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Your reference point on drugs in Europe

Illicit drug use and trafficking are worldwide phenomena that threaten health and social stability. Statistics show that one European citizen dies every hour from a drug overdose and close to 8 000 Europeans lose their lives to drugs every year. Meanwhile ever-changing patterns in supply and demand call for constant monitoring and dynamic responses.

Independent, scientific information is a vital resource to help Europe understand the nature of its drug problems and better respond to them. It was on this premise, and in the face of an escalating drug phenomenon, that the EMCDDA was established in 1993. Its creation symbolised a major political decision to build drug-related policies based on scientific and technical findings.

Who are we?

- A decentralised EU agency
- Formally established in 1993
- Based in Lisbon, Portugal (operating since 1995)
- A centre of excellence for drug-related information in Europe

Why do we do it?

- Inform decision-making on drugs
- Generate a high-quality European evidence base
- Understand what responses work
- Provide early-warning on new threats and developments

What do we do?

- Provide the Community and EU Member States with: 'factual, objective, reliable and comparable information at European level concerning drugs and drug addiction and their consequences'
- Collect, register and analyse information on 'emerging trends', particularly in polydrug use, and the combined use of licit and illicit psychoactive substances
- Offer information on best practice in the EU Member States and facilitate exchange of such practice between them

'Our job is not to dictate drug policy but to provide the evidence necessary for informed decision-making. Sound information is the key to an effective strategy on drugs. This is our core business.'

Wolfgang Götz, EMCDDA Director

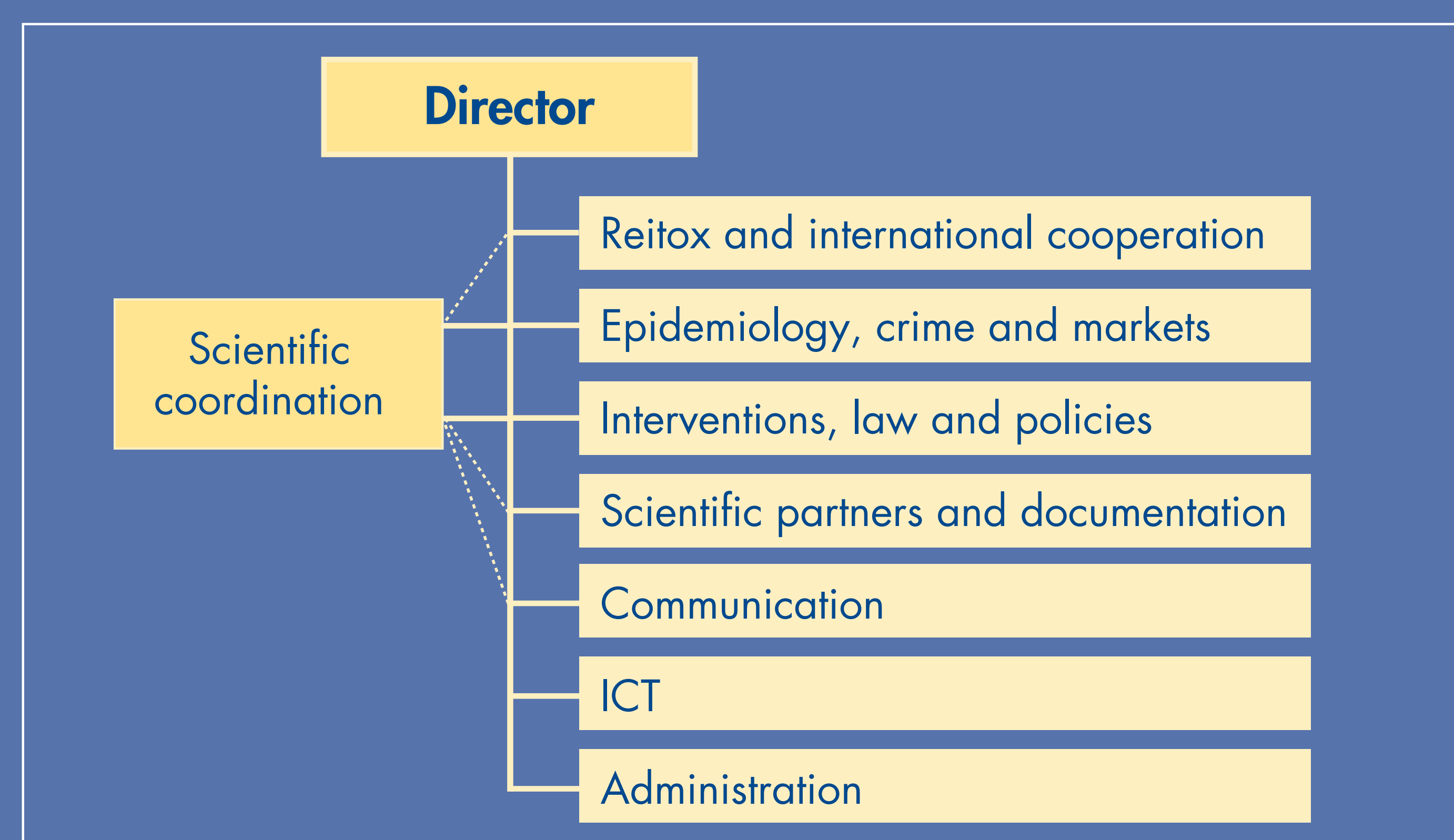
For whom?

- Policymakers
- Practitioners and professionals working in the drugs field
- Scientists and researchers

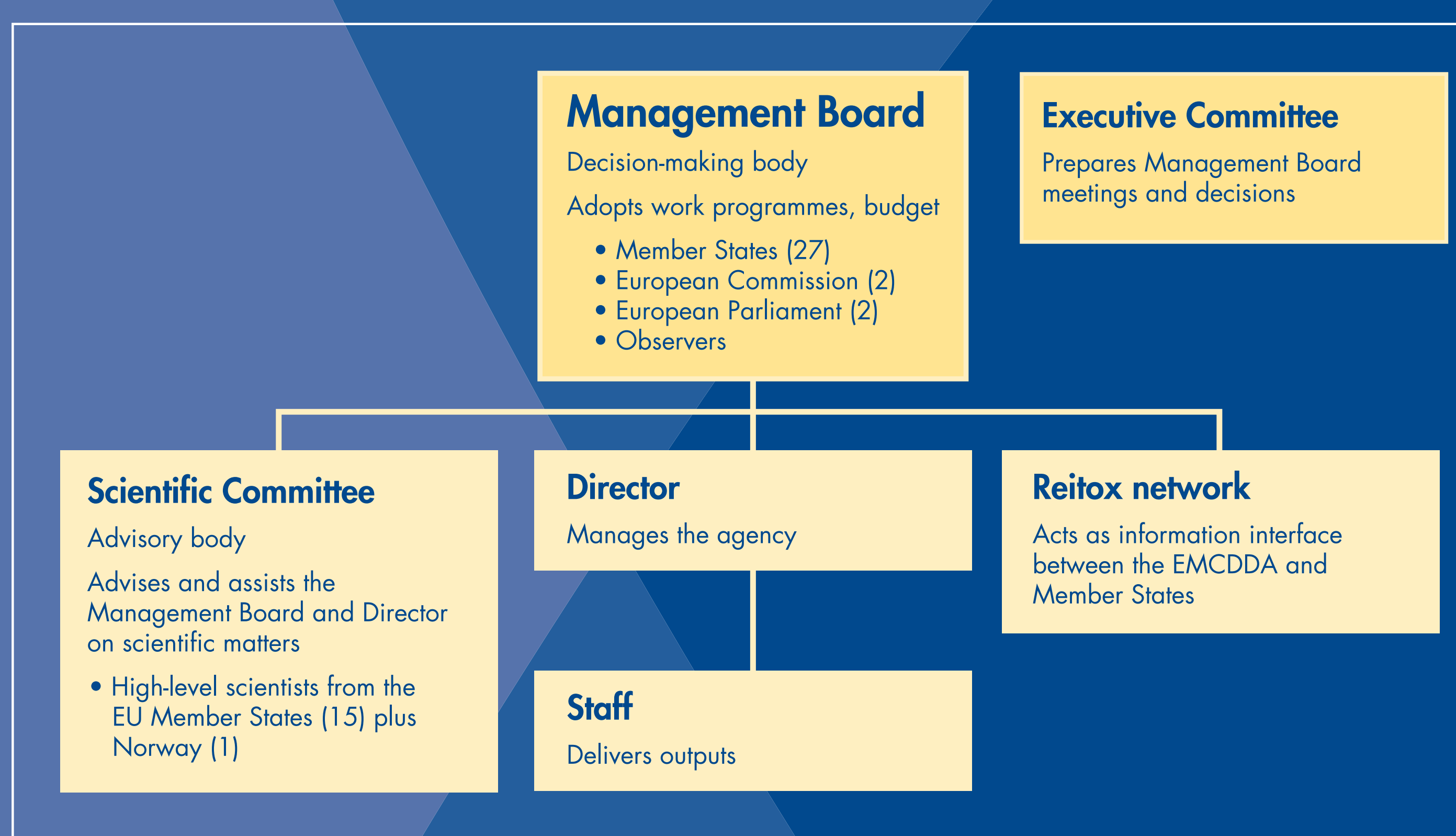
How do we function?

The agency's main statutory body is its Management Board, which guarantees the right balance between national and EU interests in EMCDDA decision-making. The scientific integrity of the EMCDDA is safeguarded by its Scientific Committee which offers formal advice and assistance on all scientific matters that the Director or Management Board may submit to it. Meanwhile, the agency's Director, appointed for a renewable five-year period, is responsible for the day-to-day running of the agency. The European information network on drugs and drug addiction (Reitox) is the information interface between the EMCDDA and its Member States.

In-house structure



Decisional and operational structure



European and international partners

While the EMCDDA is primarily European in focus, it also works with partners in various world regions, exchanging information and expertise. Collaboration with European and international organisations in the drugs field is central to its work as a means of enhancing understanding of the global drugs phenomenon.