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Drugnet Europe

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New year, new image EMCDDA unveils corporate identity

The EMCDDA kicks off 2003 with the launch of a new corporate identity manual and CD-ROM, announcing a new brand image.

The launch to the Management Board, on 16 January, will be the culmination of 15 months' hard work to streamline the Centre's image and convey a cohesive visual impression across all its products and services. The project has its roots in the 2001 EMCDDA Dissemination and Communication Strategy, which called for all information produced by the agency to be presented with 'a clear brand image'.

The manual and CD-ROM provide EMCDDA staff and close working partners with framework designs and templates for all publications and products as well as everyday materials such as stationery and reports.

While, at its most simplistic, 'corporate identity' can be perceived as the organisation's logo, the EMCDDA views it in broader terms related to personality: the 'who we are', 'what we do' and 'what we believe'. The manual thus sets out basic communication rules and guidelines related to both visual and verbal 'behaviour'.

The new logo is designed to be contemporary, serious and authoritative. The maintenance of the colours, stars and symbolic elements of the previous EMCDDA logo recall the agency's existing character, but these are encapsulated in a totally modern design. The dark blue on the left hand side, represents the negative aspects of drugs, while the yellow, on the right hand side, represents hopes for a brighter future. These two halves are linked by the universal symbol of unity and trust, the arch, making its own transformation from negative to positive. Surrounding the arch are the 12 unifying stars of the EU flag.

The new identity provides the basis for all EMCDDA communications and is the cornerstone of the agency's marketing activities. Conveying a 'statement of ownership', it will be implemented and maintained by EMCDDA staff to ensure a coherent and professional corporate image (see <http://www.emcdda.eu.int>).

Contractor: Dutton Merrifield Ltd. UK.
(<http://www.dutton-merrifield.co.uk>).



Four new synthetic drugs are singled out by the Council of the EU for risk assessment in 2003.

New risk assessments for 2003

Four new synthetic drugs were singled out by the Council of the EU for risk assessment on 12 December under the 1997 Joint action on new synthetic drugs. The decision follows consideration by the Council's Horizontal working party on drugs of a joint EMCDDA-Europol report providing the state of knowledge on these substances.

The four drugs are: 2C-I; 2C-T-2; 2C-T-7; and TMA-2. Although no fatalities related to these drugs have been recorded to date in the EU, seizures of all four have recently been reported in a number of Member States,

Although no fatalities related to these drugs have been recorded to date in the EU, seizures of all four have been reported in a number of Member States

leading some countries to already place them under control. Deaths related to 2C-T-7 have been recorded in the US, where it is now controlled. The EMCDDA will carry out a formal risk assessment of the health and social risk of these substances, as well as the possible consequences of prohibition, under the auspices of an enlarged EMCDDA Scientific Committee in 2003. Final risk-assessment conclusions will be forwarded to the European Commission and the Council in the course of the year, based on scientific evidence.

For news release see http://www.emcdda.eu.int/infopoint/news_media/newsrelease.cfm

January-February

2003

Drug situation

Images of tobacco and drug use in film

Revelations about the relationship between the tobacco industry and Hollywood may provide useful insights in the field of illegal drugs.

The tobacco industry has long understood the value of placing and encouraging tobacco use in films, as well as how to do it. But while the industry claims to have put a stop to this practice – since a voluntary ban on paid product placement at the beginning of the 1990s – scientific researchers have recently shown that smoking in motion pictures has increased. In 1960, there were on average 7.3 instances of tobacco use per hour

in top box-office films. This compares with 10.9 in 2000. Also up is the depiction of highly advertised US cigarette brands with actor endorsement: 1% before the ban and 11% after it ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾.

Top box-office films have large international audiences. By depicting images of tobacco use built on glamour, rebelliousness, and independence, they have the potential to influence adolescent smoking ⁽³⁾. A large school survey of 9–15 year-old US school students showed a strong, direct and independent association between seeing tobacco use in films and trying cigarettes. This finding supports the hypothesis that smoking in films plays a role in the initiation of smoking in adolescents ⁽⁴⁾.

Monitoring the placing of illegal drug use in films may prove worthwhile as more attention is given to images of illegal drug use among young people (see p. 4).

Deborah Olszewski

⁽¹⁾ Mekenson, C. and Glantz, S. (2002), 'How the tobacco industry built its relationship with Hollywood', *Tobacco control* 2002 (suppl 1), 81–91, www.tobaccocontrol.com

⁽²⁾ Sargent, J. et al (2002), 'Brand appearances in contemporary cinema films and contribution to global marketing of cigarettes', *The Lancet*, Jan 6, 357 (9249), pp 29–32.

⁽³⁾ Dalton, M. et al (2002), 'The incidence and context of tobacco use in popular movies from 1988 to 1997', *Preventive Medicine*, Vol. 34, No 5, May 2001, pp 516–523.

⁽⁴⁾ Sargent, J. et al (2001), 'Effect of seeing tobacco use in films on trying smoking among adolescents: cross sectional study', *British Medical Journal*, 323, 1394.

Rapid spread of 'fun' drugs in EU nightlife scene

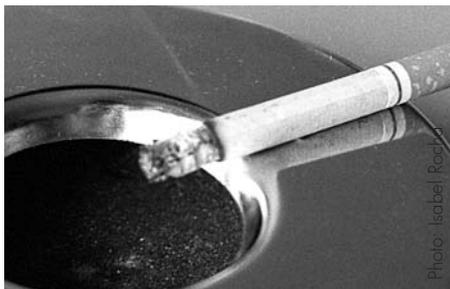
Innovative responses are required to tackle the failure to reduce widespread availability of recreational drugs in Europe's nightlife scene, states the latest edition in the EMCDDA's policy briefings series *Drugs in focus* (No 6).

Entitled 'Recreational drug use – a key EU challenge', the briefing aims to focus the attention of EU policy-makers on the issues involved in this controversial area. It states that 'reducing the risks run by the growing numbers of mainstream young people in the EU who consume such substances in such settings is a key concern of policy-makers at local, national and international levels'.

Although recreational drug use among the general population is low, use among people in nightlife settings is much higher. Rough calculations suggest that between 3 and 3.5 million adults in the EU have tried ecstasy at least once. Of these, some 400 000–500 000 have used it once a week or more over a period of time. The main reasons people give for taking ecstasy are to enjoy dancing and to have fun.

See policy briefing at <http://www.emcdda.eu.int/infopoint/publications/focus.shtml>

See news release at http://www.emcdda.eu.int/infopoint/news_media/newsrelease.cfm



Revelations about the relationship between the tobacco industry and Hollywood may provide useful insights in the field of illegal drugs

EU action plan on drugs – mid-term evaluation

On 4 November, the European Commission adopted a communication on the mid-term evaluation of the EU action plan on drugs, in which it reports on the plan's completion rate to date ⁽¹⁾.

As the plan comprises actions to be undertaken at both EU and national level, the mid-term evaluation relies on complementary tools to assess progress. These include an updated follow-up table completed by the Commission, EMCDDA and Europol on progress at EU level, and replies from the 15 Member States to a questionnaire on progress at national level. For each area of the plan, the communication summarises the main results to date, underlining areas where progress is still needed. While acknowledging achievements, it stresses that much work remains to be done, among others, in evaluating EU and national activities. It also emphasises the need for close co-operation with the candidate countries to the EU.

The communication sets methodological bases for the final evaluation of the plan in 2004. In particular, the Commission proposes to pursue the evaluation process with the support of a steering group, comprising representatives of the Commission, the Council Presidency, the EMCDDA and Europol. This group will help create an evaluation setting to help assess the pertinence, effectiveness and impact of actions and make first attempts to produce causality analysis. In this context, the EMCDDA and Europol will compare 2003 data in the field of drugs with 1999 baseline data. The EMCDDA will also help organise a second Eurobarometer study in 2004 and contribute to updating the EU bodies' follow-up table. Furthermore, it will be active in devising tools to help Member States evaluate their drug policies.

Philippe Roux

⁽¹⁾ COM(2002) 599 final, 4 November 2002. The full text of the action plan is downloadable from http://www.emcdda.eu.int/policy_law/eu/eu_actionplan.shtml

Responses

Overdose prevention and management

Between 1991 and 2000, some 7 000 to 8 000 acute drug-related deaths were recorded per annum in the EU Member States and Norway ⁽¹⁾. Although case definitions differ ⁽²⁾, these figures are likely to be an underestimate of the real extent of the problem.

The victims are mostly young people in their 20s or 30s, with most deaths occurring through accidental overdoses. Many are preventable. Some European countries are developing national and local policies to reduce the number of drug overdoses. Interventions to prevent overdoses and improve overdose management are also starting to be applied more systematically. In April 2002, the EMCDDA embarked on a project to gain an overview of these current approaches and to identify those most promising ⁽³⁾.

Experts from 10 countries met at the EMCDDA from 24–25 October to discuss work in this field. Among others, they addressed strategies at national level (Portugal, UK) and local level (Athens, Barcelona), as well as an EU-funded analysis of local strategic choices to reduce drug-related deaths ⁽⁴⁾. Also addressed were practical approaches in first-aid training; the distribution of the opiate antagonist 'naloxone' to drug users; peer-education; and models of co-operation between police, ambulance staff and drug services. As a result of the meeting, a new data-collection tool on overdose prevention policies and interventions was developed.

Dagmar Hedrich

⁽¹⁾ <http://annualreport.emcdda.eu.int/pdfs/tab21-en.pdf>

⁽²⁾ The EMCDDA defines drug-related deaths as those caused directly by the consumption of drugs of abuse. These deaths generally occur shortly after the consumption of the substances.
<http://annualreport.emcdda.eu.int/en/page34-en.html>

⁽³⁾ See *Drugnet Europe* No 37 and http://www.emcdda.eu.int/responses/themes/overdose_prevention.cfm

⁽⁴⁾ <http://www.rme.oslo.kommune.no/dokumenter/rapport/sentral/sluttrapport,%20rett%20versjon.doc>
Appendix: <http://www.rme.oslo.kommune.no/dokumenter/rapport/sentral/appendix%20sluttrapport.doc>



The victims are mostly young people in their 20s or 30s, with most deaths occurring through accidental overdoses

Many are preventable

Treatment experts define reporting criteria

Ten experts from the EU Member States and candidate countries met at the EMCDDA from 21–22 October to identify criteria for national standards and quality measures in the treatment of illegal drug use.

The group identified a total of seven criteria: physical environment; staff composition; staff training/supervision; clients' rights; inclusion/discharge criteria; treatment plan; and quality assurance. For each of the seven, four types of quality measure will be identified: guidelines, regulations, accreditation and monitoring.

A standard table has been developed to collect information on standards and quality in treatment from across Europe. This data collection is expected to start on a voluntary basis through the national focal points' annual reporting exercise in 2003.

Ulrik Solberg

EDDRA managers focus on evaluation

EDDRA managers from the Reitox national focal points convened for their annual meeting at the EMCDDA from 21–22 November and focused on an internal evaluation of the database undertaken in 2002.

Following the evaluation, two-thirds of the managers felt that the main objectives of EDDRA – providing information on demand-reduction responses, developing and planning such responses, and offering a reference tool – were either 'well' or 'very well' fulfilled. Use of EDDRA as a networking tool, however, was found not to be meeting as much response.

Meanwhile, a survey among demand-reduction projects in the EU Member States revealed that information on good practice was most needed by professionals and that EDDRA was at its most useful in this regard. Second most valued was information on planning and evaluation.

EDDRA's lack of visibility among policy-makers, but also among professionals, was seen as one of the project's main weaknesses. Suggestions on how to remedy this included:

- assessing policy-makers' information needs;
- expanding EDDRA's product range (analyses, bibliographic lists, etc.); and
- publicising EDDRA on the EMCDDA and focal points' websites.

Training professionals in feeding EDDRA was considered a key way to achieve quality. Developing a training strategy will therefore be a priority in 2003.

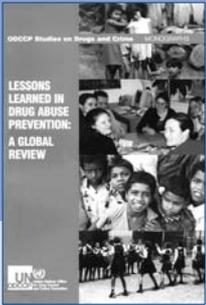
EDDRA currently contains some 400 projects from the EU Member States and Norway. Analyses of EDDRA's contents were presented at the meeting (see p.7).

http://www.emcdda.eu.int/responses/methods_tools/eddra.shtml

Margareta Nilson

Bookshelf

Lessons learned in drug abuse prevention: a global review



This publication is a global review of lessons learned in the field of drug abuse prevention, resulting from a collaborative project between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (ODC) and the international NGO, the Mentor Foundation.

The report includes a list of recommendations for policy-makers and practitioners based on the experiences of some 250 organisations working in the field of drug abuse prevention. Among others, the publication looks at: reasons for drug abuse among young people; consequences of drug abuse; and demand-reduction strategies (prevention, health promotion and treatment). It also provides an overview of drug abuse prevention globally and offers 15 case studies from around the world at local, national and international level.

Published by: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (ODC) (<http://www.unodc.org/odccp/publications.html>) and the Mentor Foundation (<http://www.mentorfoundation.org>)

Language: English

Date: June 2002

Price: Free

Downloadable from:

http://www.odccp.org:80/pdf/demand_reduction_lessons_learned.pdf

Ordering information:

secretariat@mentorfoundation.org

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

Illegal drug use and addiction in popular cinema (1995–2001)

Cinema plays a central role in the leisure time of young people and here they are regularly faced with images of drugs and drug addiction. The Cologne-based German Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung (BZgA) has recently concluded a preliminary study into how drugs are conveyed in mainstream international movies. Of the 43 films viewed (1), 15 were selected for closer analysis. These included films from: Germany, France, the Netherlands, the UK and the US, all of which covered drugs as a major part of the plot.

The study examined two key questions: How are drug use and addiction represented in popular films (what images, stories and creative techniques are used)? To what extent can such films be used for drug prevention?

Hard drugs, such as heroin and crack cocaine, were seen to be favoured by cinematographers as material for dramatic, exciting stories stirring public emotions. Here, borderline life-and-death experiences, and the search for identity and meaning in a troubled society, were recurring themes. Disappointments, hopes and personal experiences were seen to strike a chord with the audience but also to evoke tension (crime, personal drama, etc.). *Trainspotting* (1995, UK) is the most famous example of this type of film, portraying its characters less as victims of drug use but as informed young adults who consciously decide on a heroin lifestyle.

Cannabis products were conveyed in the films as harmless and used across all social classes for relaxation, 'fun' and for producing a feeling of passive 'stoned' enjoyment. Films that showed cannabis use were predominantly comedies. Ecstasy, as No1 dance drug, was portrayed as an integral part of the party scene. Any dangerous effects were rarely addressed. The party setting itself was shown as promising increased well-being, enhanced relationships and communication, and the chance to escape from everyday life. Unlike hard drugs, ecstasy emerged as unsuitable material for drama, lacking the addictive, criminal and dangerous aspects of harder drugs.



Photo: Fotobanco

It is difficult to determine in advance whether a film will stimulate or deter drug use, especially among young audiences

The second part of the study looks at how cinema can be used in drug prevention. Here films are regarded as 'texts' written for the knowledge of the spectator, whatever his/her social and cultural context. The study proclaims as incorrect the assumption that films emit a single uniform 'message' about drugs. Instead, a film's impact may differ widely, depending largely on the viewer's background knowledge, social and cultural contexts and interests. It is therefore difficult to determine in advance whether a film will stimulate or deter drug use, especially among young audiences.

One of the main conclusions of the study is that the use of film in drug prevention should be carefully analysed and prepared and combined with the opportunity for personal reflection and discussion (e.g. workshops on the media/technical features used in the film). It is also recommended that the educational aspects of each film be scrutinised very closely according to age group and setting.

Guido Noecker, BZgA

(1) All were produced between 1995 and 2001 and addressed drugs, drugs use and drug trafficking.

The study will be available in German early in 2003.

For further details, please contact: spickermann@bzga.de

Enlargement

Progressive integration

A new step towards integrating the EU candidate countries into the Reitox network and EMCDDA work programme was taken in November with the participation of the candidate-country focal points in the recent Reitox meeting and new synthetic drugs workshop (see p.6).

The European Commission's Directorate General for Enlargement also signed a new contract with the EMCDDA in November for a new Phare project on 'Participation of the candidate CEECs in the EMCDDA'. The main goal of this project is to ensure that the 10 CEEC national focal points become increasingly operational and contribute actively, and to a high standard, to the EMCDDA work programme. It is hoped that this goal will be met through their participation in major EMCDDA technical and scientific meetings, as well as in regional training activities. The project foresees a limited co-financing scheme to help set up national action plans for drug-information systems.

The enlargement of the EMCDDA will become official when ongoing negotiations for membership to the agency are concluded between the candidate countries and the European Commission. Decisions are expected to be taken early in 2003 under the Greek Presidency of the EU.

Alexis Goosdeel

Partners

Danish Presidency highlights

The Danish Presidency of the EU ended 2002 with a number of achievements under its belt in the field of drugs. These were largely taken in the framework of the Council's Horizontal working party on drugs (HWPD).

In addition to the mid-term evaluation of the EU action plan on drugs (see p.2), the Presidency submitted an 'implementation paper' to the Council on targeted action on synthetic drugs. This outlines a number of law-enforcement actions to counter the production and distribution of these substances.

The Council also adopted a resolution supporting a Commission initiative to complete its evaluation of the 1997 Joint action on new synthetic drugs, by assessing the feasibility of incorporating into national drug legislation generic classification systems and/or emergency and temporary scheduling of new synthetic drugs. This will be undertaken in collaboration with the EMCDDA and other partners.

Further Presidency highlights on drugs included: a consensus among the 15 on the prevention and treatment of drug use in prison; a HWPD meeting with the EU candidate countries on 12 November; and a meeting of the national drug co-ordinators on 11 December, during which an exchange of views was held with a high-level US delegation.

Alain Wallon

New paper on targeted action on synthetic drugs outlines law-enforcement actions to counter the production and distribution of these substances

Drugs-Lex

ELDD: new comparative studies underway

Drugs and driving

As part of an ongoing series in the European Legal Database on Drugs (ELDD), the EMCDDA is working on a comparative study of laws addressing drugs and driving in the EU Member States.

The study examines the current status of these laws, including:

- the legal status of drug-driving offences;
- impairment levels, if any;
- distinctions between medical and non-medical drugs when driving; and
- the range of sanctions across the EU.

The French government is currently discussing a new law that would specifically

make driving under the influence of narcotic drugs a criminal offence.

To date, such an act has been penalised under the law covering illicit drug consumption generally. The new penalties compare with those applied for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Small quantities

A further comparative study examines the important concept of 'small quantities' of drugs.

This designation is used by authorities to distinguish between individuals possessing drugs for personal use (small quantities) and for

trafficking (large quantities).

The study examines if, and how, countries use the designation.

Depending on the country, 'small quantities' may be defined by law according to: the weight of the active chemical in the drug; the weight of the substance apprehended; or by the judicial interpretation of the word 'small'.

The concept plays an important part in national legislation on drugs, helping to guide health and law-enforcement services. It also has implications at international level regarding the extradition of drug traffickers.

Brendan Hughes

Spotlight



Reitox celebrates 25th meeting

The Reitox network gathered on 28 November for a celebration to mark its 25th meeting. The focal points from both the EU and candidate countries gathered at a reception where they recalled important milestones since the network's first meeting in May 1995. Among the main achievements highlighted was the evolution of a real 'partnership' between the EMCDDA and the national centres.

The network now looks forward to future challenges, such as the completion of the ongoing operational reform process (see p.8) and the further integration of the candidate countries into EMCDDA activities. All persons involved in Reitox were congratulated on their valuable contributions to this dynamic network, in terms of effort, time and energy.

New Portuguese focal point

The Portuguese focal point, IPDT, and the treatment directorate, SPTT, ceased to exist on 29 November when they merged to become a single body: the *Instituto da Droga e da Toxicoddependência* (IDT). The new body takes over the tasks of the former IPDT as EMCDDA national focal point. The chairperson of IDT, Fernando Negrão, who was officially appointed on 5 December, is also the new Portuguese drug coordinator.

Reitox Focal points discuss way forward

The Reitox focal points met in Lisbon from 27–29 November and focused on three axes for the future: the draft 2003 EMCDDA work programme; the network's operating framework; and mid-term perspectives for the EMCDDA and its national partners.

On the draft 2003 work programme, discussions covered reporting guidelines for the 2003 national reports and selected issues (2004 *Annual report*). These issues will cover: the evaluation of national strategies; problems related to cannabis use and demand for treatment for cannabis; and co-morbidity among drug addicts.

The need for a global revision of national information-collection mechanisms and reporting approaches was underlined. These should take into account the focal points' capacity to cope with EMCDDA requests for information – especially in new working areas – and how this can be brought in line with the Centre's reporting methods. A specific working group composed of EMCDDA staff and members of the Danish, French, Austrian, Bulgarian and Czech focal points was set up in this regard and should conclude its work by autumn 2003.

The meeting also discussed the ongoing Reitox operating framework document, up for adoption by the Management Board in January. This addresses key issues, such as the three-way relationship between the EMCDDA, EU and the focal points; increased Reitox involvement in EMCDDA work programmes; and long-term quality standards in information provision. The EMCDDA's participation in the financing of the national focal points' activities was also debated. Following a first review of the EMCDDA's mid-term perspectives (2004–2006), the focal points were invited to address the topic bilaterally with their respective Management Board member.

Frédéric Denecker, Linda Montanari

New synthetic drugs Early-warning system workshop

The early-warning system (EWS) on new synthetic drugs, set up under the 1997 Joint action, was the focus of a technical workshop held at the EMCDDA on 26 November. It built on the results of a first technical workshop held in June 2001 (1).

The purpose of the event was to explore ways to improve the EWS by enhancing the EMCDDA's co-ordination of the mechanism and strengthening the Reitox focal points' participation in it. Prior to the workshop, the focal points were consulted via a questionnaire on different aspects of implementation.

The workshop was attended by EWS correspondents from the EU and candidate-country focal points, as well as members of the EMCDDA Scientific Committee, representatives of Europol, the European Commission and other experts. Together they analysed legal and administrative matters related to implementing the mechanism. In particular, four items were discussed: communication and information flows between key EWS players; the importance of integrating networks; the relevance of a proactive approach; and the availability of reference materials on new synthetic drugs. The workshop resulted in a number of proposals to improve the system generally and to tackle these issues. These were presented to the Reitox meeting on 27 November.

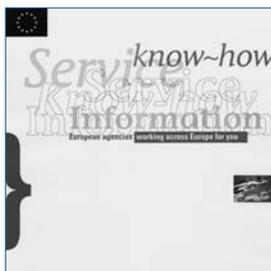
Lena Westberg

(1) The EU drugs strategy (2000–2004) recognises the Joint action on new synthetic drugs as a promising and effective tool to respond to these substances. It calls for further measures to enhance its effectiveness.

Products and services

New publications

Joint EU agencies brochure



The 12 decentralised European Union agencies have recently come together to produce a new presentation brochure entitled *European agencies working across Europe for you*.

The brochure opens with a short description of the agencies, including a map of their locations. This is followed by short one-page presentations of each of the bodies.

The brochure is one of three joint activities to promote the agencies since 2001. The other two take the form of a revised overview of the agencies on the Europa website

(<http://europa.eu.int/agencies>) and a joint video of 'stock-shots' on all the agencies, for use by television. The brochure is available from Euro Infopoints and Commission delegations throughout Europe in the 11 official EU languages.

Coming soon

- 'Treating drug users in prisons – a critical area for health promotion and crime reduction policy', EMCDDA *Drugs in focus* series (policy briefings), No 7.

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

New strategies study

The results of a new EMCDDA study on 'Strategies and coordination in the field of drugs in the European Union – a descriptive review' were presented to the meeting of national drug coordinators on 11 December in Brussels (see p.5). The report is now available at: http://www.emcdda.eu.int/policy_law/national/strategies/strategies.shtml

EDDRA analyses on the web

A new 'Further reading' section has recently been added to the EMCDDA's EDDRA website offering analyses of EDDRA's contents in different demand-reduction areas. These include: school prevention programmes in Europe; party-setting projects; treatment related to illegal drugs; police station, courts and prisons programmes; and gender-specific approaches: women and girls. The analyses summarise current findings and conclusions on best practice and are targeted at policy-makers and professionals. More analyses will follow in the coming months (http://www.emcdda.eu.int/responses/methods_tools/eddra.shtml).

Project reports on website

The EMCDDA public website (<http://www.emcdda.eu.int>) has recently been updated with the addition of the following project reports:

- Drug-related social reintegration in the EU Member States and Norway (http://www.emcdda.eu.int/responses/themes/social_reintegration.shtml)
- Handbook for surveys on drug use among the general population (http://www.emcdda.eu.int/situation/themes/drug_use_general_population.shtml#handbook)
- The DRD-standard (version 3.0) EMCDDA protocol for the key indicator on drug-related deaths (http://www.emcdda.eu.int/situation/themes/death_mortality.shtml)
- Overview of the drug situation amongst Black and minority ethnic groups in the European Union. Three volumes comprising a synthesis, country profiles and an example of a questionnaire (http://www.emcdda.eu.int/situation/themes/social_exclusion_minorities.shtml)

Resources

Useful materials and events on the drugs issue

Eurobarometer

The European Commission has recently published a Eurobarometer report on 'Attitudes and opinions of young people in the European Union on drugs'. The EMCDDA contributed to the study.

The report can be downloaded from: http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/unit/drogues/eurobarometer/index_en.pdf

UK drug strategy

An updated version of the 10-year UK drug strategy 'Tackling drugs to make a better Britain' was announced by Home Secretary David Blunkett on 3 December. The new strategy prioritises Class A drugs (heroin, cocaine, ecstasy) and foresees greater financial resources to combat dealers and enhance drug education and treatment.

<http://www.drugs.gov.uk>

'Stay in touch'

The Swiss Office of Federal Health will be holding the 3rd European Conference on youth work, youth services and drug prevention from 13–15 March in Lucerne, Switzerland. Entitled 'Stay in touch', the conference will welcome professionals from all over Europe.

For inscription details, see: <http://www.stayintouch.ch>

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

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Calendar 2003

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

- 15–17 January: 25th EMCDDA Management Board meeting, Lisbon.
- 16 January: Launch of new EMCDDA corporate identity, Lisbon.
- 31 January: EMCDDA expert group meeting: questions on drug availability within population survey questionnaires, Lisbon.
- 3–4 February: Reitox national reporting working group, Lisbon.
- 19–21 February: 26th Reitox focal point meeting, Lisbon.
- 24–25 February: Reitox national reporting working group meeting, Lisbon.

External meetings

- 20–23 January: 'Measuring addiction in Europe', Centre for social research on alcohol and drugs, Nordic Council of Alcohol and Drug Addiction, EMCDDA, Stockholm.
- 6–8 March: High-level conference on drugs, Greek Presidency in co-operation with the EMCDDA, Athens.
- 27–29 March: First European congress on addictive disorders, *Sociedad Española de Toxicomanías* Alicante.

EU meetings

- 9 January: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.
- February: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.

Statutory bodies Management Board

The 25th EMCDDA Management Board meeting will take place in Lisbon from 15–17 January. Agenda items will include: the role of the EMCDDA and its new medium-term perspectives and a new Reitox operating framework.

As usual at its January meeting, the Board will also be asked to adopt the 2003 work programme and budget; the 2002 *General report of activities*; and a preliminary draft budget for 2004. Procedural issues, including the election of the Bureau members, a 'recasting' (overhaul) of the EMCDDA financial regulation and the adoption of staff regulation implementing rules, will also be on the agenda. Among others, the Chairman will report on: decisions taken during the Bureau meeting (4 December); the EMCDDA's new corporate image; and a proposed EMCDDA marketing strategy.

Kathleen Hernalsteen

Scientific Committee

The 18th EMCDDA Scientific Committee meeting was held in Lisbon from 12–13 December. It adopted an opinion on the agency's 2003 (draft) work programme following analysis of individual project plans.

The Committee, which now operates under a new structure (with sub-committees aligned to each EMCDDA programme area), also discussed the achievements of the Centre's activities in 2002. Additionally, it commented on the 2002 *Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in the European Union* and *Annual report on the drug situation in the candidate CEECs*. Finally, the EMCDDA reported progress on the 2002 Reitox national reports and national reporting guidelines for 2003.

Lena Westberg

Prison conference

'Prison harms and prison was created to harm', so were the words of Norwegian criminologist and writer Nils Christie, at the opening of the 6th annual European conference of HIV/AIDS services in prisons, organised in Vienna from 11–12 October by ENDSP. Entitled 'Engaging with change: some practical applications of knowledge', the conference welcomed experts from 42 countries. The EMCDDA and ENDSP organised a workshop at the event where participants discussed the content and strategic application of an EMCDDA protocol for collecting demand-reduction and harm-reduction information associated with drug use in prisons. The participants requested that the results of a recent data-collection and analysis exercise (by assistance services to drug users in prison) using the protocol be made accessible.

Petra Paula Merino