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Drugnet Europe

Newsletter of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

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Broader remit for EMCDDA

The EMCDDA kicked off 2007 with a broader remit, following the entry into force on 16 January of a new mission statement which will help it respond to new challenges in the drugs field across Europe.

The revised EMCDDA regulation (1), adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU through a co-decision procedure, updates and replaces the one founding the agency in 1993. It was signed in Strasbourg in December 2006 and entered into force 20 days after its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (27 December). The revision of the original regulation was launched at the initiative of the European Commission in August 2005.

While reaffirming the EMCDDA's main purpose as to provide EU Member States with 'factual, objective, reliable and comparable information at European level concerning drugs and drug addiction and their consequences', the new regulation broadens the scope of the Centre's tasks, granting it a more active role in monitoring new methods of drug use and related trends. Specifically it allows the agency to collect, register and analyse information on 'emerging trends in polydrug use', including the combined use of licit and illicit psychoactive substances.

'This is a timely development when polydrug use is becoming ever more visible within the European drug culture', commented EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz. 'The new regulation is an important instrument which launches us on a new path and enables us to provide the full picture of today's drug problem. The new EMCDDA three-year work programme for 2007–2009 has been drafted in the light of this new mission statement'.

A key aspect of the new remit is providing information on best practice in the EU Member States and facilitating exchange of such practice between them. In reality, this will include the sharing of experience in areas such as drug prevention and reducing supply and drug-related harm. The EMCDDA is also called on to develop tools and instruments to help Member States and the European Commission monitor and evaluate national and EU drug policies.

Continued on page 8



Photo: heimbüchel.pr

Polydrug use — ever more visible within the European drug culture.

Management Board elections

Mr Marcel Reimen, Plenipotentiary Minister of Luxembourg responsible for relations with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris, was elected Chairman of the EMCDDA for the next three years at the agency's Management Board meeting from 13–15 December.

Mr Reimen, who has been member of the Board since 1994, served as Vice-Chairman (1998–2002) and ad interim Chairman (2003) before being elected Chairman for a three-year mandate in January 2004. Since then he has steered the EMCDDA through its 2004–2006 work programme and its enlargement to 10 new members in May 2004.

Commenting on his re-appointment, Mr Reimen said: 'My second mandate coincides with the beginning of a new EMCDDA three-year work programme for 2007–2009 which is based on a commitment to scientific excellence, partnership, good governance and efficiency. I fully subscribe to these underlying principles and look forward to working with the Centre to enhance the scientific quality of its work'.

Mr Ralf Löfstedt of Sweden, who has been a full member of the Board since 1996, and Vice-Chairman since 2004, was also re-elected for another three-year term. Mr Löfstedt has been Director for National and International Drug Policy Issues at the Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs since 1993.

See news release No 7/2006 at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=971>

January–March

2007

Drug situation

EMCDDA to publish drug profiles

Factual and objective descriptions of internationally controlled substances will soon be available on the EMCDDA website in the form of 'drug profiles'. The aim of the project, to be launched in March, is to provide the general public and users of EMCDDA products with clear and easily accessible information on individual drugs.

In the first phase, the profiles will cover six substances controlled by the UN conventions: amphetamine, cocaine/crack, cannabis, heroin, MDMA and methamphetamine. The profiles will be presented in a standardised way, offering a synthetic and scientifically sound description of the chemistry, pharmacology, synthesis and precursors of the six substances as well as their physical form (e.g. powder, tablet) and mode of use.

The descriptions will also contain sections on prevalence, street price and typical levels of purity, which will be updated annually on the basis of information provided by the Reitox network. Brief information on the possible medical uses and exact control status of the substances, as well as selected images, will complete the picture.

Since the profiles are intentionally technical, they will be accompanied by a short bibliography and brief glossary of chemical and biochemical terms aimed at assisting users.

Roumen Sedefov and Dominique Lopez

<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeid=25328>

HIV/AIDS think tank

Injecting drug use provided the focus of an 'HIV/AIDS think tank' meeting organised by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection from 22–23 November (http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/com/aids/aids_think_en.htm). The think tank provides a forum for discussion on HIV/AIDS policy between EU bodies and countries, international organisations and civil society.

Progress reports were presented on: HIV and harm-reduction initiatives under the EU drugs action plan; injecting drug use and HIV-related work at the EMCDDA; and follow-up to the Finnish Presidency drugs conference 'Moving forward together' (see *Drugnet Europe* No 56). Plans for the upcoming presidencies of the EU were also communicated, including conferences on HIV/AIDS and civil society initiatives under the German Presidency (Bremen, March) and on HIV/AIDS and migrants under the Portuguese Presidency (Lisbon, autumn).

The Commission's Directorate-General for Research examined HIV/AIDS related topics falling under the 7th Framework programme for research and technological development (FP7) (see p. 6). Participants noted that funds appeared to be devoted largely to developing HIV vaccines and microbicides and that initiatives geared towards behavioural change might require greater attention. The participants also highlighted the need to develop European HIV testing guidelines, following the recent release of US guidelines from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention that move towards more intensive testing (<http://www.cdc.gov>).

Lucas Wiessing

Common standards for research on drugs and driving

The use of drugs and psychotropic medicines is increasingly recorded in road traffic accidents, with combined alcohol use often exacerbating the dangers. Although various national studies have been launched to gauge the extent of the problem and possible solutions, a lack of standardisation in research methods makes cross-national comparison difficult.

At the initiative of the US National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) (1), experts from Australia, Europe and the United States met in France in 2006 for a seminar dedicated to research on drugs and driving. The aim of the meeting was to develop a set of standards designed to improve cross-national data comparability in this area. Epidemiology, toxicology and performance/behaviour were discussed for each study type (i.e. roadside, hospitals, fatal accidents).

Representatives of the EMCDDA and a major European Commission project 'Driving under the influence of drugs, alcohol and medicine (DRUID)' (2) participated in the meeting and are now contributing to the final version of a document on international standards. Following a peer review process, this document is expected to be presented in August 2007 at the 18th International Conference on Alcohol, Drugs and Traffic Safety (ICADTS) to take place in Seattle (3).

Brendan Hughes and Dominique Lopez

(1) For more on NIDA see <http://www.nida.nih.gov>

(2) The four-year, € 24m DRUID project was launched in October 2006 and involves 21 European countries and 37 partners. It aims to provide scientific support to the EU transport policy target of reducing the number of road fatalities by 50% before 2010, by establishing guidelines and measures to combat impaired driving. For more on DRUID see http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/behavior/fitness_to_drive_en.htm

(3) <http://www.icadts2007.org>



Photo: photocase.com

The use of drugs and psychotropic medicines is increasingly recorded in road traffic accidents

Responses

Prison health database

The WHO's Regional Office for Europe and Health in Prisons Project (HIPP), in cooperation with the EMCDDA and the European Network on Drugs and Infections in Prison (ENDIPP) have set up a database dedicated to the issue of prisoners' health (<http://data.euro.who.int/hip/>).

Prisons today are focal points for high-risk drug use and communicable diseases such as HIV, HCV and tuberculosis. The database was developed to store data on relevant prison health indicators and available healthcare services as a step towards supporting health planning and policy monitoring in this setting. Health in prisons has important implications for public health, with poor health among prisoners potentially impacting on society through their contact with staff, family and, on release, other members of the community.

The database will be used to develop evidence-based guidance on cost-effective disease control and health promotion in prisons as part of national strategies for public health protection. It will also be used to obtain an overview of the organisation, practice and quality control of assistance to prisoners in Europe. Monitoring health in prisons and obtaining quality prison health data will help enhance knowledge of how disease and life-threatening behaviour can be prevented in this setting in order to improve prisoners' health generally and decrease the spread of infections.

Information in the database will be updated annually by national counterparts in the WHO European Network on Prison and Health. The database opened for public access in October 2006 and is expected to include data from most EU Member States and applicant countries in the course of 2007. The project is supported by a grant from the public health programme of the European Commission.

Dagmar Hedrich and Lars Möller

Progress review — EU drugs action plan (2005–2008)

The European Commission released on 21 December the first progress review on the implementation of the EU drugs action plan (2005–2008). Covering the 18-month period from the plan's adoption on 27 June 2005 to December 2006, the report assesses to what extent activities foreseen for this period have been implemented and their objectives reached.

The EMCDDA participated in the evaluation process by compiling nine thematic papers presenting progress made in the EU in the fields of demand reduction and information, research and evaluation. These papers were used by the Commission, along with other sources, to draft the progress review which is a central instrument for the understanding and management of the action plan. Europol also contributed to the review with data on supply reduction.

In the report's conclusions, issues outlined as requiring closer attention include: a better coordination between public health and law-enforcement bodies at all levels; more realistic and feasible indicators for some actions; and the involvement of civil society in forthcoming reviews in the context of the Commission's 'Green Paper on the role of civil society in drugs policy in the European Union'. The report also raises the issue of Member States' participation in the reporting exercise which could be improved. The EMCDDA is now carrying out preparatory work for the 2007 review. This will entail updating some of the existing thematic papers as well as drafting several new ones.

The current action plan states that the Commission must present annual reviews to the Council of the EU and European Parliament reporting on progress in implementing the plan and identifying gaps and new challenges. A final evaluation of the action plan is planned for 2008 which will provide an overview of the plan's outputs as well as a snapshot on the state of the drugs situation which it seeks to address. This will form the basis for the new action plan under the EU drugs strategy (2005–2012).

Frank Zobel

http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/drugs/information/fsj_drugs_information_en.htm



Photo: heimbüchel pr

Prisons — focal points for high-risk drug use and communicable diseases

Pompidou Group ministerial conference

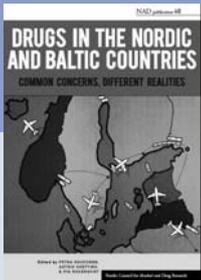
'New signals for drug policies across Europe' was the theme of the Pompidou Group's ministerial conference organised in Strasbourg from 27–28 November. The conference, held every three to four years as a forum of information exchange between policy-makers, professionals and researchers, resulted in the adoption of an anti-drug use programme with a focus on involving young people. The new programme is built around six areas: prevention, treatment, ethics, airports, research and criminal justice.

The conference welcomed increased collaboration with other international bodies active in drugs, particularly new joint initiatives with the EU launched under the auspices of the Finnish EU presidency in 2006 (see *Drugnet Europe* No 56, 'Moving forward together'). Such initiatives include a network of frontline health, social and police services coordinated by the Pompidou Group to improve inter-agency cooperation on drug problems.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/pompidou/Activities/Activities_en.asp

Bookshelf

Drugs in the Nordic and Baltic countries: common concerns, different realities



Drug experts from the Nordic and Baltic countries come together in this volume to examine drug use and its consequences from a regional perspective. The publication has its origins in a statement from Nordic and Baltic Ministers responsible for drugs which called for in-depth reporting on the drug phenomenon in the region and the need for a partnership to address the problem. This report responds to the first of these requests.

In seven chapters, the volume describes the latest developments in prevalence and patterns of drug use as well as measures taken in the areas of prevention, harm reduction, law enforcement and treatment. Despite geographical, and in some cases, historical and cultural similarities between the countries, the report reveals that a more varied picture emerges of their national drug situations and related public perceptions. Among the themes covered in the report are: trends in drug supply and demand; drug use in prison; and national drug policies.

Publisher: Nordic Council for Alcohol and Drug Research (NAD), Publication No. 48

Editors: Peira Kouvonen, Astrid Skretting and Pia Rosenqvist

Language: English

Date: September 2006

ISBN: 951-53-2840-3

Price: Free of charge

Downloadable from: <http://www.nad.fi/index.php?lang=en&id=pub/48>

E-mail: nads@kaapeli.fi

Website: <http://www.nad.fi>

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

EMCDDA strategy and work programme (2007–2009)

A sound framework for drugs monitoring in Europe

Working more efficiently, investing more in analysis and communicating more effectively with key audiences are among the goals of the EMCDDA's new work programme (2007–2009). Adopted by the Management Board in 2006, the programme charts the agency's direction and activities for the next three years. Its underlying strategy is straightforward: to concentrate on the EMCDDA's core business of monitoring the drugs phenomenon and to ensure that full value is secured from the investments made in this area. Its guiding principles are a commitment to scientific excellence, partnership, good governance and efficiency.



Photo: © Gettyimage

'At the end of the line, it is crucial that the results of our work land on the desks of those who need them'

Commenting on the programme EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz said: 'The information tools and mechanisms we have developed to date provide a sound foundation for collecting information at European level. We now need to build on this success and ensure that maximum analytical value is derived from the data collected. And of course, at the end of the line, it is crucial that the results of our work land on the desks of those who need them'.

To achieve these aims the EMCDDA's work is structured around three core priorities:

- consolidating monitoring and reporting structures;
- enhancing data analysis;
- communicating more effectively with key target audiences (policy-makers, scientists/researchers, practitioners, general public).

In line with the first priority, the agency will further improve its data-collection system, adopt a more efficient data-management approach and, where needed, invest in capacity-building. The full launch of its data-collection tool, Fonte, in 2008 and the ongoing review of data-reporting instruments are key activities in this area.

Improving data quality and management will better equip the EMCDDA to exploit the knowledge available and focus its scientific resources on the second priority: enhancing data analysis. Key areas for analysis in the next three years include: supporting the evaluation of the EU drugs action plan (2005–2008); identifying science-based good practice and providing an early-warning system on new threats and developments. New activities prescribed in the new EMCDDA regulation (see p. 1) will also be addressed.

The data that the agency collects and analyses are of little value if not disseminated in an appropriate fashion, which is why communicating effectively is important. The EMCDDA will concentrate on speaking to each of its target groups in an appropriate language and on providing them with products tailored to their needs. Better synchronisation of the communication strategy with the strategy for scientific development will result in a coherent stream of clearly delineated outputs.

For more on the 2007–2009 work programme, see <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nodeid=25311>

Evaluation

How effective is the EMCDDA?

How effective is the EMCDDA? Is it achieving its goals? Does it provide value for money? These are among the questions to be addressed in an independent evaluation of the agency launched in January 2007. The evaluation, undertaken by the UK-based Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services (CSES), at the initiative of the European Commission, will run until the end of the year. A final report of the findings will be presented to the EMCDDA Management Board in December with recommendations for follow-up.

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of the EMCDDA and to examine ways to improve and enhance its operations. It covers the last two EMCDDA work programmes 2001–2003 and 2004–2006.

Specifically the evaluation will address: the utility and European added value of the EMCDDA; the coherence of EMCDDA objectives and activities in relation to those of the European Community and Commission; the consistency of EMCDDA results/outputs with the agency's mandate, goals and tasks; and the general efficiency and effectiveness of the agency.

The exercise will be organised in three phases. A preparatory phase will feature preliminary discussions with staff, desk research and methodological work. A second phase will include internal and external surveys and an interview programme involving staff and key target audiences. And a third phase will involve a detailed analysis of the evaluation findings leading to the final report.

This is the second evaluation carried out on the EMCDDA. The first, by Deloitte and Touche in 1999, made specific recommendations to improve the working methods, organisation and outputs of the agency and led to a series of reforms (1). The new EMCDDA regulation (see p. 1), stipulates that the Commission should initiate an external evaluation of the agency every six years on completion of two triennial work programmes.

(1) <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=1651>

Have your say

As part of the evaluation process, subscribers to *Drugnet Europe* will have the opportunity to complete a questionnaire on the activities and performance of the EMCDDA. This questionnaire will be accessible online from mid March at <http://www.cses.co.uk/survey/emcdda.htm>

Readers wishing to receive the questionnaire by e-mail or fax are requested to contact CSES.

Tel./Fax ++ 44 1959 52 51 22.
E-mail: scook@cses.co.uk

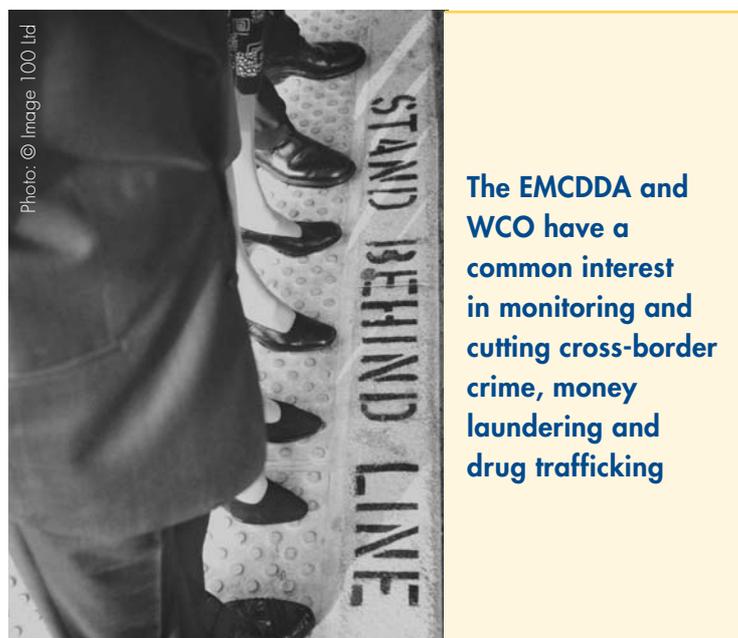
Partners

EMCDDA and WCO step up cooperation in international drug control

The EMCDDA and the World Customs Organisation (WCO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Lisbon on 12 January to enhance international drug control efforts.

The agreement, signed in Lisbon by EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz and the WCO Director of the Enforcement and Facilitation Directorate, Michael T. Schmitz, builds on over a decade of cooperation between the two organisations.

In 1993, at the birth of the EMCDDA, the WCO was named as one of the agency's six priority international partners and has since provided it with yearly data for its *Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in Europe*.



The EMCDDA and WCO have a common interest in monitoring and cutting cross-border crime, money laundering and drug trafficking

The EMCDDA and WCO have a common interest in monitoring and cutting cross-border crime, money laundering and drug trafficking. Under the terms of the agreement, the organisations will collaborate to collect, analyse, publish and disseminate information on drug seizures, drug smuggling and the diversion of precursors, making the best use of resources and existing data. The MoU also provides for an exchange of technical expertise, information and knowledge between the two bodies as well as the co-sponsoring of technical meetings and the pooling of human and financial resources to launch joint programmes.

As a result of this agreement, the EMCDDA will benefit from greater access to customs drug data and will enrich its repository of drug supply reduction information, fed to date by the Reitox network and by Europol and Interpol through similar MoUs. The EMCDDA now holds cooperation frameworks with all of its major international partners.

Ignacio Vázquez Molini

MoU text at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=1616>
Fact sheet No 1/2007 at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=2236>

Spotlight

Joint handbook on establishing national focal points



The EMCDDA and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organisation of American States (OAS) are carrying out groundwork on a joint handbook dedicated to the establishment of national drug observatories (national focal points) and drug information networks.

Based on the experience of the two bodies in their respective geographical areas, the joint handbook will present an overview of the most relevant concepts and methodologies required for setting up and assessing these national centres and their data-collection methods.

In this context, the EMCDDA has launched a preliminary study of the European experience of setting up the Reitox network and the decisive elements that contributed to the success of the project. The results of the study, expected in April 2007, will be further developed by the EMCDDA and CICAD in the ensuing months.

The joint handbook, which is scheduled for completion by December this year, will provide the EMCDDA with a valuable training manual for technical cooperation activities aimed at creating or consolidating national focal points in current and potential candidate countries to the EU. It will be used by CICAD to create, evaluate and develop national monitoring centres in several Latin American countries.

The handbook was discussed at meetings at the EMCDDA in Lisbon in November involving participants from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru and delegates from CICAD and the Peruvian Bureau of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Alexis Goosdeel

Reitox

Bulgaria and Romania — new members

On 1 January 2007, Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union and as a result became official members of the EMCDDA and its Reitox network. Their membership of the agency marks the end of a long cooperation process with the European Commission and the EMCDDA stretching back to the early 1990s.

Cooperation began when Bulgaria and Romania became associated in activities organised by the Commission in the framework of the Phare programme for the fight against drugs (1992–1999). Direct technical cooperation between the two countries and the EMCDDA followed from 2000 to the end of 2006 with financial support from the Phare programme. The countries also benefited from 'Twinning programmes' with EU Member States from 2000 which helped them draw up and implement national drugs strategies, coordination mechanisms and balanced demand and supply reduction strategies. Through these activities and programmes, Bulgaria and Romania received firm support from the Commission and the EMCDDA to establish a national focal point and a national data collection system. Today a Bulgarian focal point is located within the National Centre for Addictions of the Ministry of Health and a Romanian focal point within the National Anti-Drug Agency of the Ministry of Administration and Interior.

As we celebrate the entry of the two countries to the EU and to our network, we applaud the commitment of many Bulgarian and Romanian decision-makers, experts and professionals who faced often challenging conditions when establishing the structures and systems needed to monitor their national drugs situation within the European context. We also acknowledge the hard work of our European Commission colleagues and other EU experts involved in technical cooperation activities over 15 years. Together we look forward to writing a new chapter in the development of the Reitox network.

Alexis Goosdeel

Scientific Committee

Committee to slim down to 15 members

The new EMCDDA regulation adopted on 16 January (see p. 1) has a substantial bearing on the composition of the agency's Scientific Committee. Previously composed of one representative from each EU Member State, the Committee will now be slimmed down to a maximum of 15 members chosen through a public selection process on the basis of scientific excellence and independence. At its latest meeting from 4–5 December 2006, the Committee discussed the criteria for the new selection process which will be finalised later in the year allowing the new members to take up duties in 2008. A working group consisting of the EMCDDA Director, staff and representatives of the Management Board and Scientific Committee has been set up to draft the relevant guidelines.

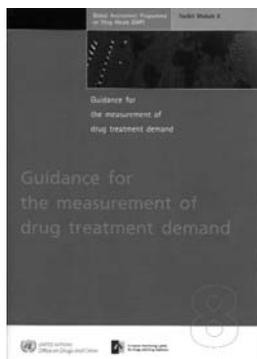
The Committee welcomed the 2007 EMCDDA work programme with its improved structure, clear prioritisation and definition of specific outputs. Also on the agenda was the 7th Framework programme for research and technological development (FP7), adopted by the Council of the EU on 18 December (1). A representative of the European Commission (DG Research) presented the programme and noted that it was often difficult to pinpoint possibilities for drug-related research within the framework programmes as they cut across several disciplines. He invited the EMCDDA to stimulate research proposals to FP7 through its Reitox network and Scientific Committee. In response, the EMCDDA has now made an analysis of FP7 on its website and highlights calls for proposals of interest from drug researchers and opportunities for funding (2).

Margareta Nilson

(1) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html — (2) <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=23765>

Products and services

Drug treatment demand toolkit



The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the EMCDDA have co-published a set of guidelines for establishing and maintaining a common system to collect treatment demand data. The aim of the guidelines is to assist countries throughout the world in compiling comparable data on this issue and thereby improve cross-national analysis. They also look at the practical issues to be addressed in order to reach an internationally consistent dataset on drug treatment demand.

Entitled *Guidance for the measurement of drug treatment demand*, the publication is targeted at drug treatment experts and practitioners throughout the world and is the eighth 'toolkit module' of UNODC's Global assessment programme on drug abuse (GAP) (1). The publication also builds on the Joint Pompidou Group–EMCDDA treatment demand indicator protocol (2000) (2).

The number of people seeking treatment for drug problems is a leading indicator of drug use patterns and prevalence. Data collected from this group offer a valuable 'window' onto an otherwise hidden population and a means of assessing the performance of treatment services, client needs and the effectiveness of policy. Although data on drug treatment are commonly available in many countries, there is still a lack of standardisation as regards data coverage, concepts and methods and tools.

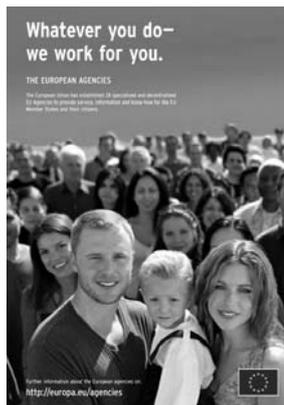
In seven chapters the toolkit proposes: a three-stage model for building the foundations of a treatment demand information system; a core set of standard data items/codes; and common definitions of treatment, drug use, treatment centres, clients and units of measurement. Also presented are tips on implementation (protocols, training resources); fieldwork; data preparation and analysis; and reporting. The final chapter on maintenance and evaluation underlines the need to regularly update inventories of service provision and systematically evaluate treatment demand indicators as a means of helping them evolve. The guidelines will be released during the 50th session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs from 12–16 March. They will also be available on the EMCDDA website at: <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeid=400>

Linda Montanari

(1) Global assessment programme: http://www.unodc.org/unodc/drug_demand_gap_aboutgap.html

(2) Joint Pompidou Group–EMCDDA treatment demand indicator protocol:
<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeid=1420>

EU agencies' advertising campaign



'Whatever you do — we work for you' was the slogan of an advertising campaign launched on 1 December 2006 to inform European citizens about the activities and services of the decentralised EU agencies. Throughout the month, the print advertisement (opposite) appeared in the in-flight magazines of some of the larger European airlines, at a time when millions of Europeans were travelling for the festive season. The EMCDDA joined the month-long campaign as one of over 20 specialised and decentralised agencies set up by the EU to provide services, information and know-how to the EU Member States and their citizens.

For more on the EU agencies, see <http://europa.eu/agencies>

Resources

Useful materials and events on the drugs issue



European clinical protocols for HIV/AIDS care

The WHO's Regional Office for Europe has released a series of European clinical protocols for HIV/AIDS treatment and care. The 13 protocols offer up-to-date, evidence-based guidance on providing the optimal services to people living with HIV/AIDS in Europe. They also aim to assist Member States in developing effective health services and systems. Each protocol has a specific focus such as HIV/hepatitis co-infection, HIV/tuberculosis co-infection, and support for the sexual and reproductive health of people living with HIV/AIDS. Downloadable in English and Russian.

Protocols
http://www.euro.who.int/aids/treatment/20060801_1

Press release
http://www.euro.who.int/mediacentre/PR/2006/20061129_1

Online research register

The Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe, in collaboration with the EMCDDA, has set up an online register of current research in the drugs field to improve the exchange of information in this field. Presently in its pilot phase, the register will enable users to: identify who does what in drugs research; find contacts of individual researchers and research institutions; and explore opportunities for sponsorship. Introducing a password, users can: submit their own projects and update them; contribute to a discussion forum; and appeal for cooperation and partnerships.

Access to register
<http://www.pgregister.coe.int/pompidou>

Feedback by e-mail registerPG@coe.int

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

Calendar 2007

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

- 7–9 March: Official visit of EMCDDA Chairman and Director to Romania.
- 29–30 March: Reitox Academy on cannabis prevention and treatment, Berlin.
- 10 May: Executive committee and Budget committee, Lisbon.
- 11 May: Reitox Academy on public expenditure analysis in the field of drugs, Luxembourg.

External meetings

- 6–8 February: UNODC expert consultation, 'Ten-year review of the implementation of the declarations and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its 20th Special session on the world drug problem (UNGASS 1998)', Vienna.
- 26 February–2 March: 26th session of the WCO enforcement committee, Brussels.
- 28 February–1 March: Pompidou Group ethics platform, Paris.
- 12–16 March: United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), Vienna.
- 22–23 March: 1st annual conference of the International society for the study of drug policy, Oslo.

EU meetings

- 2 March: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.
- 13–14 March: 'Responsibility and partnership — Together against AIDS/HIV', German Presidency, Bremen.
- 17 April: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.

Statutory meetings

Management Board adopts 2007 work programme

The EMCDDA Management Board adopted at its meeting from 13–15 December the agency's work programme and budget for 2007 as well as the preliminary draft programme for 2008. The EMCDDA budget for this year is set at €13,511,706 which includes the European Commission subsidy of €13 million.

Under this annual work programme, more attention will be paid to providing greater detail and more transparency in describing planned activities, thus reflecting the output-oriented focus of the new three-year strategy (see p. 4). The 2007 activities also reflect the need to streamline the EMCDDA's objectives in order to cope effectively with current and expected budgetary constraints and with the priorities defined in the EU strategy and action plan on drugs. The full programme can be consulted at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=25312>

Also discussed at the meeting were two agreements likely to be signed in the spring: a Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal Service of the Russian Federation for Narcotics Traffic Control and a cooperation agreement with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). In the framework of the recast of the EMCDDA's founding regulation (see p. 1), a working group was set up to draft guidelines for selecting a new EMCDDA Scientific Committee (see p. 6).

Monika Blum

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At the request of the European Commission and with approval of its Management Board, the EMCDDA may also be called on to transfer its know-how to certain non-EU countries, such as official candidates for EU accession and countries in the Western Balkans. This is likely to entail creating and reinforcing links with the Reitox network and assisting in the building and strengthening of national focal points.

The Centre's own administration is also being overhauled, with the Management Board (on which all Member States and other stakeholders are represented) to be assisted by a new six-member Executive Committee to prepare the decisions of the Board and to advise the Director. Meanwhile the existing Scientific Committee (to date made up of Member States' nominees) is being slimmed down to a maximum of 15 members to be chosen through a public selection process based on scientific excellence and independence (see p. 6).

(1) See Regulation (EC) No 1920/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council (12 December 2006) on the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (recast). <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:376:SOM:EN:HTML>