

Patterns of use and consequences of XTC and other club drugs in Rotterdam Results (so far) of a 2-year study

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Foreword

The Addiction Research Institute Rotterdam (IVO) conducted a 2-year study on the patterns of use and consequences of XTC and other club drugs in Rotterdam. We were approached by the ISA in San Francisco to participate in an international study on the subject (they conducted studies in San Francisco and Hong Kong), and with financial support of ZonMw the Dutch study commenced on January 1, 2004. This report is about the Rotterdam part of the study.

It must be mentioned that this report is not a fully complete study report. For example, an overview of the international literature on the subject is not included. This report describes the Rotterdam results. After all, the study so far was meant to provide Dutch material as part of an international study, and not to draw conclusions on the Dutch situation as such. However, we think the Dutch results as presented in this report "so far" give general indications for prevention and policy in the Netherlands. We hope to carry on studying the material in-depth for prevention and policy purposes in the future.

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- 3.2 What are the social, gender and ethnic characteristics of the users of club drugs?
- 3.3 What club drugs are currently used and in what combinations? What are the beliefs, expectations, motivations and perceived attractions for initial and subsequent use of various club drugs and their perceived risks and benefits? What are the physical, psychological, and social consequences experienced by those who use club drugs?
- 3.4 What are sources of information on club drugs? Are club drugs less harmful than other drugs, according to club drug users? What are experiences of overdose?

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Research questions

We have explored the following research questions for Rotterdam – they are the same as the research questions answered in San Francisco and Hong Kong:

- 1 – What are the social settings in which club drugs are taken?
 - 1.1 The types of different dance clubs and dance parties
 - 1.2 Rules and rituals associated with particular settings
 - 1.3 Reasons for attending particular settings
 - 1.4 Relationships between the settings and the drug use
 - 1.5 Is the use of club drugs associated with particular styles/types of music?

- 2 – What are the social, gender and ethnic characteristics of the users of club drugs?
 - 2.1 Characteristics of research group
 - 2.2 The nature of social networks
 - 2.3 History and experience of drug use / Do club drugs appeal to users who have had little experience of other drugs? / Overlap of different user groups with different types of dance clubs

- 3 – What club drugs are currently used and in what combinations (patterns of use)?
 - What are the beliefs, expectations, motivations and perceived attractions for initial and subsequent use of various club drugs and their perceived risks and benefits?
 - What are the physical, psychological, and social consequences experienced by those who use club drugs?
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 - What are sources of information on club drugs?
 - Are club drugs less harmful than other drugs, according to club drug users?
 - What are experiences of overdose?
 - 4.1 Sources of information on club drugs and their combinations / What knowledge do users have of club drugs?
 - 4.2 To what extent do the users of club drugs believe that in general club drugs are much less harmful than other types of drugs?
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1 Methods: explorative and descriptive approach

Since little information is readily available on the use of club drugs by young adults in Rotterdam, or on the social world of dance clubs or dance parties, an exploratory and descriptive approach which combines qualitative and quantitative methods is appropriate, just as it is in San Francisco and Hong Kong. By adopting such an exploratory and descriptive approach to this issue, we will attempt to remedy an existing and significant research gap by developing detailed information about the complex inter-relationships between the social worlds in which club drugs are used, and the way in which these social worlds help to shape the users' expectations and experiences; the social characteristics of those who use them; the types and combinations of club drugs used; the beliefs expectations and motivations for using these drugs; and their physical, psychological and social consequences. The use of a primarily qualitative methodology, including in-depth interviewing and observations, allows us to explore the social world of dance clubs and dance parties, the culture and meaning of club drugs, and examine the rapidly evolving world of youth cultures (Amit-Talia and Wulff, 1995), youth fashion and changing patterns of drug use. Moreover, the use of an open-ended relatively unstructured questionnaire will provide detailed, in-depth, and rich narrative information to examine the processes involved in taking club drugs, the combination of different types of drugs used and the choice of different drugs within particular social contexts. Finally, using pre-coded quantitative instruments to gather demographic information and in-depth drug use information will gather information that is useful in the comprehensive comparison of use patterns between the three sites.

As with the parent project in San Francisco, we utilized two specific strategies to collect data on the social context of club drug use in Rotterdam. First, to define the populations and explore the contexts of the use of club drugs, we began by mapping the settings in Rotterdam where club drug use occurs. This mapping mainly took place within the clubs/venues. Second, to explore fully the issues related to the use of club drugs among young adults, who attend dance clubs and dance parties, we used interview instruments which compile both individual and aggregate data. Ethnographic methods of participant observation and qualitative interview methods are employed to familiarize ourselves with the club drug scene, approach dance club attendees and develop rapport with them.

We have adopted the same overall research design, methods and analysis as the San Francisco study (see Scheme 1). We have adjusted the qualitative instruments and protocols in order to accommodate for the specifics of the social and cultural context of XTC and other club drug use in Rotterdam. Quantitative data including socio-demographics and particularly drug use data, have been collected using identical pre-coded instruments.

Scheme 1: Phases and research instruments

	<i>Research process</i>	<i>Instruments used in research</i>
Phase 1	Mapping the Rotterdam dance scene	Club and Event Descriptive Information Club Activities Observations, with Observational Protocol
Phase 2	Sampling frame, recruitment procedures and interviewing	Club Drug Use Screening Instrument Pre-Coded Descriptive Socio-Demographic Data Form In-Depth Semi-Structured Interview Drug Use Matrix
Phase 3	Analysis	Kwalitan: qualitative analyses SPSS: quantitative analyses

The activities in each of these three phases are described in the next paragraph.

1.1 Three phases

The research process took place in three phases, as stated earlier. In the first phase the Rotterdam dance scene is mapped, in the second phase we recruited and interviewed respondents, and in the third phase the collected data were analyzed.

1.1.1 Phase 1: mapping the Rotterdam dance scene

Mapping and defining the contexts and settings in which club drug use occurs in Rotterdam. Although some researchers (Malbon, 1999; Pini, 2001) have given the impression that terms as dance clubs, dance parties and raves are unproblematic, recent experiences in mapping the scene in San Francisco suggest that precise definitions of what constitutes a club or a dance party (as opposed to other possible meeting places) is much more problematic than has previously been noted. This means that both the physical and social geography of the dance scene in Rotterdam is documented.

In San Francisco, venues, clubs, raves (dance events) and private parties were distinguished. The Rotterdam situation, in which indeed this distinction can be made, is described in chapter 3 of this report in which we answer the research questions (question 1).

In order to explore the culture and social contexts of club drug use we have used the qualitative and ethnographic research methods including participant observation and key informant interviews used in the parent grant to describe the physical characteristics of the Rotterdam settings, the characteristics of the clientele, and the observable behavioral group norms in the public contexts. For this we used the observational protocol, which is modified and used in the Rotterdam project. In each of the settings described, we first outlined the following physical characteristics: the type of setting (e.g. dance club,

nightclub, bar, dance party); the size and physical appearance of the establishment or event; the type of music; the location; the hours of operation; the availability of alcohol, food and other drinks; the price of admission; advertising; and staff and security. Next, we identified and described the characteristics of the patrons, including the ranges of age, ethnicities, gender, attire and appearance, and maybe social class and sexual preferences. Finally, a description of the observable behavioral norms included activities and demeanor within the context of the club or event, including interactions, socializing, gender roles, dancing, alcohol consumption, intoxication and drug use.

The Rotterdam dance scene is described in chapter 2 of this report.

1.1.2 Phase 2: sampling frame, recruitment procedures and interviewing

Sampling Frame

We studied illicit drug use among young adults who attend dance clubs and dance parties. The precise extent to which young adults use club drugs is difficult to estimate. The task of conducting research with populations of young illicit drug users is challenging. An investigation of the club drug scene in Rotterdam – a vitally important seaport for the entry and departure of illicit drugs in the Netherlands and an increasingly important mecca for dance clubs/parties – will gather important data toward a greater understanding of the contexts of this drug use, the characteristics of this group of drug users, and the trends and prevalence of the use of club drugs. We acknowledge that the sampling frame (Rotterdam and direct surroundings) may not be representative of club drug users nationwide in the Netherlands. However, there are no specific reasons why the club drug use behavior of the "Rotterdam" respondents should be different from other Dutch club drug users. Therefore, we deem our study results to be applicable to users of club drugs in the Netherlands.

Due to the nature of the study and the hidden population that it is meant to investigate, standard probability sampling methods are ineffective in accessing study participants. Investigators, who have worked with hard-to-reach populations, such as drug users, AIDS patients, and criminals, are keenly aware of the complications of gaining access to and establishing rapport with such target populations. On the other hand, non-probability sampling methods, including location sampling (Watters and Biernacki, 1989) and chain referral sampling (Erickson, 1979), have been critiqued for a number of sampling biases, including choice of initial subjects, volunteerism, masking, differential recruitment, homophily and network linkages. Such biases may limit representativeness of the sample and render data invalid for statistical inference.

Fortunately, recent work in respondent-driven sampling (Heckathorn, 1997; Heckathorn, 2002) statistically shows how these biases may be reduced or eliminated in chain referral non-probability sampling by allowing recruitment to continue until sampling equilibrium is achieved. In addition, this type of sampling allows for tracing affiliation patterns, and provides information about the social structures in which participants are involved.

In order to be eligible for the Rotterdam study, participants will be 16 years and older and residents of Rotterdam and its surrounding areas (Albrandswaard, Spijkenisse, Oud-Beijerland, Barendrecht, Ridderkerk, Krimpen a/d IJssel, Capelle a/d IJssel, Nieuwerkerk a/d IJssel, Zevenhuizen-Moerkapelle, Bleiswijk, Bergschenhoek, Berkel en Rodenrijs, Schiedam en Vlaardingen).

We have chosen the age group of 16+ (mainly 16-25) based on our on-going research and past work which shows that XTC and other club drug use predominate in this age range. In his work on XTC, Van de Wijngaart and his colleagues (1998) found that 40 percent of attendees to large scale parties were between 18 and 21 and an additional one fifth of them were between 16 and 18. Moreover, they found that the average age of attendees at clubs and dance parties was 21. However, preliminary Rotterdam research suggests that there may well be a growing number of users in the over 25 age group, who are attracted to this entertainment scene. For example, a qualitative panel study of key informants conducted in Rotterdam in 2001 noted that a significant number of club and dance attendees were 30+ and whose preferred drugs were alcohol and cocaine (GGD Rotterdam e.o., 2001).

In our study, we have interviewed 57 respondents aged 16-25 years old (29 being 16-20 and 38 being 21-25) and 17 respondents aged 26-40 years old.

For inclusion in the study, we used the following criteria of use. Respondents must have used XTC and/or cocaine (the most used club drugs in the Netherlands) at least once in the previous six months. The sample consists of 49 males and 35 females, and of new and experienced users of a particular club drug (e.g. 11 respondents used XTC 1-11 times; 29 used cocaine 1-11 times; and 34 used speed 1-11 times).

We discovered that non-users are a significant sub-group within the dance scene (as did the San Francisco study) from 1) participant observation in clubs, 2) from possible respondents who contacted us in reacting to flyers/ads, but who we could not interview because of their non-use, and 3) information from respondents having non-using friends. Because of the lack of time, we did not interview non-users.

Recruitment procedures

Participants for the interviews were sampled from the various club settings as well as other social arenas associated with the scene that we identified from the mapping process. Key informants did not play an important role in our recruitment. While doing fieldwork we spoke with bartenders, waiting staff, bouncers, management, organizers, dance club owners, and club attendees. These conversations gave information that made us understand better what we saw doing the fieldwork, which had a positive influence on the in-depth interviews later on. Also we spoke to key informants from treatment and prevention agencies. However, they often wanted to learn from our research and were curious for the results, more than that they could give us valuable information.

We recruited 23 respondents in clubs (see Table 1). We had entrance to 7 clubs/venues (mapped in Phase 1) to approach people attending that club/venue. These clubs/venues were thought to be important to recruit interviewees, because of the following characteristics:

- Hollywood: big venue/club with many activities, young audience (16+)
- Now & Wow: big trendy venue/club with many activities, mixed audience (21+)
- Las Palmas (voted best Dutch club in 2004): trendy venue/club with mixed audience (18+) (we went here twice to recruit respondents)
- Off_Corso: mainstream venue/club with many activities, mixed audience (18+) (we went here twice to recruit respondents)
- Princess-theatre: we recruited here at one of the many after-parties of the Rotterdam Fast Forward Dance Parade which is a yearly national outdoor club with about 20 trucks with different DJ's and types of music going through the city. Audience: mainly white, somewhat older (25+)
- Beach at river Maas: in the summer many activities (including many parties) are organized at this venue where you can relax near the water (all ages)
- Locus010: alternative party, mixed audience (18+)

For more information on these clubs/venues, we refer to chapter 2 of this report. The first four clubs/venues are also described in appendix V ("Venue / club information").

Once we were allowed to approach possible respondents in a club/venue, we followed this procedure:

- We always went with 2 recruiters, preferably interviewers in the project
- We approached people between 11 p.m. and 1-1.30 a.m. After that time the music got too loud and people were "partying"
- We looked for a more quiet spot, usually around the restrooms, and approached everybody leaving the restroom or walking by that other quiet spot. We asked them if they had a minute, told very shortly about the research and whether they themselves sometimes use XTC and/or cocaine. If yes, we tried to put down their name and phone number, and agreed that we would contact them in the next week to make interview arrangements. We then gave them a flyer with our names and the IVO phone number, as a reminder.

We spoke to very many people going out at these clubs/venues. Several recruitment evenings rendered relatively many possible respondents, others did not. Furthermore, on a Friday or Saturday night people were enthusiastic, however, in the next week when we spoke to them on the phone, many did not want to co-operate. Lack of time, and lack of interest were the main reasons they refused to participate.

Furthermore, and very important, we placed flyers everywhere for months and months. Flyers were placed at many places connected to dance or going out (e.g. cafés, clubs/venues, ticket stores, record stores, hair dressers, clothing stores), and at places that a variety of people frequent (e.g. libraries, university). Also, we placed advertisements with about the same text as the flyer on websites and in a few times in local papers and magazines. The websites we first placed ads on were dance and youth sites. However, this approach rendered too little, and cost a lot of time to refresh every day or week. Later, we were allowed to put an advertisement on the website of "Going out and drugs" (from the Trimbos Institute) and on the website of the Rotterdam Municipal Health Authority. The websites rendered only a few interviewees. For a full list, see appendix Recruitment. In the end we interviewed 32 respondents who contacted us with reference to the flyer or an ad. In addition, the advertisement was spread in the network of the project team twice. This rendered only 3 respondents (see Table 1).

Last, but not least, we employed the assistance of both male and female study participants to refer the staff to fellow club drug users. This method is called snowball or chain referral sampling (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981). We asked almost every respondent whether he/she could bring another interviewee, and gave 2 flyers with our office telephone number and e-mail address. Not all respondents were asked this; sometimes the project team thought that a particular network was covered enough, and that particular (last) interviewee was not asked to bring others. For example: respondents from the squat scene who attend illegal parties, and interviewees living in the same (student)house. This snowball recruitment was successful: 21 interviewees were recruited.

Table 1: Recruitment (n=84)

	<i>Recruitment</i>
32	flyer or advertisement (not in club)
23	recruited at club during fieldwork
21	snowball
04	other
03	through project team
01	missing, unknown

Four respondents were recruited in another way (a friend saw the advertisement on the Internet; through a friend (no interviewee); through someone who did not qualify as respondent; came along with other respondent). For one respondent the way of recruitment is unknown (not registered right).

We were approached by many possible interviewees who saw our flyer or advertisements (e.g. at places where we put flyers, or from friends who were interviewed by us), who we asked a few questions to determine their suitability (see next paragraph Interviewing and appendix Club drug use screening instrument). Our registration counts 75 e-mail and telephone contacts with candidates that did not meet the criteria, and therefore could not be interviewed. Furthermore, with 43 candidates that met the criteria we made an appointment for an interview, however, they did not show at the set date and time. With the majority of them we made a second appointment, at which they also did not show.

Interviewing

The respondents were interviewed using the interview instruments. These data collection instruments were adapted from those in the San Francisco study. Language and terminology were modified to fit the social and cultural context of Rotterdam. Instruments were translated into Dutch and results were translated back into English. The following instruments were used in Rotterdam:

- a) Club drug use screening instrument
- b) Pre-coded descriptive socio-demographic data form
- c) In-depth semi-structured interview
- d) Drug use matrix

Ad a) Club drug use screening instrument

The screening instrument was administered to most potential respondents. This instrument is used by the interviewer to determine whether the candidate meets the criteria for participation. All potential respondents were asked whether they have consumed XTC and/or cocaine in the past six months. If the respondent met the criteria of inclusion an interview appointment was arranged. In appendix Club drug use screening instrument, this instrument is translated into English.

Ad b) Pre-coded descriptive socio-demographic data form

Interviewers administered the pre-coded descriptive socio-demographic data form, the first in the series of interview instruments to the interviewees, on an individual face-to-face basis. This form gathers demographic information on factors as: age, gender, place of birth, religious background, education level, work and income, current relationship situation and family structure and relationships. In appendix Socio-demographic data form is described which questions from the San Francisco questionnaire are adjusted to the Dutch/Rotterdam situation, and why.

All answers were put in the statistical package SPSS. The questions and answers were tape recorded.

Ad c) In-depth semi-structured interview

While the in-depth semi-structured interview is meant to prompt open-ended responses in a conversational style, the interview guide ensured that general areas of inquiry are consistent between interviews. The instrument is structured to gather in-depth information on both the use of club drugs

and drug use settings and contexts. Topics covered include:

- *XTC and other club drugs*
 - Initiation into drugs;
 - Continuation of use;
 - Drug use, disinhibition and risky behavior;
 - Health consequences of use;
 - Social and psychological consequences;
 - Obtaining or buying drugs.
- *Dance clubs and dance parties*
 - First experience at a dance club/dance party;
 - Current & continuing experiences at dance clubs and dance parties;
 - Dance clubs vs. dance parties.

All questions and answers were transcribed for analysis in the qualitative analysis program Kwalitan.

Ad d) Drug use matrix

We used a modified version of the latest NIDA National Household Survey on Drug Abuse Questionnaire (Office of Applied Studies, 1996) and the Monitoring the Future survey (Johnston, O'Malley and Bachman, 1994), which is specifically focused on the use of the six club drugs to ascertain patterns of drug use among users. These six drugs are: XTC (ecstasy), speed (methamphetamine), LSD, GHB, ketamine, Rohypnol¹. This pre-coded instrument gathers information on ages of first use, frequencies of use, and amounts of use, for each of the six club drugs. It also asks about other drugs used, methods of administration, and dosage.

The Drug use matrix is put in SPSS, but not transcribed for analysis in Kwalitan. However, exceptions were made when the interviewee did more than just answer the questions, e.g. gave examples or told about specific experiences.

The interviews with users of club drugs were conducted by four interviewers/researchers. Before the interview started, each respondent was informed of confidentiality. The interviews took approximately two to three hours. Each respondent was paid 20 Euro for the interview. The interviews were entirely tape recorded, and for the major part transcribed.

¹ These six drugs are identified as club drugs in the San Francisco study. In the Netherlands, XTC and cocaine are the most popular club drugs; all respondents had to have used at least one of these two drugs in the past six months. In the results of our Rotterdam study, we consider four drugs to be club drugs namely: XTC, cocaine, speed and cannabis.

1.1.3 Phase 3: analysis

The analysis plan is centered on developing a comprehensive and practical analytic framework for understanding the social world of club drug use in Rotterdam, and the extent and nature of individual use. (The framework will also allow us to compare drug use and the social contexts of drug use in three distinct and contrasting geographic areas - Rotterdam, San Francisco and Hong Kong.) Since several types of data have been collected for this study, our major analysis tasks is to integrate the quantitative and qualitative data sets (moving from one to the other and back), and to specifically focus on the research questions.

Analyses of Qualitative Data

A major portion of the analysis concerns qualitative data which includes both observational fieldwork to map the social contexts of club drug use settings, and in-depth interviews to gather information on individual drug use and the consequences of use within the social contexts.

Fieldwork observations are used to understand the range of settings and events where club drug use occurs (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995; Sanjek, 1990). Observations are transcribed and coding categories are developed for specific information such as the type of event, the numbers and general description of attendees, and types of interactions and behaviors.

The in-depth semi-structured interview is the primary tool for obtaining in-depth narrative information on individuals' club drug use including patterns, effects and consequences of use, history of use, and the social settings. In order to develop thematic domains, the text data were read and 10 to 15 categories were developed which encompass various domains of interest, such as respondents' drug use, initiation into drug use, experiences in social settings such as nightclubs and bars, the effects of use, changes in use patterns over time, activities associated with use and so on. The principal staff developed the categories for the Rotterdam sample. Once these categories were identified and indexed in Kwalitan, the text segments, which refer to a particular domain, were culled from the interviews and attached to the indexed categories. After having coded and re-read about 10 interviews, more fine-grained codes were developed (for instance, the effects of use might be further broken down into physiological, social, and emotional effects) and linked to the larger domains. In this way, the approximately 30 pages of text per participant are broken down into manageable portions and themes common (or not common) to all texts identified. After the fine-grained codes have been developed and text indexed, data are sorted by code and associations sought between the theme or domain and other variables of interest, such as educational background, gender, family characteristics and age group.

Analysis of numerate data

Two instruments are designed to collect information that can be entered into the statistical analysis program SPSS in order to combine individual data into aggregate data as well as categorically divide the data into subgroups and compare differences between respondents.

The descriptive socio-demographic data form is a pre-coded survey instrument of demographic variables which allows us to describe our population by age, education, gender, employment, social class, ethnicity, and other demographic variables at the first level of analysis. This instrument will be our principle tool for understanding subgroups of users.

The club drug use matrix is similarly pre-coded and is designed to gather information on frequencies and amounts of club drug use for each individual drug. Descriptive statistics will be run to establish patterns and trends and to create typologies of drug users and drug use (such as heavy users, binge users, social users) at the first level of analysis.

Combining qualitative and quantitative analysis

The drug use typologies developed from the quantitative data were appended to the text analysis database at the next level of analysis in order to perform additional manipulation of the data, using both text and numerate data. Similarly, event typologies from observational mapping were combined with individual and demographic data to determine if there are specific characteristics and drug use behaviors associated with certain settings. In this way we are able to assess club drug use by user subgroups, drug using types, and drug use settings within and between the parent sample and the Rotterdam and Hong Kong samples. If, for example, we wanted to examine the variations of specific drug use within a particular type of setting, we would begin by plotting the drug use of respondents into a drug using typology from data gathered from the pre-coded data form and drug use matrix. This typology could consist of groupings of several variables including age, education, gender, single drug users or polydrug users, and light users, binge users or heavy users (based on frequencies and amounts of use). Having established a type for each respondent we would then cross-tabulate this quantitative data with the text data that has been coded for particular settings. Some possible settings might include small dance clubs, large raves, and private parties. By merging the two types of data, we will be able to ascertain whether there are distinctive characteristics associated with specific groups and types of users.

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2 The Rotterdam dance scene

First, we will introduce some methodological aspects of mapping the dance scene. A part of this mapping included mapping websites and retail stores. After that, we will give an outline of the physical and social geography of the Rotterdam dance scene.

2.1 Methodological aspects

Website mapping and mapping retail stores

Directly at the start of the project we began by mapping relevant websites. This involved an in-depth search of websites based on some of the general arenas: clubs, raves, music, retail, associations/organizations, and media. Because of the broad range of information available on the Internet, we have focused on websites that are based on the Rotterdam area.

We have identified a variety of retail shops (music stores/ticketing outlets, clothing stores/costumers, paraphernalia/head shops) that are associated with the club/rave scene in Rotterdam. We have visited most outlets and collected flyers, magazines, and other related archival material. These stores were mostly listed in an SPSS file.

Mapping the nightclub scene

At the beginning of the mapping of the Rotterdam nightclub scene, we have gathered and organized all possible sources. These sources include venue websites, local daily and weekly newspapers, nightlife magazines, email lists and flyers that were found at record stores and other retail outlets or picked up at venues and dance events. The geographic target for venues and clubs was limited to Rotterdam. If clubs or organizations were national organizations, a local affiliation was included. All flyers and advertisements for upcoming events in Rotterdam were collected for a period of time. In order to organize the data collected on venues and clubs, we created a club matrix in SPSS. This provided a system for us to arrange the data in a way that was simple to examine and to generate some basic quantitative findings concerning venue and club categories. Matrix headings included venue name, venue neighborhood/district, clubs, address, venue website and a short description of the venue. We started collecting information about hours, age restriction, music played, clubs/promoter, primary ethnicity, if primarily gay/lesbian, club/promoter website, and dates of operation for each club. This information collection was not fully completed because the information was not always available/noted (and it took too much time). We entered these specifics on the matrix every couple of days especially in the period of January-May 2004. New information was entered if available. The matrix was mainly aimed at organizational purposes as it allowed us to count frequencies of the venues and clubs. Due to the constant flow of venues closing, new venues opening and new clubs organizing parties, our

numbers are not completely accurate. Instead it gives us a good idea of what the scene looks like during the time-span we were reviewing it.

Sources of information

We decided to start reviewing venues according to neighborhood, and knowing them from personal experience. We checked different kinds of lists from the Internet and filled out the information on each venue and club in the matrix. We gathered detailed data from general websites such as www.linktoparty.nl, www.love2party.nl (Rotterdam and surrounding area), www.partyscene.nl (Amsterdam and surrounding area) and the specific club and venue websites. By becoming a member we were kept up to date by these clubs with information on the parties. Once we completed the information about a club or venue we would move on to the next one. This method of searching through the websites was repeated until it seemed that we had gone through all of the venues that offered club nights on a regular basis.

Guestlist/ Glamcult flyer magazine also proved to be a helpful source of information on club events. It is a mini-sized, monthly magazine dedicated to dance club nightlife, music and entertainment in De Randstad (Rotterdam, Amsterdam, The Hague). The magazine includes advertisements for each big party with special listings about new parties and monthly events. There are also music and festival reviews, fashion articles and interviews with DJ's and other musicians.

Event flyers provided details on new clubs, promoters, and venues. We gathered flyers from a variety of places including record stores, smart shops, clubs, club/rave clothing and paraphernalia shops. Flyers were at times the source of information on venues and clubs. Most flyers have website addresses or email contacts with more details on the clubs and the party itself on it. This provided a possibility to review online sources again. We repeated this cycle many times to get the most recent and accurate information.

Venues and clubs

There are between 100-125 venues in Rotterdam. Most venues have a clubbing floor (or just 'dance' floor) and more ambient rooms for smoking or just plain relaxing. The bigger clubs have resident (inter) national DJ's. Most of these bigger venues host one or more clubs. Venues, like Las Palmas, Waterfront, Nighttown or Now & Wow host dozens of clubs. Now & Wow for example provides a stage for small and unknown clubs and organizers by 'giving' them a Thursday or Friday evening. They keep the Saturday to organize an evening of their own. In contrast, a big venue like Hollywood Music Hall organizes only HMH evenings, there are no clubs involved.

It is difficult to count the clubs exactly. Sometimes it is not clear what the definition of 'club' is. If a party is organized only once by an enthusiastic group of people, do we call this a club? Clubs vary strongly from character; from small groups to professional commercial organizers of big events,

everything is possible. At first we reviewed all club nights, also single organized club nights but we decided to stop this because it could never be complete. Besides this, flyers or websites are not always clear with information about the name of a club or whether it is organized by the venue itself (without externals) or not. Therefore it is not clear who is responsible for the party. Especially with multicultural parties it is often not mentioned on the flyers and not clear who the organizers are. Another difficult aspect of reviewing is the fact that often multiple organizers are involved in the organization, or the evening is 'hosted'.

Earlier experiences in mapping the scene in San Francisco suggested that precise definitions of what constitutes a club or a dance party (as opposed to other possible meeting places) is much more problematic than has previously been noted. We confirm this fact. The difficulty is that 'club' or 'dance club' is often mixed up with what we consider as 'venue' (the building). For example: people say they go to (dance) club Now & Wow but this evening is organized in the venue Now & Wow by a group of people (club) called Extrema. We consider a *venue* more or less as the building where an evening, (dance) party or dance event takes place. A *club* can further mean the group of people that organizes the evening, or the name of the venue. In general, venue and club are used to express the same thing: an evening out. One respondent can say he goes to the 'venue', and another says she goes to the 'club', but they meet each other at that evening because they both go to the same venue/club.

Besides the confusion between venue and (dance) club there is also some overlap between a dance club, a dance party or event and a festival. Some words about this: *dance parties* are often bigger and are mostly organized *by clubs in venues* (but sometimes outside). *Dance events* are also organized by clubs or event organizations, but they are also bigger and sometimes last for more than one day. Usually you will have to buy tickets in advance. Festivals are sometimes nothing more than a dance event but often broader orientated. More disciplines like live music, theatre, dance etc. come together at a festival.

Our respondents call everything they do around going out: *party*. When a respondent says he goes to a party, that can mean that he will go a) to a club night in a dance club/venue, or b) to a dance party (evening organized by party organizers in a club/venue), or c) to a dance event (periodically organized party at a special location). Also he can say he attended a dance party, and it appears to be a club night or a dance event. Et cetera. Early in the interviewing period, we decided to stop making a strict division between clubs, venues and events etc. and let the respondent decide what he calls what, and to just go with that definition.

2.2 Physical geography of the dance scene

In the coming paragraphs we will introduce the city of Rotterdam, its art and culture and the most familiar venues and clubs. We will give a physical geography of the nightlife of Rotterdam and say something about the Rotterdam dance scene. In appendix IV you will find maps to support the physical geography and in appendix V 7 clubs/venues are described in more detail (also with parts of field reports).

2.2.1 Rotterdam city

Rotterdam is located on the Maas River. Its population is about 600,000, which makes it one of the largest cities in the Netherlands. It is a vital part of the economy of the Netherlands, with one of the world's largest ports. The port provides a solid base for industry in and around Rotterdam. Building and development have become a way of life for Rotterdam. The city has continued to grow, ever since the rebuilding of the city after the Second World War. During the past few decades the city has adjusted and reinvented continually. More than a hundred cultures from all over the world have amalgamated here.

Art and culture

When it comes to art: Rotterdam is on the map. The local municipality supports art and cultural events, which attracts young designers, architects and artists. Many beginning artists come to Rotterdam nowadays to try out their talent and luck. You can discover museums and galleries all over Rotterdam. The area around the Witte de Withstraat is especially known for its concentration of galleries and museums. Also the Westelijk Handelsterrein and the historic Delfshaven have a lot to offer when it comes to art. In neighborhoods like 'Oude Noorden', 'Oude Westen' and 'op Zuid' you can find some smaller galleries and the more unknown artists with their studios.

Festivals in Rotterdam

During the summer (from May until August) there is something happening in the city every weekend: Rotterdam Beach on the Leuvehoofd, Dunya Festival, Parade, Summer Carnaval, Day of Romantic Music etcetera. Most of these are part of the free summer festivals². Theatrical performances take place at the weekends at various spots in the city center and some large-scale events on Loyd Kwartier and Schouwburgplein, the square in front of the city's theatre. During the 9th edition (August 2005) of the Heineken Fast Forward Dance Parade, about 40 trucks with sound systems and

² www.zomerfestivals.nl

(inter)national acclaimed DJ's, have found their way through the center of Rotterdam. This parade, which yearly attracts more than 350,000 spectators, traditionally ends with a big after party at Katendrecht (South) and several (pre and after) parties were organized elsewhere in the city (Rotterdam beach, Parkzicht, Princess Theatre and Off_Corso).

2.2.2 Rotterdam nightlife

Rotterdam does not have one single center; the nightlife is spread around a few centers. Quite recently the center has moved across the water near the South. De "Kop van Zuid" at the south bank has become a part of the original center (at the north bank). In the last couple of years more new areas have been developed. There has been an explosive growth in the number of (night) cafés, restaurants, clubs and discotheques over the last twenty years. Various areas in Rotterdam offer cafés, restaurants and venues such as the city center, the Westelijk Handelsterrein, the historic Delfshaven and the Old Harbour. Rotterdam has a vibrant nightlife, centered around locations including the Witte de Withstraat, the Nieuwe Binnenweg and the Stadhuisplein. From hardcore techno venues and clubs to early hour chill-out cafés, there is a wide range of possibilities for night time entertainment in Rotterdam.

In the following five parts of the city are described. Maps of these areas are included in appendix IV "Maps Rotterdam nightlife". Seven clubs/venues are described in more detail in appendix V, and these are: Hollywood, Now & Wow, Las Palmas, Off_Corso, Nighttown, Waterfront and Tropicana.

Center

The West-Kruiskade, also known as China Town, is the place to go if you want multicultural bars and music from around the world. Especially the venue Nighttown is a well-known and popular multicultural venue. In front of Nighttown you find The White Elephant, a place with lots of world music played by students from the conservatorium. Further down the Kruiskade offers a lot of (Surinamese) cafés. De Westersingel/Mauritssingel, Nieuwe Binnenweg and Witte de Withstraat have many late-night cafés and (small) clubs/venues. For example 'Calypso', that used to be a cinema and Hyperhyper, organized by a club called 'Verse Geesten' (in English: Fresh Spirits). The 'Bootleg' is a small late-nightclub with electronic music popular among the after-party people. Across from the Bootleg is club/venue Vibes, a common club with visitors from the cafés around the corner of the Nieuwe Binnenweg, for example from Rotown, a small café/restaurant/club/podium where concerts are organized often. A few years ago Witte de Withstraat contained only the same type of 'shoarma' diners/places (like kebab-places). At this moment this street is trendy with mostly small cafés, restaurants, galleries and trendy shops. Behind this street, at de Schiedamsesingel, you find Gay Palace, a venue especially for the gay and lesbian population, but of course you find the hetero population here too. Some call the area around Westersingel, Nieuwe Binnenweg, and Witte de With 'the cultural quarter' or the 'alternative' area,

while you can find dozens of record stores, galleries, hip clothing stores and small food shops here. A bit further down to river Maas (direction south) is Westelijk Handelsterrein, another rather new area where you find trendy restaurants, galleries and a few clubs situated in renovated warehouses. Land van Waas for example is known by the 30+ people and hosts a few clubs/DJ's that play 'broken beatz' and 'future jazz'. In the Loft you can eat while listening to groovy lounge music, while after dinner the music gets more volume and transforms to clubbing house.

Stadhuisplein, situated in the center of the regular shopping area, has a number of small discotheques and bars. This same audience visits venues like Hollywood and BED nearby. At Stadhuisplein itself you find more common music bars and venues (top 40 = like billboard top 100) like the Skihut and the Coconut Bar. Around the corner (also West-Kruiskade) is the popular venue Off_Corso in a building that used to be a theatre. At this moment the club/venue offers many different styles, from hip-hop to salsalounge, dance and urban, popular to a lot of people. Visitors to the theatres and cinemas at Schouwburgplein usually favor the cafés around this square to have a drink. Nearby you find some bars with a fascination for The United States with names like 'the American Dream Café' and 'Breakaway'. You can eat steaks here and sit on a mechanical bull.

At the Coolsingel, a famous street in Rotterdam is Bularia, the relative new club that advertises a lot with salsa parties. At the West-Blaak, next to the skatepark, you find Blacklite, a club with mostly black audience (Cape Verde, Surinam etc.). The relatively large venue Hollywood, that received the Nightlife Award 2005, is the club especially for the very young (21-) pleasure seeker. Because of the convenient location near the Central Station, the club attracts a lot of audience from outside Rotterdam. Around the corner (in the direction of Hofplein) you find some more clubs for the urban public, like l'Ambiance. Near the shopping center 'De Koopgoot' (official name 'Beurs traverse') you find Locus 010 which used to be a squat – and still looks like it – but has a legal status now and organizes lots of trendy evenings. Close here is Club Revolution, especially popular among the after-party people. This club is opened until around 11 o'clock in the morning.

Center/West

More to the west, near de Euromast and the big park beside it, you find the Lloyd quarter, former property of Van Gent en Loos, a rather new multimedia area with bars around the multimedia theme. Once a year a very big cinema screen provides free movies every evening for three weeks. In the Euromast park itself you find the venue Parkzicht, famous because this place is seen as the cradle of Gabber Music.

Near the historic Delfshaven, the only real old harbor of Rotterdam in the west, the Princess Theatre is located. It provides, besides programming theatre, space to small dance parties, also on Sunday afternoons (Club Metz).

Center/East

Oude Haven, next to the cube houses is a harbor with old ships, cheap restaurants and cafés. This area is popular among students. Plan C for example is a real student-club. High schools organize their parties here, but Plan C programs also bands popular to students. The area around Oostplein – and Oostzeedijk Beneden – is also particularly popular among students, with lots of bars and restaurants.

In the summer 'Strand aan de Maas', an artificial beach, is created next to the river Maas and nearby the Erasmus Bridge. Salsa parties alternate house parties. A bit further down north at the Maas Boulevard you can find places like Jackies, a restaurant-club, and Waterfront, a pop podium with many studios for musicians. To get in here you have to walk down to the waterside. Even further down is dance club Tropicana with next to it a swimming paradise with the same name. Tropicana is known for the more extravagant parties with names like 'Hookers and Pimps', 'Crazy land' and 'Pussy Lounge'. Also some hardcore evenings and cultural related parties are held here.

Center/North

In the north you find like in other neighborhoods of Rotterdam some cafés, some more common, others trendy and 'young'. At Zomerhofstraat are some big party locations like Atlantic Palace that programs parties with Dancehall and Bubbling. Theater BEP is located in the middle of the Rotte, a small river in Rotterdam. This theatre organizes activities around theatre, music and other creative disciplines.

Center/South

The Kop van Zuid (South) is seen as the 'new' center of Rotterdam, with for example a new big theatre looking out over the river Maas. This area has an international 'feeling' with the cruise boats that frequently moor. Here you find the famous Hotel New York and big venues like Las Palmas (recently closed; June 2005), the Cruise Terminal and Club Rotterdam (at the building of café Rotterdam). At the other side you find the 'Poortgebouw', an anti squat commune that organizes 'alternative' parties and small concerts in their unique building. Behind this is an area with some closed restaurants. Further down south you find the big venue Now & Wow that is located in an old grain silo. Nearby this venue is the Afrikaanderwijk, an area that is planned to become a new multicultural arena with bars and restaurants.

2.3 Rotterdam and dance

Rotterdam is the cradle of house and dance music, a fact that is clear from the high quantity and quality of dance parties and clubs. Before Rotterdam was known as the cradle of Gabber and therefore a 'Gabber city', now it is more (general) known as a techno city. The Heineken Fast Forward Dance parade (FFWD), a big house parade shows yearly the main clubs, organizations DJ's and record labels in the dance industry.

Famous locations for parties include club Now & Wow, and the trendy in-crowd of dance effortlessly gravitates to clubs like Las Palmas, Off_Corso and Calypso. After these 'regular' venues and clubs close people can visit places like the Bootleg and Club Revolution, both situated in the center for a after party. Once in a while clubs like Thalia lounge organize special after-parties, usually after special events or big parties.

Dance Parties and dance events are held in big venues like Ahoy (Carl Cox), Binnenmaas (Decibel Outdoor by Back2School), the cruise terminal of (the former) Holland America Line and Tropicana (Keifland, Lunapark). There are some 'special' locations for parties like the Laurens Church (Must & Flirtation), warehouses in the harbor (Reactor Events) and the Van Nelle Ontwerpfabriek (recently: Maison Royale).

Information on the dance scene

To find your way around the party scene, people use the party flyers in cafés, record stores and clothes shops for example at the Nieuwe Binnenweg, specialized in club wear. For more information of different venues see the overview. For information on parties and clubs take a look at the following websites.

Websites clubs

<http://www.B2s.nl>

<http://www.beatsandbites.nl>

<http://www.close2heaven.nl>

<http://www.discotheque.nu>

<http://www.Jazzsole.nl>

<http://www.lunapark.nl>

<http://www.reactor-events.com>

<http://www.sangam.nl>

<http://www.soundarchitecture.nl>

<http://www.versegeesten.nl>

<http://www.b-sweet.nl>

<http://www.chemistry.nl>

<http://www.dirtysneakers.nl>

<http://www.extrema.nl>

<http://www.keifland.nl>

<http://www.must.cc>

<http://www.sahmeran.nl>

<http://www.santai-party.com>

<http://www.beatsandbites.nl>

<http://www.wormweb.nl>

<http://www.somethinelse.nl>
<http://www.sparklingtunes.nl>
<http://www.chivas.nl>

<http://www.dacircleofsole.nl>
<http://www.sillysymphonies.nl>

Outside Rotterdam

<http://www.id-t.com> (national)
<http://www.udc.nl> (national)

Magazines/forum/outlines

<http://www.beatfreax.nl>
<http://www.djbroadcast.nl>
<http://www.feestagenda.com>
<http://www.groovetrackers.com>
<http://www.partytoys.nl>
<http://www.presale.nl>
<http://www.rotfeest.tk/> (overview)
<http://www.tedmtc.nl>
<http://www.partystartz.com>
<http://www.onlydance.nl>
<http://www.urbanscene.nl>
<http://www.party.snl.utwente.nl>
<http://www.q-dance.nl>

<http://www.dancelinx.com>
<http://www.dnbforum.nl>
<http://www.fok.nl>
<http://www.guestlist.nu>
<http://www.phono.nl>
<http://www.housem.nl>
<http://www.tecknolusion.com>
<http://www.partyscene.nl>
<http://www.spgnet.org>
<http://www.wick-it.com>
<http://www.fiestainfo.nl>
<http://www.partyhall.com>
<http://www.good2b.com>

Music/DJ's

<http://www.aceagency.com>
<http://www.armadamusic.nl>
<http://www.prspct.nl>

<http://www.amplified.nl>
<http://www.breakthru.info/>

3 Research questions answered

Before answering the research questions, three concepts must be further defined: club drugs, use of club drugs and combination of drugs.

Club drugs

In the San Francisco study six club drugs were identified: ecstasy (we write "XTC"), methamphetamine (we call it "speed"), LSD, GHB, ketamine and Rohypnol. In our Dutch study we identified four club drugs: XTC, cocaine, speed and cannabis. These four drugs are used by many respondents when they go out. LSD, GHB, ketamine and Rohypnol are less or not popular in our sample.

Use of club drugs

Club drugs are used in the nightlife or while going out, but also outside of that (e.g. at home with respondents' partner or with friends in a park). These different settings should be kept in mind when interpreting the numeric results.

Combination

Different drugs can be used in the same timeframe; this is called: combination of different drugs. However, this period of time varies. For example, the fact that many respondents used XTC and cannabis in the same period of time (e.g. last month) does not necessary mean that they used both drugs at one occasion (e.g. at the same night).

In the qualitative analysis, we refer to combinations of drugs when different drugs are used in one "session", mostly "clubbing sessions" or "dance event sessions". Usually, this is one day, or sometimes one weekend.

Furthermore, we included a *selection* of segments from the 84 interviews in appendix VI. The segments in this appendix belong to this chapter. The segments are included as an *illustration* of the material we collected.

3.1 What are the social settings in which club drugs are taken?

- 3.1.1 Types of different dance clubs and dance parties
- 3.1.2 Rules and rituals associated with particular settings
- 3.1.3 Reasons for attending particular settings
- 3.1.4 Relationships between the settings and the drug use
- 3.1.5 Is the use of club drugs associated with particular styles/types of music?

3.1.1 Types of different dance clubs and dance parties

Like in any other big city there are many types of different venues, clubs, dance events and festivals in Rotterdam. For every taste you can find something. Some say you really have to search for the nightlife in Rotterdam. The right places are not always easy to find. Generally, we can distinguish different venues and dance clubs by their characteristics, geographically, by the visitors (subcultures) or the music style. For a geographically outline of the Rotterdam venues see chapter 2 of this report on the Rotterdam dance scene.

Some venues or clubs are especially orientated at one subculture (students, hard rock etc.), or music styles like R&B, drum & bass, trance, techno, tekno, hardstyle, electro, no-beats etc. Others are a melting pot of all these subcultures or music styles together. For example: a venue like Off_Corso tries to reach various subcultures on different evenings. Plan C reaches mostly students and offers evenings only and especially for them.

If we look at the different house variants like club, ambient or hardcore we find many clubs in Rotterdam that are orientated on one of these variants. Some popular clubs have recently closed, like Las Palmas, but other (big) clubs and venues just opened or are being developed, like the big venue 'Outland', in Alexanderpolder [part of Rotterdam] orientated at hardstyle. Many venues have weekly, monthly or periodically organized evenings with one style of (house) music with their own resident DJ's.

Dance parties are organized in 'normal' venues like Now & Wow or at settings that are bigger (Ahoy), more extravagant (HAL), extraordinary (Laurens church) or revolutionary (Van Nelle Ontwerfabriek). It all depends on the vision of the organizers. Do they wish for a real 'underground' (illegal) small tekno party or a huge mainstream dance event?

The multicultural arena in Rotterdam provides many cultural related club nights. For every ethnic group like the Turkish, Moroccan, Antillean, Cape Verdean, Surinamese and more in general Asia there are special club nights or parties. A part of these are meant especially for people with the same cultural background and are being organized by clubs like Sahmeran or Sangam that have the same cultural background. For example: at a Turkish Sahmeran evening at Tropicana the audience is Turkish, there are Turkish DJ's are invited, etc. Venues like Nighttown also organize cultural related evenings but these evenings can be seen as more 'open', the cultural setting can be seen more as a theme. Here you will find for example many Dutch people also.

A great part of the existing subcultures within the youth culture of Rotterdam is represented in this research. Besides respondents that are interested in any of the house variants we interviewed persons from the pop/rock scene, underground, R&B and hip-hop scene, squatters, kite surfers, skaters, students, gays, Skihut/ Baja scene, SM/Kinky party scene etc. Many respondents form themselves a mix of interests in different styles and types of music they are interested in. They visit festivals, dance events and many different venues and clubs.

Particular settings

In Rotterdam we can distinguish venues/clubs (dance parties), café's, dance events, festivals, private parties/private settings and outside (beach, forest, public hangout) as particular settings where club drugs are taken. A big dance party or dance event is by the respondents seen as more special; it's more exclusive and more expensive. A club night is 'normal' to them. There often is a different kind of ritual before a special evening or weekend takes place. People often look forward to it days or weeks before the event takes place. They spent time on it by downloading new music etc. to prepare themselves for the event.

3.1.2 Rules and rituals associated with particular settings

Our respondents deliberately choose the settings in which they like to take drugs and in which settings they do not, so when it is done or not-done. For example: at one week they go to an R&B party and drink only alcohol or smoke a joint, the next week they go to a techno party and use XTC. In general, they do not take drugs: being with their family, with certain friends (from the old days, or friends who do not like drugs), at work or when going out with colleagues, in 'worlds' where people refuse drugs.

Most people take drugs before or while going out: at venues/clubs, cafés, dance events or festivals. Many youth in Rotterdam attend clubs and dance events in groups and start and finish their (clubbing) experience in a person's home. Drinking alcohol is often part of the ritual. This meeting and drinking in

a private setting (in Dutch often called 'indrinken') is part of the ritual but it has also a functional reason: it is cheaper. They buy wine or liquors and drink together before going to a club or party, where the drinks are often quite expensive. Sometimes there are also already drugs on the table (before going out). The after-parties take place in special clubs like Bootleg DJ Café or Club Revolution, or also in a private setting.

Some take drugs (especially cocaine) already (also) before they go to the club, party or event, but most prefer to take their drugs (XTC) just before or after their arrival at the club or party.

Respondents say they like the effect of the XTC when it 'hits in', when you notice the first effect (in Dutch called 'inslaan') when they are on the location of the party. Some want to check out the atmosphere first and decide whether they will take something or not. Some respondents mention that they are afraid to get caught before they get in the club and therefore take it just before they get in the club.

We can distinguish two different types of users. Type-1 users are people that have thought about using on specific occasions and take one pill (=total) for the whole evening. They usually take drugs once in a while, very deliberately. Probably most of the starters are of this type. Type-2 users are experienced users, and most use (or have used) heavily for a period of time. They seem to use every drug that comes by on a specific occasion and also mix different kinds of drugs.

People can go from being a Type-1 user to a Type-2 user, and later on, return to Type-1 again.

Most respondents like to experiment with others. Almost all use club drugs with (close) friends. But also many respondents have an experience with taking drugs (included alcohol) alone/ by themselves. Alcohol and cannabis seems quite 'normal' to use by yourself. Also quite some respondents have used XTC, cocaine or LSD by themselves. Sometimes this was only to experiment one time, others seem to do this more often: to finish the leftovers, to be able to work longer, for creative expressions, self-reflection or listening/making music. Others just enjoy taking drugs alone before they go out, or just like to take something by themselves when they are in the companionship of others; they use their (extra) drugs in a way that others do not notice it.

3.1.3 Reasons for attending particular settings

Clubs and events

Quite some respondents say the drug use on dance events and festivals is higher and more 'normal' than at a Saturday evening club nights in a venue. Usually the event lasts more days so people 'need' it more to get some extra energy. But there are also people that find events too big to use relaxed (too crowded, busy, chaotic). Events are seen as massive, anonymous and some people like this for their use, others do not. But drugs are generally (even) more accepted on events and festivals than in the 'normal' nightlife.

It seems like on special cultural evenings (Turkish or Moroccan) there is less use of drugs than at 'normal' club nights. At these evenings there is usually more family and more close contacts, and therefore it is not very likely that people use (many) drugs. They are afraid of getting a bad name and fear this out of respect for their family.

At home/private setting

When people take drugs at home it is often to experiment for the first time, or to feel relaxed and safe, for example with the use of cocaine they find it more comfortable. Sometimes it is used for a more intense musical experience; sometimes it is an extra stimulant to create music at home.

Outside

There are a few examples of XTC use outside at hangouts. Usually those who do not have enough money to go out choose for this form of use. They mention tekno music from the radio in their cars or portables. Also drug use outside in nature is mentioned: this is done to have a more intense experience with nature, or it is just more 'relaxed'. Here music plays a less significant role.

3.1.4 Relationships setting and drug use

Table 3.1 shows which drugs are used in which settings. Alcohol is used in all settings. XTC is a popular drug in clubs/at parties and at festivals, as is speed. Cocaine is a popular drug to use at home/in a private setting and in bars. GHB, LSD and mushrooms are not popular drugs while going out.

Table 3.1: Settings and drugs

	<i>Private setting</i>	<i>Club/party</i>	<i>Café</i>	<i>Festival</i>	<i>After-party</i>	<i>Outside</i>
Alcohol	++	++	++	++	+	+
XTC	+	++		++	+	+
Cocaine	++	+	++	+	+	
Speed		++		++		
Cannabis	++	+	(+)	++	++	+
GHB		+		+		
LSD, mushrooms	++					++

++ Many respondents use this drug use it in this setting.

+ Some respondents use this drug use it in this setting.

(+) In most cafés it's forbidden to smoke cannabis, but where it is allowed, respondents use it. In the following, drugs and the settings in which they are used are further elaborated upon.

Alcohol

– Alcohol is used at every setting: at home, in a club, outside etc. In relation to going out, it is often used in combination with XTC, cocaine, speed and/or cannabis.

XTC

– Most respondents prefer to use XTC at an event or a big club or party. With trance, techno, tekno, electro or drum 'n bass music. "At all those electronic evenings."

– Quite some respondents like to stay anonymous when they use XTC, because often people recognize the symptoms. Therefore, they do not use XTC in (small) clubs that are also frequented by their colleagues or others that need not know about respondent's drug use.

– XTC is sometimes used in a private setting or outside, at public hangouts.

– Not much XTC use at urban, reggae, funk, hip-hop, R&B parties (that more black people attend).

– Not at parties where it is important 'to see and be seen'.

– Pure MDMA (crystals) is used in the tekno scene.

– In the nightlife: 1) when there is already a good vibe, to dance or to party; 2) when the party seems dull or not interesting, XTC can make it the evening more fun and interesting.

Cocaine

– Is used at cafés, clubs, at home, almost 'everywhere'. The reason for this is because you stay 'normal', after you have used it. Others cannot see that you have used:

– One group of respondents prefer to use cocaine while going out. Another group prefers to use cocaine in a private setting: with friends on special occasions (New Year's eve etc.). Cocaine use is then going together with drinking alcohol, playing games and having conversations.

– Cocaine is getting more popular in the 'mainstream scene'.

– In the nightlife (bars, clubs) respondents use it to feel sober again and that little boost of energy. Self-confidence, self-assuredness. The restrooms are the most popular place to take cocaine. However,

cocaine use is often mentioned as not very 'practical'. You have to go to the restroom or a place where nobody can see you. Many people like to use it together with a friend. A few more experienced users mention the use of a 'shooter' (e.g. respondent 079).

- Cocaine is used everywhere, also at home. Not 'really' a party drug (like XTC): "you do not go loose".
- For the ones who can afford it; many find it expensive. Some would like to use cocaine more often, but they cannot afford it.

Speed

- Speed is used in the tekno and hardstyle scene (also known as the gabber scene).
- Many use speed because they cannot afford cocaine.
- Mostly used while going out: more energy, sometimes outside on hangouts. Speed is not always used on purpose (they thought it was XTC or cocaine).
- Many respondents using XTC also use speed (unwillingly), because speed often is an ingredient in XTC pills. However, many use or have used speed deliberately together with XTC, to smoothen the effects of XTC and be able to go on longer on the XTC.

Cannabis

- At home: as a habit, to get to sleep, to get calm (as a downer at the end of the evening) when they took (too much) XTC, cocaine, speed or different combinations of drugs.
- Cannabis is used at urban, reggae, hip-hop, funk en R&B parties.
- Regarding going out, cannabis is mostly used in combination with other drugs. Many respondents use cannabis to get calmer after (too much) drug use en to get to sleep after an evening with drugs. Besides this, respondents use cannabis unrelated to going out.

Other drugs: GHB, mushrooms, LSD

- GHB is often used while going out. Some respondents have used GHB but did not know this at the time (so the use was accidentally).
- Mushrooms and LSD are mostly used outside (park, woods) or at home with a group of people. In a quiet, peaceful environment.

3.1.5 Associations music – drug use

Our data confirm the relationship between recreational drug use and (dance) music. It looks like every group of people or scene has its own drug use and rituals concerning drug use. But overall: many respondents mention drugs – especially XTC – in relation to music/dance. They use it in the Rotterdam nightlife and at dance events and festivals where music plays a major role. Music is experienced as

more intense and respondents mention that they get more energy and are (more) able to dance and dance longer. These effects of XTC, and sometimes also speed, are mentioned as extra motivations for taking the drugs. Some say that on hardstyle club nights they cannot make it through the night without XTC or speed. Their physical condition needs this extra boost.

It depends on the party/club whether respondents take a club drug or not. Drugs like XTC and speed (separate but also combined) are associated with electronic up-tempo music (all kinds of house music), whereas the combination of cannabis and alcohol is associated with urban, reggae, R&B and hip-hop music. The urban scene is more black-oriented, while the electronic scene is more white. This separation is of course not as sharp as presented here. Cocaine is said to be used "everywhere", in the "white scene" maybe a bit more open than in the "black scene". Because in general cocaine use can be hidden (physically: no big eyes etc.), it is said to be used in the "black scene" as well.

There are a few examples of respondents who say when they hear music or a nice song, the XTC pill 'hits in' right at that moment. Besides this, respondents mention that they feel like taking XTC when they hear electronic music. One person mentions he does not like house music but when he takes a pill he can handle it, and even likes it.

3.2 What are the social, gender and ethnic characteristics of the users of club drugs?

- 3.2.1 Characteristics of research group
- 3.2.2 The nature of social networks
- 3.2.3 History and experience of drug use / Do club drugs appeal to users who have had little experience of other drugs? / Overlap of different user groups with different types of dance clubs

3.2.1 Characteristics of research group

We succeeded in sampling a diverse group of respondents: males and females, 20– and 20+ as well as 25+, Dutch and foreign cultural backgrounds, students as well as working people, singles and people with a partner, et cetera. We believe the sample is divided well. The group of 84 respondents has the following characteristics:

- 49 males (mean age 23,2 years) and 35 females (mean age 21,9 years).
- Age range: 16 – 40 years; average 22,7 years; 75% is 18-24 years old.
- 66 have only a Dutch cultural background (self-reported), 14 have the Dutch and another cultural background (e.g. Turkish, Surinamese, Cape Verdean, Indonesian), and 4 have only a non-Dutch cultural background (Surinamese, Turkish, Cape Verdean and Moluccan).
- Allochthonous (respondent and/or at least one of his parents are born in a non-western country): 21 (one or both parents born in African countries, Antilles, Surinam) and 63 are autochthonous (60 both parents born in the Netherlands, 3 have one parent born in a European country).
- 40 respondents had some kind of religious upbringing (most protestant or catholic); at the time of the interview 55 respondents are not at all religious and 24 not much or a bit religious.
- Current activities: 42 are students (of which 31 also have a paid job), 34 are employed, and 8 are unemployed, unable to work or 'other'.
- 74 respondents are heterosexual and 10 are homo/bi-sexual.
- 43 respondents are single (of which 2 are divorced), 30 have a partner (but are not married or live together) and 11 are living together with their partner – none are married.
- 28 respondents live at their parents' house or with family, 43 live in a room/ apartment/ house (not with family; alone, student house, with partner), and 7 live in a squat or stay with friends.
- 12 respondents have no siblings, 55 have one or two, and 17 have three or more siblings (self-reported siblings, so sometimes including half and step siblings).

3.2.2 The nature of social networks

When asked which people or relatives are important to the respondents, many say that their parents, siblings and friends are important. Those with a partner also mention him or her. Some mention other relatives (e.g. cousins and grandparents), roommates and/or co-workers.

Unsurprisingly, the respondents go out mostly with friends; that can be with one friend or a group of friends. These friends are not necessarily always the same friends; one weekend a respondent can go clubbing with friend A and the next weekend with friend B and the next weekend with a group of friends.

3.2.3 History and experience of drug use / Do club drugs appeal to users who have had little experience of other drugs? / Overlap of different user groups with different types of dance clubs

Most respondents use alcohol as their first "drug", followed by cannabis, followed by XTC, followed by cocaine and speed. Trip drugs like LSD and mushrooms are used on special occasions; these are drugs "on the side, for the extra". (This is no evidence for the stepping stone theory; to be included in our study respondents had to have used XTC and/or cocaine. There are many users of e.g. alcohol or cannabis that never took XTC or cocaine or any other drug, however, these alcohol or cannabis users could not be interviewed because of the study aim.)

Club drugs are/were appealing to almost all respondents, because the selection criteria was that they had used XTC and/or cocaine at least once in the last 6 months. If we look at XTC and cocaine, we see that no-one has *no* experience of other drugs: 80 used cannabis at least once, all drank alcohol. Furthermore, many used speed, poppers, cannabis, mushrooms etc. Therefore, we conclude that club drugs are appealing to almost all respondents: 78 used XTC, 62 used cocaine, 56 used speed at least once (and apparently, many used more than one drug). In the segments of the individual drugs, we see that many respondents are within a group of friends that also use drugs. Nevertheless, they all have (some/many) friends that do not use drugs. Apparently these friends do not experiment with drugs, or have not continued their drug use. Also, respondents have friends who use less than they do (amount of drugs) or less often (frequency of drug use).

3.3 What club drugs are currently used and in what combinations (patterns of use)? What are the beliefs, expectations, motivations and perceived attractions for initial and subsequent use of various club drugs and their perceived risks and benefits? And what are the physical, psychological, and social consequences experienced by those who use club drugs?

- 3.3.1 Ever and current substance use of club drugs and other drugs
- 3.3.2 Individual drug experience / Benefits and risks / Reasons for taking individual club drugs
 - 3.3.2.1 XTC
 - 3.3.2.2 Cocaine
 - 3.3.2.3 Speed
 - 3.3.2.4 Cannabis
- 3.3.3 Do combinations of club drugs suggest new ways of mixing and matching?
- 3.3.4 Reasons for initial use / Availability of individual club drugs / Sources of supply
- 3.3.5 Quality/purity of club drugs

3.3.1 Ever and current substance use of club drugs and other drugs

The results show that alcohol is currently used by 66-78 respondents (self-reported current use) (Table 3.2). Eighty respondents ever used cannabis and 60 are current users. With respect to XTC, 78 used it at least once and 61 respondents regard themselves as current users. Cocaine is ever used by 62 and currently used by 43 respondents.

Table 3.2: Substance use (never, ever and current use) (n=84) *

<i>Substance</i>	<i>Ever used</i> <i>84=100%</i>		<i>Current use</i> <i>abs. ever=100%</i>		
	%	abs.	%	abs.	
Liquor	99	83	94	78	
Wine	92	77	87	67	
Beer	95	80	83	66	+
XTC, MDMA	93	78	78	61	
Cannabis, hash	95	80	73	58	
Tobacco	87	73	75	55	
Cocaine	74	62	69	43	**
Poppers	51	43	79	34	
Speed, methamphetamine	67	56	36	20	
Mushrooms	63	53	34	18	
LSD	17	14	43	06	
Ephedrine	45	38	13	05	***
GHB	25	21	19	04	
N2O	36	30	10	03	
Amphetamine, "uppers"	11	09	22	02	
Ketamine	10	08	25	02	
MDA, MDE, MBDB	05	04	50	02	**
Crack, basecoke	08	07	--	--	
Heroin	01	01	--	--	
2CB, Nexus	01	01	--	--	
DXM	02	02	--	--	
All other substances	--	--	--	--	

* This table gives no information on the frequency or amounts used.

+ More males than females are current users of beer: 94% vs. 66% (Fishers Exact = 0.002). For all other substances no differences in number of current users between males and females are found.

** n=1 is missing in the number of current users.

*** Ephedrine became illegal in April 2004. Before then, it was sold in so-called smart shops.

Alcohol

All 84 respondents consider themselves current users of liquor and/or beer and/or wine (51 are current users of the three types of alcohol). Regarding drink pattern, Table 3.3 shows that binge drinking and heavy drinking are most occurring (26 and 23 respondents). For 21 respondents a second drink pattern is attributed: mostly this is a distinction between drinking at home and drinking while going out.

Table 3.3: Drink pattern* (n=84)

<i>Drink pattern 1</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Drink pattern 2</i>
Social drinking = special occasions	01	
Light drinking = now and then 1 or 2 glasses, min. once a month	07	
Moderate drinking = regularly 1 or 2 glasses, min. once a week	18	+ 8x binge, 1x heavy
Binge drinking = 5+ glasses per occasion on 1-4 occasions in a month	26	+ 6x heavy, 1x daily light/mod, 1x daily heavy
Heavy drinking = 5+ glasses per occasion on 5 or more occasions in a month	23	+ 1x daily light/mod, 1x daily heavy
Daily light/moderate drinking = 1 or 2 glasses every day	03	
Daily heavy drinking = 3 or more glasses every day	06	+ 1x binge, 1x heavy

* These drink patterns do not exclude each other; we asked this question accordingly to the original San Francisco questionnaire.

The mean age at which the respondents drank their first alcohol is almost 14 years. For wine and liquor the mean age of first use lies at around 15½ years old. Remarkable is that 68 of 83 respondents (82%) drank liquor on 1-10 days in the past month; we see here that liquor is usually limited to weekends and going out. For beer and wine, this percentage is 45% respectively 57%. No respondent drank liquor on more than 20 days in the past month, while 11% of beer drinkers and 8% of wine drinkers did this. Another result from the interviews is that drinking on a night out can take place in two different "phases". The first phase is drinking at home or at a friends' home, earlier on the evening. The function of this drinking is that respondents do not want to go out all sober; they want to get "in the mood". Furthermore, self-bought alcohol is cheaper than the alcohol they buy in clubs or bars. In Dutch this is called "indrinken". The second phase is drinking in the club. Of course when respondents go out, they have one or more drinks at the place(s) they go to. (And of course, they also drink non-alcoholic drinks.)

Other drugs used while going out

Poppers (amyl nitrite or butyl nitrite) are also used while going out (34 current users/ 43 ever users).

Despite the headache that nearly every user mentions, many users use it once in a while. It is a drug that is used in combination with other drugs. No respondent uses only poppers.

N₂O, also known as laughing gas, is ever used by 30 and currently used by 3 respondents.

GHB is used at least once by 21 respondents; 4 of them are current users. It appears that many used it once or twice, but do not like the taste (salty) and the effects. Users can easily take too much, and then they feel down/drowsy. Because the combination of GHB and alcohol is not recommended (both 'downers'), many prefer alcohol. GHB is used in combination with XTC while going out, but is also used after clubbing as a downer, to be sure to fall asleep.

Drugs not used while going out

Mushrooms are usually not used while going out. Respondents prefer settings more quiet, such as their living room at home or the woods. Mushrooms are used at least once by 53 respondents and 18 regard themselves current users. In general, LSD is also not regarded as a club drug. Because of the hallucinogenic effects and long duration of the effects, it is predominantly used at home. Fourteen respondents used LSD ever and 6 of them are current users.

Other drugs

In our sample, ketamine is not a drug that many respondents used or still use. Most of those who did use ketamine used it just once or a couple of times. The popularity of ketamine is diminishing in the Netherlands

XTC, cocaine, speed, cannabis

These 4 drugs we consider club drugs. We will elaborate on the use of these club drugs later.

Combination of club drugs (current use of XTC, speed, cocaine and/or cannabis)

With respect to (self-reported) current users, the results show that 6 respondents regard themselves as current user of none of the four drugs*; 17 current users of one drug (mostly XTC or cannabis); 29 of two drugs (mostly cannabis combined with cocaine or XTC); 22 of three drugs (cannabis, cocaine and XTC is the most frequent combination); and 10 of four drugs (all use cannabis, cocaine and XTC combined with speed). Note that combination of drugs does not necessarily mean that respondents used two or more drugs on the same occasion. Here it is about "regarding yourself as a current user of more than one drugs".

* These 6 respondents used in the past 6 months, but stopped using and consider themselves non-users.

In Table 3.4 we see that the majority of respondents see themselves as light or social drug users. We attributed a second drug pattern to 34 respondents: their drug use cannot be captured in one pattern. The majority has a drug pattern for XTC, cocaine and/or speed on the one hand and cannabis on the other (e.g. daily use of cannabis and social use of cocaine). These "double patterns" can also be extracted from Table 2.7 in the row "use in the past 30 days", where we see that the (nearly) daily use of cannabis is occurring and the use of the other club drugs are used in 1-10 days in the past month.

Table 3.4: Drug pattern* (n=84)

<i>Drug pattern 1</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Drug pattern 2</i>
Non user	05	+ 2x social
Social use = special occasions	22	+ 2x light, 1x heavy, 1x daily
Light use = now and then, monthly	32	+ 9x moderate, 1x binge, 3x daily
Moderate use = light but regularly, weekly	13	+ 3x binge, 2x daily
Binge use = heavy use on occasions, e.g. weekends	05	+ 1x heavy, 2x daily
Heavy use = regular heavy use	01	
Daily use = every day	06	+ 1x social, 1x light, 1x moderate, 3x binge

* These drug use patterns do not exclude each other; we asked this question accordingly to the original San Francisco questionnaire.

3.3.2 Individual drug use / Benefits and risks of individual club drugs / Reasons for taking individual club drugs

XTC, cocaine, speed and cannabis are the four drugs that we consider club drugs. In The Netherlands, cannabis (marihuana, hash) is legally sold in so-called coffeeshops. The trade in the other drugs is illegal.

Table 3.5 shows that respondents use cannabis for the first time when are on average about 15 years old. Almost one-fifth of cannabis users used it every day in the past month. The mean age at which respondents used XTC for the first time is about 17,5 years. Cocaine and speed were used for the first time at about the same mean age, namely almost 19 years. For XTC and cocaine we see that the majority of users used it on 1-10 days in the past month (XTC: n=49, 63% and cocaine: n=34, 55%).

The majority of speed users did not use speed in the past month (n=38, 68%). When we look at the use in the past 12 months, we see that these three substances are used by the majority of users on 1-25 days (XTC: n=64, 82%; cocaine: n=48, 77%; speed: n=31, 55%).

Table 3.5: Use of cannabis, XTC, speed and cocaine
(ever, age first use, frequency of use in % of N ever used; % are rounded off) *

	<i>Cannabis</i>	<i>XTC</i>	<i>Cocaine</i>	<i>Speed</i>
Ever used = 100%	n=80	n=78	n=62	n=56
Mean age first use	15,4	17,7	19,0	18,7
# days in last 7 days				
- 0 days	40	77	77	82
- 1-3 days	29	23	21	18
- 4-6 days	12	--	02	--
- 7 days	19	--	--	--
# days in last 30 days				
- 0 days	25	36	44	68
- 1-10 days	39	63	55	29
- 11-20 days	18	01	02	04
- 21-30 days	19	--	--	--
# days in past 12 months				
- 0 days	10	05	06	38
- 1-25 days	31	82	77	55
- 26-50 days	11	10	05	--
- 51-100 days	10	03	10	05
- 101-200 days	10	--	--	02
- 201-300+ days	26	--	--	--
# days ever				
- 1-25 days	13	28	56	64
- 26-100 days	18	44	26	21
- 101-300 days	11	13	11	07
- 300+ days	56	14	05	07

* This table gives no information on the amounts used.

In the next sections (3.3.1.1 to 3.3.1.4), we go into the use of XTC, cocaine, speed and cannabis. We discuss each of the four club drugs, including ways of obtaining, reasons for use (attractions), and perceived benefits and risks.

3.3.2.1 XTC

Use of XTC

- XTC is easy to obtain, easy to use and cheap (from 1,50 to 5 euro per pill). Everybody takes it. Everybody knows people who have it or who sell it. The main expectation that initial users had was that they wanted to be like those under the influence of XTC. They see and hear people dancing, talking etc. (positive expectancy). Also they know from what others are saying that it is bad for you, because it is drugs (negative).
- Initial XTC use is either planned or not. Respondents see how others go totally loose on XTC and that is attractive. Initial use is sometimes at home, in a safe environment, to see how the respondent reacts to the substance. Once he/she knows, XTC can be used in clubs, at parties etc.
- Subsequent XTC use is more planned. Sometimes for a period of time it is used very often, e.g. every weekend, or on two weekend nights in a row for many weekends. Then going out is equal to using XTC. After some time, the majority of then experienced XTC users use it less frequently and more deliberately, e.g. once every month, or at specific events.
- Settings: in general, in clubs/venues, at events, at festivals. Not in clubs/venues that your co-workers also frequent. Some respondents like to use it now and then at home in the companionship of their partner and/or friends.
- On a clubbing night, respondents take a pill right before they leave home to go clubbing or right before they go into the club/venue. They do not wish to wait for the effects for too long; they want to go dancing etc. as soon as they are in the club. Others take a pill when they are inside. They wish to feel the atmosphere before they use XTC. When the atmosphere is not good, or not good enough, they will not use XTC.
- In the actual use of XTC, many respondents first take half a pill, to see what quality it is, then take the other half. It also happens that respondents "build the evening": taking a total of 1,5 or 2 pills, but use it in 3 or 4 halves every other hour.
- The majority of respondents hold the view that they are quite responsible in their XTC use. They say things like: "I never take 20 pills or something..." or "I only use it when I get it from a friend" (without knowing where he/she got it) or "I am the one that uses the least in our group of friends".
- Only some respondents have clear boundaries/limits (they are afraid to loose control): 1 pill and if that pill does not give the desired effects, too bad. No alcohol. Sitting down regularly. Tell friends what and how many you use. Many others (they do not mind losing control): take another pill, drink alcohol, do what you want.
- Only a few respondents have the XTC pills that they bought tested at the addiction care service point. Before, test services were available at large events; nowadays these services are prohibited. Testing pills takes now much more effort (going there, having it tested, get the results after a few days).
- Respondents do not talk about their XTC use with family members, especially their parents. They do

not want their parents to know that they use XTC/drugs. But also, parents have little knowledge on effects and symptoms of XTC/drug use. The discussion is being avoided.

– XTC is also sometimes used in an after-party setting at home, for those who do not want the "going out session" to end. Sometimes the party continues until the next day's afternoon.

Benefits of / reasons for taking XTC

– XTC is used in the form of a pill, which contains many other components, or pure MDMA crystals (both swallowing).

– The desired and almost guaranteed effect of XTC is feeling "waus", which is the positive state of being that people get from XTC: active, energetic, crazy, feeling on top of the world, sociable, affectionate, dancing, being absorbed by the music, partying. All these positive feelings together is called "waus". When respondents are too waus, they lose the ability to speak properly, they are then in their own world.

– Another aspect is that users can go on for much longer (dancing etc.). Good sex. More open conversations especially amongst partners.

– To many respondents XTC was even more fun than they expected it to be.

– Respondents use XTC to know for sure that they have a good evening out. E.g. after a period of hard work, or when respondents has bought an expensive ticket to a dance event.

– XTC is used in companionship with friends, never alone. Friends also take care of each other when something is wrong (too waus, throwing up, feeling weak/miserable).

Risks of XTC

– "It never gets as good as the first time you used."

– "You look awful" and "like a zombie": wide pupils, chattering teeth. Furthermore: paranoia, heart palpitations.

– Sometimes the XTC is of poor quality (bad XTC). The pills then contain too much speed. As a result users have too much energy and less of the desired waus feeling.

– All respondents have troubles the next day(s): wretched, tired, dehydrated, exhausted, emotionally weak. The Blue Tuesday nearly always is there when XTC is used on Saturday night (feeling down and depressed).

– XTC is often used in combination with alcohol. First they drink alcohol (at home or in club), then take a pill. Sometimes the XTC use is not planned, and the alcohol makes the threshold to use XTC much lower.

– XTC is used in combination with cannabis. First there is XTC and then cannabis is used later on to smoothen and enhance the effects of XTC. Cannabis is used while clubbing, but also after clubbing at home.

– XTC is used in combination with speed. First there is XTC and later on some speed is used to keep on going. Nearly always used in the club/venue or at the event or festival.

- Many respondents come to dislike the artificiality of XTC. Especially the fact that the sociability and the happy feelings ("everybody is your friend") are chemically and artificially induced, makes them feel troubled. It is fake. XTC loses some of the attraction.
- Many respondents – or their friends – have had bad experiences with XTC: from black holes in memory (not knowing where you have been, how you got home) to hospital visits (cleansing stomach).

3.3.2.2 Cocaine

Use of cocaine

- Expensive. Exclusive. Easy to use. Nobody can see that you have taken coke. Self-assuredness, self-confidence. If it were less expensive many respondents would use it more often and in larger quantities. (Cocaine costs 40-50 euro per gram.)
- Respondents either prefer using at home/in a private setting with their partner and/or friends (but also sometimes use when they go out) or prefer using while going out (but also sometimes use in a private setting).
- Many plan their use of cocaine, however, just as many do not plan it; they use it whenever it is around (whenever someone else has it with him/her). This applies to the initial use as well as to the subsequent use of cocaine.
- A few persons in a group are responsible for obtaining cocaine. Not all users know where the cocaine is coming from, where they themselves could get it. Furthermore, many do not pay for it, they get it for free, especially girls. The common idea is that it is easy to obtain. In general, respondents have no idea about the amounts they use.
- Cocaine is sniffed. In the nightlife: with a key (right from the bag/envelop), from the finger or with the use of a special device like a 'shooter'. At home: lines from the table/mirror. The majority regards the act of sniffing as scary but also as attractive (like in the movies). A few find sniffing rancid and cheap.
- Most do not take any precautions before they use cocaine (contrary to e.g. XTC).
- Most say: "it is not good for you, it is bad", but cannot explain precisely what they mean by it. It is more a general conclusion: cocaine is not good for you. Some also have feelings of guilt after they used: "it is not really necessary, why did I use it?". However, it remains an attractive drug.

Benefits of / reasons for taking cocaine

- The first time respondents use cocaine, it often has no effects, at least not to the respondents. However, they have hardly any expectations of it. They say they expect to feel more active, but when they do feel more active after they used, they do not think of this as an actual effect of cocaine. Some compare it to XTC, and then it becomes obvious that cocaine has less observable effects.
- To go party, dancing. Talk for hours, more open. Good sex. Loose weight.

- Energy, active, sharp, alert, catchy, "smart-assed", "macho". Go on and on.
- If respondents are a bit tired (e.g. from working the whole week) or get tired on the specific evening, cocaine makes the tiredness disappear.
- Clear-headed feeling, especially when under the influence of alcohol: "you do not get drunk". Drinking more alcohol and using (more) cocaine go together. Some respondents enjoy the tipsy feeling, and for this reason they do not use cocaine when they are drinking. Also, some do not use cocaine after going out (back home again with a group of friends) because at that time they do not want to wake up again but e.g. enjoy the run-out effects of XTC or a cannabis joint instead.
- Because of familiarity with other drugs (XTC, cannabis), cocaine is another drug to experiment with. Respondents do not have high thresholds for cocaine use. Even though they fear addiction, they do use it.
- Respondents use it in the midst of company, however, a few like to use more (amounts and frequency) and therefore they go to the restroom to use "extra" by themselves.

Risks of cocaine

- Bleeding nose, numb face.
- Once used, it feels like using more. Because the effects last for a short period of time (about one hour), it is tempting to use again when the effects start to run of. Respondents say they use over and over again. Some do not mind, others find this pre-occupation with cocaine use problematic (they call it junkie behavior).
- Aggressiveness, that comes along with enhanced self-confidence. Only when people use much cocaine.
- Overly boldness. Indifference. Respondents mention they are in their own little world, thinking they are great, but the indifference towards other people they see as a disadvantage.
- Used in combination with alcohol: the (psychological) effects of alcohol are undone, you feel sober again. However, physically the alcohol has not disappeared. Risks over excessive alcohol use, but also e.g. in traffic.
- Addiction. Many fear addiction. Cocaine is seen as a whole other drug than e.g. XTC. XTC makes you dancing, partying, sociable, warm etc., whereas with cocaine you remain "the same person". This is considered a big risk for using excessively: you stay the same, but with a bit more energy and self-confidence.
- Also: usually cocaine is taken after a few drinks. This alcohol consumption lowers the threshold for drug use. Some say that in a sober condition they would not have thought about using cocaine (on that particular occasion), however, under the influence of alcohol, they did use it. Some respondents regret that cocaine seems to be "a normal thing to do", and therefore they find it difficult to not use it.
- The after-effects the next day(s) depend on how much cocaine is used, in what setting and what other drugs are used as well. The wretched feeling afterwards (tiredness, headache, hurtful nose and throat) that respondents mention is caused by large quantities of alcohol, cocaine and maybe other

drugs as well, in combination with lack of sleep, exhaustion, being dried-up. Others state that they do not experience problems the next day; they used only cocaine, a little alcohol and did not go on partying.

3.3.2.3 Speed

Use of speed

- Speed is often used with XTC and/or alcohol. Respondents hardly ever take only speed.
- It is sometimes used as a replacement for XTC, or instead of a second XTC pill. Some respondents use speed as a replacement for cocaine, because cocaine is too expensive.
- The short term effects (on the night itself) are experienced as advantages, longer term physical effects (the day or days after) are considered disadvantages and reasons for not taking it anymore.
- Speed is used in clubs as well as on dance events. It is popular at illegal and/or tekno parties, in the underground scene.
- Some plan their use of speed. Most respondents do not plan their use; they use it as it comes along.

Benefits of / reasons for taking speed

- Speed is taken for the energy, active, alert. You wake up. Clear-headed feeling. You go on and on. Empty head. Respondents regard speed to have only physical effects (except that a few say that it makes them cheerful and active). Respondents do not see/mention psychological benefits. They do not use speed for becoming more cheerful, certainly not compared to why they use XTC.
- It is cheap (about 7 euro for 1 gram).

Risks of speed

- Faster heart beat. Muscle contractions – looking silly, stupid/angry facial expression (stretching jaws).
- Not being able to sleep. Feeling tired. Exhaustion.
- Not eating/appetite. Burns fat reserves. Fainting.
- Pain in muscles. Nose hurts.
- Takes away feelings of drunkenness.
- Paranoia.
- Long recovery time. (Next day you're finished/wasted.)

3.3.2.4 Cannabis

Use of cannabis

- Smoking cannabis (marihuana, hash) is not limited to going out or use in weekends. Some respondents use it on a frequent basis, then it usually functions as a means to fall asleep, or just something to do with friends. Some respondents use(d) cannabis as a means of dealing with problems; they become in a vicious cycle of experiencing problems, smoking weed every day, becoming more passive, more problems etc. We do not elaborate upon this kind of marihuana use, but instead focus on the role it has in going out.
- Cannabis is used in the nightlife, clubbing, on festivals etc. It is used either at the club (mostly urban and also alternative music clubs) or as a "closer of the evening". The cannabis smoothens the effects of possible other drugs that were used on that particular evening/night, like XTC, speed or cocaine ("taking the edge off").

Benefits of / reasons for taking cannabis

- Cannabis is used for the calming/smoothing effects. These calming effects are also the reason why it is not used by others while going out.
- The use of cannabis is linked to the urban music scene (R&B, hip-hop, bobbling etc.). In this scene it is often used in combination with alcohol. Some use it in combination with cocaine. The use of e.g. XTC in this scene is much less prevalent.
- Many respondents use cannabis to close the evening before going to bed; they smoke weed at their own home or at a friends' house to calm down and be able to sleep. They take a few sips of a marihuana joint, or smoke a whole joint by themselves.

Risks of cannabis

- Passiveness. Paranoia.

3.3.3 Do combinations of club drugs suggest new ways of mixing and matching?

Some respondents do not combine any drugs with each other or with alcohol. However, many do use two or more drugs, and alcohol, on one occasion. In this section it is about the use of two or more different drugs in one "session", usually going out to a club or dance event.

All four club drugs (and alcohol) are used combined in every thinkable way. Many evenings out start off with having a drink, either at someone's house or in a bar. Also, many evenings end with smoking weed, usually at someone's house. In between, everything is possible, depending on the kind of club/venue or event/party.

In the tekno scene, MDMA use is often followed by the use of speed. In the urban scene, it is all about drinking alcohol and smoking weed, and sniffing cocaine is becoming more popular. In clubs/venues/events (trance, house, etc.) the use of XTC remains popular; often XTC use goes together with drinking alcohol. Cocaine and alcohol is a popular combination in this scene as well.

3.3.4 Reasons for initial use / Availability of individual club drugs / Sources of supply

The reasons for initial use for all drugs are comparable. Respondents are curious to the effects of a particular drug, or a group of drugs, on them. Mostly they have seen others who were under the influence of that substance and heard (positive) stories about how it feels. They all say that "drugs are bad", because that is the public opinion about drugs. However, drugs have an attraction that they do not (want to) resist. (Again: keep in mind that we interviewed users of club drugs; we did not interview non-drug users.) Some respondents then purposely search for information about the substance they want to use and finally look for a way to obtain the substance. In the case of cannabis, this is easy because it is legally sold in so-called coffeeshops. One has to be 18 years or older to be allowed inside a coffeeshop and buy cannabis. For other substances, they ask people they know use the substance for it. However, more frequently friends or acquaintances offer the substance to respondents who then do not say "no". Once the substance is used, usually in the company of friends, it becomes easy to obtain it. It becomes easier to ask someone for it, because respondents recognize the symptoms of use ("where did you get it?"). It is remarkable that many respondents, especially females, get drugs for free; they get it from friends that get it somewhere else. In general, respondents state that every substance is well available if you want to use it.

XTC is usually bought in advance. Someone has bought XTC for the whole group, or respondents have XTC pills at home. This is also true for speed (in advance).

Cocaine is bought in advance, but also on the spot. Whenever someone feels like using cocaine, they call a dealer who then delivers the cocaine at the door, or at a meeting point somewhere.

See for examples the segments about XTC, cocaine, speed and cannabis.

3.3.5 Quality/purity of club drugs

"In the early days, everything was better"; and this is also true for the quality of drugs.

- Respondents went on from using XTC pills to pure MDMA because then they know what they are taking. XTC pills contain more and more other substances, e.g. speed. Some like this, most do not. Only a few respondents have their XTC pills tested on quality/purity. This testing is carried out by addiction care services and the test results are available after a few days. This means that testing in this official way needs planning and organization. A more common way of testing XTC is to buy or get it from friends or acquaintances, or friends of friends. Because respondents trust the person they buy or get XTC from, they believe that the XTC is of good quality. Another way of testing is to see how others, that got the same pill as the respondent, react to it. If they do not get sick, then it is believed to be safe to use that pill as well.
- The quality of speed is variable, but users say that it is usually crap.
- The quality of cocaine is okay, however, some respondents mention that they switched dealers because of bad coke (adulterated/cut up with other substances).
- The quality of cannabis (marihuana, hash) in general is very good.

3.4 What are sources of information on club drugs? Are club drugs less harmful than other drugs, according to club drug users? What are experiences of overdose?

- 3.4.1 Sources of information on club drugs and their combinations / What knowledge do users have of club drugs?
- 3.4.2 To what extent do the users of club drugs believe that in general club drugs are less harmful than other types of drugs?
- 3.4.3 Avoiding, preventing and experiences of overdose / Perceptions of health and illness

3.4.1 Sources of information / Knowledge of club drugs

Respondents know most of what they know about club drugs through friends. Also the Internet (MSN, websites), school, television and information leaflets/books are used as a source of information. The book 'Uit je bol' (Hellinga & Plomp, 1997) is mentioned a few times as an information source. In this book many substances are discussed, positive as well as negative aspects, and the "best way" to use it (preparations, amounts). Some respondents mention they actively search for information before they use a club drug for the first time. Others only look for information after a (bad) experience.

Most respondents report that they did not look for particular written knowledge before they started using. Some say they were 'well' informed and some mention they knew nothing about the drugs they have taken. Most respondents started to experiment or use after listening to their friends' stories and after seeing the effects of the drug use on others. After their initial use some searched for extra information (for example because they want to know why they felt so bad the next day). Many mention all kinds of risks that they have heard or read about. Some seem well informed, others less.

Amounts

Many respondents find themselves responsible and moderate users. Almost every one has an example of someone they know who uses too much. They are often referred to as 'bad examples'. Generally, most respondents know that they should not use club drugs too often. However, what is 'too often' is not clear; some use every week or every other week and think that is not too often. Most respondents seem not aware of the amounts of drugs they are taking. Especially with XTC pills, it is unclear how much MDMA each pill contains. Neither is it clear how much (if any) speed is in XTC pills. For this reason, some respondents cut back on their use of XTC pills and started using pure MDMA crystals, because it can be dosed much better. Furthermore, many respondents do not know how much cocaine they use. When asked what their average dosage is, they say e.g. "2 lines" or "5

lines", but could not say how much cocaine is actually in these 2 or 5 lines. Of course a longer or fatter line contains more cocaine than a short and slim line. The same holds for some respondents who sniff speed; they do not know how much they use (in grams). There are a few examples of respondents who made stupid and almost fatal mistakes with the amounts of drugs they took. They were not good informed and 'just' trusted their friends and/or dealer (examples ketamine, MDMA).

The use of club drugs of some respondents can be called problematic (by the research team).

However, these respondents see no problems in the amounts of (different) drugs they take. Some asked the opinion of the interviewer about their usage amounts. They wanted a confirmation about their 'moderate' use (which was sometimes extreme and even problematic).

3.4.2 Club drugs less harmful?

Many respondents mention heroin addiction as something that is very far from away from them. They never want this "junkie addiction" and avoid this drug. They believe their drug use is something completely different. Every person has its own opinion about which drug use goes 'too far', because they are afraid of it, have had a bad experience or saw a bad influence of these drugs on others. XTC is generally accepted as a drug you can use. A lot of speed users find it 'trash'. Most current users call it 'trash' too. Speed has a low status. If respondents have enough money they would rather use cocaine. Some respondents LSD and other hallucinatory drugs are a step too far, mostly because of the lack of control.

3.4.3 Avoiding, preventing and experiences of overdose / Perceptions of health and illness

When asked about worries about some drugs, some/many respondents report that at first they were afraid of getting addicted on drugs, especially with cocaine. Current users of cocaine still mention this fear, but most have their cocaine use seems under control.

Quite some respondents have had a bad experience with taking a club drug. Many respondents mention bad trips with mushrooms or cannabis (especially "space cake" which is a cake baked with cannabis in it). Some respondents mention an overdose of one drug (example MDMA, ketamine) or a combination of drugs. They have had medical care (general practitioner, hospital), but are still using, although less. Many respondents know or knew someone (or know someone through others) that had a bad experience while the respondent was around (epileptic attacks, fainting, extreme (blood) vomiting) or saw someone with an overdose (XTC, speed or mushrooms).

Respondents know that they should not drink alcohol in combination with XTC use, but instead drink water. However, the combined use of XTC and alcohol is common. They know about the risk but still they use both substances. They say they like the combination and they never had problems with using both (never fainted or anything) so they feel that it is safe to use both. Some mention that they have something sweet (sugar) with them when they know they are going to use XTC and/or speed.

Fears

Besides the overdose the respondents mention some fears. To some the Tuesday Blues or a longer period of 'depression' after (too much) use is mentioned because they have worried about this. When the feeling of depression returns too often this is seen as a bad sign. Some have fears about the quality of the drugs or the composition of it. These are fears they have from their own experiences. When it comes to fears more in general (from stories they heard, or information they gathered), then they fear the following psychological problems: getting problems with their memory, e.g. 'holes in your brain'; concentration deficits; sleeping problems, and paranoid thoughts: 'it all goes wrong' or 'forever stay in the trip'. Physical problems that they mention are heart problems and motorial problems.

Precaution

Some respondents make arrangements with friends that one of them stays clear (sometimes this is a person who never uses any drug and is sober anyway). Respondents mention that these sober friends tell them when they go too far in their use (and have appointments about this).

The majority of respondents make sure that they eat well and drink enough water, and they make sure their friends do too (but do not extremely pay attention on this; they just do as usual). This is mostly true for XTC use. However, there are a few respondents who deliberately do not eat to get the 'best' effect of their XTC and they like it when it really 'hits in'.

For cocaine, speed and cannabis, no precautions are taken.

4 Last remark

In the results so far, we found that XTC is (still) a popular club drug, that cocaine is also very popular, that speed is popular in certain scenes and that cannabis can be seen as a club drug because it is used more and more in the nightlife. Furthermore, smoking weed is also regarded a "closer of a night clubbing". Many use alcohol in combination with all kinds of club drugs.

These results (and many more segments from our interviews) are sent to our colleagues in San Francisco, and they will systematically compare our Rotterdam results to the results they found in their San Francisco and Hong Kong studies. You can read much more about the use of club drugs in the previous chapters; we will not repeat our findings here.

For the Dutch situation, we have only just begun to study the patterns of use of consequences of the use of club drugs. In the 84 interviews we held with mostly young outgo-ers and club drug users, there are many indications for prevention and policy. We hope to find finances in the near future in order to carry on our work in this under-studied area.