



## FACT SHEET from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

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### EU DRUGS AGENCY HOSTS 2011 ESPAD MEETING IN LISBON

#### **EMCDDA and ESPAD to scale up cooperation through new joint actions**

(28.11.2011) The **EMCDDA** and the **European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD)** pledged to scale up their cooperation today in a joint statement adopted at the **2011 ESPAD project meeting**. The event, hosted by the **EMCDDA** in Lisbon (27–29 November), brings together participants from 39 European countries.

**ESPAD** data provide crucial information on substance use among 15- to 16-year-old school students and are routinely included in the **EMCDDA**'s annual reporting on the drug situation in Europe. In the statement, the partners vow to boost joint work and technical cooperation to enhance understanding of long-term drug use trends in Europe.

Cooperation between the **EMCDDA** and **ESPAD** began in the mid-1990s and was formalised by a 'cooperation framework' agreed in 2007. This agreement recognised the mutual benefits of joint activities to: exchange information and expertise; improve the availability, quality and comparability of school survey data; and gain analytical insight from the data available in this area.

So far this cooperation has delivered positive results, such as joint **ESPAD–EMCDDA** analyses of polydrug use; joint multilingual publishing projects; and **EMCDDA**-supported **ESPAD** data collections in several Balkan countries.

Based on the encouraging experiences to date, the two partners reaffirm today the long-term value to be achieved through close technical cooperation and the sharing of expertise. In the joint statement they agree, among others, to:

- develop an enhanced dissemination strategy of ESPAD findings (including a multilingual approach);
- work together to ensure harmonisation of methods and to support methodological development;
- develop a joint work programme to contribute to long-term sustainability of the ESPAD network (e.g. joint analyses, data sharing); and
- meet regularly to review joint activities.

High on the agenda at this week's meeting are the 2011 ESPAD data collections and the analysis of findings. During the proceedings, participants will hear the experiences of investigators in new ESPAD countries: Albania; Liechtenstein and the Republic of Srbska. In addition, thematic discussions will address a range of topics, including: methodological issues; alcoholic beverage drinking patterns; polydrug use; the use of synthetic drugs; and predictors of, and the impact of environmental factors on, cannabis use.

Today's statement underlines the commitment of the two partners to monitoring and understanding substance use in this important adolescent population. This in turn will help to inform policymakers, promote scientific understanding and facilitate the development of effective interventions for young and vulnerable school students.

See joint statement at: [www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/partners](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/partners) • [www.espad.org](http://www.espad.org)

For background see: [www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att\\_45923\\_EN\\_espad.pdf](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_45923_EN_espad.pdf)

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