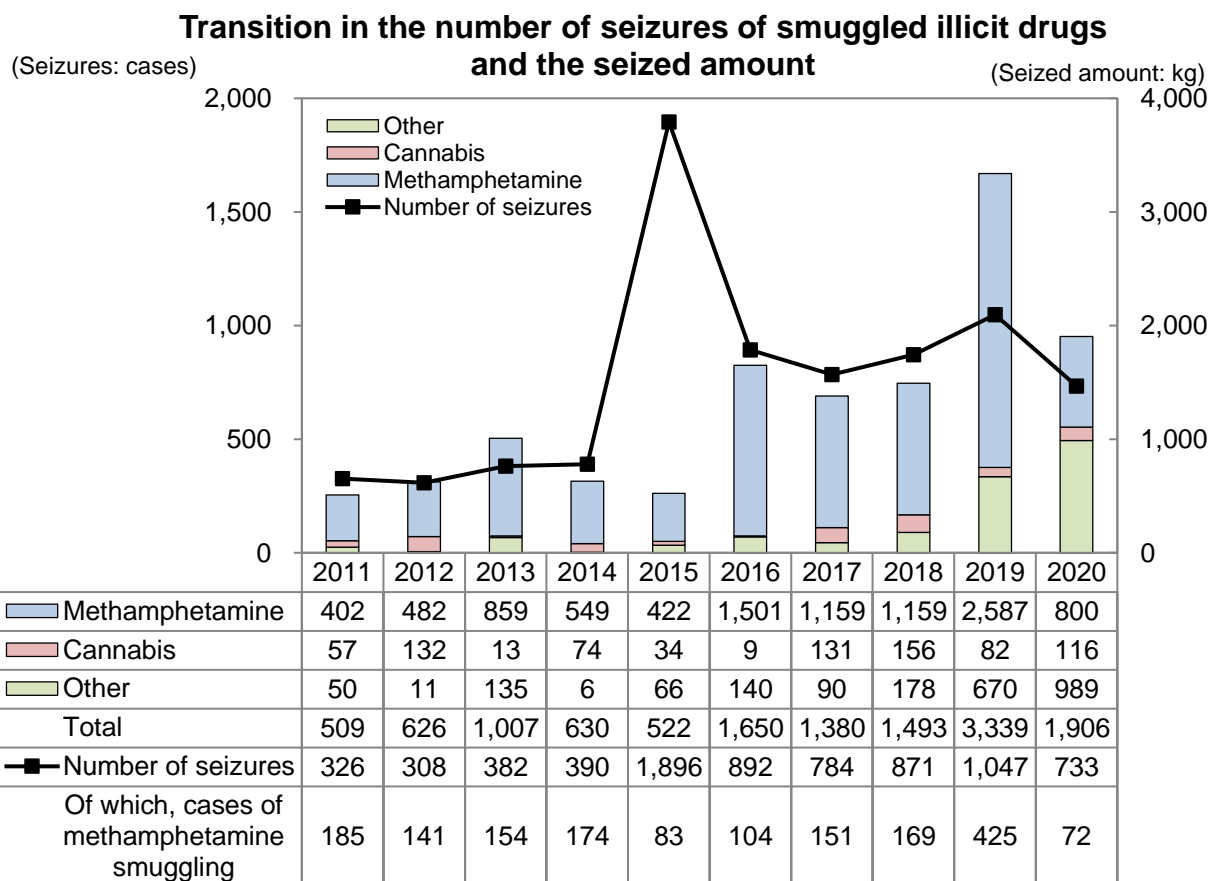


I. TRENDS IN ILLICIT DRUGS SMUGGLING

1. Seizures of Smuggled Illicit Drugs

The total number of seizures of smuggled illicit drugs*¹ during the one-year period from January to December of 2020 was 733 (down by 30% from the previous year), and the total amount of seized illicit drugs*^{2,3} was approx. 1,906 kg (down by 43% (id.)). However, the seized amount exceeded 1 ton for the fifth consecutive year, recording the third largest amount, at close to 2 tons. The situation has remained serious.

- * 1 "Illicit drugs" refers to methamphetamine, cannabis, opium, narcotics (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, etc.), psychotropic substances and designated substances.
- * 2 "The total amount of seized illicit drugs" excludes tablet formed drugs.
- * 3 The seized amount excludes those whose weights, etc. are not defined. The same applies hereinafter.



(Note) "Others" includes opium, narcotics (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, etc.), psychotropic substances and designated substances. Figures for 2020 are provisional. Figures for 2019 are those from January to December 2019. The same applies hereinafter.

(1) Methamphetamine

< Seizures of smuggled methamphetamine >

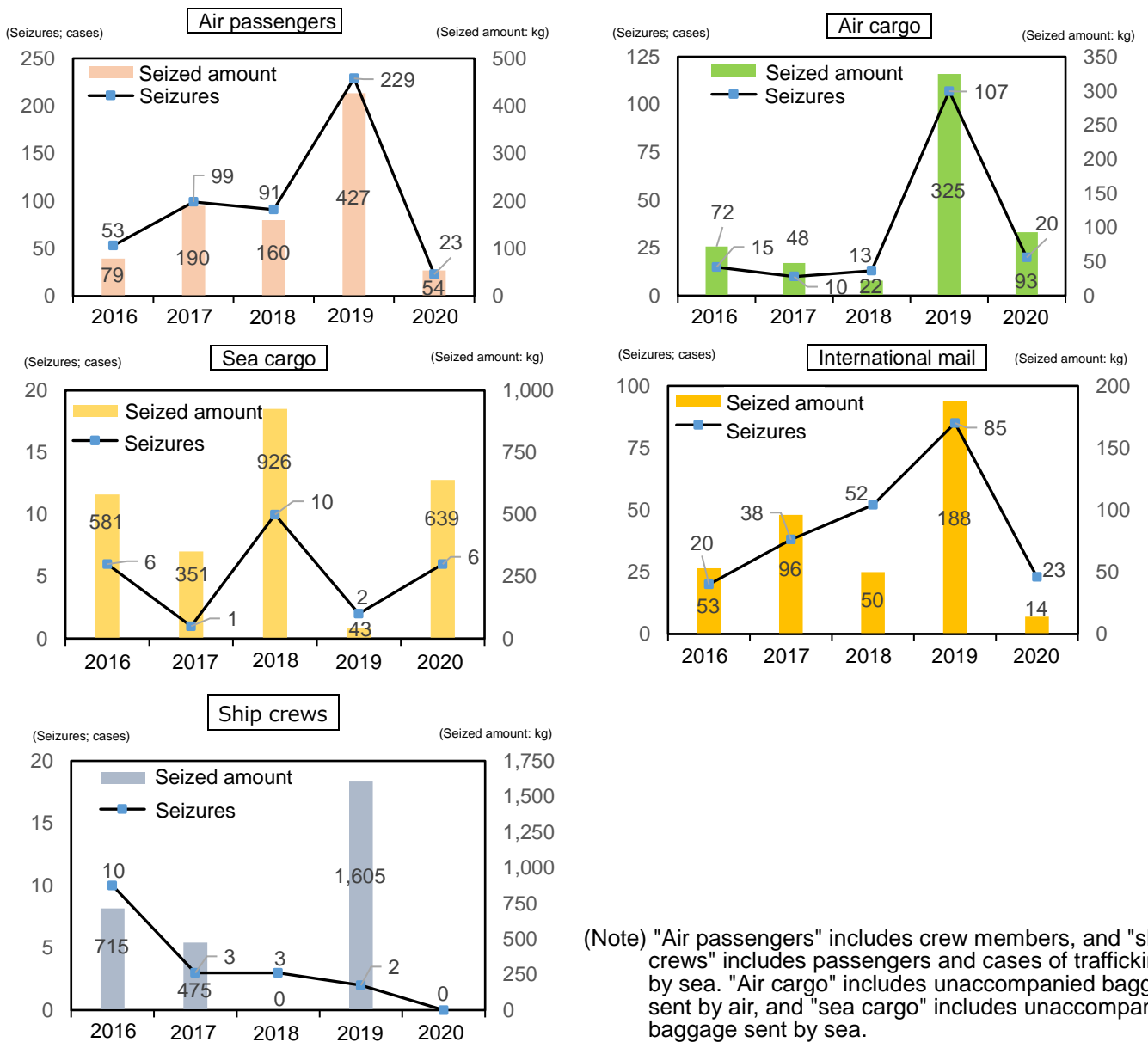
The number of seizures of smuggled methamphetamine during the one-year period from January to December of 2020 was 72 cases (down by 83% from the previous year), and the amount of seized methamphetamine also decreased significantly to approx. 800 kg (down by 69% (id.)).

Seized methamphetamine is equivalent to approximately 26.68 million doses, worth approximately 51.2 billion yen in end price.

By mode of transport, the amount of methamphetamine seized from sea cargo increased approx. 15-fold from the previous year, partly due to a large scale seizure, and accounted for approx. 80% of the overall total.

In the meantime, smuggling cases by air passengers, air cargo, international mail, and ship crews all decreased both in terms of the number of seizures and seized amount.

Transition in the number of seizures and seized amount

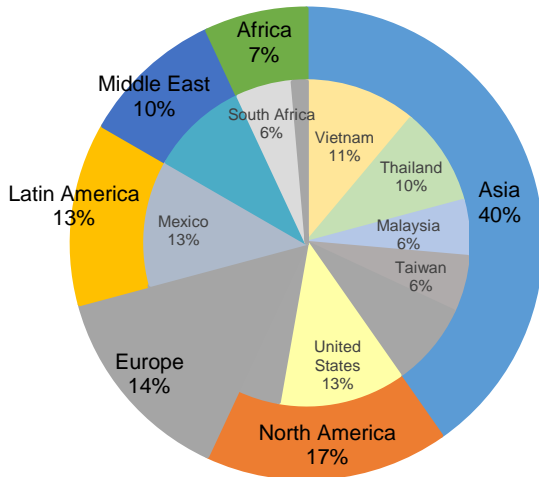


(Note) "Air passengers" includes crew members, and "ship crews" includes passengers and cases of trafficking by sea. "Air cargo" includes unaccompanied baggage sent by air, and "sea cargo" includes unaccompanied baggage sent by sea.

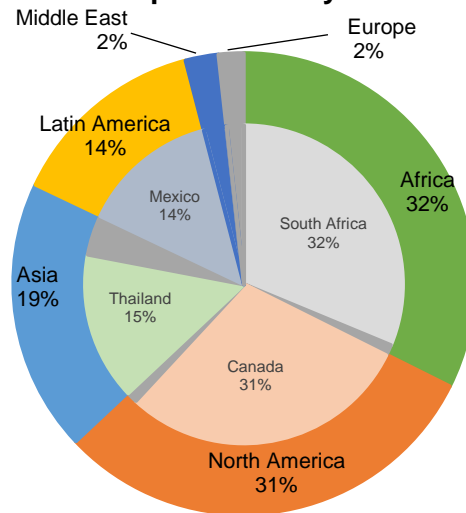
By source, Asia (40%) and North America (17%) accounted for the majority of the overall total.

In terms of the seized amount, Africa accounted for 32%, North America 31%, and Asia 19%. These three areas accounted for approx. 80% of the overall total.

Number of seizures of smuggled methamphetamine by source



Amount of seized methamphetamine by source



< Major seizures of smuggled methamphetamine >

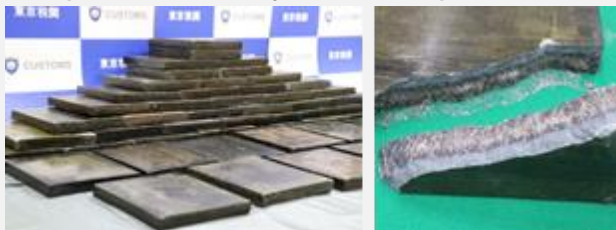
[Case 1]
 Customs seized 239 kg of methamphetamine concealed in sea cargo (falsely labeled as sweet shrimp) from Canada.
 (Jan. 2020; Tokyo Customs)



[Case 2]
 Customs seized 237 kg of methamphetamine concealed in sea cargo (plastic injection machine) from South Africa.
 (Oct. 2020; Yokohama Customs)



[Case 3]
 Customs seized 113 kg of methamphetamine concealed in sea cargo (stone plate for steak) from Thailand.
 (Mar. 2020; Tokyo Customs)



[Case 4]
 Customs seized a total of 22 kg of methamphetamine concealed in suitcases for four passengers who arrived at Narita Airport from Mexico.
 (Sep. 2020; Yokohama Customs)



(2) Cannabis

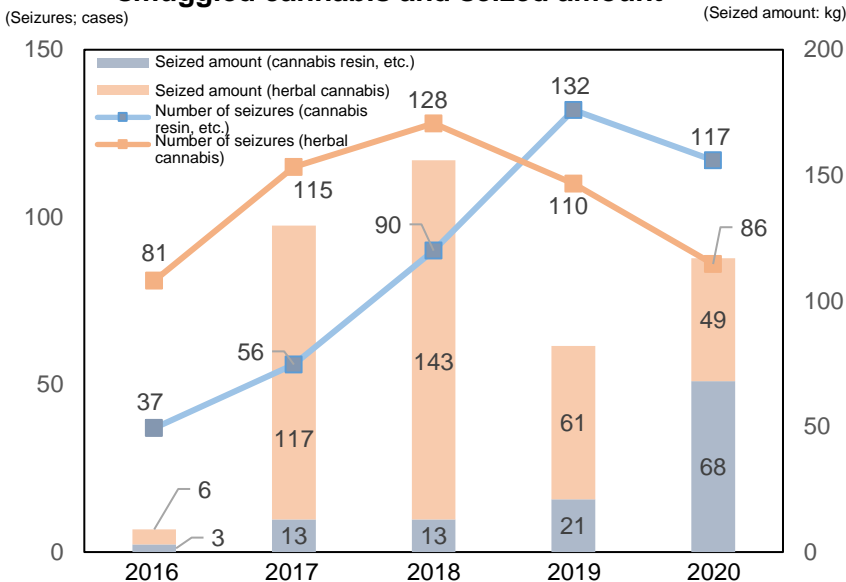
< Seizures of smuggled cannabis >

The number of seizures of smuggled cannabis during the one-year period from January to December of 2020 was 203 cases (down by 16% from the previous year), while the seized amount increased by 42% from the previous year to approx. 116 kg.

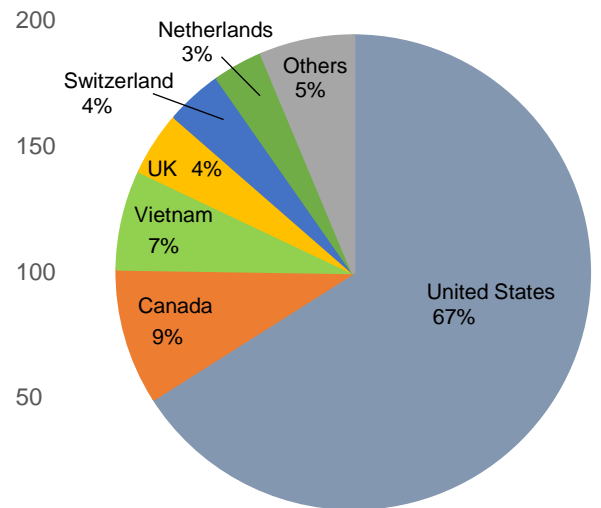
The number of seizures and the seized amount both decreased for herbal cannabis, but the seized amount increased for cannabis resin, etc. (including cannabis products, such as cannabis liquid and cannabis sweets, in addition to cannabis resin) (approx. 68 kg [increased approx. 3.2-fold (id.)]).

By source, North America accounted for approx. 80% of the overall total (67% from the United States and 9% from Canada).

Transition in the number of seizures of smuggled cannabis and seized amount



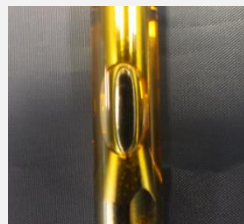
Number of seizures by source (2020)



< Major seizures of smuggled cannabis >

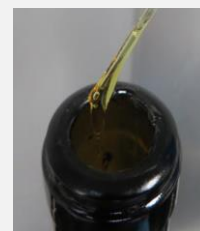
[Case 5]

Customs seized **approx. 5 g of cannabis liquid** concealed in international mail from the United States.
(Sep. 2020; Osaka Customs, etc.)



[Case 6]

Customs seized **approx. 9 kg of cannabis liquid** conceal in air cargo (wine bottles) from the United States.
(Feb. 2020; Tokyo Customs)



(3) Narcotics

< Seizures of smuggled narcotics >

The number of seizures of smuggled narcotics (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, etc.) during the one-year period from January to December of 2020 decreased to 163 cases (down by 22% from the previous year), but the seized amount increased to approx. 821 kg (up by 25% (id.)) and to approx. 90,000 tablets (up by 48% (id.)).

The number of seizures of smuggled cocaine almost halved to 27 cases (down by 48% (id.)), but the seized amount increased to approx. 818 kg (up by 28% (id.)).

As a cause of the increase in the seized amount, a large-scale seizure of approx. 722 kg, the largest amount ever, can be cited [see Case 7].

The number of seizures increased for MDMA (74 cases [up by 10% (id.)]) and the seized amount also increased to approx. 90,000 tablets (up by 48% (id.)) and to approx. 2 kg in other forms (increased approx. 4.3-fold (id.)).

< Major seizures of smuggled narcotics >

[Case 7] (Largest ever seized amount for cocaine)

Customs seized approx. 722 kg of cocaine concealed in sea cargo from Ecuador.

(Apr. 2020; Yokohama Customs)



[Case 8]

Customs seized approx. 10,000 tablets of MDMA concealed in a suitcase of a passenger who arrived at Fukuoka Airport from the Netherlands.

(Feb. 2020; Moji Customs)



(4) Designated Substances

< Seizures of smuggled designated substances > <Major seizures of smuggled designated substances >

The number of seizures of smuggled designated substances during the one-year period from January to December of 2020 increased to 293 cases (up by 78% from the previous year), and the seized amount increased to approx. 168 kg (increased approx. 12-fold (i.d.)).

A large amount of smuggled Sivagus was seized and this case increased the overall total [see Case 9].

[Case 9]

Customs seized a total of approx. 23,000 gas cylinders containing dinitrogen monoxide (Sivagus) concealed in international mail from China.

(Jan. etc. 2020; Yokohama Customs)



2. Influences of Illicit Drug Abuse

Methamphetamine and narcotics significantly harm the mental and physical health of people who abuse them, make them unable to live like human beings, or even cause deaths.

Hallucinations or delusions due to the illicit drug abuse may lead to heinous crimes, such as murder or arson, or traffic accidents in some cases. The abuse of illicit drugs may thus cause irredeemable damage not only to abusers themselves but also to the people around them and to society as a whole in the end.

(1) Mental and physical influences

The abuse of methamphetamine and other illicit drugs fatally destroys abusers' mental and physical health. Major organs are subject to serious adverse influences listed as follows, which may even cause death in the worst case.

- Brain: Brain atrophy and brain hemorrhage (memory deterioration and senility symptoms)
- Eyes: Optic nerve disorder and fundus hemorrhage (decreased vision and loss of sight)
- Bronchi: Mucosal abnormality (bronchitis)
- Lungs: Mucosal abnormality (lung cancer)
- Stomach: Gastric mucosal abnormality and bleeding (gastric pain, nausea, and emesis)
- Bone marrow: Red blood cell dysplasia (anemia)

The abuse of illicit drugs hinders normal brain development and worsens abusers' mental balance. Abusers may temporarily feel to be clear-headed or have nervous excitement, but will be overwhelmed by a sense of exhaustion or a feeling of fatigue, and will eventually have hallucinations and delusions.

(2) Influences on surrounding people

The abuse of illicit drugs not only exerts influences on individual abusers but also causes damage to the people around them and society as a whole. One of the representative adverse influences is violence. Long-term abuse of illicit drugs causes disturbance of perception, decreased appetite, emotional disorder, hallucinations and strong paranoia, due to which abusers often use violence on their family members or develop abnormal

behavior, such as carrying a weapon all the time. Family members and people around them are swayed by such behavior and are forced to live with fear and suffering.

The high prices of illicit drugs often make abusers heavily debt-ridden, leading to the destruction of families or failure of lives, or triggering minors to take money from the home. The abuse of illicit drugs thus also causes serious economic problems.

Furthermore, the abuse of illicit drugs triggers various offenses. There seems no end to the heinous crimes, such as murder, arson, captivity, and injury, caused by hallucinations, delusions or flashbacks,* or theft just to get money for purchasing drugs.

Additionally, it is also a serious social problem that money paid by illicit drug abusers becomes the source of funds for international narcotics crime organizations and organized crime groups in Japan. In this manner, the influences of abuse of illicit drugs threaten people's lives on a broad scale from various aspects.

(*) Once a person develops a hallucination, delusion or other symptoms of mental illness due to the abuse of illicit drugs, even if the person superficially seems to have recovered through treatment, his/her base prone to mental disorders remains and something may easily trigger a mental disorder, such as a hallucination or delusion, after the person stopped the drug abuse and resumed his/her normal life. This is called a flashback, which may be caused by a trivial stimulus such as drinking alcohol or mental stress.

Refer to Japan Customs' Website:

<https://www.customs.go.jp/mizugiwa/smuggler/abuse.htm>