



FACT SHEET from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

DIRECTORS OF TWO EU AGENCIES SIGN AGREEMENT TODAY IN LISBON

EMCDDA and ECDC to join forces in tackling drug-related infectious diseases

(29.6.2007, LISBON) Joint projects to prevent and control drug-related infectious diseases will be facilitated in the future thanks to a cooperation agreement signed today by the **EU drugs agency (EMCDDA)** and the **European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)**.

The agreement, signed in Lisbon this morning by **ECDC Director Zsuzsanna Jakab** and **EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz**, provides the agencies with a formal framework to join forces in tackling such infections and to contribute to the broader EU effort to prevent and control communicable diseases.

The Stockholm-based **ECDC** was set up in 2004 to strengthen Europe's defences against infectious diseases, including SARS, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and influenza. The Lisbon-based **EMCDDA** was set up in 1993 to provide an objective and factual picture of drugs and drug addiction and their consequences in Europe.

One of the **EMCDDA's** main data-collection tools is its indicator on drug-related infectious diseases which allows it to monitor HIV, hepatitis B/C and other infections in injecting drug users in a reliable and comparable way across Europe. The indicator also helps generate indirect estimates of the incidence, prevalence and trends in drug injecting and identify priorities for preventing further infections and forecasting health-care needs and costs.

ECDC is tasked with reinforcing Europe's defences against infectious diseases. Its mission is to identify, assess and communicate on current and emerging threats to human health from infectious diseases. Key areas of activity are providing scientific advice, strengthening Europe-wide disease surveillance and supporting preparedness and response to disease outbreaks. In carrying out this mission, **ECDC** works closely with national disease-control organisations, EU-level authorities and international organisations, encouraging cooperation and the pooling of knowledge.

The two agencies have a common interest in communicating on, and preventing the spread of, drug-related infectious diseases in Europe. While **ECDC** analyses trends in these diseases across the whole population, the **EMCDDA**, as a specialised information provider on drugs, focuses on specific drug-related risk groups such as injecting drug users.

Today's accord will enhance cooperation between the two agencies on drug-related issues through knowledge exchange and the sharing of best practice. Among others, the agencies will cooperate in the collection, analysis and dissemination of data and in the exchange of expertise via technical meetings and contacts between staff. Areas of mutual interest will be identified by the agencies and implemented through projects relating specifically to epidemiology and disease prevention and control.

Notes:

For the text of the agreement, see 'Latest news' at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu>

For more on the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), see <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu>

For the EMCDDA's work on drug-related infectious diseases, see <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeid=1375>

For more on the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), see <http://www.ecdc.europa.eu>
