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Drugnet Europe

Newsletter of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

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Survey results: youth attitudes to drugs

The European Commission published on 11 July the results of its fourth survey exploring *Youth attitudes on drugs* (1). This 'Flash Eurobarometer' is based on telephone interviews conducted in May 2011 with over 12 000 randomly selected young people (aged 15–24) in all 27 EU Member States. It builds on three earlier Eurobarometer surveys carried out in 2002, 2004 and 2008.

Among the issues covered by the survey are: perceptions on the health risks of drug use; attitudes to banning or regulating substances; views on the availability of drugs; and opinions on the effectiveness of policies. For the first time, questions were included on new psychoactive substances ('legal highs').

On average, around 5 % of the young respondents said that they had used 'legal highs', with Ireland (16 %), Latvia (9 %), Poland (9 %) and the UK (8 %) reporting higher rates and Italy, Malta and Finland (all around 1 %) reporting lower rates. These substances were mainly obtained through friends (54 %), at parties or in clubs (37 %), in specialised shops (33 %) or over the Internet (7 %).

The survey shows that young people's attitudes to drugs remain substance-specific. Occasional drug use (used once or twice) was perceived as a 'high risk' to health by 23 % of respondents regarding cannabis, compared with 59 % for ecstasy and 66 % for cocaine. Regular drug use was rated as a 'high risk' by 67 % of respondents for cannabis and by over 90 % for cocaine or ecstasy. Those who had already used cannabis had a lower perception of its health risks than never-users.

Around a quarter of those surveyed (26 %) reported having used cannabis at least once in their lifetime and perceived it to be the easiest illicit drug to obtain. Over half (57 %) of the respondents believed that obtaining cannabis within 24 hours was 'fairly easy' or 'very easy', against 22 % for ecstasy or cocaine (96 % for alcohol, 95 % for tobacco).

The survey revealed that 64 % of young people would use the Internet as their main source of information on drugs, while 37 % would talk to friends and 28 % to family.



Young people's attitudes to drugs remain substance-specific.

International day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking

'Global action for healthy communities without drugs', was the theme of this year's International day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking (26 June) (1). It is also the focus of the international campaign led by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to raise awareness on the major challenge that illicit drugs represent to society as a whole, and especially to the young. With this slogan, this year's initiative aims to promote approaches that empower and support community-based strategies.

The EMCDDA celebrated this international day with an awareness-raising event on 24 June for the Lisbon diplomatic community and its partners from the Portuguese authorities. Speaking at the event, EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz stressed the importance of this year's theme, stating that successful approaches to preventing and treating drug use and ensuring safe and healthy environments often involved a wide range of partners, including families, schools and communities.

Mr Götz underlined that drug use in Europe remained a major threat to public health, being responsible for between 7 000 and 8 000 fatal overdoses every year in the EU (2). Preventing drug use and offering effective treatment to those with substance use problems were central pillars of Europe's response to drugs, he added. Today, at least 1 million people in the EU receive some form of treatment for drug problems per year. On 23 June, the EMCDDA launched a new series of *Drug policy profiles* (see page 7), while UNODC released its *2011 World drug report*.

(1) www.unodc.org/drugs

(2) www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2011/m-1

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July–September

2011

Research

EMCDDA cooperates in ongoing studies



Photo: istockphoto.com

Drug-related research is crucial to understanding Europe's drug problems. In recent years, the subject has received increased attention, with several European Commission (EC)-funded projects launched. The EMCDDA is currently cooperating with three of these projects.

Addictions and lifestyles

Alice-RAP (Addictions and Lifestyles In Contemporary Europe — Reframing Addictions Project) is a large-scale project under the EC's 7th Framework programme (FP7: socio-economic science and humanities). Over 100 researchers and 43 research organisations are involved in this project, which runs for the period 2011–16, with a budget of EUR 10 million. The project covers addictive substances as well as behavioural addictions, such as gambling.

<https://sites.google.com/site/aliceraproject>

Methodological tools

'New methodological tools for policy and programme evaluation' will run from March 2011 to February 2012, with a budget of EUR 750 000. Partially funded by the Commission's 'Drug prevention and information programme', this study aims to develop indicators for monitoring and evaluating drug-related interventions and policies.

www.drugpolicyevaluation.eu

EU illicit drugs market

'Further analysis of the EU illicit drugs market and responses to it — responding to future challenges' is a follow-up of the 2008 EC-commissioned 'Report on the global illicit drugs market 1998–2007'. It aims to develop a more in-depth analysis of various features of the EU illicit drugs market.

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/contracts/318374_en.htm

Margareta Nilson and Maria Moreira

Drug situation

Indicators of drug supply in Europe: call for input

The EMCDDA has launched on its website a call for contributions to the development of potential indicators in the areas of drug markets, drug-related crime and drug supply reduction. Experts' suggestions, comments and ideas are invited for all three areas, in preparation for working group sessions on these topics to be held in Lisbon in October 2011.

The need to scale up the monitoring of illicit drug supply in Europe is an important component of the current EU drugs action plan and EMCDDA work programme 2010–12. In October 2010, the first European conference on drug supply indicators initiated work on the conceptualisation of technically sound and sustainable indicators in this area of key importance for European drug policy (1).

According to the strategy adopted at the conference, the overall conceptual framework

to monitor illicit drug supply will integrate the three above-mentioned areas. This year, the corresponding working groups, supported by the EMCDDA, will produce a roadmap comprising short, medium and long-term monitoring objectives for the three domains.

Contributions to the development of these indicators should be sent to paulete.duque@emcdda.europa.eu by 31 August.

Chloé Carpentier

(1) Organised by the European Commission and the EMCDDA with the active involvement of Europeol www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/online/2011/73/article3

For background information and conference conclusions, see: www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/supply-indicators and www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/supply-indicator-conference2010/conclusions

Mapping GPS questionnaires

General population surveys (GPS) represent one of the most fundamental, and widely used, data-collection tools on drug use in the countries of the European Union and Norway today.

The EMCDDA's European Model Questionnaire (EMQ) was launched in 2002 to provide a template for the construction of comparable surveys (1). While many countries now follow the EMQ, others with long-standing survey series may not. The latter maintain their national comparability over time by employing the same questions year on year (which may differ from the EMQ questions).

To continue its work to standardise data-collection methods on drug use in the general population, the EMCDDA has recently mapped GPS questionnaires in 24 European countries. The project, which kicked off in October 2010, compares all of the key questions on substance use and other issues (e.g. attitudes, perceptions) employed in recent national surveys of the general population (2).

The wording of each key question is now stored in a common and user-friendly database in the form of a 'questionnaire map'. This map, which will be updated periodically, provides the



Photo: istockphoto.com

Mapping GPS questionnaires: a further step towards greater comparability

EMCDDA and its partners with a sound basis when conducting common analyses and comparing GPS data in different European countries and when designing surveys.

The project represents a further step towards greater comparability of European surveys and a more complete harmonisation of data.

Alexandra Ionescu and Deborah Olszewski

(1) www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index58052EN.html

(2) The questionnaire map was presented to the EMCDDA's annual GPS expert meeting in June 2011.

Responses

Prevention science award for EMCDDA staff member

The 2011 International Collaborative Prevention Research Award went to EMCDDA staff member Dr Gregor Burkhardt for his 'outstanding contribution to advancing the field of prevention science' (1).

An initiative of the Society for Prevention Research (SPR), the accolade is bestowed on an individual, or team of individuals, for contributions to prevention science in the area of international collaboration.

Dr Burkhardt, an active SPR member for several years, accepted the tribute at the society's annual award ceremony in Washington on 2 June. He was singled out for his efforts in fostering the application of prevention science in Europe and connecting US and EU prevention researchers through scientific panels and cross-national research collaboration.

Such collaboration resulted in the establishment of the European Society for Prevention Research in 2010. A second meeting of this new body will be hosted by the EMCDDA from 9–10 December in Lisbon (2).

Minimum quality standards in drug demand reduction

Improving the quality and effectiveness of prevention, treatment, harm reduction, rehabilitation and social reintegration is a priority set by the current EU drugs strategy (2005–12). To achieve this important goal, the EU drugs action plan 2009–12 tasks the European Commission — in cooperation with the EMCDDA — to develop a European consensus on minimum quality standards and benchmarks in the field of drug demand reduction.

Over 120 stakeholders — including policymakers, practitioners, NGOs and researchers — met in Brussels from 15–17 June, for a Commission-organised conference on this issue (1). Held in association with the Hungarian Presidency of the EU, the event analysed the initial findings of an EC study which proposes a range of such minimum standards. Among the themes addressed at the conference was the translation of standards into practice and overcoming barriers

In Europe, Dr Burkhardt has documented prevention programming and highlighted outcomes of prevention research trials. Along with his colleagues at the EMCDDA, he has also been instrumental in establishing a Best practice portal which covers prevention (3). Furthermore, he has been actively involved in the coordination of the EU-Drug Abuse Prevention (EU-Dap) trial to assess the effectiveness of a school-based prevention curriculum, 'Unplugged' (now being disseminated across Europe).

Dr Burkhardt holds a vision of what effective prevention can do for young people, based on general frameworks that are not country-centric. This vision, along with his commitment to prevention, is evident in his work, earning for him the respect of his colleagues.

Prof. Zili Sloboda, SPR founder

(1) www.preventionresearch.org/about-spr/awards/2011-awards-presentation

(2) www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/online/2011/73/article7

(3) www.emcdda.europa.eu/themes/best-practice/evidence/universal-prevention

to implementation. Four different national approaches were examined in this light (Czech Republic, the Netherlands, the UK and Switzerland).

Stakeholder feedback will be incorporated into the final study report due in December 2011. The European Commission will draw on the study's recommendations to propose an EU consensus on minimum quality standards in drug demand reduction, planned for 2013.

Caroline Hager, DG Justice, European Commission

Stakeholder feedback will be incorporated into the final study report due in December 2011

(1) For more, see 'Building an EU consensus for minimum quality standards in the prevention, treatment and harm reduction of drugs': http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/anti-drugs/events/110615_en.htm

Best practice: identifying key topics at national level



Best practice portal: fentanyl dependence under the spotlight

Highlighting interventions that work in the field is a key element in promoting best practice. Likewise, analysing the information needed by national drug professionals to assist drug users is an essential part of our work.

In this light, the EMCDDA has created a system to exchange information and communicate on the most relevant issues for drug professionals, based on the experiences of their day-to-day work.

emcdda.europa.eu/best-practice

A comprehensive strategy to establish a best practice communication platform was presented at a workshop organised at the EMCDDA on 12 April. Attended by some 20 national focal points, the meeting was a first step towards developing a best practice network.

After collecting and analysing issues of relevance to professionals around Europe, the participants drew up a list of new topics to be included in the Best practice portal. The first topic to be highlighted will be fentanyl dependence, as highlighted by Estonia. An overview will be presented this summer in the 'Treatment' module for opioid users (1).

Marica Ferri
(bestpractice@emcdda.europa.eu)

(1) www.emcdda.europa.eu/best-practice/treatment/opioid-users

Bookshelf

Drugs and culture



Current approaches to drugs tend to be determined by medical and criminal perspectives, with the concepts of

addiction, on the one hand, and drug control on the other, being central notions in drugs discourse. *Drugs and culture: knowledge, consumption and policy* presents alternative voices and understandings of drug issues, highlighting the socio-cultural features of consumption and regulation in modern societies. Among others, this collection of essays explores how the use of specific psychoactive substances becomes associated with particular social groups and what factors determine the political and policy responses to drug use. The book has its roots in an international conference held in Paris in 2008, organised by the French monitoring centre for drugs and drug addiction (OFDT) and the Public health Chair at Sciences Po (www.droguetcultures2008.com).

EMCDDA authors contribute to two chapters on: 'Drug use in Europe: specific national characteristics or shared models?' and 'Knowledge and policies to reduce drug supply in France'.

Editors: Geoffrey Hunt, Maitena Milhet, Henri Bergeron

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(Also available as an e-book

978-1-4094-0544-3)

www.ashgate.com/default.aspx?page=2843

Price: GBP 65 (website price GBP 58.50)

Ordering information: www.ashgate.com

The EMCDDA is responsible for the selection of materials for the Bookshelf and for the text presented. However, responsibility for the content of these materials and the opinions expressed therein lies with the authors themselves.

Feature

Forum on new drugs — reflections and conclusions

The First international multidisciplinary forum on new drugs, organised by the EMCDDA in Lisbon from 11–12 May (1), brought together experts from a wide range of disciplines to discuss what might be described as a paradigm shift in our understanding of 'the drug problem'.

Delegates came from all over the world to discuss how a broad range of new drugs — e.g. mephedrone, BZP and synthetic cannabinoids — had begun to be used in their countries and how policies had been developed in response.

While there were differences in the where and when of how particular drugs had appeared in individual countries, there was a strong impression of commonality. This was a global phenomenon, driven by the Internet, with striking similarities across the world in the names and packaging associated with these substances.

Another overriding impression from participants' accounts was one of dynamism: as one new drug and its use subsided, another unrecognised substance emerged to replace it. While legal controls appeared to work in terms of suppressing production and use, by the time one of these drugs was on the legal schedule, clandestine chemists and producers had already moved on to producing alternative uncontrolled substances. Producers therefore appeared to be one step ahead of both forensic scientists and the law. One danger of this potentially endless 'cat-and-mouse' game was that producers, and therefore users, were pushed further and further into the realm of untried and untested drugs.



A global phenomenon, driven by the Internet

Potential solutions discussed at the forum included: public health warnings in response to suspected dangers; working with



New psychoactive substances: a paradigm shift in our understanding of 'the drug problem'

the media to publicise harms; introducing general legislation that covered whole groups of substances; and using laws relating to medicines or consumer protection to put the legal onus of product safety on the producer.

A further key issue highlighted at the event was the need to move from a purely reactive, to a more proactive, response. With the benefit of hindsight, it was possible to see how drugs, such as BZP, were likely to prove popular with both producers and users. Perhaps with better foresight, experts could identify substances likely to become the new drugs of the future.

The need to recognise potential problems more quickly was also underlined. Methods to identify new waves of use as they broke, rather than after the event, could include: monitoring Internet chatrooms; testing wastewater; and using information from hospital emergency departments and poison centres.

A resounding impression was that the world was changing fast and that drug use was changing with it. This threw up major challenges for those working in the drugs field, be they scientists, researchers or policymakers. In this context, many speakers and participants emphasised the importance of the timely sharing of knowledge and information at global level. The forum was a first step in this direction.

Charlie Lloyd, University of York, and Ana Gallegos, EMCDDA

(1) See news releases 1/2011 and 2/2011 at www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/home

See also *Drugnet Europe* No 74 and concluding remarks at: www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/2011/new-drugs-forum

Enlargement

Croatia launches first GPS on drugs

Croatia is one of eight candidate and potential candidate countries to the EU currently receiving EMCDDA technical assistance, under the European Commission's Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) programme. In May 2011, co-funded by the EMCDDA's IPA 3 project (see page 6), Croatia launched its first general population survey (GPS) on drugs. The survey of 4 000 individuals will provide insight into the prevalence and patterns of psychoactive substance use in Croatia, as well as the attitudes to drugs of different population groups. The results, to be available at the end of this year, will help tailor interventions to drug users and those affected by drug use.

Another important outcome of the ongoing assistance is the integration of the best practice concept into Croatian procedures. The Office for Combating Drug Abuse (hosting the NFP) set up a national database earlier this year which: monitors the quality of projects in the area of drug demand reduction; encourages evaluation; and promotes best practice. The IPA 3 project also supported the organisation of four regional workshops on best practice in May 2011, where over 180 experts were acquainted with new developments in the field and invited to participate in follow-up activities.

Finally, following an IPA 3-supported national conference on new psychoactive substances in Zagreb in April 2011, the Croatian early-warning network has been widened. Newly established expert focus groups will allow for the more rapid detection of new drugs and emerging trends and more timely interventions to protect the health of users.

Lidija Vugrinec (Head of the Croatian national focal point) and Dijana Jerković (expert at the NFP)

Research and innovation

Stakeholders have their say on EU funding

The results of a public consultation on future EU funding for research and innovation were discussed at a major conference organised by the European Commission in Brussels on 10 June (1)(2). The consultation, which closed on 20 May, was based on a Commission Green Paper published on 9 February. This proposed ways to: make EU funding more attractive and accessible; increase the scientific and economic impact of funded projects; and ensure better value for money.

Over 800 stakeholders from research, industry, academia, science and politics took part in the consultation. The EMCDDA Scientific Committee featured among these, contributing with a position paper on specific drug-related research funding challenges for the future, adopted at its May meeting (3).

Participants at the conference concluded that funding should be made available for 'curiosity-driven' as well as 'agenda-driven' research topics and should be less prescriptive and accessible to small groups as well as large consortia. They also agreed that funding procedures should be simplified and that research and innovation be addressed under one framework that would contribute to tackling societal challenges. Changes sparked by the consultation and conference will be introduced under the next EU research and innovation budget (post-2013). This will cover: the 7th Framework programme for research (FP 7); the Competitiveness and innovation programme; and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology.

Maria Moreira

(1) http://ec.europa.eu/research/csfr/index_en.cfm

(2) 'Conference on the common strategic framework for EU research and innovation funding': http://ec.europa.eu/research/csfr/index_en.cfm?pg=events

(3) www.emcdda.europa.eu/themes/research

Drug prices

Monitoring wholesale drug prices in Europe

The EMCDDA has been collecting and analysing routine data on Europe's drug markets since the mid-1990s, focusing on seizures, drug purity/potency and on retail drug prices. In 2009, it also embarked on a project to assess the feasibility of monitoring wholesale drug prices and purity-adjusted prices in Europe (1). Building on this study, the EMCDDA launched a 'Pilot study of wholesale drug prices in Europe' in 2010, providing an overview of information available in EU countries (2).

Whereas retail drug prices indicate what users pay for a given drug, wholesale prices show what drug dealers pay to major distributors in the market where the drug is consumed.

By comparing the two, estimates can be made of the maximum profit margins that drug traffickers may obtain in the retail market.

The pilot study reveals that, in 2008, the wholesale price for consignments of one kilogram of cocaine can be estimated at between EUR 31 000 and EUR 58 000, with most countries reporting figures around EUR 35 000. When reported, the average purity level of such consignments was close to 70 %.

In 2008, retail cocaine prices reported were 25 % to 83 % higher than wholesale prices. Purity levels decreased when moving from the wholesale to retail market, where they were

reported to be on average between 13 % and 60 %, depending on the country. Additional data are, however, required to estimate precisely the purity-adjusted price differences between the wholesale and retail level.

During the implementation of the pilot study, the utility of improving current data-collection systems was analysed and the required investments assessed. As a result, 10 countries have revised, or plan to revise, their current data-collection practices.

Cláudia Costa Storti

(1) www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/online/2009/67/article7

(2) To be available on the EMCDDA website in September.

Spotlight

New formula put to the test



A new formula for Heads of national focal point (NFP) meetings was put to the test from 18–20 May and scored well with participants in a final evaluation. For many years, these plenary meetings have acted as an all-purpose forum for content-related discussions and updates as well as decision-making on contractual arrangements between the EMCDDA and NFPs. Pressure on the agenda increased when the network doubled in size between 2004 and 2010, and when the annual meetings were cut from three to two, for budgetary reasons, in 2005.

The new structure was conceived to ease this pressure by promoting a more participative approach through smaller thematic workshops. Each workshop is set clear objectives ahead of the meeting and the conclusions are duly documented to facilitate follow-up and further action.

The new approach allows for formal decision-making procedures to be dealt with separately from content-oriented debates. This separation is particularly important in the perspective of cooperation with candidate and potential candidate countries and, in the mid-term, with neighbouring countries, which do not have a contractual relationship with the EMCDDA.

While the participants identified the need for some fine-tuning of the new model, they welcomed it unanimously. It was felt that a focus on greater participation and sharing of experience would help the EMCDDA and the network welcome new countries, adapt more quickly to changing circumstances, be more efficient and continually improve and maintain the relevance of its outputs.

*Alexis Goosdeel, Alan Lodwick,
Tim Pfeiffer-Gerschel*

Reitox

IPA 3 project progresses in Albania

A new Country overview, a national drug report and first-time participation in the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD), will be among the outcomes of the EMCDDA's technical assistance project in Albania under the European Commission's Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) programme.

Albania is one of eight candidate and potential candidate countries to the EU currently receiving EMCDDA assistance, under a EUR 900 000 project which kicked off in April 2010 (IPA 3). The project, which will run until November 2011, is designed to help the eight partners establish national drug information systems in line with EU standards (1).

Important partners in the project are 'Reitox coaches': representatives from EU national focal points (NFP) assigned to assist the partners in running national activities according to EU norms. The Reitox coach for Albania made two visits to the country in 2010, in partnership with the Albanian representative from the National Institute of Public Health (the project's 'national correspondent').

The aim of the first visit (June 2010) was to draw up a plan of activities for the period

2010–11, with input from a variety of Albanian stakeholders. This led to the completion of the Country overview and an information map, to be published on the EMCDDA website this autumn (2). The EMCDDA national reporting guidelines were discussed with an Albanian working group of experts during the second visit (December 2010). This group will assist the national correspondent in writing the first integrated Albanian national report on the drug situation, due for completion in October.

Other IPA 3-project-related national activities include the translation into Albanian of the five EMCDDA epidemiological key indicator protocols; a developmental project in the area of the treatment demand indicator; and a national training event in the area of problem drug use.

*Frédéric Denecker, Ernestas Jasaitis
(Reitox coach) and Eduard Kakarriqi
(national correspondent)*

(1) The eight partners are: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99), Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. See *Drugnet Europe* No 74.

(2) www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/country-overviews

Cooperation with Malta: new momentum

Cooperation between the EMCDDA and Malta gained momentum this spring with the signature of a grant agreement on 6 April between the agency and the Maltese national focal point (NFP). The event took place on the occasion of the official visit of EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz to Malta, at the invitation of Minister of Education, Employment and the Family, Dolores Cristina. The agreement guarantees co-financing by the EMCDDA of the national focal point for 2011 and paves the way for its future development.

Minister Cristina underlined the commitment of her country to consolidate the NFP and the national drug information network. Mr Götz thanked the Minister for her support and stressed the added value of a strong Maltese focal point in the European drug information system. He also acknowledged the valuable contribution of EMCDDA Management Board member Professor Richard Muscat to re-establishing the NFP (1).

The agreement was signed by the Ministry's Director of Corporate Services, André Vassallo Grant, and Alexis Goosdeel, Head of the EMCDDA's Reitox and international cooperation unit.

The EMCDDA holds grant agreements with the NFPs in all 27 EU Member States. Under these agreements, the agency can finance up to half of the Reitox actions, with the Member State financing the same amount.

Alexis Goosdeel

(1) The Maltese national focal point was not operational during the period 2009–10.

Products and services

Drugnet Europe survey



Launched in September 1996, *Drugnet Europe* is one of the EMCDDA's central communication tools, regularly conveying the latest news from the agency, the Reitox network and the EMCDDA's institutional and international partners. Over the years, the newsletter has undergone a number of changes in design, content, format, style and frequency. In order to engage with *Drugnet Europe* readers and assess how the product is received, a survey has been launched on the EMCDDA website. We invite readers to respond to a short questionnaire (deadline: 15 November). Your feedback will help us ensure cost-effective communication and a relevant coverage of issues.

Survey accessible at www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/survey

Drug policy profiles — Portugal



Ahead of International day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, the EMCDDA launched, on 23 June, a new series of *Drug policy profiles*. This new series aims to describe some of the main characteristics of national drug policies in Europe and elsewhere in the world. The first edition describes the national drug policy of Portugal, a policy that has attracted significant attention recently in the media and in policy debates.

The profiles do not attempt to assess national policies, but instead outline their development and main features. The objective is to help readers — from researchers to policymakers — gain a better understanding of the way in which countries control drugs and respond to drug-related social and health problems.

Available in English at www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drug-policy-profiles/portugal

Preventing infections among people who inject drugs

Guidance on infection prevention and control among people who inject drugs will be the focus of a joint ECDC–EMCDDA publication to be launched on 12 October in Lisbon. The publication aims to inform and support public health decision-makers, at national and regional level, who work in areas such as infectious diseases, addiction, mental health and drug control. Designed as a resource for shaping informed public health responses to injecting drug use in the EU Member States and beyond, it brings together expert knowledge on practices to prevent infectious diseases in this highly vulnerable group. The guidance is based on the latest available evidence.

Coming soon in English at www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/joint-publications

Amphetamine: a European Union perspective in the global context



Amphetamine: a European Union perspective in the global context is the title of the upcoming third edition in the EMCDDA–Europol series of joint publications dedicated to prevalent illicit drugs. The new study, to be launched in the autumn, focuses on amphetamine production and markets in Europe, set in a global context. Previous editions in the series covered methamphetamine and cocaine, whilst upcoming volumes will focus on ecstasy-type substances, heroin and cannabis. The series is one of several collaborative activities agreed by the two agencies for the period 2009–12 (www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/partners/europol).

Coming soon in English at www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/joint-publications
For more on this series, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/illicit-drugs

Resources

Events and materials on the drugs issue



Guia de recursos da saúde e dependências

This guide to resources and responses in the area of drug addiction in Portugal was published this spring and is now available online in

Portuguese. The publication presents a vast and qualified network of institutions operating throughout the country as well as the evolution of the Portuguese drug policy. Also included is a section on international bodies working in the field, where the EMCDDA and its Reitox network are presented.

For more, see www.dependencias.pt

Harm reduction conference

The European harm reduction network (EuroHRN), established in 2010, will hold its 1st European conference on harm reduction from 6–7 October in Marseilles. The meeting will gather the network's members and concerned stakeholders with the aim of: sharing an assessment on the harm reduction situation within Europe; improving the EuroHRN sub-regional networks (southern, northern and central-eastern European networks); and developing the European drug users' network.

For more, see www.eurohrn.eu/

Global Addiction 2011

Global Addiction 2011 is an international conference to be held in Lisbon from 5–7 December. The event has evolved from the former European Association of Addiction Therapy conferences, the last of which was held in 2009. Organised by the Global Addiction Network, the 2011 event will bring speakers from around the globe to present on a wide spectrum of topic areas pertinent to addiction and the treatment of addictive disorders. The EMCDDA will participate in a session on 'Innovation and quality'.

For more, see www.globaladdiction.org

Organisations wishing to publicise their newsletters, magazines, websites, CD-ROMs or any other resources are invited to contact Kathryn.Robertson@emcdda.europa.eu

Calendar 2011

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

EMCDDA meetings

- 4–8 July: EMCDDA and CADAP–DAMOS training event on national drug monitoring systems for a delegation of Kazakh experts, Lisbon.
- 7–9 September: National Reitox Academy on building national drug observatories, Rome.
- 14–15 September: Reitox Academy for IPA beneficiaries on new psychoactive substances and the EU early-warning system, Tirana.
- 20–21 September: EMCDDA expert meeting on the treatment demand indicator, Lisbon.
- 22 September: Similarities and differences in treatment systems in Europe and consequences for treatment monitoring, Lisbon.
- 26–28 September: Drug-related deaths training activity, Skopje.
- 29–30 September: EMCDDA and TAIEX scientific seminar, Kiev.
- 11–12 October: EMCDDA expert meeting on drug-related infectious diseases, Lisbon.
- 12 October: Launch of ECDC–EMCDDA *Guidance on infection prevention and control among people who inject drugs*, Lisbon.
- 27–28 October: EMCDDA expert meeting on the problem drug use indicator, Lisbon.
- 15 November: EMCDDA *Annual report* launch, Lisbon.

External meetings

- 17–18 July: International drugs and driving symposium, Montreal (www.ccsa.ca).

EU meetings

- 6–7 September: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.
- 4–5 October: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.
- 18–19 October: EU/eastern Europe conference, Warsaw.
- 27–28 October: Justice and Home Affairs Council, Luxembourg.
- 21–22 November: National drug coordinators' meeting, Poznań.

Statutory bodies

Scientific Committee elects new Chair and Vice-chair

The EMCDDA Scientific Committee, meeting in Lisbon from 16–17 May, elected its new Chair and Vice-chair for the coming three years. Dr Marina Davoli (Italian) was elected to the position of Chair and Prof. Dr Gerhard Bühringer (German) to the position of Vice-chair (1).

At the meeting, the Committee discussed its strategy for the coming years, including earlier involvement in the development of the agency's work programmes and in the preparatory phases of EMCDDA studies. Outgoing Chairman Prof. Michael Farrell (Irish) was thanked for his valuable contribution in steering the Committee over the last three years. Prof. Farrell, who will remain a Committee member, has recently been appointed Director of the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC), Australia.

During the meeting, the members expressed their gratitude to EMCDDA staff member Margareta Nilson, who has been responsible for liaison with the Scientific Committee since 2005 and who will be leaving the agency in September. Both the Committee and EMCDDA staff wish her well in her retirement after 16 years of service.

(1) See Fact sheet No 4/2011 at www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2011/fs-4

Survey results: youth attitudes to drugs

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But, when asked how they had been informed about drugs issues in the past year, the Internet came in third position (39 %), behind media campaigns (46 %) and school prevention programmes (41 %). However, figures show that the Internet has become a more significant drug-related information source than in 2008.

In terms of drug control and regulation, the majority of respondents (59 %) still support cannabis prohibition, but this number has declined from 67 % since 2008. Regarding new psychoactive substances, respondents indicated that these should be banned only if they pose a risk to health (47 %) or be regulated in similar ways to alcohol or tobacco (15 %). Around one third of respondents (34 %) felt that these substances should be banned under any circumstances.

Released on the same day was a European Commission assessment of the EU's mechanism for addressing new psychoactive substances entering the European market (2). The EMCDDA contributed to this report.

Maurice Galla, DG Justice, European Commission

(1) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_330_en.pdf

(2) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/document/index_en.htm