

## Observational study on seizures of marijuana, cocaine, and crack in a city in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte, Brazil

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### Abstract

It is estimated that 275 million people in the world between 15 and 64 years old used drugs of abuse in 2020. In the same year, the Brazilian Federal Police seized about 546,439.57 kg of marijuana and 91,234.87 kg of cocaine, demonstrating how much these substances are present in everyday life. This study aimed to describe the epidemiologic profile of seizures of marijuana, cocaine, and crack, carried out by the Civil Police, in city of Betim, Minas Gerais State, Brazil. This is a descriptive observational study, carried out on a documentary basis, in the years 2017 and 2018. The information was collected through the analysis of the final reports issued by the Betim Police Department, and the Social Defense Event Records (REDS). A total of 568 definitive reports and REDS were analyzed, and the sociodemographic profile of the individual apprehended in connection with illicit drugs is composed mainly of men (86.4%), single (86.6%), with incomplete elementary education (33.2%), with a median age of 20 years. The 24-hour Police Station (88%) and the north region Police Station (22.7%) were where the largest seizures took place; illicit drug trafficking (85.6%) was the main crime related to these seizures, and marijuana was the most seized drug (51.1%). Knowledge of the profile of drug seizures in this region allows for the creation of prevention measures for the trafficking and use of illicit drugs, contributing to the improvement of public health and safety.

*Keywords:* Psychoactive substances. Illicit drugs. Use and abuse. Police. Drug Seizure.

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### Resumo

Estima-se que 275 milhões de pessoas no mundo entre 15 e 64 anos usaram drogas de abuso em 2020. No mesmo ano, a Polícia Federal brasileira apreendeu cerca de 546.439,57 kg de maconha e 91.234,87 kg de cocaína, demonstrando o quanto essas substâncias estão presentes no dia a dia. Descrever o perfil das apreensões de maconha, cocaína e crack, realizadas pela Polícia Civil, na região de Betim no estado de Minas Gerais, Brasil. Trata-se de um estudo observacional descritivo, realizado em base documental, nos anos de 2017 e 2018. As informações foram coletadas por meio da análise dos relatórios finais expedidos pela Delegacia de Polícia de Betim e dos Registros de Ocorrências da Defesa Social (REDS). Foram analisados 568 boletins de ocorrência e REDS, sendo que o perfil sociodemográfico do indivíduo apreendido por tráfico de drogas ilícitas é composto majoritariamente por homens (86,4%), solteiros (86,6%), com ensino fundamental incompleto (33,2%), com idade média de 20 anos. A Delegacia 24 horas (88%) e a Delegacia da Zona Norte (22,7%) foram onde ocorreram as maiores apreensões; o tráfico ilícito de drogas (85,6%) foi o principal crime relacionado a essas apreensões, sendo a maconha a droga mais apreendida (51,1%). O conhecimento do perfil das apreensões de drogas nessa região permite a criação de medidas de prevenção ao tráfico e uso de drogas ilícitas, contribuindo para a melhoria da saúde e segurança pública.

*Palavras-Chave:* Substâncias psicoativas. Drogas ilícitas. Uso e abuso. Polícia. Apreensão de drogas.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The use and abuse of psychotropic substances is a frequent concern for society, being one of the main public health and safety problems due to the set of damages associated with it [1-3]. This consumption is among the health problems cataloged by the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Americas are the only region where drug use disorders are among the ten main factors that contribute to the reduction of years of life of healthy people [4,5].

According to the World Drug Report 2021, issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), it is estimated that about 275 million people in the world between the ages of 15 and 64 have used some type of drug, whether licit or illicit, in 2020, of which 36 million suffered from disorders associated with the use of these substances [3].

In Brazil, according to the “III National Survey on Drug Use by the Brazilian Population” (*III Levantamento Nacional Sobre o Uso de Drogas Pela População Brasileira*), carried out in 2017, marijuana is the most consumed drug among the population (7.7 %), followed by cocaine (3.1 %), solvents (2.8 %), and crack (0.9 %) [6]. In a previous report, in the “II National Survey of Alcohol and Drugs” (*II Levantamento Nacional de Álcool e Drogas*), carried out in 2012, marijuana was also the most consumed drug (6.8 %), followed by cocaine (3.8 %), stimulants (2.7 %), solvents (2.2 %) and crack (1.3 %) [7].

Although illicit drugs are substances prohibited by law, both for commercialization and consumption [8], the number of seizures of these substances increases every year. In 2020, the Brazilian Federal Police seized approximately 546,439.57 kg of marijuana and 91,234.87 kg of cocaine (hydrochloride, crack, and base paste) [9]. In the same year, the state of Minas Gerais was towards the top of the ranking of Brazilian states that most seized marijuana (40,000 kg), behind only the states of Mato Grosso do Sul (390,000 kg) and Paraná (145,000 kg) [10].

The illicit drug market has been one of the biggest global concerns, due to its impact on the economy, crime, and public health [11]. In Brazil, in addition to the impact on these three aforementioned areas, drug trafficking directly affects social life, being related to cases of violence and homicides [12]. In a study carried out by Singulane et al. [13], 79.2 % of crack users declared that they had been involved at least once in some criminal or violent activity [13]. There is also a relationship between fatal assault/homicide victims and their positive postmortem outcomes for alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, and crack [14,15].

Betim, where the present study was carried out, is considered the fifth largest municipality in the state of Minas Gerais, with a population estimated in 2021 by the

IBGE of 450,024 inhabitants [16]. The city is considered one of the most violent in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte, being in 2006 included in the group of 20 Brazilian municipalities with more than 100 thousand inhabitants, with the highest rates of homicides in adolescence, occupying 19th place in the national ranking [17]. In 2008, the city ranked first in the overall homicide rate (65.9 per 100,000 inhabitants) in the State of Minas Gerais, and in 2012, seventh place (55.5 per 100,000 inhabitants) [18,19]. The disorderly population growth, growing industrialization, social inequalities, and the fact that it is located at the road junction between Belo Horizonte and São Paulo, make Betim a city more prone to the circulation of drugs, both for commercialization and consumption [20].

The seizures of illicit drugs carried out by the Federal, State, and Municipal Police are epidemiological indicators, capable of providing indirect data regarding the consumption of drugs carried out by a population [21], allowing for example, the profile of the use of these substances in a city to be outlined. Although Brazilian society is aware that the use and abuse of illicit drugs is an important public health problem, knowledge about consumption patterns, as well as the problems associated with the use of these drugs, is still scarce. Thus, it is extremely relevant to carry out studies that aim to identify the diffusion of these substances in a specific region, to collaborate on improvements in apprehension skills, as well as in the demands of public health and safety.

In view of the above, the objective of this study was to analyze, from an epidemiological point of view, the seizures of the illicit drugs marijuana, cocaine, and crack, carried out by the Civil Police, in the region of Betim, Minas Gerais, Brazil, from January 2017 to December 2018, addressing the sociodemographic profile of the detainees, the pattern of use and the amount of drugs seized, the regions of Betim where the seizures took place, and the types of crimes related to those seizures.

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1. Type of study

This is a cross-sectional and descriptive observational study designed according to guidelines proposed by the Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (STROBE) tool [22] carried out on a documentary basis from January 2017 to December 2018 in the city of Betim, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

### 2.2. Sample calculation

The sample size calculation was performed using OpenEpi® software, based on data obtained from the Drug

Seizure Report for the mid-west region of Minas Gerais, made available by the 1st Regional Civil Police Department of the 7th Civil Police Department of Minas Gerais. A total of 4751 available reports was considered for the population size, a frequency of 59.0 % for the event of interest (drug seizures) and a confidence interval of 95 %, resulting in a sample of 345 reports needed for the analyses. However, the expansion of the collection period allowed access to a greater number of data, with 568 reports being randomly included in the study.

### 2.3. Data collection

Data collection took place at the 2nd Regional Civil Police Department – Betim and crime scene investigations – Regional Technical Section of Criminalistics of Betim, through the system used by the police: Pete – Web-based Police Procedures Management.

### 2.4. Data collection steps

Data collection was divided into four stages: In step I, the final reports made by the Criminal Investigation for the Betim Police Departments, in the years 2017 and 2018, were quantified through the book of records of reports issued in the respective years. The requisitions and later the reports were then inserted into the Police Use System – PcNet (steps II and III). Finally, in the last phase IV, the REDS referring to each report were analyzed.

### 2.5. Study variables

The variables analyzed were sex, marital status, schooling, age, Police Station of origin, location, related crimes, type of drug seized, form in which it is presented, and total quantity seized (Law No. 11,343) [23].

To fill in the epidemiological information, the following information was considered:

- Sex: Male and Female;
- Marital status: Single, Married, Separated, Divorced, Widowed, Stable union;
- Schooling: Illiterate, Literate, Incomplete Elementary School, Complete Elementary School, Incomplete High School, Complete High School, Incomplete College Education, College Degree, Incomplete Postgraduate Education, Postgraduate Degree;
- Age
- Unit of origin: 1st Police Station (Teresópolis), 2nd Police Station (PTB), 3rd Police Station (Alterosas), 4th Police Station (Centro), 5th Police Station (Citrolândia), DEAM (Delegacias Especializadas de Atendimento à Mulheres - Specialized Police Stations for Women), 24-hour Police Station, 2nd Regional Police Station;

- Related crimes: Law No. 11,343 - Use and consumption of drugs (art. 28), Illicit drug trafficking (art. 33), Drug trafficking affiliation (art. 35), Financing or funding of drug trafficking (art. 36);

- Type of drug seized and form in which it is presented as described in the REDS (Social Defense Event Records): Marijuana (Portion, Packet, Pressed (Tablet/Bar), Cigarette, Plantation/Plant, Seed), Cocaine (Portion, Powder, Packet, Pod, Paste), Crack (Portion, Rock);

- Location: Regions – Alterosas, Centro, Citrolândia, Icaivera, Imbiruçu, Norte, Petrovale, PTB, Teresópolis, Vianópolis.

### 2.6. Data processing and storage

The database was created using the Questionnaire Development System (QDS) version 2.6.1.1. Subsequently, the data were exported to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19 for statistical analysis. Missing data were disregarded for the execution of statistical analyses.

### 2.7. Statistical analysis of the results

To characterize the epidemiological profile of the population studied, a descriptive analysis was performed, in which the variables of interest were represented by frequency distribution, measures of central tendency, and variability. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied to the numerical variables, in order to verify the normality of the data. Data referring to the types of drugs were compared in relation to the nature of the seizures, using the Chi-Square test. Null data were not analyzed.

## 3. RESULTS

A total of 568 definitive reports were analyzed with positive results for the years 2017 and 2018, from the seizures of illicit drugs carried out by the Civil Police of Betim, Minas Gerais. Regarding the sociodemographic profile of the individuals apprehended, characterized as perpetrators, most were male (86.4 %), single (86.6 %) and with incomplete elementary education (33.2 %), as shown in **Table 1**. A median of one perpetrator per REDS was observed (IQ25 % = 1; IQ75 % = 2).

When considering the age of all perpetrators, a median age of 20 years was identified (IQ25 % = 17; IQ75 % = 24). The minimum age at which the perpetrator was arrested was 14 years and the maximum was 61 years, with 17 years being the age with the highest number of arrests (**Table 1**).

**Table 1.** Sociodemographic profile of individuals indicted by Law no. 11,343 of August 23, 2006, according to the Social Defense Event Records (REDS), between 2017 and 2018, in the municipality of Betim-MG.

VARIABLES	N	%
SEX	N = 552	100 %
Female	75	13.6
Male	477	86.4
MARITAL STATUS	N = 434	100 %
Single	376	86.6
Married	19	4.4
Separated	1	0.2
Divorced	5	1.2
Widowed	1	0.2
Stable union	32	7.4
SCHOOLING	N = 419	100 %
Illiterate	4	1.0
Literate	100	23.9
Incomplete elementary school	139	33.2
Complete elementary school	45	10.7
Incomplete high school	95	22.7
Complete high school	33	7.9
Incomplete College Education	2	0.5
College Degree	1	0.2
AGE	20 (17 : 24) <sup>a</sup>	
PERPETRATORS PER "REDS" (SOCIAL DEFENSE EVENT RECORD)	1 (1 : 2) <sup>a</sup>	
TYPES OF DIFFERENT DRUGS PER "REDS"	1 (1 : 2) <sup>a</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Values represented by median and interquartile range (25 %; 75 %). REDS - Social Defense Event Records. \*Null data are not shown in the table.

Regarding the location in the city of Betim (Table 2), the North (22.7 %), Imbiruçu (18.4 %) and Alterosas (15.6 %) regions are among those with the most drug seizures in the period of study, these being bordering regions.

Regarding the classification of the crime according to Law no. 11,343 of August 2006 (23), 85.6 % are for illicit drug trafficking, when compared to other crimes such as use and consumption (7.8 %) (Table 2).

Table 3 shows the type of drug seized, with marijuana (51.1 %) being that with the highest number of seizures. This table also presents the ways in which the drugs (marijuana, cocaine, and crack) seized were sold. For marijuana, the most seized form of the drug was the form of portion and/or packet (86.8 %). For cocaine, despite being packaged in different ways (portions, packets, pods) as described in the REDS, if the final material is considered, 99.4 % of seizures represent powdered cocaine, while the paste form represents only 0.6 %. Regarding crack, the most seized form was the rock form (64.2 %), when compared to portions (35.8 %). The median

amount is one drug type per REDS (IQ25 % = 1; IQ75 % = 2).

Table 4 shows a significant association between the types of drugs analyzed in the reports and the nature of the crime. Regarding the nature of the crime, marijuana is commonly present in REDS whose main crime is use and consumption (78.1 %), while cocaine (30.6 %) and crack (20.4 %) constitute mainly the crime of illicit drug trafficking.

In addition, the form of presentation of the seized marijuana for use and consumption was mainly in the form of a portion (48 %), while for trafficking it was in the form of a packet (48.2 %). For cocaine, for use and consumption, the most seized form was the portion/pod (50 %), while for trafficking it was the portion form (39.1 %). And for crack, both for use and consumption (100 %) and for trafficking (62.5 %), the main form seized was the rock form (Table 4).

**Table 2.** Police Station of origin, regions with greatest apprehensions and typification of the crime according to Law no. 11,343 of August 2006, in the municipality of Betim-MG, according to the Social Defense Event Records (REDS) during the years 2017 and 2018.

VARIABLES	N	%
<b>POLICE STATION OF ORIGIN</b>	<b>N = 568</b>	<b>100 %</b>
1st Police Station (Teresópolis)	22	3.9
2nd Police Station (PTB)	10	1.8
3rd Police Station (Alterosas)	15	2.6
4th Police Station (Centro)	10	1.8
5th Police Station (Citrolândia)	6	1.1
DEAM (Women)	1	0.2
24-hour Police Station	500	88.0
2nd REGIONAL Police Department	4	0.7
<b>REGIONS</b>	<b>N = 353</b>	<b>100 %</b>
Alterosas	55	15.6
Centro	36	10.2
Citrolândia	30	8.5
Icaivera	1	0.3
Imbiruçu	65	18.4
Norte	80	22.7
Petrovale	4	1.1
PTB	26	7.4
Teresópolis	28	7.9
Vianópolis	6	1.7
Other	22	6.2
<b>MAIN NATURE OF THE CRIME</b>	<b>N = 360</b>	<b>100 %</b>
Drug use and consumption	28	7.8
Illicit drug trafficking	308	85.6
Partnering in drug trafficking	2	0.6
Drug trafficking financing	1	0.3
Other	21	5.8

\*Null data are not shown in the table.

**Table 3.** Type of drugs seized, and form of drug by type of material as described in REDS, in the municipality of Betim-MG, during the years 2017 and 2018.

VARIABLES	N	%
<b>TYPE OF DRUG</b>	<b>N = 567</b>	<b>100 %</b>
Marijuana	290	51.1
Cocaine	168	29.6
Crack	109	19.2
<b>PRESENTATION FORM OF MARIJUANA</b>	<b>N = 289</b>	<b>100 %</b>
Portion	116	40.1
Packet	135	46.7
Pressed (Tablet/Bar)	18	6.2
Cigarette	12	4.2
Plantation/Plant	7	2.4
Seed	1	0.3
<b>PRESENTATION FORM OF COCAINE</b>	<b>N = 168</b>	<b>100 %</b>
Portion	65	38.7
Powder	13	7.7
Packet	36	21.4
Pod	53	31.5
Paste	1	0.6
<b>PRESENTATION FORM OF CRACK</b>	<b>N = 109</b>	<b>100 %</b>
Portion	39	35.8
Rock	70	64.2
<b>QUANTITY OF DRUGS SEIZED</b>	11 (3 ; 34) <sup>a</sup>	
<b>TOTAL WEIGHT OF SEIZED DRUGS (kg)</b>	12.5 (3.8 ; 41.4) <sup>a</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Values represented by median and interquartile range (25 % ; 75 %).

\*Null data are not shown in the table.

**Table 4.** Distribution of the illicit drugs marijuana, cocaine, and crack according to the nature of the seizure during the years 2017 and 2018, in the city of Betim-MG.

VARIABLES	TOTAL		NATURE OF SEIZURE				p-value
	N	%	USE AND CONSUMPTION		ILLICIT TRAFFICKING		
			N	%	N	%	
<b>TYPE OF DRUG</b>							
Marijuana	273	50.5	25	78.1	248	48.7	0.010*
Cocaine	162	29.9	6	18.8	156	30.6	
Crack	105	19.4	1	3.1	104	20.4	
Other	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.2	
<b>MARIJUANA PRESENTATION FORM</b>							
Portion	111	40.8	12	48	99	40.1	p > 0.05
Packet	129	47.4	10	40	119	48.2	
Pressed (Tablet/Bar)	16	5.9	1	4	15	6.1	
Cigarette	11	4.0	2	8	9	3.6	
Plantation/Plant	4	1.5	0	0	4	1.6	
Seed	1	0.4	0	0	1	0.4	
<b>COCAINE PRESENTATION FORM</b>							
Portion	64	39.5	3	50	61	39.1	p > 0.05
Powder	13	8.0	0	0	13	8.3	
Packet	32	19.8	0	0	32	20.5	
Pod	52	32.1	3	50	49	31.4	
Paste	1	0.6	0	0	1	0.6	
<b>CRACK PRESENTATION FORM</b>							
Portion	39	37.1	0	0	39	37.5	
Rock	105	62.9	1	100	104	62.5	

\* p &lt; 0.05. Statistics: Chi-Square

\*Null data are not shown in the table.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Regarding sex, men are more likely to use illicit drugs than women, since they are more exposed to situations that favor the use of these substances [24]. Women are three times less likely to use illicit drugs than men, and they are more likely to use legal drugs, such as benzodiazepines, analgesics and anorectics [3,6].

Regarding age, according to the “III National Survey on the Use of Drugs by the Brazilian Population”, of 2017, the consumption of illicit substances in life is concentrated in the intermediate age groups, especially among younger adults (25-34 years) (15.5 %), followed by the age group of 18-24 years (14.3 %) [6].

The study carried out by Machado *et al.* [25] (descriptive observation), aimed to describe the profile of illicit drug seizures in the mid-west region of Minas Gerais, through the analysis of reports that addressed drug seizures in cities belonging to the region between January 2017 and December 2018. In addition, it sought to compare this information available in the media with the actual data available in the REDS on drug seizures in the years 2017 and 2018, provided by the Criminal Investigation of the Civil Police of Divinópolis, Minas Gerais. The results

obtained in Machado’s study [25] describe the profile of individuals detained for involvement with illicit drugs, consisting mostly of men (73.1 %), with a median age of 21 years (IQ25 % = 18; IQ75 % = 26.5), data consistent with the present study.

The sociodemographic profile observed in this research is consistent with studies that analyzed the profile of illicit drug users. Cruz *et al.* [26] identified the profile of crack users as being mostly men, single, with some elementary school education, and just over 20 years old. The study by Guimaraes *et al.* [27], who analyzed the sociodemographic profile of users of this same drug, showed that the majority had low schooling (62 %) and were single (77.7 %).

Of the 568 reports analyzed, 88 % were requested by the 24-hour Police Station, as shown in Table 2.

Silva *et al.* [28], analyzed the prevalence of drugs seized in Itajubá, a municipality in the south of Minas Gerais, and also reported that neighborhoods located in peripheral regions of the study city were where the highest number of seizures occurred. In general, Fernandes and Endlich [29] state that border regions are geographically favorable regions for drug trafficking. In the case of Brazil, which borders more than ten countries in South America, these areas have little or no surveillance, which facilitates

the commercialization of narcotics [30]. This event may be related to the results found in this research, where the bordering regions of the city of Betim were where there were greater drug seizures.

In relation to crimes, drug-related crimes are those that most contribute to the increase in the prison population in Brazil [31]. According to the National Penitentiary Information Survey (INFOPEN) [31], from July to December 2019, 20.2 % of prisoners in the country were responsible for drug-related crimes, with trafficking being the crime that stands out the most in this regard [32], as well as the main reason for the seizures in this study.

In addition, according to the World Drug Report 2020 (UNODC), marijuana is the number one drug related to people's contact with the criminal justice system, accounting for more than half of drug law violations, based on data from 69 countries, from 2014 to 2018 [33].

As shown in Table 3, the total weight of all drugs in the study was 27,091.96 kg, with a median of 12.5 kg of drugs (Interquartile (IQ)25 % = 3.8; IQ75 % = 41.4), and 11 drug units (IQ25 % = 3; IQ75 % = 34) per report.

The World Drug Report 2020 showed that Cannabis was the most consumed substance in the world in 2018, with an estimated 192 million users [33]. Information issued by the “III National Survey on the Use of Drugs by the Brazilian Population”, in 2017 (6), and by the “Brazilian Center for Information on Psychotropic Drugs” (Centro Brasileiro de Informações sobre Drogas Psicotrópica – CEBRID), in 2005 [34], confirm that marijuana is the most consumed drug among the Brazilian population, thus it is consistent that the seizures have been higher for this substance.

In Brazil, Silva *et al.* [28], report that marijuana was the drug most seized by the Civil Police of Itajubá, a municipality located in the south of Minas Gerais (2005-2012) and Machado *et al.* [25] in their study also described that according to the media, marijuana was the most seized drug in the mid-west of Minas Gerais (2017-2018), followed by cocaine and crack, as observed in the data obtained in the present research. Internationally, data from the study by Silvestre *et al.* [35] regarding illicit material seized in the Naples area in Italy, from 2013 to 2018, also showed a higher occurrence of marijuana seizure, followed by cocaine.

Drug use and abuse can be related to a number of public health and safety issues. The consumption of these substances can cause a range of health hazards, such as mental disorders, health disorders, HIV infection, hepatitis, cancer, cirrhosis, overdose, and premature death [3].

It is also known that drug use and abuse is highly related to situations of social vulnerability, in which individuals with low socioeconomic status and homeless people are more likely to use these substances [36]. In the case of the municipality of Betim, as mentioned earlier in this study, the rapid industrial development also caused an

increase in conditions of social vulnerability, especially among young people. Opportunistically, drug trafficking took hold in the communities of Betim, making the city one of the most violent in the state of Minas Gerais [19].

The use and abuse of drugs can still be linked to the increase in cases of violence, homicides, and crimes in general. The study by Dayrell & Caiaffa [17] showed that homicides in the city of study (Betim) are concentrated in the younger age groups, comprising mainly young people and adults aged between 15 and 24 years, and these homicides are correlated with drugs of abuse, mainly due to drug dealing. Also in relation to crimes, Soares [19] described the profile of violence against women in the city of Betim in recent years and correlated these events to several factors, including the use and abuse of drugs by these women's intimate partners.

It cannot be said that the increase in cases of violence and homicides in the city of Betim are related to the increase in the use and abuse of illicit drugs, but it is something relevant to discuss. Thus, it is important to carry out more studies that can correlate these events in the city of Betim, with the profile of illicit drug seizures exposed in this research.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the limitations presented by the present study. The scarcity of studies similar to this one, carried out in the region of Betim, to compare the results. And the variables marital status and schooling were not filled in during some occurrences since they were not mandatory.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

This study presents the first data on the profile of seizures of the illicit drugs marijuana, cocaine, and crack in the city of Betim, located in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais. The results found in this research showed that the sociodemographic profile of the detainees involved in the seizures of illicit drugs was mostly composed of men, single, with incomplete elementary school education and a median age of 20 years. The 24-hour Police Station and the neighboring regions of the city were where the biggest seizures took place. Marijuana was the most seized drug, and drug trafficking was the main seizure crime.

Knowledge about the profile of drug seizures in this specific region (Betim, Minas Gerais) allows for the creation of prevention measures for drug trafficking and use, contributing to the improvement of health conditions and public safety.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflicts of interest for this study.

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