

WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence

Tramadol

Annex 1: Member State Questionnaire

Overview of Responses

Representatives of 89 countries answered the questionnaire.

1. Do you have any information on the use of **Tramadol** in your country for either medical, scientific, industrial or other professional purposes, or for non-medical consumption, recreational purposes, or any other purpose?
 - 81 (96%) answered yes, 3 (4%) answered no.

Approved medical or scientific use

2. Do you know if approved medical products containing **Tramadol** are available in your country for human or veterinary indications?
 - **“Human medical product”**
 - N=79 countries
 - **“Veterinary medical product”**
 - N=15 countries
 - **“Not available in medical products”**
 - N=0 countries
 - **“Do not know”**
 - N=1 country
3. What are the therapeutic indications approved for **Tramadol** in your country?
 - In 75 out of 77 responses, tramadol was described as being prescribed as “pain killer” or “analgesic”. In most countries, “moderate to severe” pain has been given as indication.
4. Please indicate the marketed name, dosage form(s) and strength(s) of any of **Tramadol** available in your country; also indicate the exact substance name and any special properties such as slow release, etc?
 - More than 350 responses have been given to this question. The drug strength varied between 50mg and 200mg and Tramadol was reported to be available as capsule, tablet, solution for injection, oral solution, and oral drops. Further, a combination with other constituents, such as paracetamol, was reported as well.
5. Is **Tramadol** currently used in medical or scientific research (excluding use as an analytical reference standard) in your country (e.g. , is it in clinical trials for any human or veterinary indication)?
 - 16 (20%) answered yes, 36 (46%) answered no and 27 (34%) answered “Do not know”.

What types of professionals are allowed to prescribe **Tramadol**?

- **“Healthcare worker”**
 - N=1 country
- **“Medical doctor/psychiatrist”**
 - N=70 countries
- **“Osteopath”**
 - N=3 countries
- **“No prescription is required”**
 - N=3 countries
- **“Other”**
 - N= 5 countries

6. Are any clinical guidelines used in your country for the prescription of **Tramadol**?

- Out of 76 responses, 35 indicated available guidelines.
- There were 26 “no” answers
- The majority of clinical guidelines are based on national guidelines on treatment of pain, which implicitly (for opioids in general) or explicitly (for Tramadol in specific) gives recommendations on and the legal background for the prescription of Tramadol. Several guidelines are published by scientific or medical associations, while others are issued by national institutions. Few respondents mentioned product information leaflets only. Non-approved medical and non-medical or non-scientific use

7. Is **Tramadol** used for industrial or other non-medical/non-scientific purposes in your country?

- Out of 77 responses, 12 indicated that Tramadol is used for industrial or other non-medical/non-scientific purposes in their country
- There were 16 “Do not know” responses

8. What is the origin/source of **Tramadol** when used for legitimate non-medical/non-scientific use?

- **“Manufactured in your own country”**
 - N=2 countries
- **“Imported”**
 - N=21 countries
- **“Both manufactured in your own country and imported”**
 - N=3 countries

- **“Do not know”**
 - N=22 countries

9. What is the estimated amount of **Tramadol** used annually in your country for any non-medical/nonscientific use? Please specify where information is available, referring to the specific amounts (kg/litre) and the reference year.
- In most countries, data on the estimated amount used was not available.

Cultural, religious or ceremonial use

10. Is **Tramadol** used for cultural, religious or ceremonial purposes in your country?
- Out of 78 responses, N=2 indicated cultural, religious or ceremonial use. The majority of respondents indicated no such use (N=60; 77%), while 16 country representatives answered “Do not know” (20%).

Epidemiology of non-medical/non-scientific use – psychoactive purposes/recreational use

11. Is **Tramadol** misused for their psychoactive properties (as a recreational drug) in your country?
- Out of 77 responses, 65% (N=50) indicated misuse of Tramadol.
 - In eight countries Tramadol is reportedly not misused, while 19 country representatives answered “Do not know”

12. By what route(s) of administration is **Tramadol** used for non-medical/non-scientific purposes in your country?

Oral (N=45)
Injection (N=16)
Inhalation (N=3)
Sniffing (N=4)
Smoking/Waterpipe (i.e., adding Tramadol to waterpipe) (N=1)
Do not know (N=4)
Other (please specify) (N=1)

13. What is the most common route of administration for **Tramadol** for non-medical/non-scientific purposes?
- Oral administration of Tramadol was reported to be the most common route (N=39)

14. In which formulations is **Tramadol** used for non-medical/non-scientific purposes in your country?

Powder (N=6)
Tablets (N=45)
Liquid or solution for oral administration/use (N=9)
Solution for injection (N=9)
Other (please specify) (N=3)

15. Please indicate if any formulation is different from the usual pharmaceutical application in your country:

- Several countries indicate no differences. In other countries, different dosage levels or formulations or mixed with other drugs is reported.

16. What is (are) the source(s) of **Tramadol** for non-medical/non-scientific use in your country?

Legal manufacturing (N=5)
Legal trade (N=9)
Illegal manufacturing (N=2)
Diversion (from legal supply chain) (N=25)
Smuggling (from other countries) (N=22)
Do not know (N=8)
Other (please specify) (N=4)

17. Are there any specific subpopulations in your country known to misuse **Tramadol**?

- In 20 out of 48 responding countries there are specific subpopulations misusing Tramadol.
- In the remaining 28 countries specific subpopulations are not known to misuse Tramadol.
- In addition to drug users, the most commonly described population are youth.

18. Please provide any information on the extent and magnitude of public health problems or social harm caused by the use of **Tramadol** in your country:

- In six out of 27 countries, no data is available to describe public health problems with regard to Tramadol.
- In three countries, the public health impact was explicitly considered to be small.

- In eight countries, the public health impact was explicitly considered to be large.
- In nine countries, the magnitude was described by using data on hospital admission rates, cause of death statistics, or by highlighting adverse effects on the individual (e.g. anxiety) or society (e.g. family murder).

19. As an expert, what negative health impact do you believe the non-medical consumption of **Tramadol** has in your country?

- Out of 48 responses, a total of 27 country representatives evaluated the negative health impact of Tramadol as either “serious” or “substantial”. In 13 countries, Tramadol were found to have a “negligible” negative health impact. Eight country representatives answered “Do not know” (17%).
- Most respondents refer to adverse effects on the individual, such as fatal and non-fatal intoxications, dependence of Tramadol and other opioids, respiratory depression, or car accidents. Other respondents refer to problems with trafficking.

20. Are you aware of any emergency room/department visits related to the use of **Tramadol** in your country?

- Out of 44 responses, 16 country representatives were aware of any emergency room/department visits related to the use of Tramadol. The remaining 28 responses were unaware of such visits.

21. Are you aware of people presenting for drug dependence treatment due to the use of **Tramadol** in your country?

- Out of 47 responses, 20 country representatives were aware of people presenting for drug dependence treatment due to Tramadol use.
- In eleven countries, Tramadol dependence treatment was not reported and 16 answered “Do not know” (34%).
- Several responses refer to data from hospitals and/or specialized treatment centers.

Current Control

22. Is **Tramadol** currently controlled under national legislation in order to regulate its availability in your country?

- Out of 78 responses, the majority of countries have a national control legislation in place.
- In 19 countries no national legislation exists.

23. What is the scope of this control?

Production	N=36
Manufacture	N=37
Export	N=38
Import	N=50
Distribution	N=46
Use	N=35
Possession	N=30
Do not know	N=0
Other (please specify)	N=9

24. Is the current control a temporary provision in your country?

- Out of 56 responding countries, the current control is a temporary provision in six countries

25. Have there been challenges to implementing controls of **Tramadol** in your country?

- Out of 60 responding countries, challenges in implementing controls were reported by 17 countries
- In the remaining countries, no challenges in implementing controls were reported

Forensic laboratory capacity	N=4
Resources to implement and/or enforce	N=7
Expertise to detect or enforce	N=6
Other	N=4

26. Are there illicit activities involving **Tramadol**?

Manufacture of the substance by chemical synthesis	N=2
Manufacture of the substance by extraction from other products	N=1
Production of consumer products (dosage forms, packaging)	N=2
Trafficking	N=19
Diversion	N=19
Internet sales (seller or website located in your country)	N=4
Internet sales (from abroad to buyers in your country)	N=7
Internet sales (other or location of sellers and website unknown)	N=9
Sales to people who use Tramadol	N=18

Do not know	N=16
Other (please specify)	N=5

27. If **Tramadol** was to be placed under international control, will your country have the capacity to enforce the control at the national level?
- Out of 73 responses, 60 reported sufficient capacities
 - Nine country representatives answered “Do not know”
 - In four countries, the local capacities do not suffice to enforce control of Tramadol.
28. If **Tramadol** was to be placed under international control, does your country have the forensic laboratory capacity to analyse the substance (identification, purity)?
- Out of 72 responses, 60 reported sufficient capacities
 - In six countries the laboratory capacities do not suffice to analyse Tramadol.