

Consequences of criminalisation

The Dutch Khat market
before and after the ban

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Risk assessment qat 2007

Co-ordination Centre for the Assessment and
Monitoring of new drugs

(CAM)

“The use of khat poses little risk to the health of
the individual user, and it presents
no appreciable risk to Dutch society as a whole.

There is therefore no reason to
prohibit its use in the Netherlands”.

Khat, criminalisation & questions



Khat (Drug Act sched. II) in 2013:

- Pressure Justice & police
- Pressure moral entrepreneurs
 - > Negative social & medical harms
- Pressure local enforcers & politicians

Promise evaluation (2½Y) after ban

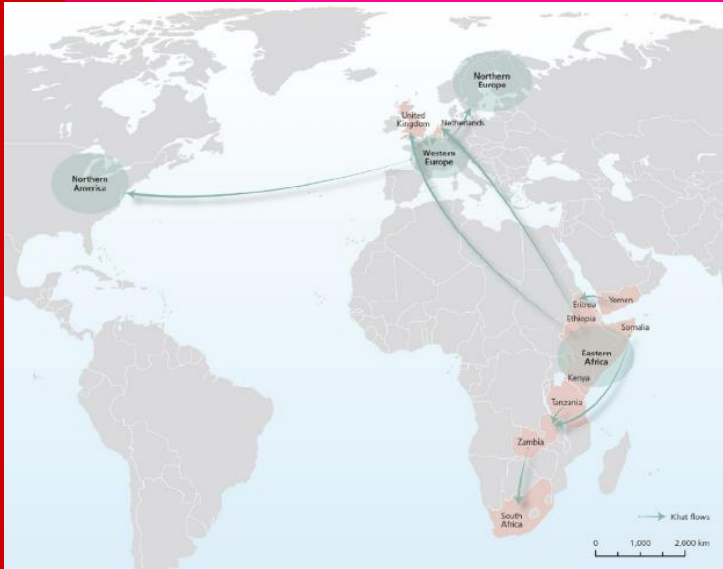
Main questions effects khat ban:

1. Has availability changed?
2. Changes in extent & numbers health problems as a result of the ban?
3. Side effects (health, soc. problems)?
4. Changes in municipalities?
5. How succesfull is enforcement?

Multiple Methods

- **Survey:** among Somalis (n=168) in 11 large municipalities (a third from totally 35.000)
 - comparison with survey (2011) before the ban
- **Focusgroups:** Somali professionals; users & women (n=20)
- **Local experts / officials** (n=27) in 11 municipalities
- **Enforcement & customs** (n=6) National Police, customs & Hit And Run Cargo (Schiphol)
- **Other sources:** reports, literature etc.

Khat (Catha edulis)



- Mild psycho active plant based stimulant (e.a. coca leaves)
- Globalisation of khat since '80's
- Int. Khat market concentrated in migrant communities (e.a. Eritrea, Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenia & Yemen)
- Minimal transformation product from farms (East Africa) to European market.
- Temporary psychoactive (5-7 days)

Khat control is 'grey area'



- Cathinon & Cathine under control UN convention psychotropic substances 1971
- Khat remains outside UN control
- Grey area between control and legal trade



- Prohibition of khat has created an opportunity for transnational crime (Sweden, Germany, Canada, North America)
- Tensions (Somali) community and law enforcement after police raids

Dutch khat market before the ban

- Rise of khat since 2005
- Import grows to 880.000 kilo (2010)
- Every week planes from Kenia
- Central distribution in 'khat city' Uithoorn
- Khat use in mafresh, at home or streets
- Fresh khat bundle (€3-4) to consumer in 2-3 days
- Public policy issues with Somali in half of the municipalities (n=11)
- Developing local policy > focus health intervention
- Few problems before the ban at local level



After the ban: HARC team Schiphol

(customs + royal military police)

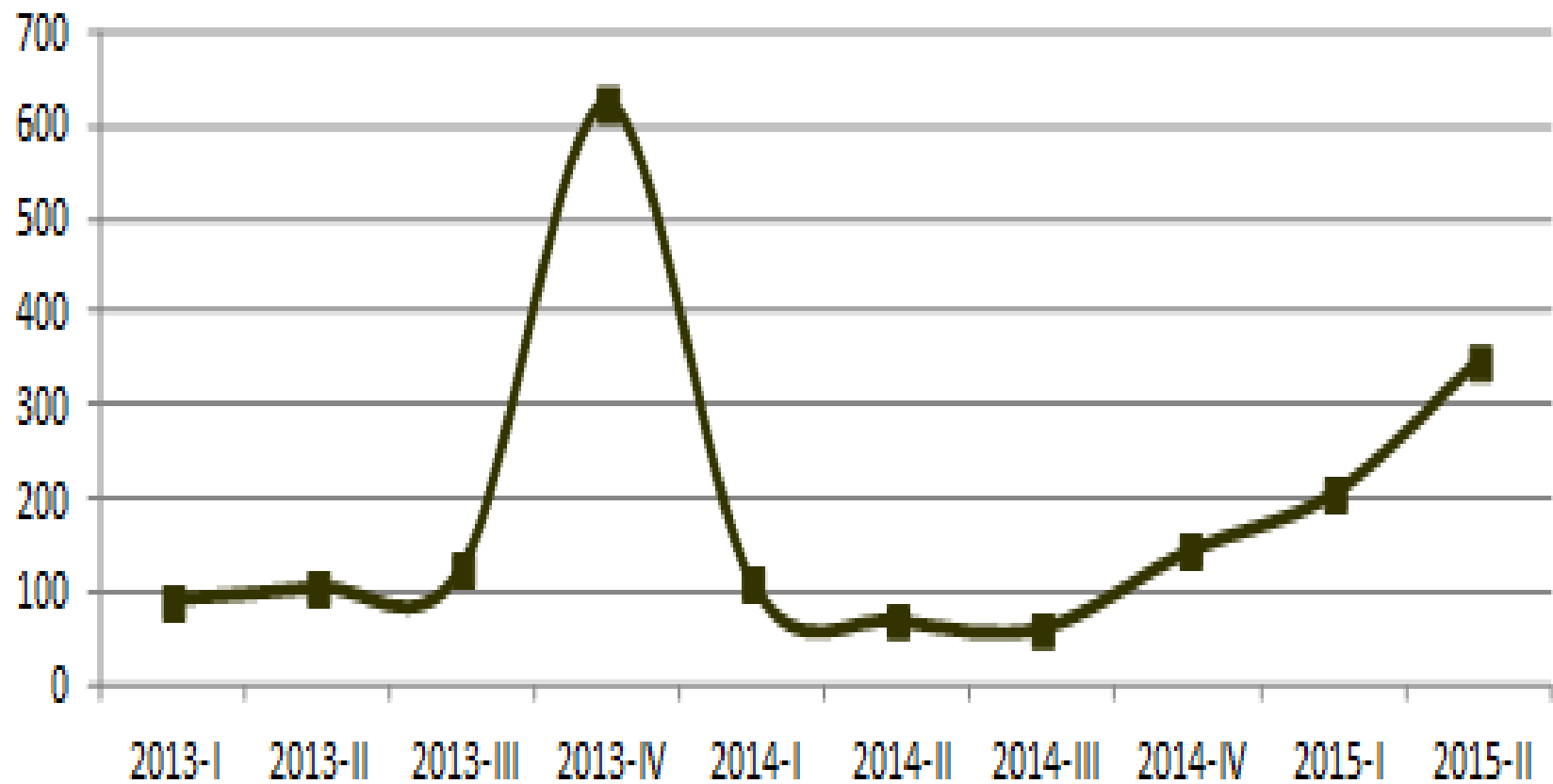


- Most capacity (cannabis, cocaine & synthetics)
- HARC (600 seized khat shipments totally 5000 kilo (2013-I to 2014-III))
- After ban in UK more seizures transport to US
- Less fresh and more dried khat

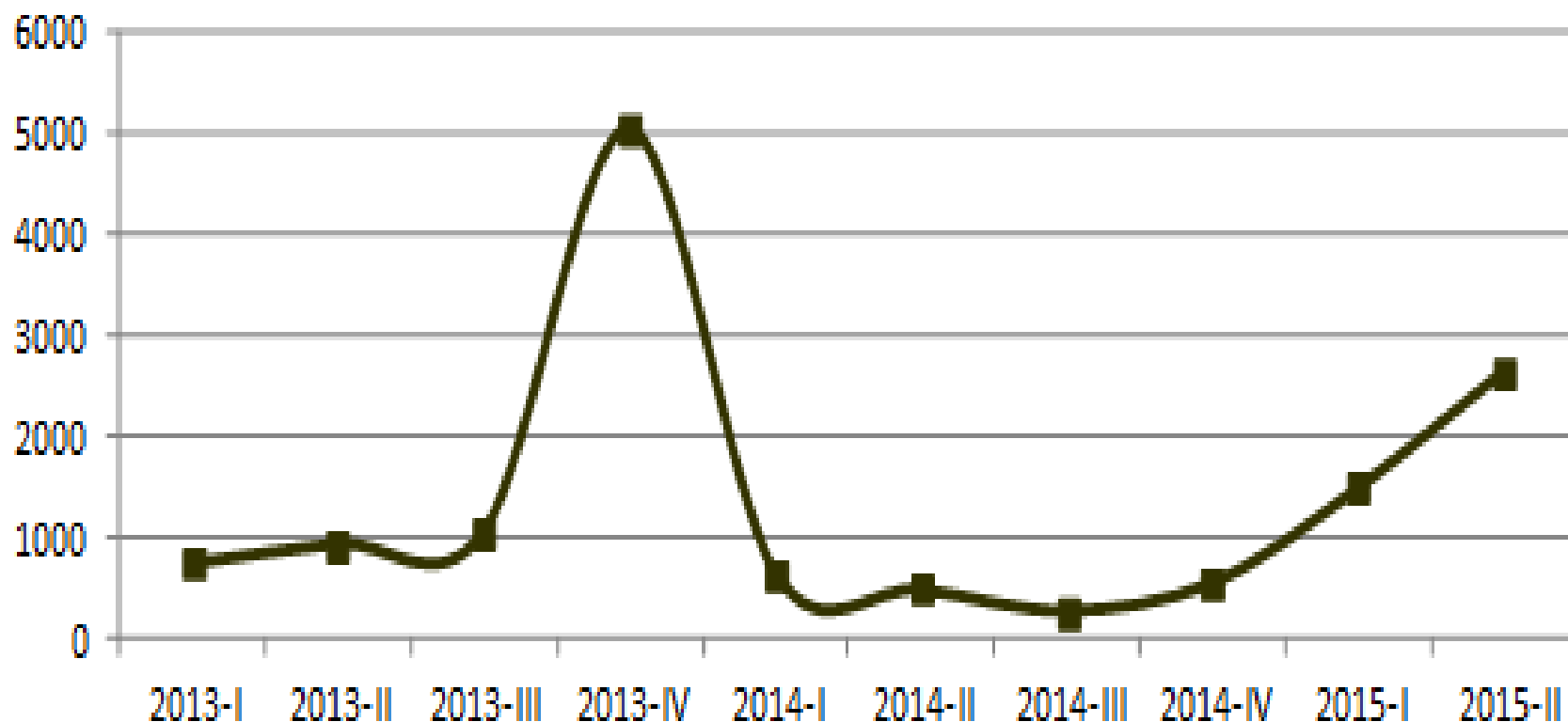
Profiling (customs 'pax')

- Passengers list
- 2013 (n=1); 2014 (n=4) 2015-II (n= 34)
- 1/3 = NL; others UK & Scandinavian

(HARC-team) seizures shipments of khat at Schiphol NUMBERS quarterly



(HARC-team) seizures shipments of khat at Schiphol KILOGRAMS quarterly



National police registration (2011-I to 2015-I)

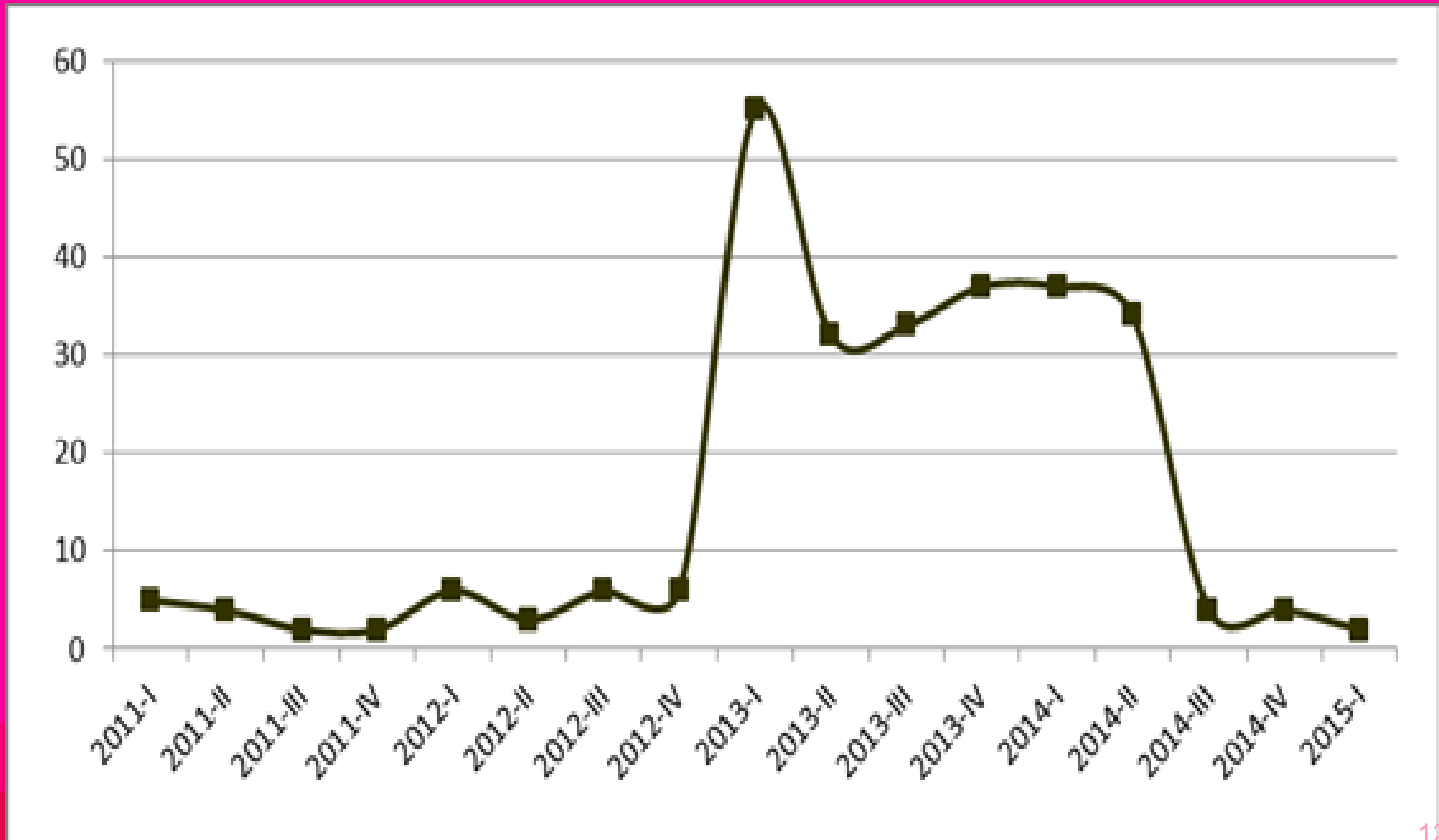


- Dozens of incidents per month between bans in NL and UK
- Circumstances & seizures unknown
- Media Analysis (police & internet)

Enforcement

- Detention of persons at terminals (UK), borders and highways
- Profile: Somali men (NL)
- Most khat seizures in traffic (suspect behaviour etc.)
- Few (khat) houses

After the ban: National Police (incidents registered in BVH seizures of khat quarterly)



Local policy, enforcement, side effects after ban (professionals in 11 municipalities)



- Less has changed in half of the Muni's
- Market goes underground
- Less openly khat related activities
- Less nuisance (alerts) in public domain
- Closing khat houses
- Khat use drops sharply
 - > 'Destroying' social networks
 - > Isolation (individuals) after the ban
- Khat more expensive, hard to get and lousy quality
- Are the moral entrepreneurs satisfied?

After the ban: users (n=168) & market



70% using less khat
Availability has changed:

- Khat harder to get (65%)
- less buying in khat houses, more deliverers

Price & quality:

- Tenfold for a bundle €32
- Bad quality(63%) or similar (36%)
- khat export takes much longer

Product:

- More dried khat or in powder
- khat parcels similar



Conclusions

- Dutch khat market has changed dramatically after the ban.
- **From enforcement perspective:** khat control is very effective. Bundle cost tenfold after the ban, overt distribution has vanished
- **From health perspective:** more positive because there are less frequent (recreational) users
- **From community perspective** mixed opinions:
 - > anti khat leage happy (less negative image
 - > number of people did not see it as a drug but as part of there culture and history

Discussion

The image shows three bundles of khat (Catha edulis) leaves and stems, tied with twine, lying on a dark, textured surface. The bundles are arranged vertically, with the stems pointing upwards. The leaves are green and the stems are reddish-brown.

In spite of governmental efforts, illegal drug markets largely evolves autonomously and hardly affects prevalence of use. Law enforcement efforts do not (always) influence the demand and supplyside.

Nevertheless Dutch khat market (on the short term) changes dramatically (e.g. price, quality, availability) and prevalence of use decreased

Does the khat prohibition further the integration, social inclusion and economic prosperity?