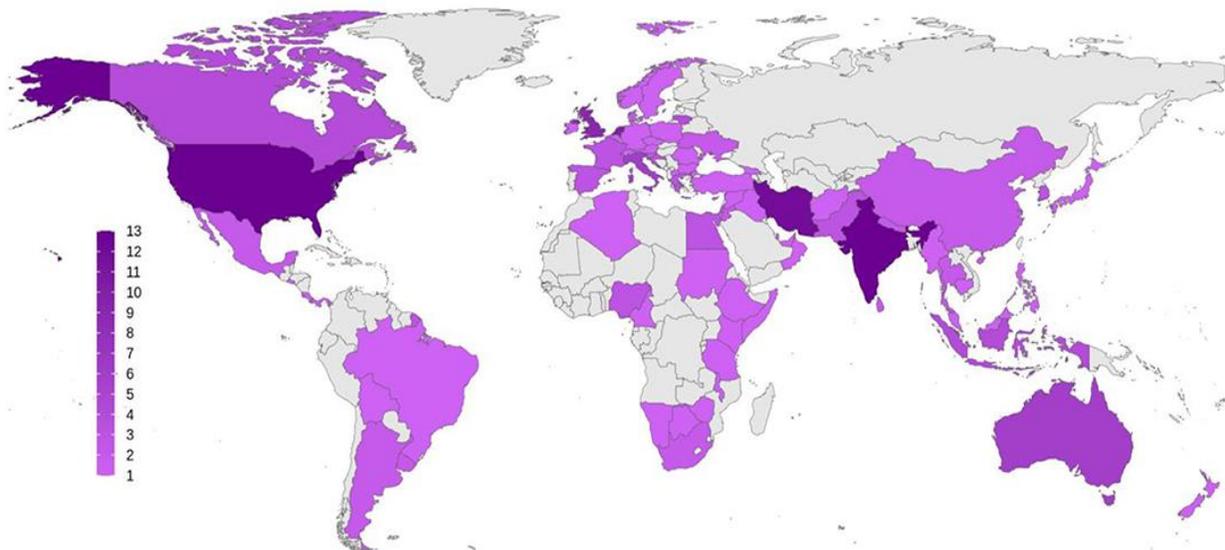
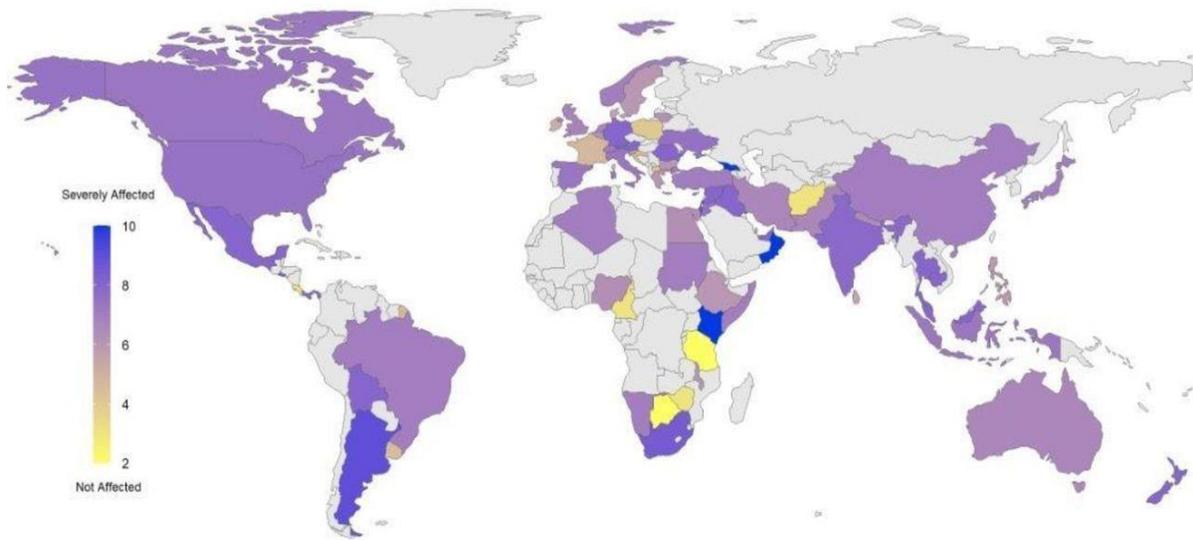


## Past projects

In response to unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the International Society of Addiction Medicine (ISAM) in March 2020 delineated practical guidelines for addiction researchers and policymakers to support decision making during the pandemic ([bcn.iums.ac.ir/article-1-1743-en.html](http://bcn.iums.ac.ir/article-1-1743-en.html)). Almost one month after this announcement, in April 2020, ISAM conducted a rapid, multi-phasic expert survey of informants from across the globe to investigate the impacts of the COVID-19 on different aspects of addiction medicine during the pandemic; including changes in the patterns of drug and alcohol use, price alterations, virtual care, education and training qualities, and addiction treatment and harm reduction services for high-risk populations with substance use disorders. The study protocol was published in June 2020 ([bcn.iums.ac.ir/article-1-1821-en.html](http://bcn.iums.ac.ir/article-1-1821-en.html)). A total of 185 respondents from 77 countries participated in the first phase of this global survey:



Given the lack of multicentric addiction epidemiology studies in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ISAM global survey investigated the status of substance use during a 5-week period starting in April 4th, 2020. Respondents from 77 countries reported a significant decrease in drug supply (69.0%), and an increase in prices of the alcohol and drugs market (95.3%) in their countries. The findings also suggested an increase in the usage of alcohol (71.7%), cannabis (63.0%), prescription opioids (70.9%), and sedative/hypnotics (84.6%), while the use of amphetamines (59.7%), cocaine (67.5%), and opiates (58.2%) was reported to be decreasing. A majority of experts also reported increases in complications related to drug and alcohol use (<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsy.2021.646206/full>). An overall rating of the general impact of the pandemic on people with substance use disorders is presented below:



Lastly, the results of this global expert survey suggested an alarming impact on substance use treatment and harm reduction services during the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic, with more than 40% of represented countries having experienced partial discontinuations of important harm-reduction services. Based on this survey, the directors of the ISAM global survey highlighted several issues which needed to be tackled more effectively ([www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsy.2021.639393/full](http://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsy.2021.639393/full)).

### **Current projects**

The ISAM-GEN is currently working to further develop and validate the global expert survey infrastructure required for future global surveys. A webinar summarizing the experience of the prior ISAM global survey, important challenges in developing valid expert surveys, and future directions will be held in the autumn of 2021.