescription drugs, benzodiazepines were the most frequently endorsed drug of abuse in France, Germany and Spain, and tied with tramadol in Italy. In the UK, the most endorsed prescription drug abused was codeine, and buprenorphine was the most abused prescription drug in Norway.
- Far more men than women were enrolled in MAT; perhaps women may need targeted support to facilitate their accessing addiction treatment services.
- Smoked was the most reported route for abusing primary drug in two-thirds of countries represented.
- Dealer was the main source for acquiring primary drug followed by Friend/Relative in all countries, although UK respondents were less likely to obtain their primary drug from a Friend/Relative.
- Additional studies are recommended to further understand these results in context as well as the complexities of this patient population.

Table 1. Demographics

Variable		France N = 187 (%)	Germany N = 148 (%)	Italy N = 86 (%)	Norway N = 78 (%)	Spain N = 62 (%)	UK N = 199 (%)
Gender	Male	141(75.40)	114 (77.03)	63 (73.26)	57 (73.08)	40 (64.52)	147 (73.87)
	Female	46 (24.60)	33 (22.29)	23 (26.74)	21 (26.92)	22 (35.48)	50 (25.13)
	Missing	0 (0)	1 (0.68)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (1.01)
Age	Mean	35.88	38.95	31.37	35.35	43.21	36.8
	Median	35	40	27	34	41.5	36

Figure 1. Route Used to Administer Primary Drug

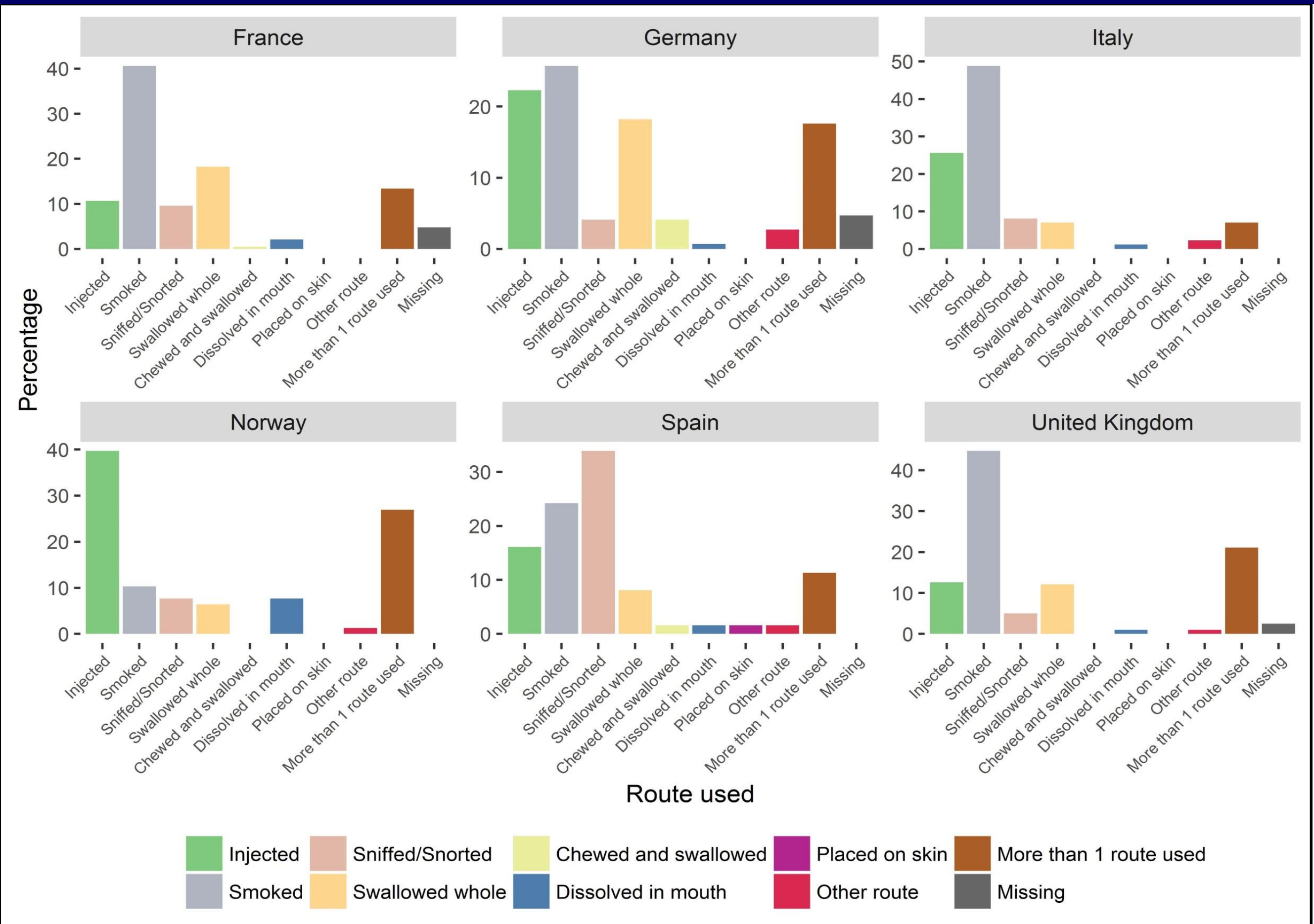


Table 2. Primary Drug Used “to Get High”

Primary drug of abuse	France N = 187 (%)	Germany N = 148 (%)	Italy N = 86 (%)	Norway N = 78 (%)	Spain N = 62 (%)	UK N = 199 (%)
Buprenorphine	13 (6.95)	0 (0)	0 (0)	14 (17.95)	0 (0)	8 (4.02)
Codeine	7 (3.74)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	17 (8.54)
Fentanyl	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1.28)	1 (1.61)	0 (0)
Methadone	2 (1.07)	4 (2.70)	1 (1.16)	1 (1.28)	0 (0)	3 (1.51)
Morphine	5 (2.67)	2 (1.35)	0 (0)	3 (3.85)	1 (1.61)	2 (1.01)
Oxycodone	1 (0.53)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Tramadol	2 (1.07)	0 (0)	3 (3.49)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (3.02)
Heroin	26 (13.90)	75 (50.68)	51 (59.30)	26 (33.33)	28 (45.16)	128 (64.32)
Amphetamine (pharmaceutical)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1.28)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Amphetamine (not pharmaceutical)	2 (1.07)	2 (1.35)	1 (1.16)	8 (10.26)	2 (3.23)	0 (0)
THC/Cannabinoid/Marijuana (pharmaceutical)**	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
THC/Cannabis/Marijuana (not pharmaceutical)**	39 (20.86)	0 (0)	8 (9.30)	0 (0)	4 (6.45)	1 (0.50)
Benzodiazepine	15 (8.02)	14 (9.46)	3 (3.49)	6 (7.69)	4 (6.45)	2 (1.01)
Other: write in	37 (19.79)	35 (23.65)	12 (13.95)	6 (7.69)	22 (35.48)	7 (3.52)
More than 1 primary drug	34 (18.18)	13 (8.78)	2 (2.33)	12 (15.38)	0 (0)	24 (12.06)
Missing	4 (2.14)	3 (2.03)	5 (5.81)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.50)

**THC/Cannabis/Marijuana (not pharmaceutical) was added to the survey in the latest version. Due to participants incorrectly endorsing “THC/Cannabinoid/Marijuana (pharmaceutical)” prior to this change, the table only presents endorsements for “THC/Cannabis/Marijuana (not pharmaceutical)” from the revised version of the survey

