

July–August 2002

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E.M.C.D.D.A.
European Monitoring Centre
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

Bimonthly Newsletter of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

Measuring drug use in Europe: strategic pointers

Reducing the number of drug users in a country or community, and reducing the rate at which people take drugs for the first time, are key challenges for policy-makers at local, national and international levels. So much so that the European Union Drugs Strategy (2000–2004) set the target to reduce significantly, over five years, the prevalence of drug use and the recruitment of new users, especially among the under 18s.

In the third edition of its *Drugs in focus* series, released in May, the EMCDDA looks at the most appropriate measures of drug prevalence and incidence; what they can tell us; and how they can help inform drug-prevention policy-making in the EU. Among the issues explored are: whether school surveys are the most suitable way of estimating drug use in young people; who will continue taking drugs later in life; and whether some people are at a higher risk of continued, or more intensive, drug use than others.

School surveys, typically of adolescents between 11 and 16, are one of the most common ways of measuring drug use in young people. But, says the briefing: 'Surveys of the wider population show that the highest levels of drug use and rates of first use are generally observed in young people around 18 years old or more – that is after school-leaving age'. So, while school surveys can be a valuable yardstick of drug use in young people, their coverage is limited and they ignore the important increases in drug use in early adulthood. The message to policy-makers therefore is not to neglect young adults up to the age of 25 when monitoring and responding to drug use among young people.

The briefing also examines who continues to take drugs regularly later in life. It estimates the "continuation rate" at around 20% or less for illegal drugs, compared with over 75% for alcohol. Most people who try drugs do so either experimentally or intermittently when



Indicators of drug prevalence and incidence can help policy-makers gain an insight into who is taking drugs, where and how, as well as at what age they start and when they stop

Drug co-ordinators meet under Spanish Presidency

National drug co-ordinators from the EU Member States and candidate countries met in Salamanca on 21 May under the Spanish Presidency of the EU. The meeting, also attended by the European Commission, EMCDDA and Europol, responded to the EU Action Plan on Drugs (2000–2004), which calls on the rotating presidencies to hold regular co-ordinators' meetings promoting information exchange and co-operation. Among the items discussed at the meeting were: international co-operation on drugs, centred on Afghanistan and the candidate countries; the illicit trafficking of cannabis; and drug prevention. Particular concern was expressed around the renewed cultivation of the opium poppy in Afghanistan – despite bans since January 2002 – and the knock-on effects in the region.

Co-operation with neighbouring Iran was underlined in this context. The co-ordinators also stressed the need for political support in the candidate countries to keep drugs on the agenda and for co-operation based on experience gained under Phare twinning projects. Finally, the meeting underlined the need to: convey clear evidence-based messages concerning the risks of cannabis use; boost police co-operation in cannabis trafficking in the EU; and increase co-operation with the Kingdom of Morocco. Drug prevention efforts in schools and recreational settings were also considered important.

Continued on page 8

Drug situation

Research community justice system in substance abuse: setting priorities for research

“Setting the agenda for correctional research in substance abuse” was the focus of an international expert forum organised by the Correctional Service of Canada in Charlotte-town from 29 April to 3 May.

Experts from Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, the United States and Europe (Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) attended the event, providing an overview of the extent of psychoactive substance use within criminal populations. Information was also presented on correctional strategies other than punishment and the various types of treatment, harm-reduction and rehabilitation schemes available. The EMCDDA presented its latest findings on drug users in prisons.

The conference resulted in a list of priorities for future research, such as: targeted assessments of special populations; continuity of care; effectiveness of existing programmes; epidemiological assessments and different prison regimes ⁽¹⁾.

Chloé Carpentier and Petra Paula Merino

⁽¹⁾ For further information on the conference, please contact: Dr. Brian Grant, Director, Addictions Research Centre. E-mail: grantba@csc-scc.gc.ca

EMCDDA annual expert meeting on population surveys

The EMCDDA’s annual expert meeting on the key indicator “prevalence and patterns of drug use among the general population”, based on representative general population surveys, was held in Lisbon from 23 to 24 May.

The meeting revealed that progress is being made in a number of countries. Austria, Italy and Portugal, for example, have recently conducted, or are starting to conduct, their first national drug surveys. These surveys were promoted by the implementation of the EMCDDA key indicator “population survey” in the context of the indicator’s development. Meanwhile, many other countries have increased, or are planning to increase, their sample sizes or are establishing series of repeated national surveys.

However, it was stressed that continued progress cannot be taken for granted, and that strong national commitment is needed for maintaining and improving this key indicator. The next steps in the implementation of the indicator will increase the level of the compliance of national surveys with EMCDDA guidelines and facilitate better exploitation of survey information for understanding and monitoring drug use.

A progress report was presented on the EMCDDA databank on population surveys (based on voluntary contributions from national institutions). Four countries (Germany, Greece, Spain, United Kingdom) have already submitted their national surveys and others intend to do so in the future. Also, the preliminary results of a joint analysis of the data submitted was discussed.

Abstracts from the conference can be downloaded from <http://www.ihrc2002.net/abstracts.html>

Julian Vicente

The next steps include further increasing the number of national surveys which comply with EMCDDA guidelines

Surveillance of drug-related hepatitis B/C and HIV

In the framework of a Reitox Academy training course on the five EMCDDA key epidemiological indicators (see page 6), the EMCDDA hosted a one-day workshop on 6 May on the drug-related infectious diseases indicator. The purpose was to acquaint the participants from the candidate countries with progress achieved so far in the EU with this indicator and, in turn, to learn from their experience.

Presentations were given by the EMCDDA on concepts and tools, focusing on three complementary elements of a national surveillance system: prevalence indicators from routine sources; special studies; and case reporting or notification data ⁽¹⁾.

Subsequent presentations were given by Spain and Italy on the use of drug-treatment monitoring systems as a routine indicator for the prevalence of infections, and on epidemiology and evaluation of prevention measures by Hungary and the Slovak Republic. The European Network on HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis Prevention in Prisons presented the results of special studies in prisons, while Dutch experts presented a system for national infectious diseases surveillance, based on community-wide surveys.

The best data – including data on risk behaviour ⁽²⁾ – can only be obtained from studies, but these are expensive and have low coverage. Routine sources such as drug-treatment monitoring systems can provide very useful data and continuous national coverage, but validation is essential. Activities at national level should therefore investigate, in the first stage, all potential data sources, with the subsequent balance in activities depending on (potential) availability, coverage and quality of routine data and availability of funds for studies. The EMCDDA has drawn up draft guidelines for the collection of existing data at national level, including an electronic standard data reporting form ⁽³⁾. It will also make available planning to translate the abovementioned Dutch protocol for community-wide surveys.

Lucas Wiessing

⁽¹⁾ See also Guidelines for sexually transmitted infections surveillance, World Health Organisation.

Available at http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/Abstracts/guidelines_for_sexually_transmitted_infections_surveillance.html

⁽²⁾ See also http://www.who.int/emc-documents/aids_hiv/whocdscsredc20005c.html

⁽³⁾ Available at http://www.emcdda.org/situation/themes/infectious_diseases.shtml; see also http://www.emcdda.org/situation/themes/problem_drug_use.shtml for guidelines to estimate population sizes of injectors.

Responses

New trends in drug treatment in the EU

In March and April this year, the EMCDDA participated in two international conferences on treatment for drug use. The first, organised in Velen (Germany) by the World Health Organisation's Regional Office for Europe and the German Ministry for Health, focused on models of medication-supported treatment for opioid addicts. The second, organised in Oslo by the European Opiate Addiction Treatment Association, centred on maintenance therapy. Both explored recent findings and practices in the area of medically assisted treatment.

A recently conducted Dutch study on co-prescribed heroin to methadone clients (1) has provided new scientific evidence on the potential offered by this kind of treatment to very deprived drug users. A heroin trial in Germany is also starting up and will randomly apply two different kinds of psycho-social treatment modalities to the trial population: drug counselling combined with psycho-education and case management combined with motivational interviewing.

A further trend in medically assisted treatment is the increasing use of alternatives to methadone around the EU. Buprenorphine, once predominant in France, is slowly but surely being used more frequently in a growing number of Member States.

In the area of drug-free treatment, there seems to be a trend towards increased availability, both in terms of numbers of treatment slots as well as geographical coverage.

Trends in drug use over the last year, such as a wider variety of drugs being used, more polydrug users being reported and more co-abuse of drugs with alcohol, have led to changes in many drug-free treatment centres. In the past, many treatment centres distinguished between alcoholics and drug



Photo: CAT TAIPAS

In the area of drug-free treatment there seems to be a trend towards increased availability, both in terms of numbers of treatment slots as well as geographical coverage

users, but an increasing number now include both groups, thereby widening accessibility to treatment services.

Margareta Nilson and Ulrik Solberg

(1) Contact: CCHB, Universiteitsweg 100, NL – 3584 – CG – Utrecht.
<http://www.ccbk.nl/ENG/index.htm>

Exploring drug consumption rooms

Facilities for the supervised consumption of drugs – also known as “healthrooms”, “medically supervised injecting centers”, “safer injecting rooms” and “consumption rooms” – have become part of official service-provision for problem drug users in a number of cities in Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and more recently Australia and Spain.

In several other European countries and Canada, the introduction of such services has been discussed, mostly at local level (eg. in Denmark, Luxembourg, Austria, Portugal and Norway). On 9 May 2002, the UK Parliamentary Home Affairs Select Committee recommended a pilot programme on consumption rooms (<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200102/cmselect/cmhaff/318/31802>).

The main benefits expected from provision of such facilities are: a reduced risk of blood-borne virus transmission and overdose; improved access and uptake of health and other welfare services; and reduced public nuisance. In May, the EMCDDA embarked on a project to assess the achievements, challenges and lessons learned to date concerning consumption rooms. Available evidence will be reviewed at a meeting of European and Australian experts in September 2002. Subsequently, the project will look at local needs assessment and core data for evaluation.

Dagmar Hedrich

EDDRA: examples of good practice

“The hole in the fence” (*En la huerta con mis amigos*) is one of the very few childhood prevention programmes in Europe today, targeting children of between 5 and 9 years. At this early stage in life, prevention aims to support psychological, emotional and social development, as well as to enhance the children's own personality traits so that they are 'ready', protected and in a favourable situation to reject drug use later on in life. Specifically, the programme aims to increase coping and problem-solving skills, social integration and the perception of a positive self-image.

This EDDRA-evaluated programme covers 5 900 children in Spain. External professionals evaluated the programme's implementation and changes in attitudes and behaviour of the children involved (September 2000). Coping and problem-solving proved to be statistically higher in the group which had received the programme. Health behaviour, social integration and the perception of self-image also proved to be higher.

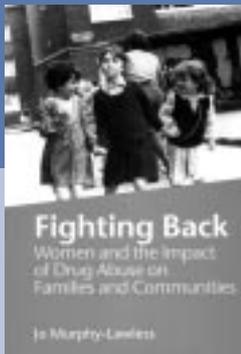
These results were later confirmed by means of supplementary tests and the comparison of several variable parameters. Gender, age or academic course differences were only found in the control group. This programme appears to help reduce the normal developmental differences between the sexes, generally favourable to girls, and harmonises the psychological and emotional development in boys and girls.

Gregor Burkhart

For more information on EDDRA, see <http://www.emcdda.org/responses/methods-tools/eddra.shtml>

Bookshelf Fighting Back:

women and the
impact of drug
abuse on families
and communities



Dublin North's inner city has had to live with the social and economic damage inflicted by widespread heroin use since the beginning of the 1980s. The introduction of heroin into a community already experiencing high unemployment had a devastating effect on the individuals and families living there.

Fighting Back, an ethnographic study, looks at the impact drug abuse has had on women, their families and communities and how these groups are challenging the government to develop better support structures for the population in the face of the drug phenomenon. This book aims to demonstrate that crises can bring about change for the better if we can take action by identifying the most urgent needs, and if we also identify the resources needed to enable the community to move beyond the crisis. The fieldwork undertaken for *Fighting Back* consisted of background interviews with women in different inner-city groups. The aim of the study was to make available to a wider audience an account of what women have done and to show where substantial support has been lacking and where this must now be granted.

Authors: Jo Murphy-Lawless •
Published by: The Liffey Press •
Languages: English – 208 pages •
Date: 2002 • **ISBN:** 1-904148-09-3 •
Price: 21.50 € • **Ordering information:**
<http://www.theliffeypress.com>

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 E is for evidence A New Scientist Editorial

A recent editorial in the *New Scientist* magazine (UK) ⁽¹⁾ addressed the importance of evidence-based science for informing drug policy. The editorial takes the case of ecstasy to show that while the jury is still out on the risks of this drug, scientists should “resist the temptation to turn their always complex – and sometimes flawed – findings into simple scare stories in pursuit of grants and headlines”.

The article points to the fact that researchers have produced numerous published papers on the neurotoxic potential of ecstasy (MDMA), whilst very few do the same for Prozac-style antidepressants, which act on the same serotonin synapses in the brain as ecstasy, and are taken by millions of people every day.

The *New Scientist* enquiry into the scientific evidence on MDMA does not claim to find proof that it is harmless to brain cells. The enquiry raises questions about what happens when the safety of an illicit drug is complex and disputed. Who decides which findings should influence policy and how open should policy-makers be about scientific dissent?

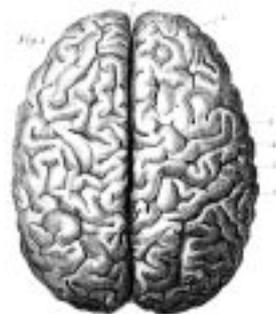


Image: “Pictorial Archive of Nature and Science”

An article published in *The Lancet* (UK) ⁽²⁾ in 2000 about assessing and communicating the risks of MDMA neurotoxicity concluded that: “a non-alarmist and accurate portrayal of the evidence is required if it is to receive the support of influential individuals in the MDMA using subculture”.

The recent editorial in the *New Scientist* reminds the scientific community that it risks losing credibility if, by solely following a political agenda, it allows flawed science to inform public drug policy.

Deborah Olszewski

⁽¹⁾ *New Scientist* editorial, vol 174, issue 2339, 20 April 2002.

⁽²⁾ Boot, B., McGregor, I., Hall, W. “MDMA (Ecstasy) neurotoxicity: assessing and communicating the risks”, *The Lancet*, vol 355, 20 May 2000.

While the jury is still out on the risks of ecstasy, scientists should resist the temptation to turn their always complex – and sometimes flawed – findings into simple scare stories in pursuit of grants and headlines

Since 1998, MDMA research findings, using brain-imaging techniques, have become a major part of the basis for government campaigns and concern about the dangers of ecstasy. This is despite significant scientific limitations and the variability of such measurements, and the subsequent failure to provide undisputed evidence to causally link MDMA with brain damage and cognitive impairment. This led the Scientific Committee of the EMCDDA, when consulted by DG Research of the European Commission, to recommend the inclusion of these elements within the thematic areas of the VI framework research programme.

A non-alarmist and accurate portrayal of the evidence is required if it is to receive the support of influential individuals in the MDMA using subculture

Enlargement Training course on Joint action on new synthetic drugs

A training course on the functioning of the Joint action on new synthetic drugs was organised in Slovenia from 15 to 16 April in the framework of the Reitox Academy training programme piloted by the Phare Project on EMCDDA–CEEC co-operation.

The course, hosted by the Slovenian governmental drugs office, was attended by the future early-warning system (EWS) correspondents to the EMCDDA from 11 candidate countries to the EU ⁽¹⁾. It was carried out by EMCDDA staff as well as experts from the Greek and Luxembourg Reitox national focal points (NFPs), the Dutch Ministry of Justice, the UK and the European Commission.

The focus of the course was preparing the launch of core task Reitox activities on the Joint action in all candidate countries with a special emphasis on early-warning systems. The future correspondents from these countries received the joint actions updated information on the functioning of the EWS and guidelines for its implementation, and presented their plans to set up such systems. The Reitox NFPs presented their national experiences on implementing the EWS.

*Lena Westberg and
Roumen Sedefov*

⁽¹⁾ 10 candidate countries from Central and East European Countries (CEECs) plus Cyprus.

**CICAD underlined
the value of
comparable
epidemiological
indicators in
obtaining a reliable
picture of the drug
phenomenon and
presented the
experiences of
regional organisations**

Partners Treatment demand indicator presented to CICAD

The 31st regular session of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) ⁽¹⁾ was held in Washington from 29 April to 2 May. The EMCDDA, which signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CICAD in 2000, has been invited to present its recent work on the epidemiological indicator “Estimating demand for treatment”.

CICAD underlined the value of comparable epidemiological indicators in obtaining a reliable picture of the drug phenomenon and presented the experiences of regional organisations both in Europe (e.g. the EMCDDA and its five key indicators) and the Americas (e.g. CICAD's Mutual Evaluation Mechanism). At International level, it also referred to the “Lisbon Consensus Document” endorsed at the EMCDDA in March 2001 by the UN's Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

The EMCDDA's presentation, entitled “Conception, implementation and development of treatment demand indicators”, included statistical results and positive findings from the initial implementation of such indicators – results which were welcomed by the delegations present. In the wake of the meeting, CICAD approached the EMCDDA to request increased co-operation on this issue.

Alain Wallon

⁽¹⁾ CICAD is the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission of the Organization of American States (OAS). For more information, see <http://www.oas.org>

Drugs-Lex Recent developments in the ELDD

New comparative study

The European Legal Database on Drugs (ELDD) has recently published the latest in a series of comparative studies, this time focusing on “Medicinal cannabis and derivatives”. The study offers a legal analysis of the options, limitations and current practice regarding the medicinal use of the drug in the EU Member States and Norway. It also looks at the various derivatives of cannabis and methods of administration, from smoked cannabis herb, through cannabis-extract sprays, to prescribed dronabinol.

The different legal controls applied to these derivatives at international, EU and national level are examined in the study and the varying levels of permission – whether for clinical trials, limited or general use – are considered.

The study also examines the implications of the international classification of some cannabis products based on the belief that they offer few therapeutic advantages.

Further comparative studies planned for 2002 will focus on: administrative sanctions; threshold quantities; drugs and driving; and the drug legislation situation in the candidate countries to the European Union.

ELDD meetings

Two meetings of the ELDD legal correspondents were held in April and May. The first took the form of a training seminar in Brussels for newly-appointed legal correspondents from the candidate countries to the EU, which should help the ELDD extend its coverage to these countries in the coming months. The second brought together in Lisbon the legal correspondents from the EU Member States and Norway to discuss the ELDD's first year as well as possible improvements and future plans.

Brendan Hughes

Reitox

Greek professionals attend seminar on treatment-demand data

Examining the quality of treatment-demand data was the focus of a seminar held at the Greek national focal point on 17 May in the framework of the new Reitox Academy training programme launched in March. Around 40 experts from drug addiction centres throughout Greece attended the event.

Clients attending Greek drug treatment centres largely tend to be heroin users (approx. 89%) with precarious social conditions (e.g. high unemployment rate, low income, etc.).

This high proportion of heroin clients appears to be attributable to market factors – such as the geographical position of Greece – as well as to the fact that the country's treatment services are mainly tailor-made to heroin users' needs.

Currently, around 50% of clients entering treatment are recorded. This figure should almost reach 100% in the course of 2002 due to the fact that the two major treatment units in Greece (KETHEA and 18 ANO) have recently adopted the EMCDDA standards regarding data on treatment demand (TDI protocol) ⁽¹⁾.

“Specific topics were discussed during the meeting: how to deal in the TDI protocol with information on new trends (e.g. speedball = combined use of heroin and cocaine) or specific national situations (e.g. a long waiting list, which might lead information on people demanding, but not admitted to treatment).

The adoption of a common European standards for data collection obliges different realities to adapt specific information needs to common criteria, but it is also the only possibility to compare national realities, having a European overview.

The seminar underlined the need to harmonise national information with EU standards, to discuss new trends at EU level and operational definitions.

Linda Montanari

⁽¹⁾ See http://www.emcdda.org/multimedia/project_reports/situation/treatment_indicator_report.pdf

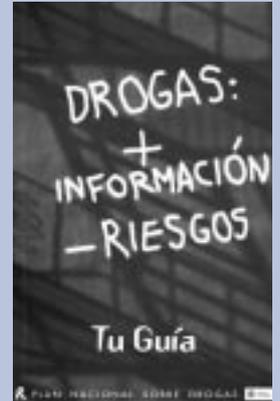
Spotlight

Spanish national focal point

Plan nacional sobre drogas

Delegación del Gobierno para el Plan Nacional sobre Drogas

Drogas + información - riesgos is the title of a recent publication produced by the Spanish Reitox national focal point in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior. Designed as a practical guide, it aims to inform the general public on the drug phenomenon in general and on drug use among young people in particular. These goals are aptly summed up in the sub-title: “Your guide to know more and decide better”.



Frequently asked questions on drugs are taken up in the guide.

These include: What substances can be considered as drugs? What are the risks? How can we prevent drug use? and How can we treat the problem?

For further information, please contact:

Centro de Información y Documentación de la Delegación del Gobierno para el Plan Nacional sobre Drogas.

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Reitox Academy

training course on key epidemiological indicators

This Reitox Academy training course took place in Madrid from 6 to 8 May. Organised in the framework of the Phare-EMCDDA project in co-operation with the Spanish National Plan on Drugs, the course provided training on developing and implementing four of the five EMCDDA epidemiological indicators. The indicators covered were: drug-related infectious diseases; drug-related deaths and mortality among drug users; the extent and patterns of drug use in the general population; and the prevalence of problematic drug use.

Participants included: experts from the 10 central and eastern European candidate countries to the EU; EMCDDA staff; EU national experts; and members of the Reitox national focal points.

The three-day seminar allowed participants to exchange experiences on the harmonisation of epidemiological indicators in Europe. The EMCDDA and the Reitox network have been working on implementing and harmonising these indicators for the past five years. However, the participation of the candidate countries is a new element in the equation and an essential part of fully completing this process across the enlarged EU.

Ana Ballesteros

Products and services



New publications *Prosecution of drug users in Europe: varying pathways to similar objectives*

EMCDDA *Insights* series, No 5

This publication studies the prosecution and non-prosecution of drug users in 15 EU Member States. It focuses on actual practice and looks at interventions by police, prosecutors and courts. Patterns of prosecution and non-prosecution are examined in relation to: offences of drug possession and/or use; offences of drug trade and supply to drug users; and acquisitive criminal offences, such as burglary, when committed by a drug user.

The first section provides a synthesis of the formal frameworks, actual practice and climates of opinion. The second section presents a country-by-country narrative describing the legal systems in Member States and how what happens in practice fits with this framework.

An executive summary is available online at <http://www.emcdda.org/infopoint/publications/insights.shtml>

Rosemary de Sousa

Coming soon

- *Report on the risk assessment of PMMA in the framework of the joint action on new synthetic drugs.*
Available in English.

- “Drug injecting challenges public health policy”, *Drugs in focus*, No 4, July–August.
Available in 11 EU languages plus Norwegian.

Further information on all EMCDDA publications and details of how to order titles are available on the EMCDDA website at <http://www.emcdda.org/infopoint/publications.shtml>

New release: *Drugs in focus* No 3

On 15 May, the EMCDDA launched the third edition in its new series of policy briefings, *Drugs in focus*.

Issue No 3 (May–June 2002): ‘Measuring prevalence and incidence of drug use’

ISSN: 1681-5157 (English version)

Catalogue number: TD-AD-02-003-EN-D • Price: free

Download Issue No 3 in the 11 EU languages plus Norwegian from <http://www.emcdda.org/infopoint/publications>

Register for updates of new editions at: <http://www.emcdda.org/infopoint/register.cfm>

See page 1 for more.

Drugs in focus No 4

“Drug injecting challenges public health policy” is the title of the forthcoming edition in the EMCDDA’s policy briefing series *Drugs in focus*. Issue No 4 (July–August), to be launched in mid-July, highlights the key challenges currently presented by drug injecting for public health policy in Europe. Among others, it describes the consequences of drug injecting and the various approaches and interventions employed to reduce it.

Much of the responsibility for reducing drug-related health damage lies locally. It is therefore hoped that the briefing will be of particular interest to local decision-makers and service-providers, as well as policy-makers at national and European level. Those interested in subscribing to the briefings free of charge are invited to do so by e-mail (info@emcdda.org), stating the language and quantity required.

Kathy Robertson



Resources Useful products on the drugs issue

Report: Epidemiology and Health Sociology

Epidemiologia e sociologia sanitaria (Epidemiology and health sociology) provides an overview of public service drug monitoring activities in a large area of northern Italy. Among others, it presents the results of epidemiological studies on mortality, infectious diseases and the prevalence of problem drug use obtained through cohort studies, capture–recapture methods and mortality multiplier techniques.

Contact: Regione Emilia-Romagna.
Azienda Usl di Ferrara Comune di Ferrara.

PEDDRO journal

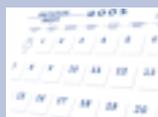
Drug abuse and AIDS: stemming the epidemic is the title of a special edition of PEDDRO, the monthly journal published by UNESCO, UNAIDS and the European Commission. Special chapters examine: the state of the drug problem in Eastern Europe and Asia; education for drug users; harm reduction; and the new challenge posed by cocaine injecting in Europe.

Contact: UNESCO/PEDDRO Fax: ++ 33 1 45 68 56 21.
<http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/pead/GB/DrugsGB/CadDrugGB.html>
PEDDRO: Networking of information in the field of prevention of drug abuse through education.

DIP & DOC

The Emilia-Romagna region (Italy) has just published a leaflet, *DIP & DOC*, about its network of documentation centres on drug addiction, alcoholism, youth and related problems. The network promotes reports, books, scientific journals, multimedia tools and bibliographies by subject and offers expert advice from professionals.

For direct access to the network’s bibliographical database, see <http://www.stradanove.net/dipdoc>



Calendar 2002

EMCDDA meetings

- 3–5 July:** EMCDDA Management Board meeting, EMCDDA, Lisbon.
- 12–14 September:** Expert meeting on prevention indicators, EMCDDA, Lisbon.
- 23–24 September:** Expert meeting on consumption rooms, EMCDDA, Lisbon.
- 3–4 October:** European expert meeting on the treatment demand indicator, EMCDDA, Lisbon.

External meetings

- 7–12 July:** 14th International AIDS Conference, Barcelona.
- 8–9 July:** European seminar, EURO-Trend project, French Reitox focal point, OFDT, Paris.
- 11 July:** Dublin Group, Brussels.
- 2–5 September:** Expert group meeting on school-based drug abuse, UNDCP, Vienna.
- 2–5 September:** 2nd European conference on drug Trafficking and law enforcement, DrugScope – IHESI, Paris.
- 5–7 September:** Annual Conference of the European Society of Criminology, Toledo.
- 10–12 October:** Engaging with change, ENSDP (European Network of Drug Services in Prisons), Vienna.

EU meetings

- 10 July:** Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.
- 3 September:** Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.

Statutory bodies

EMCDDA Bureau: latest news

The EMCDDA's six-member Bureau met in Lisbon on 27 March and 17 May.

The main issues discussed at these two meetings were:

- the implementation of the EMCDDA's 2002 work programme;
- the 2002 EMCDDA draft action plan, particularly activities in the area of international co-operation;
- follow-up of the external evaluation of the Reitox national focal points;
- the state of implementation of the five key epidemiological indicators;
- preparations for the forthcoming Management Board meeting from 3 to 5 July;
- the EMCDDA annual conference in 2003.

Also discussed were financial and personnel matters and the Centre's ongoing improvements in the area of quality management.

Kathleen Hernalsteen

Measuring drug use in Europe: strategic pointers

Continued from page 1

young as part of "normal" growing-up, it reports. They stop due to factors linked to "an adult life", such as a regular job, children or financial responsibility.

But a relatively small number of drug users do continue on to more intensive, problem drug use later in life – mostly triggered by adverse social and economic circumstances conducive to drug use.

Given the facts, policy-makers therefore have to decide how far to spread their prevention resources across the whole population and how far to concentrate efforts on specific groups or those at greatest risk.

Finally, Georges Estievenart, EMCDDA Director, says: "Indicators of drug prevalence and incidence can help policy-makers gain an insight into who is taking drugs, where and how, as well as at what age they start and when they stop. The knowledge they offer helps policy-makers ensure that prevention measures are properly targeted and shows them where efforts should be concentrated in future".

See news release at <http://www.emcdda.org/infopoint/news-media.shtml>



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