

Mariya Prilutskaya [Ed.]

New Psychoactive Substances

Studies from Central Asia and China



Nomos

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Preface

I am pleased and honored to introduce this important new book that explores the spread of novel psychoactive substances (NPS) in Central Asia and China. While, the drug markets in these regions have historically been dominated by opioids and cannabis, in recent years, there has been a noticeable shift towards more potent synthetic analogues of these substances. Their strategic locations at the crossroads of major global trafficking routes, coupled with complex socio-economic conditions, make these regions particularly vulnerable to the proliferation of previously unknown and potent NPS. Such a rapidly changing drug landscape not only intensifies the health risks faced by their populations, but also presents new and urgent challenges for public health and law enforcement, underscoring the need for comprehensive, multi-faceted responses.

This book, written by leading experts, provide crucial insights into these developments. It emphasizes the urgent need for targeted strategies and policies to address the escalating threat posed by NPS in these regions. Whether you focus on specific chapters or read the entire book, you will encounter the most thorough and up-to-date research available on NPS in the context of Central Asia and China.

So far, over 1 087 NPS have been identified by the United Nations and European Commission Early Warning Systems between 2009 and 2021 in 133 countries and territories, including China, with an average of a new substance still been detected on the illicit market every week.

The complexity of the situation we experienced during the past decade is inextricably tied up with globalisation, the internet and rapid changes in technology and lifestyles across the planet. The solutions, therefore, cannot be proposed and implemented by a single nation, but will require the will, dedication, and investment of all the countries involved as they join forces to protect the health and security of citizens. To support this effort, we have recently established the International Society for the Study of Emerging Drugs (ISSED), aimed at fostering international collaboration and information-sharing on NPS.

I strongly believe, that through cooperation, collaboration, and a global perspective, we can overcome the harms of drugs in society and safeguard the health and welfare of humanity.

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