

REVIEW

A Review of the Russian Federation's Main Legal Regulations on Drug Abuse and Their Impact on Prevention

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Main Points

- Over one-fourth of the imprisoned population in the Russian Federation is punished for drug-related crimes.
- In spite of ongoing efforts by the Russian Federation and its severe punishments, the number of drug-related crimes either remains almost the same or shows a slight decrease.
- Severity of punishment alone neither affects drug-related crime rates significantly nor has any sufficient deterrent effect.
- Punishment certainty is more important than severity.

Abstract

It is demonstrated that policies, operational, and legal responses against drug abuse vary from country to country. In this context, the current and prospective efforts of the Russian Federation to combat drug abuse and its prevention methods need to be closely scrutinized. This is because the Russian Federation is no longer a member of the Council of Europe, and it is now unclear whether the Russian Federation will fulfill its obligations concerning drug abuse and, if so how it will fulfill them. Therefore, in this article, firstly, a brief analysis of the main legal regulations on drug abuse and its prevention methods for drug abuse which are currently applied in the Russian Federation will be provided. Then, in light of some official statistical data provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other sources, it will be discussed whether the existence of heavy fines and severe punishments enforced on perpetrators of drug-related crimes in the Russian Federation so far has had any sufficient deterrent effect. In light of such limited reliable data, it will be argued that the severity of punishments (e.g., receiving a custodial sentence of up to 20 years) alone neither affects drug-related crime rates significantly nor has any sufficient deterrent effect.

Keywords: Drug abuse, drug addiction, regulation, the Russian Federation

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Introduction

It is a historical fact that humans have been using drugs for a long time. Throughout recorded time, almost every society in the world has used one or more drugs to achieve certain desired physical or mental states or to experience relaxation and happiness (Courtwright, 2012; Gahlinger, 2004; Goode, 2012). So, the history of non-therapeutic use of drug dates back to before the rise of the modern state. Since the time of ancient Greek and medieval societies, there have been attempts to restrict the use

of drug to therapeutic purposes. For instance, medieval Muslim societies prohibited the non-therapeutic use of drugs and punished users of hashish as an intoxicant with up to 80 lashes (Aldrich, 2010).

Though every country works hard to solve the problem of drug abuse and minimize its effects on the mental and physical health of people, drug abuse remains one of the global problems of the modern world that needs to be addressed through international efforts. However, it is demonstrated that policies, operational, and legal responses against drug

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abuse vary from country to country, and there are differences in practice. Since each country's characteristics and experience are unique, we need to engage and learn from other countries (Mehroolhassani, et.al, 2019; UK, Home Office, 2014).

In this context, the current and prospective efforts of the Russian Federation against drug abuse and its prevention methods need to be closely scrutinized. This is because, in accordance with the Resolution of the European Court of Human Rights of 22 March 2022, the Russian Federation is no longer a member of the Council of Europe and ceased to be a High Contracting Party to the European Convention on Human Rights on 16 September 2022 (Resolution of the European Court of Human Rights). It is now unclear whether the Russian Federation will fulfill its obligations concerning drug abuse and, if so, how it will fulfill them. Therefore, in accordance with the scope and limitation of this journal, in this article, firstly, a brief analysis of the main legal regulations on drug abuse and its prevention methods currently applied in the Russian Federation will be provided. Then, in light of some official statistical data provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other sources, it will be discussed whether the existence of heavy fines and severe punishments enforced on the perpetrators of drug-related crimes in the Russian Federation so far have had any sufficient deterrent

effect. In other words, by considering the case of the Russian Federation, it will be discussed whether the assumption that more severe punishment creates greater deterrence (Bennett et al., 1996; Scheidegger and Rushford, 1999) is supported by official empirical data. In light of such limited reliable data, it will be argued that in the Russian Federation, severity of punishments (e.g., receiving a custodial sentence of up to 20 years) alone neither affects drug-related crime rates significantly nor has any sufficient deterrent effect.

Main Legal Regulations of the Russian Federation on Drug Abuse and Prevention

Russia, in terms of size, is the largest country in the world with a surface of 17,098,242 km², and according to the population census of 2024, on October 2024, 144.592.798 people are estimated to be residing on Russian territory (Russia, Federal State Statistics Service). As a party to the 3 international drug control conventions, which are namely the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, the Russian Federation has established a robust policy and legal framework, along with a solid institutional structure, to

Table 1.
Annual Drug Seizures in Tons by Drug Type

Year	Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (Excluding "ecstasy")	Cannabis Herb (Marijuana)	Cannabis Resin (Hashish)	Cocaine-Type
2017	0.30	12.35	1.12	0.44
2018	0.14	12.89	2.08	0.05
2019	0.04	10.10	2.79	0.52
2020		9.38	0.93	0.86
2021		12.18	2.21	0.87
2022		9.21	1.76	0.23

Source: <https://dataunodc.un.org/content/country-list>, DataUNODC, Country Profile, the Russian Federation.

Table 2.
Number of Treatments Provided, by Drug Class

Drug Class	Drug	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021
Amphetamine-type stimulants	Amphetamine-type stimulants	14,410	16,699	17,766	18,804	
Any drug	Any drug	496,000	459,155	423,391	401,233	
	Other substances not under int. control				54,977	
Cannabis-type drugs	Cannabis-type drugs	28,143	27,903	27,843	28,106	
Cocaine-type drugs	Cocaine-type drugs	72	70	73	80	
Opioids, including opiates and synthetic opioids	Opioids, including opiates and synthetic opioids	203,621	177,711	152,471	134,247	
Other drugs/psychoactive substances/ pharmaceutical products not listed above	Other drugs/psychoactive substances/ pharmaceutical products not listed above					63,579
Other miscellaneous	Multiple drugs	46,161		52,481		
Solvents and inhalants	Solvents and inhalants	22,362	7851			

Source: <https://dataunodc.un.org/dp-drug-use-treatment> DataUNODC, Drug Use- Treatment, the Russian Federation.

effectively manage drug control at national, regional, and international levels. Additionally, the Russian Federation has made significant improvements by enhancing its national anti-drug and anti-crime laws (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2003). Thus, Table 1 shows annual drug seizures by ton, by drug type, by year, and Table 2 shows the number of treatments provided by drug class.

In the Russian Federation, however, laws concerning the protection of citizens from drug abuse and forcing drug addicts to undergo compulsory treatment are derived from Articles 41 and 72 of the Russian Federation Constitution. According to article 41 of the Russian Federation Constitution:

- “1. Everyone shall have the right to health protection and medical care. Medical care in State and municipal health institutions shall be rendered to citizens free of charge at the expense of the appropriate budget, insurance premiums and other proceeds.
2. In the Russian Federation federal programmes for the protection and improvement of the health of the public shall be financed, measures shall be taken to develop State, municipal and private healthcare systems, and activities shall be encouraged which contribute to the improvement of human health, the development of physical education and sport, and ecological, sanitary and epidemiological well-being.
3. The concealment by officials of facts and circumstances, which pose a threat to the life and health of people, shall result in liability according to federal law.” (The Constitution of Russian Federation).

Similarly, article 72 (1/g) of the Constitution of the Russian Federation stipulates that coordination of healthcare issues—such as ensuring accessible and quality medical care, promoting public health, creating conditions for a healthy lifestyle, and fostering a culture of responsible health awareness among citizens, as well as social protection and security—falls under the joint jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and its constituent entities.

In the context of these constitutional bases, the main legal regulations of the Russian Federation on drug abuse and its prevention can be found in Federal Law No. 436 – FZ of 2010, on “Protection of Children from Harmful Information,” Federal Law No. 120-FZ on “the Fundamentals of the System for the Prevention of Child Neglect and Juvenile Delinquency,” Article 69 of the Family Act, article 30 of the Russian Civil Code, and the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. Details of all these main regulations will be discussed further below.

Federal Law No. 436 – FZ of 2010, Protection of Children from Harmful Information

This federal law aims to protect children from information that is harmful to their health and/or development, including information contained in products. From articles 7 to 10, the law classifies harmful information by taking into account different physical and intellectual development levels of children aged between 6 and 16. According to Article 5 (2) of this federal law, information harmful to the health and/or development of children, and therefore, prohibited for distribution among children, includes information that is

1. “inducing children to commit actions that pose a threat to their life and (or) health, including causing harm to their health, suicide, or the life and (or) health of other persons, or aimed at inducing or otherwise involving children in the commission of such actions;
2. capable of causing children to want to use narcotic drugs, psychotropic and (or) intoxicating substances, tobacco products, nicotine-containing products, alcoholic and alcohol-containing products, to take part in gambling, engage in prostitution, vagrancy or begging.” (Federal Law No. 436 – FZ of 2010, Protection of Children from Harmful Information)

The federal law authorizes the federal executive body, as designated by the Government of the Russian Federation, and makes it responsible for developing and implementing a unified state policy to protect children from harmful information and for producing a list of federal measures aimed at preventing the circulation of such harmful information (Article 4, (1.)).

Federal Law No. 120-FZ on the Fundamentals of the System for the Prevention of Child Neglect and Juvenile Delinquency

There is a great deal of concern about the increase in drug abuse among otherwise law-abiding people, particularly adolescents, in the Russian Federation. Over the years, more and more young people have been becoming victims of drug abuse and related crimes. Addiction, prostitution, and homelessness are frequently brought on by young people’s readiness to take drugs, which is a serious threat to public safety (UNODC Regional Office for Russia and Belarus, 2008). In this particular context, young people’s decision to take drugs for the first time reportedly arises from and is influenced by “curiosity, peer pressure/acceptance, ‘brotherhood,’ poor parental control, and a belief that parents and/or teachers fail to pay them sufficient attention” (UNODC Regional Office for Russia and Belarus, 2008).

In the Russian Federation, Federal Law No. 120-FZ on the Fundamentals of the System for the Prevention of Child Neglect and Juvenile Delinquency aims to address the problem of young drug abusers. Thus, article 5 of Federal Law No. 120 provides that in the Russian Federation, bodies and institutions of the system for the prevention of neglect and juvenile delinquency should carry out individual preventive work in relation to minors who use narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances without a doctor’s prescription or use intoxicating substances, alcoholic, and alcohol-containing products. According to this federal law, relevant bodies and institutions of the system have a duty to open rehabilitation centers that will provide health and social work services for these minors.

Article 30 of the Civil Code of the Russian Federation

In the Russian Federation, the number of drug and alcohol addicts remains high, and the survival capacity of drug and alcohol addicts is very limited. In 2020, 18,013 people overdosed on illicit drugs and 7366 died as a result, which is a 16% increase compared to the number of deaths that occurred in 2019 (Sárosi, 25 February 2022, cited in Hellman, 2022). Due to the high number of drug and alcohol addicts, the Russian Federation applies article 30 of the Civil Code to restrict the active capacity to

protect them. According to article 30 of the Civil Code of the Russian Federation entitled “Restriction of the Citizen’s Active Capacity”

“The active capacity of the citizen, who as a result of his abuse of alcohol or drug addiction has plunged his family into a precarious financial position, may be restricted by the court in conformity with the procedure, laid down by the procedural legislation. He shall be put under the guardianship” (the Civil Code of the Russian Federation).

Since, in Russia, many drug addicts put themselves and their families into financially very tough positions, Russian courts have many cases before them for the appointment of legal guardians or trustees for drug addicts.

Article 69 of the Family Code of the Russian Federation

Since children of families that suffer from chronic alcoholism or drug addiction may potentially become addicted as well, the Russian Federation has amended article 69 of the Family Code and made it possible to deprive parents who suffer from chronic alcoholism or drug addiction of their parenthood. According to this article, if one of the parents suffers from chronic alcoholism or drug addiction, the court may deprive him/her of his/her parenthood. Here, for the deprivation of parenthood, courts do not need to follow the procedure cited above and regulated by the Civil Code of the Russian Federation, and the courts can also deprive parenthood even in cases where one of the parents has limited active capacity.

Parents who are deprived of their parenthood lose all rights based on the fact of their kinship with children, including the right to receive maintenance for him/her (article 71 (1) and 87 of the Family Code), and also the right to privileges and state allowances established for citizens with children (Article 71 (1) of the Family Code).

Russian Criminal Code

In the Russian Federation, roots of current criminal law provisions on combating drug trafficking go back to 1999 when the Criminal Code was put into force. These provisions were amended in 2012 and 2024. These provisions are now set out in Chapter 25 (from article 228 to 245) of the Russian Criminal Code entitled “Crimes Against Human Health and Public Morality”. Drug trafficking crimes are specifically set out in articles 228, 228.1, 228.2, 228.3, 228.4, 229, 229.1, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, and 234.1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. However, the majority of drug crimes regulated in Russia are prosecuted under articles 228 and 228.1 of the Russian Criminal Code. To specify, 95% of all drug crimes registered and prosecuted in Russia in 2013 – 2014 fall into the scope of articles 228 and 228.1 of the Criminal Code (Travova, 2023).

As explained above, in the Russian Federation, legal basis of laws concerning protection of citizens from drug abuse is derived from articles 41 and 72 of the Russian Federation’s Constitution, where right to health is guaranteed. Therefore, the object matter of these crimes is to protect public health. According to Tsepelev et al (2021), the substances and means that are subject to specific regulations are the subjects of these offenses, which are strong and poisonous compounds. A legal

definition of strong and poisonous compounds does not exist. However, the Government of the Russian Federation has approved a list of these substances in Decree No. 964 “On the Approval of Lists of Potent and Poisonous Substances for the Purposes of Article 234 and other Articles of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.”

According to the criminal code, the illegal acquisition, storage, transportation, and selling of plants containing narcotics or psychotropic substances are also punishable offenses. The severity of the penalty under these articles, however, depends on the purpose of the perpetrator (drug usage or drug sale) and the weight of the drug seized, which is classified by quantities as “significant,” “large,” or “especially large.”

For the purpose of Articles 228, 228.1 and 229 of the Russian Criminal Code, “large scale” means a quantity of a narcotic drug, psychotropic substance, or its analog exceeding the average one-time consumption dose by 10 or more times, and “especially large scale” by 50 or more times. The quantity of average one-time doses of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for the purposes of Article 228, as well as Articles 228.1 and 229 of the Code, shall be endorsed by the Government of the Russian Federation. For the purposes of Articles 228 and 228.1 Table 3 below shows quantity of significant, large, and very large scale doses for narcotic drugs in the Russian Federation.

In accordance with the aforementioned regulations, however, the weight of the composition of the mixture—rather than the weight of the pure narcotic substance—determines the quantity of drugs confiscated. As a result, for instance, 3 g of heroin will be deemed to be found if a police officer finds, or say, 1 g of heroin is combined with 2 g of sugar. Using such a calculation system, as argued by Travova (2023:1146), provides a conducive environment to cheat in the performance evaluation of police officers. As explained, the measurement of the number of confiscated drugs is the main factor while determining criminal responsibility for illegal drug trafficking (Levinson, 2008).

Table 3.

Quantities of drugs (in grams) for purposes of Articles 228 and 228.1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation

	Significant	Large	Especially Large
Marijuana	6	100	100,000
Hashish	2	25	10,000
Hashish oil	0.4	5	1000
Papaver	20	500	100,000
Poppy straw	1	5	500
Methadone	0.5	2.5	1000
Heroin	0.5	2.5	500
Amphetamine	0.2	1	200
Desomorphine	0.05	0.25	10
Cocaine	0.5	5	1500
Synthetic cannabinoids	0.05	0.25	50

Source: Travova, 2023: 1165

In this context, article 228 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation provides that

1. "Illegal acquisition, storage, transportation, making or processing of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances or analogues thereof on a large scale without the purpose of sale - shall be punishable by a fine in the amount of up to 40 thousand roubles, or in the amount of the wage or salary, or any other income of the convicted person for a period of up to three months, or by corrective labour for a term of up to two years, or by deprivation of liberty for a term of up to *three years*."
2. The same deeds committed on an especially large scale - shall be punishable by deprivation of liberty for a term of *three to 10 years* with or without a fine in the amount of up to 500 thousand roubles or in the amount of the wage or salary, or any other income of the convicted person for a period of up to three years." (The article 228 of the Criminal Code of Russian Federation)

When it comes to illegally producing, selling or sending narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, or analogues article 228.1 of the Criminal Code provides that:

1. "Illegal making, sale or sending of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances or analogues thereof - shall be punishable by deprivation of liberty for a term of *four to eight years*."
2. The same deeds committed:
 - a. by a group of persons in a preliminary conspiracy;
 - b. on a large scale;
 - c. in respect of a known minor by a person who has attained the age of 18 years -

shall be punishable by deprivation of liberty for a term of *five to 12 years* with or without a fine in the amount of up to 500 thousand roubles or in the amount of the wage or salary, or any other income of the convicted person for a period of up to three years.

3. The deeds provided for by Parts One and Two of this Article which are committed:
 - a. by an organized group;
 - b. by a person through his official position;
 - c. in respect of a person known to be under 14 years old;
 - d. on an especially large scale

shall be punishable by deprivation of liberty for a term of *eight to 20 years* with or without a fine in the amount of up to one million roubles or in the amount of the wage or salary, or any other income of the convicted person for a period of up to five years." (Article 228.1 of the Criminal Code)

Discussion

It is estimated that over one-fourth of the imprisoned population in the Russian Federation is punished for drug-related

Table 4.
Persons Held in Prisons, Penal Institutions, or Correctional Institutions for Drug Trafficking and Possession in the Russian Federation

The year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Classification of crime:					
Drug possession	54,067	52,872	47,927	40,546	32,278
Drug trafficking	84,087	84,287	85,182	82,592	80,036

Source: UNODC <https://dataunodc.un.org/dp-prisons-persons-held>

crimes (Hellman, 2022; Knorre, 2020). The limited data and statistics provided by the UNODC suggest similar findings. For instance, in 2017, the number of prisoners serving their sentences for only drug-trafficking and drug possession was over 136,000 which represents almost 23% of the entire Russian prison population (602,176). Table 4 shows the number of prisoners serving their sentences for drug possession and drug trafficking, and Table 5 shows the number of total prison population in the Russian Federation by year.

So, the question that needs to be asked here is why, in spite of ongoing efforts by the Russian Federation and severe punishments enforced on perpetrators of drug-related crimes, the number of drug-related crimes does not decrease dramatically. It either remains almost the same or shows a slight decrease.

Finding a good balance between certainty and severity in punishment is crucial. It is evident from published tests and empirical data that the enforcement of punishments is more decisive than severity. Moreover, available data suggest that low punishment probability makes the sentence or punishment inefficient even though punishment severity is very high (Cremene et al., 2014). Research and empirical data provided by Von Hirsch et al. (1999) provides 4 criteria which seem to be necessary conditions for severe punishment to have a deterrent effect. First of all, potential offenders must think there is a high probability of being detected for criminal sanctions to have any deterrent effect. Secondly, potential offenders should be aware that there is a significant or increased risk of being convicted and receiving a heavy punishment. Thirdly, potential offenders should believe that the penalty will be applied to them if caught, and finally, potential offenders should consider the risk of penalty when deciding whether to violate the rule and commit a crime. Each of these necessary preconditions needs to be considered and met for successful deterrence in the context of drug-related crimes and specifically in the prevention of re-offending by drug addicts.

The general perception about the risk of being caught, and if caught, the perception that a severe punishment is going to be applied without exception is important in order to make severe punishment effective (Cremene et al., 2014). When the risk or

Table 5.
Total Number of Persons Held in Prisons, Penal Institution or Correctional Institutions in the Russian Federation

The year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Prison population total	701,909	677,827	671,649	646,085	630,155	602,176	563,166	523,928	482,851	465,896	439,453

Source: UNODC <https://dataunodc.un.org/dp-prisons-persons-held>

Table 6.
The Bribery Rate Per 100,000 Population in the Russian Federation and Selected Countries

Country	Category	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Algeria	Corruption: bribery				0.21	0.23	0.23	0.22	
Morocco	Corruption: bribery		20.36	53.61	59.15		64.99	43.83	54.42
Mexico	Corruption: Bribery		1.30	0.93	2.03	2.83	2.35	2.24	1.70
Uruguay	Corruption: bribery	0.21	0.23	0.41	0.38	0.61	0.61	0.41	0.41
Uzbekistan	Corruption: bribery	6.47	5.51	5.78	3.70	3.25	0.47	0.58	
Azerbaijan	Corruption: Bribery		0.44	0.33	0.78	0.79	1.16	1.82	
Cyprus	Corruption: bribery	2.27	3.17	2.48	1.31	1.14	0.89	0.96	1.84
Israel	Corruption: Bribery				1.01	1.06	1.76	0.51	0.82
Bulgaria	Corruption: bribery	1.15	1.82	1.94	2.35	1.84	1.69	1.47	1.55
The Russian Federation	Corruption: bribery	10.88	11.06	9.06	9.29	10.46	11.04		
Albania	Corruption: bribery	7.42	8.89	10.31	9.52	10.61	5.62	9.21	17.38
Greece	Corruption: bribery			1.11	2.17	1.80	0.61	2.42	1.26
Italy	Corruption: bribery	0.91	0.87	0.89	0.68	0.77	0.69	0.58	0.60
Montenegro	Corruption: bribery		3.16	0.63	0.63	0.16	0.95	1.27	1.91
Germany	Corruption: bribery	10.53	7.90	4.66	4.79	4.99	5.00	6.13	5.91

Source: UNODC Corruption and economic crime <https://dataunodc.un.org/dp-crime-corruption-offences>

certainty of being caught for a wrongful act is high, socially and morally unacceptable behaviors are less likely to occur. However, offenders generally do not consider, or if consider they underestimate, the risk of being caught. Instead, they think that they will avoid the mistakes that others may make (Redding, 2006:11; Robinson & Darley, 2004). As Von Hirsch et al (1999) argue, potential offenders tend to have much more information about the risk of being caught than the severity of the sentence. According to studies, both the public and those who commit crimes frequently have little knowledge of possible punishments (Redding, 2006, Robinson & Darley, 2004). Furthermore, punishment alludes to an unforeseen circumstance that wrongdoers may disregard. This means that strictly implemented sentencing guidelines, mechanisms, and procedures may be effective if they are combined with a significantly increased probability of conviction (Von Hirsch et al., 1999).

Lastly, Redding (2006) contended that the perceived costs of non-compliance with laws must be greater than the perceived advantages of breaching them in order for criminal penalties to have a deterrent impact. However, it needs to be mentioned that it is particularly challenging to eradicate dishonest behaviors in societies where there is widespread systemic corruption since poor habits are somehow accepted as morally right and even “normal” (Cremene et al., 2014). The bribery rate per 100,000 people in the Russian Federation remains high (see Table 6) and one can easily consider that there are other social and economic factors that weaken the implementation of criminal law provisions. Therefore, the severity of punishment (e.g., receiving a custodial sentence of up to 20 years) alone neither affects drug-related crime rates significantly nor has any sufficient deterrent effect. Severe sentencing policies might possibly have an impact if combined with much higher probabilities of conviction, certainty of apprehension, and implementation of sentence.

Conclusion

In light of the necessary preconditions explained above, severe punishments or laws cannot act as a deterrent if the targeted population is unaware that laws exist or does not believe that laws or sentences will be implemented. Moreover, as seen in the case of Russia, in societies where the enforcement of the law is prevented through the systematic practice of bribery or corruption, severe punishments will not have a deterrent effect.

Similarly, in societies in which implementation of sentences is interrupted through systematic practice of pardons or amnesties or in which soft or unconditional parole rules exist for offenders, the punishment will not have a deterrent effect, and it will not prevent reoffending. The same conclusion is also correct for culturally motivated crimes. When it comes to culturally motivated crimes such as honor killing, no matter how severe or light, punishment may not well serve as a deterrent (Doğan, 2013, 2020). However, this article has its own limitations in terms of available reliable data and, therefore, it would be implausible to claim that it provides the whole picture of circumstances that explain why the existence of severe punishments enforced on perpetrators of drug-related crimes does not have any sufficient deterrent effect in the Russian Federation. With these caveats, this article contributes to the literature on whether more severe punishment creates greater deterrence in the context of drug abuse and its prevention.

Data Availability Statement: The corresponding author can provide the data supporting the study's results upon request.

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