

# Sniffing out in Luxembourg Assessing inhalant abuse

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In recent months there have been recurrent media reports about inhalant abuse, mainly focusing on isolated events in which children or teenagers were gravely injured. In the current study, we wanted to assess the genuine extent of inhalant abuse in the general population, and concurrently, the need of prevention work on this topic.

With this aim, we initiated a nationwide enquiry contacting various professionals in the fields of health and education working in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

	Total cards	
2700	sent out 5% returned	136
1892	Medical Doctors (MDs)	47
760	Teachers in primary schools	68*
35	Counselling services in secondary schools	20
13	Police districts	1
	* 1 invalid card dis	carde



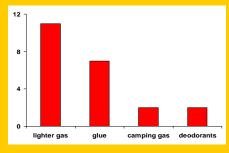
#### Main results

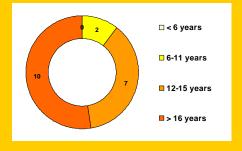
- The vast majority (n = 118) did not report any case of inhalant abuse.
- > Only 16 respondents stated encountering any inhalant abuse before.
- Overall, 34 individuals were implicated during the last year.

## Characteristics of the concerned population

- predominately masculine: 12 responses indicated male, only 7 female consumers
- ➤ equivalent number of responses concerning individual (n=8) or group (n=9) inhalant abuse
- nearly no reports concern children in primary school age

### **Substances involved**





### Conclusion

In contrast to the alarming scene depicted by the media, our results show very localised and isolated occurrences of inhalant abuse in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Furthermore, very few reports concern primary school pupils.

Well intentioned dissemination of information and hazard warnings can easily backfire and, instead of preventing inhalant abuse, turn into a publicity stunt for these products. On the basis of our results of this poll we refrained from launching a widespread information campaign and decided to publish instead a fact sheet for professionals working with children and teenagers.