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Drugnet Europe

Newsletter of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

ISSN 0873-5379

In this issue...

- 2** Monitoring the content of drug tablets
- 3** Cigarettes, alcohol and colonisation
- 4** Feature: *World Drug Report 2006* — An overview of the world drug situation
- 5** Europe's diverse drug-driving laws
- 6** New German national standard for monitoring treatment
- 7** New EMCDDA products and services
- 8** EMCDDA priorities for 2007–2009

International day against drugs

Three European Commissioners joined forces on International day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking (26 June) to promote a comprehensive EU response to drugs, consisting of reducing both supply and demand.

Justice, Freedom and Security Commissioner Franco Frattini advocated the 'vigorous enforcement of laws against drug production and trafficking'. He stressed that the EU's balanced approach to drugs, tackling the areas of public health and law enforcement, reflected 'the balance between peoples' rights and public safety'. In this light, he spoke of his immediate goal to involve civil society in the drug policy-making process at EU level (see article opposite).

Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner Markos Kyprianou underlined the public health dimension of drug addiction and the Commission's role in preventing and reducing demand for drugs. He reported that, in the first two years of the ongoing EU public health programme (2003–2008), over € 4.1 million were spent directly on drug-related projects, with priority given to harm reduction, joint prevention programmes and best practice in drug treatment and social reintegration.

Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner, responsible for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, spoke of support for third countries through common projects. European Union assistance to these countries in tackling drugs has almost doubled over the last three years. Projects implemented by the Member States and the Commission — focusing mainly on Afghanistan and Latin America — amounted to over € 500 million in 2005. 'As major donors' she said, 'we help countries outside the EU where drugs are cultivated to offer new routes out of poverty and strengthen their ability to provide alternatives to drug crops. We also help other third countries to improve their efforts to reduce drug use and limit health and social harm'.

The Commissioners' statement emphasised the 'crucial role' of the EMCDDA in providing the evidence base for EU drugs policy. European Union objectives in the drugs field are set out in

Continued on page 8



Frattini: 'It is vital to connect with citizens in order to reach the millions of Europeans — mostly young people — for whom taking drugs has become a normal recreational activity'.

Commission launches consultation on Green paper

On 26 June, the European Commission launched a consultation process to explore ways to improve and structure dialogue with civil society organisations on EU drugs policy. The move coincided with the adoption of a 'Green Paper on the role of civil society in drugs policy in the European Union'.

According to Franco Frattini, Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security: 'It is vital to connect with citizens in order to reach the millions of Europeans — mostly young people — for whom taking drugs has become a normal recreational activity...and to convince drug users across the EU that they are harming themselves and others.'

The consultation process will run until 30 September. The aim is to ensure that the knowledge and expertise of civil society organisations working in the drugs field is taken into account in the EU policy-making process, particularly the implementation of the EU drugs action plan (2005–2008). The consultation follows on from the January 2006 conference 'Civil society and drugs in Europe' (see *Drugnet Europe* No 54).

For more on the consultation, see http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/news/consulting_public/news_consulting_public_en.htm

For more on the conference, see http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/news/information_dossiers/drugs_conference_06/index_en.htm

Photo: istockphoto.com

July–September
2006

Drug situation

New challenges in drug population surveys

Measuring prevalence and patterns of drug use in the general population (population surveys) is one of the five EMCDDA key indicators and was the focus of an expert meeting held in Lisbon from 8–9 June.

The meeting revealed that considerable progress had been made over the last year in applying the indicator at EU level. Most of the 25 Member States now carry out drug surveys in line with the European Model Questionnaire (EMQ), although continuity and comparability require further improvement. Nine countries presented their national methodological work or results from recent national surveys.

Two challenges raised at the meeting were: the need for a more focused analysis of cocaine use; and the development of methods to assess intensive patterns of drug use in the general population (in the wake of rising levels of drug use among mainstream young people and increasing demand for treatment relating to cannabis and cocaine problems).

Cocaine use in the EU was reviewed and the national situations of Italy, Spain and the UK presented. In recent years, use of this drug has increased considerably in many EU countries, particularly among young people attending nightlife events.

In a session on methods assessing intensive patterns of drug use in the general population, the EMCDDA and the French Reitox focal point (OFDT) presented a conceptual overview of measuring dependence and problem drug use in surveys, covering issues such as sample requirements and cross-cultural comparability. National experts from Spain, France, the Netherlands, Poland and Portugal presented their work (Germany is also active in this field).

Finally, the EMCDDA underlined the added value of developing common European scales for assessing intensive forms of drug use. Here it promised to promote active collaboration between European experts and carry out methodological work to gain deeper insight into the validity and relationship between existing scales already in use on a national level in some Member States.

Julian Vicente and Danica Klemová

Monitoring the content of drug tablets

The way in which the EMCDDA monitors the content of drug tablets sold on the illegal market was the subject of an expert meeting held in Lisbon from 13–14 June. The composition of illicit drug tablets is an important issue in terms of understanding the type of substances being manufactured, trafficked and used in the EU and whether any patterns and trends can be detected.

Specifically under review was the reporting tool introduced in 2000 which is used by the EMCDDA to collect information on this issue from the Reitox national focal points. In 2005, 25 countries submitted data on the contents of drug tablets in 2004.

The meeting examined and compared national experiences in monitoring drug tablets (goals, methods, results) and proposed a number of revisions to the tool. Based on a 20-point consensus list, a revised version was agreed by the meeting and has been sent out to the Reitox network

for consultation. Among others, it was agreed that the revised tool would monitor the contents of tablets (but not capsules or powders) used (or seized) as illicit drugs in the EU — namely synthetic drugs controlled under the 1971 UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances and European legislation (Council Decisions). However, it will not monitor medicinal products diverted from licit manufacture or illegally produced (e.g. steroids, benzodiazepines).

The final version is scheduled to be completed by November and used in data collection from 2007 for the *2008 Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in Europe*.

Chloé Carpentier

Monitoring drug-related infectious diseases

Drug-related infectious diseases — one of the five EMCDDA key indicators — are among the most serious consequences of illicit drug use. Of particular concern is the continuous threat of these infections passing from drug users to the general population and the high cost they incur for healthcare systems across Europe.

Since 2004, the EMCDDA has been revising its data-collection protocol on drug-related infectious diseases in collaboration with the Greek national focal point and an editorial committee of European experts. As a result, the EMCDDA data-collection tool in this area now includes behavioural and prevention items, such as last-month needle-sharing and last-year HIV testing (<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=1375>).

An EMCDDA expert meeting in October will evaluate this protocol, and the first experiences with behavioural data collection, as an important step towards more comparable and effective surveillance of drug-related infectious diseases in Europe. EMCDDA work over the last five years has focused on collecting existing prevalence data on HIV and hepatitis B and C among injecting drug users (IDUs). This has resulted in the first pan-European evidence base on hepatitis B and C infection and strongly improved data on HIV among IDUs (<http://stats05.emcdda.europa.eu/en/page023-en.html>).

Lucas Wiessing



Photo: stockphoto.com

The composition of illicit drug tablets is an important issue in terms of understanding the type of substances being manufactured, trafficked and used in the EU

Responses

Cigarettes, alcohol and colonisation

'I have learned not to try to convince people about what to do. I consider the task of trying to convince others a lack of personal respect, an attempt at colonisation', wrote José Saramago. The reticence of the Portuguese Nobel prize-winning author provided the perfect challenge to health professionals active in the field of licit and illicit drugs attending the first EMCDDA expert meeting on 'environmental prevention strategies' held in Lisbon from 29–30 June.

There are numerous interpretations of what constitutes an 'environmental prevention strategy' in the area of drug, alcohol and tobacco prevention. One definition is a strategy that is not targeted at the individual or the psychosocial level. Literature on the subject distinguishes the scale of strategies: macro or universal on the one hand (e.g. government legislation such as taxation and bans) or micro or selective on the other (e.g. event licensing).

In the light of evidence of early-adolescent initiation into drug use, endemic binge drinking and street violence, questions raised at the meeting included: Are we legitimate in trying to regulate the individual's potential for self-harm? Should we focus our efforts at the level of the individual? Or is public health better safeguarded through larger-scale regulatory or environmental strategies?

This was the first EMCDDA event to focus on legal psychoactive substances, in the context of the agency's current task to examine polydrug use. Presentations were delivered on tobacco and alcohol regulation, and on the evidence base for environmental approaches to psychoactive substance use prevention. Case studies described environmental approaches to reducing smoking and drinking in Ireland, Malta, Poland and the UK.

Professionals working in the fields of both licit and illicit psychoactive substances — disciplines often kept apart — were able to debate topics such as the potential cross-substance effects of smoking bans, aggressive marketing which encourages binge drinking; and the poor impact of school education and health promotion campaigns, particularly those demonising drugs. Based on discussions at the event, evidence suggests that 'macro-environmental' measures can offer better value prevention than those focused on persuading the individual. However, regulatory measures can face obstacles, such as the political resistance to universal measures and defensive lobbying by vendors.

While colonisation of the mind is rarely the agenda, what is certain is that regulation has a valuable role to play in changing cultural attitudes towards psychoactive substances, whether the laudanum or absinthe of the past, or today's alcopops, cigarettes and vertical drinking. A full follow-up report of the event will be published in the autumn.

Peter Thomas

EDDRA to promote science-based practice

The 'Exchange on drug demand reduction action' (EDDRA) is an online information system and data-collection tool focusing on evaluated practice in responding to drug use in the European Union. EDDRA provides details on a wide range of evaluated prevention, treatment and harm-reduction programmes in the EU, while promoting the exchange of professional expertise and hands-on experience.

This autumn, to coincide with EDDRA's 10th anniversary, the EMCDDA will hold a series of meetings with its Reitox focal points and EDDRA managers to examine how to restructure and refocus the system to draw optimal benefit from it. This re-examination takes place in the context of the EU drugs action plan (2005–2008) which calls for the 'effective dissemination of evaluated best practices' and the 'more effective use and regular updating of EDDRA'. The new EMCDDA mission statement, likely to be adopted this autumn, will also refer to the need to further develop dissemination on best practice.

The forthcoming EDDRA discussions will focus on how to house the system within a broader online portal offering an array of resources on science-based practice. The portal would offer the public access to: standards in the area of evaluation; reviews on the effectiveness of interventions; and other documents on the issue of best practice in demand reduction.

Jennifer Hillebrand



Photo: istockphoto.com

Are we legitimate in trying to regulate the individual's potential for self-harm?

Cocaine literature review

Now available on the EMCDDA website is a literature review of current research on cocaine treatment responses. The review covers harm-reduction and psychosocial interventions as well as the more recently explored pharmacological treatment options. New findings regarding treatments for cocaine dependence and responses to mental health disorders arising from crack cocaine use are summarised, providing drug services with useful information on approaches that can be adapted to new demands for treatment for cocaine problems.

<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=18945>

Dagmar Hedrich

Bookshelf

World Drug Report 2006



The *World Drug Report 2006*, launched by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 26 June, estimates that some 200 million people, or 5% of the global population aged 15–64, have consumed illicit drugs at least once in the last year. Although the report highlights a number of weak elements in the global drug control system (see opposite), it states, on a positive note, that we have entered the 21st century with much lower levels of drug cultivation and addiction than 100 years ago.

According to the report, there is less land under coca and opium cultivation today than a few years ago and significantly less than a century ago. The world opium supply has shrunk and, within a few years, Asia's notorious Golden Triangle could become opium-free, although Afghanistan remains vulnerable to renewed rises in production. Over the past five years, coca cultivation in the Andean countries has fallen by a quarter.

Publisher: UNODC

http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/world_drug_report.html

Language: English (Spanish and French versions to follow)

Date: 26 June 2006

ISBN: 92-1-148217-8.

Price: 70 USD (for two volumes).

Ordering information:

United Nations Publications
Sales Office and Bookshop
CH-1211, Geneva 10, Switzerland
E-mail: unpubh@unog.ch

Executive summary:

http://www.unodc.org/pdf/WDR_2006/wdr2006_ex_summary.pdf

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

World Drug Report 2006

An overview of the world drug situation

Heroin supply in Afghanistan, cocaine demand in Europe and cannabis supply and demand worldwide are the three key weaknesses in the global drug control situation, according to Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Launching the UNODC *World Drug Report 2006* on International day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking (26 June), Mr Costa warned that despite a welcome 21% decline in Afghan opium production in 2005, its drug situation 'remains vulnerable to reversal because of mass poverty, lack of security and the fact that the authorities have inadequate control over its territory.' 'This could happen as early as 2006', he said, 'despite large-scale eradication of opium crops this spring'.

Mr Costa also cautioned that, although cocaine production is broadly stable and although cocaine seizures are up and global cocaine use slightly down, the demand for cocaine in western Europe is rising 'to alarming levels'. 'I urge European Union governments not to ignore this peril' he said. 'Too many professional, educated Europeans use cocaine, often denying their addiction, and drug abuse by celebrities is often presented uncritically by the media, leaving young people confused and vulnerable.'

Turning to the world's most used drug, cannabis, Mr Costa expressed his concern over the drug's rising potency and said that it was now 'a mistake to dismiss it as a soft and relatively harmless drug'. 'Today the harmful characteristics of cannabis are no longer that different from those of other plant-based drugs, such as cocaine and heroin', he said.

Mr Costa also criticised countries which changed their cannabis policies frequently. 'National policies on cannabis vary and sometimes change from one year to the next', he said. 'Policy reversals leave young people confused as to just how dangerous cannabis is. The cannabis pandemic, like other challenges to public health, requires consensus, a consistent commitment across the political spectrum and by society at large.'

This year's report devotes special attention to cannabis, the drug which was used at least once by an estimated 162 million people in 2004 — equivalent to some 4% of the global population aged 15–64.

Finally, the UNODC chief said that, over the past few years, worldwide efforts to reduce the threat posed by illicit drugs had halted a quarter-century-long rise in drug use that, if left unchecked, could have become a global pandemic. Trends in the global drugs market were moving in the right direction, he added, although governments needed to step up their efforts to reduce both supply and demand. 'Drug control is working' he concluded 'and the world drug problem is being contained.'



Photo: istockphoto.com

Costa: 'The demand for cocaine in western Europe is rising to alarming levels. I urge EU governments not to ignore this peril'

Enlargement

New Country situation summaries

EMCDDA 'Country situation summaries' are now available for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. These summaries have been developed under the European Commission's TACIS programme which has put in place three regional drug action programmes: CADAP (Central Asia Drug Action Programme), SCAD (South Caucasus Action Drug Programme) and BUMAD (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova Action Drug Programme).

The TACIS regional approach aims to help beneficiary countries intercept drug trafficking along the major drug trafficking routes by strengthening land and sea border posts including international airports most affected by the problem. At the same time, it aims to help countries cope with the vast expansion of drug use (and HIV/AIDS) that represents a serious impediment to peace and development.

The EMCDDA has provided some technical assistance to the European Commission in establishing national focal points in the above countries through the organisation of Reitox Academy training activities (Lisbon, 2003; Ankara, 2004). The new summaries are one result of this cooperation.

The main purpose of the summaries is to provide policy-makers, researchers, journalists and the general public with a brief synopsis of up-to-date data, trends and core characteristics of the state of the national drug problem and responses to it.

Jennifer Hillebrand and Xavier Poo

Country situation summaries: <http://profiles.emcdda.europa.eu>
TACIS: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/ceeca/tacis/index.htm

Partners

Drug routes from Afghanistan

The Russian Foreign Ministry and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) hosted the 2nd Ministerial Conference on 'Drug routes from Afghanistan' from 26–28 June in Moscow in preparation for the G8 Summit held in July in St Petersburg.

The core purpose of the event was to review the so-called 'Paris Pact' process, set in motion at a similar ministerial conference in Paris in 2003. The pact calls for stronger and better coordinated action in border control and law enforcement in order to limit the illicit trafficking of opiates from Afghanistan through, and to, countries of western and central Asia and Europe. The UNODC is responsible for the 'Paris Pact Initiative', due for completion in October 2006, which facilitates counter-narcotics enforcement and coordination among countries seriously affected by Afghan opiate trafficking. UNODC delegates presented the ADAM database, a clearing-house mechanism calling on donors, beneficiary agencies and international organisations to 'connect, cooperate and coordinate' in tackling illicit drugs in the region targeted by the pact.

Three working groups examined the issues of: border control; regional and international cooperation; and health and social aspects of the drug phenomenon. On the latter, the conference recommended that States devise and implement prevention, treatment and rehabilitation measures, including: the prevention of drug use and HIV infection; the provision of effective drug treatment; and the establishment of effective outreach strategies to engage injecting drug users in HIV prevention strategies.

The EMCDDA participated in the event delivering a presentation on European trends in drug treatment and harm reduction.

Daniilo Ballotta

For further information on the Paris Pact see <http://www.unodc.org>

Drugs-Lex

Europe's diverse drug-driving laws presented at Pompidou Group seminar

The latest ELDD 'Topic overview' (<http://eldd.emcdda.europa.eu>), describing the laws and penalties regarding drugs and driving across the EU, was presented at the Pompidou Group's 'Third seminar on road traffic and drugs' held in Strasbourg from 10–11 July.

With research and technology still developing in this area, there is no clear pan-European policy on the detection and prosecution of drivers who have taken drugs. The seminar brought together practitioners from the main disciplines involved in the detection and prosecution of these drivers: police, researchers, doctors and lawyers. Given that these

groups have diverse views on what should constitute best practice, the meeting aimed to facilitate an exchange of ideas in order to progress towards an effective solution acceptable to all.

The 'Topic overview' updates and expands on groundwork carried out in 2003 (see ELDD 'Legal reports'). The new document examines: the status of the offence (criminal/non-criminal); the substances forbidden by law; whether police may stop to test at random or only on suspicion; and whether there is zero tolerance (any trace of drugs) or whether a certain level of impairment is required before prosecution.

The paper also looks at the various sanctions available by country, particularly the range of fines and prison sentences and the possible period for suspension of a driving licence.

The overview shows that, although all Member States list 'drug driving' as an offence, the conditions for its prosecution and the range of possible penalties can vary massively between countries.

Brendan Hughes

The 'Topic overview' is available at: <http://eldd.emcdda.europa.eu/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.Content&nmodelID=5036>

Spotlight

New German national standard for monitoring treatment

Over a decade ago, scientists and therapists in Germany developed a core data set for statistics in addiction aid. This national standard is based on the EMCDDA's treatment demand indicator and allows for the uniform description of treatment facilities, persons treated for drug problems, treatment episodes and outcomes. The data set also includes a standardised instrument, used by in-patient and out-patient treatment facilities, for the basic follow-up assessment of problem drug users after treatment.

Since the original version of the national standard was completed in 1998, drug problems and the framework of addiction aid have changed considerably, calling for a revision of the standard.

A group of national experts has recently completed its work on a new version of the data set and accompanying guidelines, which have now been approved by the *Deutsche Hauptstelle für Suchtfragen/DHS* (<http://www.dhs.de/index.html>) and are likely to be endorsed by the Federal Länder in the coming weeks. These will be published in manual form by the DHS and the German Reitox national focal point (DBDD) in the autumn. Changes in these guidelines reflect the experiences and needs of national monitoring, research, administration and practice. More details are collected than previously on the issue of substitution treatment, diagnosis and referrals.

The *German Addiction Aid Statistics* for 2005 reported on 160,000 client intakes from 749 out-patient and over 100 in-patient clinics. Up-to-date and scientifically sound data from such a monitoring system can help to take evidence-based decisions on the further development of treatment provision. The German monitoring system increasingly achieves this goal through good coverage and data quality. EMCDDA activities to standardise monitoring have been an important catalyst for this development.

Roland Simon, DBDD; Raphael Gaßmann, DHS

Reitox

EMCDDA information sessions

The Reitox national focal points from the UK and Turkey visited the EMCDDA in May for exhaustive information sessions on the core activities and outputs of the agency and its role vis-à-vis the Reitox network. The two-day events allowed for presentations of the work of the respective focal points and included debates on monitoring practices and methods as well as areas for future cooperation.

The UK delegation, visiting from 15–16 May, comprised officials from England, Northern Ireland and Scotland. This meeting resulted in an agreement to fine-tune and align UK and EMCDDA calendars for data submission.

The Turkish delegation, visiting from 29–31 May, was headed by Omer Aydin, Deputy-Director of the Department of Anti-Smuggling and Organised Crime. This visit included discussions on: the implementation of the five EMCDDA key indicators in Turkey; feedback on the quality of Turkish data; a twinning project between Spain, Greece and Turkey, and a new technical assistance project between the EMCDDA, Croatia and Turkey.

Ignacio Vázquez Molini

Inter-American Observatory on Drugs

A delegation from the Inter-American Observatory on Drugs, a monitoring centre established in 2000 under the auspices of the Organisation of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), visited the EMCDDA from 5–7 June. The visit took the form of a training session on the work of the EMCDDA.

Discussions focused on a proposed joint handbook on assessment procedures for publication later this year and a meeting between the EMCDDA, CICAD and the UNODC to take place in October in Lisbon. The meeting ended with an analysis of future steps for cooperation between the EMCDDA and CICAD in the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two bodies in 1999.

Ignacio Vázquez Molini

New guidelines for early-warning network

The Reitox early-warning system (EWS) network held its 6th annual meeting in Lisbon from 15–16 June and drafted a new set of EWS operating guidelines in the wake of the 'Council Decision on the information exchange, risk assessment and control of new psychoactive substances', adopted in May 2005.

The EWS network was created under the 1997 Joint action on new synthetic drugs to rapidly detect and exchange information on the production, traffic, use and risks of these substances entering the European drug scene (1). Until recently the network operated according to a practical guide published in 2002 entitled 'Early-warning system on new synthetic drugs: Guidance on implementation' (2).

A review of this modus operandi became necessary when the Council Decision replaced, and broadened the scope of, the Joint action last year. The new guidelines aim to assist EU Member States in implementing Step 1 (information/early warning) of the new mechanism (3) by explaining the scope of this new instrument, methods for information collection and outputs. The new guidelines will be published in 2007 following a six-month test period.

Roumen Sedefov

(1) It comprises correspondents from the focal points, EMCDDA, European Commission, Europol and the EMEA.

(2) <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=16775>

(3) For a new brochure on the Council Decision see <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=17869>

Products and services

EMCDDA formalises relations with OPOCE

On 8 June, the EMCDDA signed a service-level agreement with the EU's Publications Office (OPOCE) which formalises the long-standing cooperation between the bodies and promises to ensure that EMCDDA publications reach an ever wider audience.

OPOCE is the official publishing house of the EU institutions and other bodies. It has worked with the EMCDDA since the latter was founded in 1993, including the simultaneous publication, in 22 languages, of the *Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in Europe*. The agreement foresees that OPOCE cater for the production of publications from design stage to distribution — in paper form or electronically.

Under the terms of the agreement, the EMCDDA will provide OPOCE with advance notice of its annual publications plan and important events. OPOCE's part of the deal includes publicising the EMCDDA's for-sale publications through its own well-developed sales network and helping the agency distribute its publications via the EU Bookshop (<http://www.bookshop.europa.eu>).

The agreement between the two institutions was signed at a ceremony in Lisbon by OPOCE Director-General Thomas Cranfield and EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz.

EMCDDA report on hallucinogenic mushrooms

Many young Europeans are experimenting with hallucinogenic ('magic') mushrooms, according to a new study released by the EMCDDA on 26 June. The study is available at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/?nnodeID=7079>. A news release is also available at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=875>

Promoting the EU agencies

Following meetings of the Heads of Information and Communication of the EU agencies in January and June 2006, a number of joint projects have been launched to raise the profile of these decentralised bodies within the EU institutional architecture and to communicate 'Europe' to its citizens (see also 'White Paper on a European communication policy' — http://ec.europa.eu/communication_white_paper/index_en.htm).

The agencies section on the Europa website was re-designed under a new logo in April (http://europa.eu.int/agencies/index_en.htm), while a print advertisement with the slogan 'Whatever you do, we work for you' is being finalised and will appear in the in-flight magazines of some of the larger European airlines in September. Work on a new brochure presenting the agencies will begin in the autumn (see existing brochure at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=438>).

Potential 'hooks' for future marketing opportunities include the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome (25.3.2007), the European Year on Equal Opportunities (2007) and the World Exhibition in Zaragoza 2008 (<http://www.expozaragoza2008.es/EN/index.asp>).

EMCDDA website now offers RSS news feeds

The EMCDDA is now providing an RSS feed on its website offering the most up-to-date news from the agency. RSS stands for 'Really Simple Syndication' and makes it easier for visitors to stay informed of new content on a website. The EMCDDA's feed consists of headlines, short summaries and links to full articles. To subscribe to the feed, simply visit the EMCDDA home page (<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu>). For further information, including a tutorial, see <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=19049>

Resources

Useful materials and events



Drugs and holiday safety

The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has recently launched, in conjunction with *Lonely Planet* travel guides, a publication entitled *Travel safe: know before you go* (2006). The 27-page brochure is published under the FCO's 'Know before you go' awareness campaign to better prepare British citizens for overseas travel.

The brochure contains a section on drugs which carries a list of 'Stay safe tips'. Also published by the FCO is the leaflet *Drugs: information for travellers* (2004).

Campaign: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo>

Travel safe: know before you go:
http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/FCO_LP_TravelSafe_FINAL1_1.pdf

Drugs: information for travellers:
http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/Drugs%20Information%20for%20Travellers_1.pdf

Training directory

The Irish National Documentation Centre on Drug Use (NDC) released in July a 'Directory of courses and training programmes on drug misuse in Ireland 2006'. The 93-page directory contains information on courses and training programmes in drug misuse for individuals and agencies interested in developing their knowledge, skills and capacity in this field.

Downloadable from: <http://www.ndc.hrb.ie/attached/2920-DirectoryofTrainingCourses2006.pdf>
Printed copies available by e-mail: ndc@hrb.ie

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

Drugnet Europe is a newsletter published by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Lisbon. The newsletter is published four times per year in English. Any item may be reproduced provided the source is acknowledged.

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Calendar 2006

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

- 13 September: Technical meeting on the revision of EDDRA, Lisbon.
- 25–26 September: Annual expert meeting on the EMCDDA treatment demand indicator, Lisbon.
- 2 October: Legal correspondents meeting, Lisbon.
- 3–4 October: EDDRA managers' meeting, Lisbon.
- 10–11 October: Annual expert meeting on the EMCDDA infectious diseases indicator, Lisbon.
- 12–13 October: Annual expert meeting on the EMCDDA problem drug use indicator, Lisbon.
- 16–17 October: Technical meeting on the revision process on prevention tools, Lisbon.
- 26 October: Budget committee and Bureau meetings, Lisbon.

External meetings

- 3–7 September: 'What makes good practice?', 49th ICAA conference on dependencies, Edinburgh (<http://www.icaa-uk.org>).
- 9–12 September: 'Developing standards for research in drugged driving', experts meeting, Talloires, France.
- 20–22 September: 'Club Health 2006', 4th International conference on substance use, nightlife and related health issues, Piran, Slovenia. (<http://www.clubhealth.org.uk/conference>).

EU meetings

- 6–7 September: EU conference 'Moving forward together', Turku, Finland.
- 29 September: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.
- 31 October: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.

Statutory meetings

EMCDDA priorities for 2007–2009

The EMCDDA's three-year work programme for the period 2007–2009 received the seal of approval at the agency's Management Board meeting in Lisbon from 5–7 July, following consultation with the EMCDDA Scientific Committee, the European Commission and Council of the EU.

The three-year work programme focuses on three priorities:

- consolidating monitoring and reporting activities to support capacity-building and ongoing improvements in data quality and comparability;
- enhancing data analysis to better inform policy-relevant questions;
- ensuring that information is effectively disseminated via outputs tailored to the needs of the EMCDDA's target audiences.

In this context, the Management Board discussed the implications of the forthcoming recast of the EMCDDA founding regulation on the functioning of the Centre and its activities.

Finally, the Board agreed a draft Memorandum of Understanding between the EMCDDA and the World Customs Organisation (WCO), and mandated the Director to explore further options for formalising cooperation with the Federal Service of the Russian Federation for Narcotics Control (FDCS).

Monika Blum

Continued from page 1

the EU drugs strategy (2005–2012) and EU drugs action plan (2005–2008).

On 26 June, the EMCDDA hosted a reception for the diplomatic corps in Portugal and Portuguese authorities working in the drugs field. Presenting the role of the EMCDDA, Chairman Marcel Reimen referred to the fact that the agency's reporting tools and working methods were now shared across an entire continent. He also referred to an upcoming revision of the agency's mission statement which would place more emphasis on monitoring trends in polydrug use in the EU and on disseminating information on science-based practice (see EDDRA p. 2). Director Wolfgang Götz provided an overview of the EU drug situation and announced the release that day of a new EMCDDA emerging trends study on the use of hallucinogenic mushrooms (see p. 7).

Highlights 26 June: <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodelD=407>
EU drugs strategy (2005–2012): <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodelD=6790>
EU drugs action plan (2005–2008): <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodelD=10360>