

## Summary

**Background:** Typical users of cocaine are socially integrated individuals of higher education, higher income. They use it recreationally. It is a hidden population standing outside the range of addiction treatment. According to population research cocaine users in the Czech Republic create a minor subpopulation of drug users whose characteristics and behavior have not been adequately described.

**Aims:** The primary aim is to describe patterns of cocaine use among recreational users using qualitative research methods. The secondary aim is to track how cocaine users value this drug in their lives.

**Methods:** The concept of the study is based on qualitative research methodology. The snowball sampling was used as a selection method. Chosen respondents were given semi-structural interviews. The study sample contains 11 respondents, 7 men and 4 women in average age 26,7 (the youngest 20 years old, the oldest 33 years old) with a predominance of secondary or higher education. Data were analyzed according to the procedures of grounded theory.

**Results:** Cocaine was consumed mainly during social events, mostly in night clubs in groups of friends. The predominant form of use was intranasal application with average frequency of 3-5 doses per party in the time range of single doses of 30-60 min. Cocaine was always combined with alcohol. The respondents perceived cocaine as a means of distraction, relaxation or hobby. Most of them admitted somatic, psychological or social complications, some are regularly confronted with symptoms of craving. Half of the respondents have significantly bigger experience with drugs than general population.

**Conclusion:** This study uses available information to describe patterns of recreational cocaine users predominately among young adults during nightlife. The results may be methodological inspiration for other similar studies and serve as a theoretical basis for a deeper explanation of the cocaine usage problem in the Czech Republic.

**Keywords:** cocaine, recreational drug use, patterns of drug use, qualitative research