



Preliminary draft conclusions and action points | 59th meeting of Reitox Heads of Focal Points

Date meeting 14–16 November 2018

Introduction and follow-up of previous meetings (Plenary session I)

Lies Gremeaux, the National focal points (NFP) spokesperson made a **debriefing of the pre-Reitox meeting**: there is a common issue within the network regarding the annual reporting, which is now in its third year of submitting workbooks (WBs). The main purpose of introducing the WBs was to reduce the work burden. This does not seem to be the case. NFPs have no concrete solution to put forward, but need to highlight their limitations in resources and time and to see the issue addressed by the Centre. They would like to hear more about EMCDDA's experience with the WBs to get to a common understanding on the reporting (both quantitative and qualitative); it was pointed out that the Reitox Development Framework (RDF) discussion on future of the network is difficult but also useful. The network should focus on actions (some of which are already on-going).

Update on key recent and future policy and institutional developments (Plenary session II)

- Gonçalo Felgueiras (GF) gave a brief update on the **EMCDDA activities**, such as: the external evaluation, the implementation of the new regulation, and the technical cooperation project with EU neighbouring countries – the EU for Monitoring Drugs (EU4MD) project. Concerning planning issues, NFPs were informed that the 2019 work programme (WP), regarding which NFPs were consulted in February 2018, will be submitted to the Management Board (MB) in December. Similarly, the 2020 draft WP will be sent to NFPs for comments in early February 2019 with a deadline of three months.
- **National developments**: MT NFP informed that Malta launched its alcohol policy on 2 November;
- The EC representative, Ms Hofer, gave an update on the main **EU institutions** developments and priorities:
 - EMCDDA external evaluation: EC thanked all NFP for providing input to the evaluation. The final recommendations and executive summary will be shared with the MB and all NFPs around 29 November (date of the upload of the documents for the MB). These are still confidential. NFP comments can be given through the NFP Spokesperson or the MB member. Overall the outcome of the external evaluation is very positive and gave some interesting issues on the future on the agency. The NFP network is seen as crucial for the EMCDDA. One recommendation addresses the comparability of data;
 - Evaluation of EU drugs strategy 2013-20: the EC is about to launch the evaluation with external consultants in the course of 2019. The support of the Reitox network to the consultants will be highly appreciated. The outcome will feed into the new EU drugs strategy, which needs to be adopted by the Council before the end of 2020;
 - Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) of March 2019: The EC is preparing its position for the Ministerial segment of the upcoming CND;

- New NPS legislation: applicable as of 23 November 2018 including the Directive which needs to be transposed by the Member states (MS). 10 MS already did so (one of which partially). NFP were asked to highlight/remind national authorities about this;
- Horizontal Drugs Group: AT presidency proposed the Council a conclusion on alternative developments. This will be adopted at the Justice and Home Affairs Council of 6 December. The thematic debate of the National Drug Coordinators meeting was Internet and prevention;
- The EU policy cycle on cross borders and organised crime mentions two priorities on drugs: cannabis, cocaine and heroin, and synthetic drugs / NPS.
- Relations of the EMCDDA with **EU agencies, international organisations and third countries**, concerning the EU4MD project the Centre welcomes any information NFPs may have on bilateral technical cooperation projects with these countries. The start of the IPA7 project in July 2019 was also announced;
- NFP hooked up on the previous agenda point and gave their feedback on the 7th Extended Reitox meeting (13 November):
 - Although there is a general consensus that the topic of the meeting was very well chosen and inspiring, members of the network considered that there was too little opportunity/time for discussion/interaction. The format of the meeting is good, but the input of information was simply felt to be too intense;
 - The Centre explained that this year's meeting was envisaged to produce some concrete result and was actually used as a kick-off on the 'Futures exercise' of the EMCDDA. The cooperation with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) will start in 2019 and around February there should be a clearer idea on a timeline of the project, stakeholders' engagement incl. workshops involving the members of the network etc.

Action points:

- EC to send out Recommendations and executive summary of the External evaluation of the EMCDDA by the end of November;
- The Centre will try to have a better balance between presentations and dialogue in the 2019 RTX meeting and contribution of the non EU countries to the content of the meeting.

Reitox Development Framework: Roadmap 2020 (Plenary Session III)

- GF reminded that the RDF is a joint Centre and Reitox network document which aims to enhance the relevance of the network at EU level and of each NFP at national level. Therefore, it is key to focus on systematic implementation of the objectives set in the RDF. This can only be done through a clear agreement between the Centre and the network on the implementing measures (requiring action by the NFPs and the Centre alike) needed to achieve the main goals of the RDF.
- IE NFP gave feedback on the technical meeting of 2 October where the topic was discussed: many actions are already on-going and are listed in the roadmap. It is important to emphasise the EMCDDA's efforts to give support to MS, e.g. through the Best Practice Portal, the policy workshop, etc. NFPs need to reflect on how to take advantage of this in their own countries. The network has many stakeholders and NFPs need to learn how to communicate with all of them;
- The need to prioritise actions was discussed and it was decided to dedicate all the three parallel sessions foreseen for the following day to discuss the Roadmap implementing plan. The parallel session on trendspotter training was moved to plenary session VI. The parallel session on the preparation for the Lisbon Addictions 2019 would also cover the Strategic Objective 4. One of the groups would tentatively cover Strategic Objectives 2 and 3;
- The actions resulting from the discussion will be integrated in the Roadmap.

National reporting package: 2018 submission and 2019 reporting (Plenary Session IV)

- Feedback from 2018 reporting: there is still some diversity within the WBs submissions but overall all the information is very useful for the EMCDDA and provided in a more structured way.
- Revision of tools for 2019 reporting: the following has been agreed.
 - Changes in the Standard Tables (ST) are very limited and mainly concern the year and adjustment of substance list;
 - Only the Prisons and Research WBs have minor changes;
 - The two Structured Questionnaires 25–26 will remain part of the 2019 National Reporting Package (NRP) and will be collected in the usual way through Fonte. This information will be needed for the evaluation of the EU Action Plan (2017–2020) and is not collected through other tools.
- The 2019 NRP guidelines were adopted with the changes mentioned above.
- The questions on social reintegration to be collected in 2019 to inform the evaluation of the EU Action Plan (2017–2020) were also presented and discussed.
- The overall results of the assessment of the 5 KI implementation 2018 were presented.

Action points:

- Centre to upload the 2019 NRP guidelines on the RTX extranet and to introduce the changes in the Fonte templates as agreed;
- Centre to follow-up on the additional information request to inform the evaluation of the EU Action Plan;
- NFPs to make use of the new templates for Prisons and Research WBs;
- Centre to send final documents related to the 5KI assessment to the NFPs and MB representatives.

Country Drug Reports (CDR) (Plenary Session V)

- Positive feedback on the CDRs usefulness from a number of countries. It was explained that the EMCDDA CDR team has two replacement members in 2018/2019 and they asked for support from the NFP as they will have challenges. NFPs suggested ideas such as some level of customisation, keeping the focus of info-graphic on the available data (already done in 2018), possibility of including national highlights.
- The planning of CDR2019 was presented. The Centre has already implemented the following ideas from the NFPs: feedback in one single document (rather than text and graphs sent separately), keeping a second round of proof-checking and including national logos and links. In addition, comments from the rounds of consultations will be tracked with actions to address them. Overall the 2019 edition will be kept the same but some adaptations to country data display may be feasible. The Steering Group will consider the suggestions from NFPs for future editions.

Action points:

- Early 2019: Centre to send CDR to NFPs for the first consultation (in 5 batches);
- Centre to consider the suggestions from NFPs for future editions.

Updates on activities (Plenary Session VI)

Drug markets, crime and supply reduction; NPS:

- **European database on new drugs (EDND2):** it was tested in 2018 together with reporting authorities (labs), NFPs from 4 MS and the JRC. It will be launched in the beginning 2019 and trainings will be provided;
- Adapted reporting system **Early Warning System (EWS):** Progress and Final Reports will be replaced by one single annual EWS Final Report;

- **New EWS regulation** will enter into force on 23 November. The new operating guidelines for the EWS will be drafted. They will define steps, procedures, roles, responsibilities and sequence of actions. The Centre will also assist in the implementation and will provide transparency to the process;
- Positive feedback on the participation of NFPs together with **Reference group** representative at the RG meeting.

Action points:

- Centre to request to EWS/NFPs to update the list of reporting agencies, relevant users and contact details;
- Centre to send the new operating guidelines for the EWS – for consultation;
- The Centre will provide NFPs with prior information about the RG meeting;
- The quality of the supply data provided by the NFPs will be discussed in one of the network meetings in 2019 (possibly in a Technical meeting).

Health related issues

- Update on the recent publications in the area of public health, the latest meetings and on-going projects;
- To be better prepared at national level, NFP will be sent information on wastewater data update before the launch of the publication;
- It was suggested that the EMCDDA should work on Minimum quality standards for the Drug Consumption Rooms (DCR) – as there is a big impact and policy relevance;
- Support for drug checking was requested especially because it is a controversial/sensitive topic;
- The Centre presented the objective of the training for 2019 National Trendspotter studies;
- Update of Promoting HCV testing in drug treatment settings: aims to support countries to develop and improve their harm reduction services. In the first phase it is focusing on increasing HCV testing and referral in drug treatment settings. The PL NFP contributed to the project by piloting the knowledge questionnaire during a HR conference. The knowledge questionnaire exists in DE, EN and PL, PT and IT versions are also being produced and will be piloted. A first piloting of the diagnostic process will be undertaken in LU and in PL in 2019.
- NFPs suggested to replace the presentations into a 'market place' or similar interactive format;

Action points:

- NFP to inform the Centre by mid-January of their interest to the national trendspotter studies;
- Centre to consider the market place format for the session on health related topics at the next HFPs meeting;
- Centre to explore options for the translation of the medical cannabis publication (Greece expressed interest on this).
- NFPs interested in participating in the HCV testing project either via translation and testing of the knowledge questionnaire for staff in drug services or piloting the diagnostic process (national or regional round tables) should contact the EMCDDA (KP or DH).

Feedback from the parallel sessions (Plenary Session VII)

- The discussions held in each of the three groups decided at the Plenary session III, were presented by the respective rapporteurs (AT HNFP for Parallel session (PaS) 1, PL HNFP for PaS 2 and CZ/IE HNFP for PaS 3);
- The actions envisaged by each of the groups will be included in a revised version of the Roadmap Implementing plan that will be distributed for NFPs comments together with the conclusions of the HNFP meeting;
- For the Lisbon Addictions conference, the Reitox network decided to prepare an abstract for a structured session. The topic will be 'A comparative policy analysis on the use of routine monitoring data in the policy process in two or three member states'. It will include a number of case studies on the use of data by all policy actors, in government, civil society and the media and in the public debate

leading up to a major policy change. The session will focus on legislative change relating to the criminal status of possession of drugs for personal use. The network would also like to join the EMCDDA exhibition stand (located in the main hall).

Action points:

- Centre to send the consolidated comments in the roadmap implementing plan table to the NFPs;
- Centre and NFPs to follow-up on actions agreed upon during the meeting (see also feedback from parallel session).
- Lisbon Addictions conference: NFPs received an e-mail about the structured session and were asked to send their contribution by 23 November 2018.
- Centre and NFPs to follow-up on the participation of the network on the EMCDDA stand.

RTX network business (Plenary Session VIII)

Feedback and updates were given by the Centre on Grant agreements and on the related RTX academy, as well as on the RTX academy on communication. There was a discussion on the Academies for 2019 with the Centre requesting the NFPs to reflect and inform the Centre on their capacity building needs (there was a try-out online voting on possible topics). The Centre is envisaging establishing still in December a Reitox Academy programme for 2019, taking into account not only the NFPs needs, but in particular the key areas identified in the RDF as requiring increased capacity from the network. Accreditation: NFPs were invited again to start implementing the self-assessment questionnaire. The dates for next years' meetings were also agreed upon. The "Reitox facility locator" results were presented by Viktor M., Czech HNFP. Next steps of the project, finalisation and dissemination, were discussed.

Action points:

- NFPs to inform the Centre until the end of 2018 on the topics for national or regional Academies in 2019;
- NFPs to implement the self-assessment questionnaire in 2018 and in 2019;
- NFPs to send comments to Viktor on the Reitox facility locator by end 2018;
- Spokespersons to follow-up with EMCDDA on future dissemination of Reitox facility locator;
- Dates for 2019 meetings are: 19 March Technical meeting, 21–23 May 60th meeting of Heads of NFPs, 1 October Technical meeting and 12–15 November 8th Extended and 61st meeting of Heads of NFPs.

Cross-cooperation projects (Plenary Session IX)

- Main opportunities for research funding are still those from Justice and Home Affairs. The Public Health programme could also be a source of funding but it usually prioritises infectious diseases and its future under the next Multiannual Financial Framework is not yet clear; EMCDDA is however not centralising all existing information on drug-related research funding.
- Updates on EU research projects and a feedback on EU Agencies Network on Scientific Advice meetings (EU-ANSA) was provided and will continue to be provided;
- 8 countries are involved in the ASAP training (drug prevention professional training). PL NFP will send a short survey to NFPs about mapping prevention services. This was prepared in the framework of the project.
- By 2020 IE will make all outputs from public services available on open-access platform.

Action points:

- NFPs to continue to report on research priorities in the revised research WB.
- Centre and NFPs to continue sharing information on research projects.
- The EMCDDA will reassess if reporting in the field of drug-related research could better address the needs of European and national audiences.