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2001: New year, new perspectives

A new working framework for the EMCDDA received a seal of approval at the agency's Management Board meeting in Lisbon from 10–12 January, with the adoption of the three-year and annual work programmes for 2001–2003 and 2001. Both programmes reflect the orientations of the reform plan adopted by the Board in September 2000 following an external evaluation of the agency in 1999.

The 2001–2003 work programme focuses on:

- monitoring the drug problem in the EU;
- monitoring responses to the drug problem;
- implementing the 1997 Joint action on new synthetic drugs; and
- monitoring national and Community strategies and policies and their impact on the drug situation.

These activities will be supported by dissemination and administrative initiatives and by the REITOX network of National Focal Points. Special attention will also be devoted to EU enlargement, in accordance with the 'Enlargement Strategy' also adopted by the Board last September.

The 2001–2003 programme devotes particular attention to implementing and exploiting a limited set of indicators and core data in the EU to provide comparable and reliable information on drugs. It also moves to increase the scientific capacity of the EMCDDA by internalising a greater number of studies and analyses. The programme defines the Centre as 'primary producer' of information on the drug situation and as 'secondary producer' of information on crime and law-enforcement data, under joint projects with bodies such as Europol, Interpol and the EC.

The 2001 work programme is the first step towards implementing the above-mentioned goals. A budget of 9.1 million EURO was adopted at the



New perspectives for the EMCDDA

Deputy UK Anti-Drugs Co-ordinator elected new EMCDDA Chairman

The EMCDDA starts the year with a new Chairman, a new working framework and two new work programmes. Its budget for 2001 is set at 9.1 million EURO.

Mr Mike Trace, Deputy UK Anti-Drugs Co-ordinator, was elected new Chairman of the EMCDDA at the 21st Management Board meeting in January. Mr Trace was elected for a three-year term, replacing Mr Franz-Josef Bindert of Germany. Mr Trace has played a pivotal role in the UK Anti-Drugs Co-ordinating Unit since 1997 in creating and implementing the government's 10-year strategy 'Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain'. Mr Bindert, Chairman since 1997, did not stand again in the elections. Mr Marcel Reimen, first government advisor at the Permanent Representation of Luxembourg to the EU, was re-elected Vice-Chairman of the Board.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman will form part of, and be supported by, the Bureau of the Management Board. Bureau members include: Mr Camilo Vázquez (Spain) and Mrs Brigitte Magistris (Austria), both elected at the meeting, and Sir Jack Stewart-Clark and Mr Jean-Paul Mingasson, nominated by the European Parliament and European Commission respectively.

Kathleen Hernalsteen

Continued on page 8

Drug situation

Estimating the incidence of problem drug use

It is important to estimate the incidence of new cases of problem drug use, in addition to estimating the prevalence of all existing cases in the European Union. Incidence can show the effects of prevention and recent trends more directly. The EMCDDA is therefore working on methods to estimate the incidence of opiate use, to be included in its key indicator 'prevalence and patterns of problem drug use'.

An EMCDDA expert group, co-ordinated by the University of Rome Tor Vergata (Italy), has developed different methods of estimating incidence from treatment data. All methods are limited to estimating the incidence of users who will end up seeking treatment many years later ('relative incidence'). This, however, is precisely the most important group for evaluating drug problems and treatment needs.

One method is based on back calculation – as used in AIDS projections – using a separate estimate for the time between first opiate use and first treatment (the 'latency period'). Another method directly corrects for the year of first use, resulting in more biased but still useful incidence. A third approach is to monitor changes in the latency period over time, as an increase in incidence will temporarily result in a shorter period and vice versa. Finally, it is possible to simply follow the age distribution of the treated population, as increases in incidence are expected to show up in relative increases of younger age groups.

These methods each have their merits and weaknesses, results ranging from qualitative indications of trends in incidence (e.g. through age) to full projections of future treatment needs (back calculation). A new report by the expert group, in which the first two methods are developed, suggests that the timing of opiate epidemics may have been different between some European countries and cities.

Lucas Wiessing and Carla Rossi

International Conference on Hepatitis C

The 4th International Conference on Hepatitis C was held from 10–11 November in Amsterdam. The conference was organised by the NGO Mainliners London, in collaboration with Mainline Amsterdam. Both organisations represent and support drug-user services. This international conference is special in that it brings together scientists, hepatitis-C-infected individuals and those working in the drugs field to present and discuss latest research findings and their direct implications.

At global level, transmission of the hepatitis C virus (HCV) occurs mainly via the re-use of needles in resource-poor countries. In the EU, future health-care costs of drug-related infections (of which there are possibly about 0.5 million today) may reach around 0.75 billion EURO per annum. This rises to around 1.9 billion if HIV is included, or approximately 0.5% of the total EU health budget.

The meeting reported that, on the positive side, new data on drug users suggest that the natural history of HCV may be less severe than previously thought (around 5–7% having cirrhosis of the liver after decades, rather than the 20–30% originally estimated). In addition, harm-reduction measures appear to have resulted in lower infection rates among young injectors in Scotland.

Lucas Wiessing and Maarten Postma

Analysing local drug markets: Frankfurt and Milan

An EMCDDA pilot project to describe and analyse local drug markets in Frankfurt and Milan¹ has revealed similarities between the two cities.

Data for the study were primarily gathered through secondary sources (studies, literature, institutional information, legal files and media articles). Primary sources were also used, with more than 100 interviews conducted in each of the cities with drug users, suppliers, law-enforcement officials and treatment providers. A questionnaire was developed exclusively for this purpose.

The study shows that, following the spread of cannabis and LSD use in the late 1960s, LSD disappeared and, in the 1980s, parallel drug markets developed in the two cities: one for heroin and one for cannabis. However, in the 1990s, the polarisation of these markets was shaken by the spread of a variety of illegal drugs, including cocaine, amphetamines and ecstasy. This was accompanied by a



The majority of drug deals are carried out by numerous, relatively small and often ephemeral enterprises

diversification of drug users in terms of socio-economic integration and cultural background.

According to the study, the majority of drug deals are carried out by numerous, relatively small and often ephemeral enterprises. Some are family businesses, some non-kin groups and others crews which form and split as the opportunity arises. In both cities, the retail market is dominated by foreign dealers who occupy the most dangerous positions.

Although some dealing enterprises may attempt to, and occasionally do, exercise a monopoly on certain areas, none of them is able to influence the drug price by varying the quantity available on the market. In both Frankfurt and Milan, drug markets have always been open markets where anyone can make his or her own fortune.

Chloé Carpentier

¹ Contractors: Letizia Paoli and Hans-Jörg Albrecht, Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law, Freiburg (Germany). The study, initiated in September 1999, will be downloadable in the coming weeks from http://www.emcdda.org/activities/epidem_analyse_markets.shtml

Responses

Assisting drug users in prisons in the EU

It is estimated that three in five inmates in the European Union have been imprisoned for drug-related crimes, and up to a half of them either use, or have used, drugs in the past. These are some of the figures emerging from an EMCDDA study being carried out on assistance to drug users in prisons in the EU.

Provisional data from the report, to be released this spring, were presented by the EMCDDA and the University of Oldenburg at a conference held in Hamburg from 23–25 November. The conference, which welcomed over 300 participants, was organised by the City of Hamburg, the Dutch REITOX Focal Point (Trimbos Institute) and the European Network of Drug and HIV/AIDS Services in Prisons. The event, entitled 'Encouraging Health Promotion for Drug Users within the Criminal Justice System', focused on the promotion of the health and well-being of drug users in prisons.

The conference addressed themes such as:

- prisoners' drug habits;
- the forced abandonment of children of female prisoners;
- needle-exchange programmes;
- alternatives to prison for drug addicts; and
- drug-substitution treatment in this setting.

Needle-exchange programmes received most attention at the conference. Today Germany and Spain have implemented such programmes in some of their prisons, while countries such as Portugal are considering doing the same. The backdrop of these initiatives is the high number of prisoners in the European Union carrying HIV/AIDS, hepatitis and tuberculosis.

Prisons are settings which present serious public-health problems, not only for inmates and prison staff, but, given the high turnover of prisoners, also for society in general.

Petra Paula Merino

For further information on the EMCDDA study, please contact: Petra.Paula.Merino@emcdda.org
For further information on the results of the conference please contact: Paddy Costall, Cranstoun Drug Services, 4th Floor, Broadway House, 112–134 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, SW19 1RL, UK.

E-mail: pcostall@cranstoun.org.uk
<http://www.cranstoun.demon.co.uk>



Three in five inmates in the EU have been imprisoned for drug-related crimes, and up to a half of them either use, or have used, drugs in the past

Evaluation Instruments Bank goes live

The EMCDDA's Evaluation Instruments Bank (EIB) went live in December and is now accessible at http://www.emcdda.org/eib/databases_eib.shtml.

The EIB is a database of standard instruments used for evaluating drug-prevention and treatment activities in the European Union. The database now contains a total of 140 instruments. Most of these are available in English, but some are downloadable in Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish and Swedish. Navigating the EIB is facilitated by three search modes enabling the visitor to browse for material suited to his/her specific interest. All those interested in the database or in implementing an evaluation can now locate and download relevant instruments.

Should you wish to add instruments to the EIB in any official EU language, or have any queries, please e-mail: eibprofile@emcdda.org.

Ulrik Solberg and Gregor Burkhardt

Drug abuse treatment and care

Country reports, recommendations and guidelines on quality drug-abuse treatment and care were presented at an expert meeting in Athens from 22–24 November. The meeting was organised in the framework of the 'Adequacy in drug-abuse treatment and care in Europe' project (ADAT) launched by the World Health Organisation (WHO-Regional Office for Europe) in 1997 and managed by the Institut für Suchtforschung, Zürich.

This material will be published on the WHO homepage in the first half of 2001 (<http://www.who.int/regions/euro/index.html>) and will include links to the EMCDDA's Evaluation Instruments Bank (see above). The WHO will also publish the recommendations and guidelines in the course of the year.

Ten countries participated in the project: the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. The project covered:

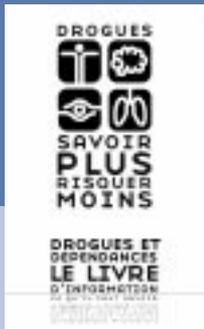
- ethical aspects in the treatment and care of drug addicts;
- treatment and support of the needs of drug addicts;
- professionalism in drug-abuse treatment and care;
- basic and further education of professionals in the field of dependencies; and
- evaluation of the effectiveness and economic evaluations of substance-abuse treatment.

A 120-strong meeting of the Greek branch of the European Association for Professionals Working with Drug Dependencies (Itaca) followed the expert meeting from 24–25 November. Participants discussed: the ethical issues of drug treatment; clients' needs; hidden populations; and networking of services. The proceedings will be published by Itaca in the coming months (<http://www.itaca-europe.org>).

Margareta Nilson

Bookshelf

Savoir plus,
risquer moins
(Know more, risk less)



This practical pocketbook is designed to provide young people and their parents with comprehensive information on drugs and drug addiction and to open up dialogue on the risks of drug taking. 'There is no such thing as a society without drugs', states the introduction, 'but there are effective measures against drugs and drug-related harms'.

The first section of the handbook looks at drug use and harmful drug use, outlining the first signs of addiction. This is followed by chapters explaining the effects of different drugs on the brain and the various properties, dangers and legal situation of substances including cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy, heroin, alcohol and tobacco. The book closes with information on harm-reduction measures, assistance to drug users and contacts of drug information and advisory services in France.

Published by: Mission interministérielle de lutte contre la drogue et la toxicomanie (MILDT) and the Comité français d'éducation pour la santé (CFES).

Date: July 2000.

Language: French.

ISBN: 2-908444-65-8.

Price: Free.

Volumes may be ordered from: Comité français d'éducation pour la santé, 2, rue Auguste-Comte, BP 51, 92174 Vanves Cedex. Fax: ++ 33 1 41 33 33 90.

E-mail: cfes@cfes.sante.fr

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

Learning about drug trends from the youth media

In January this year, the EMCDDA released a summary of the findings of the first study of its kind into the youth media as a new source of information on drug trends. The study highlights distinctive differences between the youth media in three EU countries. This is perhaps contrary to expectations that, due to globalisation, the youth media everywhere are very similar.

The study concludes that some youth publications can provide information about: physical aspects of a drug and of how the market is working; effects and side-effects of drugs from the perspective of the consumer; and motives of the consumer. However, cultural, political and legal differences between Member States are key weaknesses in using the youth media in a highly standardised way for indicators of drug prevalence in Europe. And important questions arise about what role the youth media play in different countries in providing evidence-based information about drugs to meet the demands for information of an increasingly consumer-minded and health-conscious youth.

Widespread ecstasy use in the 1980s and 1990s caught the scientific world and policy-makers off guard, although it was already being documented in the youth media from 1985. This led the EMCDDA to commission a study into the feasibility of the youth media as a new source of information on drug trends.

The study was conducted by *Gruppo Abele* (Turin, Italy), which worked with grassroots drug researchers in France, Italy and the UK. The media studied were confined to these three countries over a two-year period (1997–98). They included general lifestyle magazines, music and cult magazines, and leaflets and journals produced by young enthusiasts ('self-produced' media).

Some of the study's findings are:

- Ecstasy is the most written about specific drug overall, reflecting the recreational, consumer-orientated nature of drug coverage in the youth media. Unlike newspaper media there is little or no reference to drug deaths.
- The more specific the target readership, the more information is detailed and in-depth. Targeted and self-produced media favour a semi-scientific approach, with pragmatic information to limit health and social damage.
- In France and Italy, positive opinions about drug use are rarely expressed in the youth media. In the UK, however, 16% of opinions about drug use are positive. In France, over half of expressed opinions are negative compared with much lower rates of negative opinion in Italy and the UK.

Differences in editorial practice in the three Member States were shown by the study to be marked. For example, two UK editors believed that articles linked to drugs increase sales of their magazines and they actively sought opinions from experts in the drug field. In Italy and France, although magazine editors perceived a desire for objective information about drugs on the part of their readers, they do not provide it, nor do they seek opinions of drug experts. The reason given is to protect their advertising and legal interests. These factors explain some of the differences in the youth media between countries and raise important questions, such as: do the youth media fill an evidence-based drug information gap – as appears to be the case with specialised magazines in the UK and 'self-produced' media in France and Italy – and does this signify that where official, evidence-based drug information is available, there is less likelihood of the youth media giving coverage to drug topics?

Do the youth
media fill an
information gap
for an
increasingly
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and health-
conscious
youth?

Deborah Olszewski

Enlargement

Green light for co-operation project with the CEECs

A co-operation project between the EMCDDA and the Central and East European Countries (CEECs) was given the green light by the European Commission in December 2000.

The two-million-EURO project, funded by the Phare Programme, will kick off in February. Its goals are:

- to develop further the institutional base of the National Focal Points and national drug information systems in the CEECs; and
- to consolidate the relationship between the CEEC National Focal Points and the EMCDDA, involving them directly in the agency's activities and programmes.

The project will cover the 10 CEEC candidate countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia), while associating as far as possible Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The approval of this project marks the first phase of the 'Enlargement Strategy' approved by the EMCDDA's Management Board in September 2000. The second phase will involve the direct participation of these countries in the activities of the Centre on conclusion of their entry negotiations with the European Commission.

Alexis Goosdeel

Two-million-EURO co-operation project to kick off in February between EMCDDA and CEECs

ring a better knowledge of new drugs and patterns of use were a major public-health challenge today. She noted that, since the creation of the EMCDDA in 1993, countries now knew more about the drug situation in Europe and, faced with similar problems, were adopting similar policies.

The meeting stressed the need for greater information sharing between politicians, scientists, grassroots workers and the general public on the grounds that drug policy cannot be imposed exclusively from the top down.

Partners

New challenges for public health

A high-level European Colloquium organised under the French Presidency of the European Union in November called for the need to invent new ways of adapting to the reality of today's drug situation and to improve communication across legal and institutional boundaries. It also concluded that European drug policies are today tending to converge and discussed the creation of a European network to evaluate and inform on new patterns, uses and risks of drugs. The meeting addressed the new public-health challenges and implications created by the development of drug addictions in Europe. It was held under the auspices of the Mission interministérielle de lutte contre la drogue et la toxicomanie (MILDT); the European Commission; the French Ministry of Health; and the Agence française de sécurité sanitaire des produits de santé.

Speaking at the conference, Mrs Nicole Maestracci, President of MILDT and Head of the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs of the Council under the French Presidency, affirmed that acqui-

Alain Wallon

Drugs-Lex

Drug users and the law: prosecution, concepts and practices

What happens in practice when an individual is arrested for possession of a small quantity of drugs for personal use? What are the practical consequences of selling drugs? What is the procedure when property crime is committed by a drug addict?

These are among the questions examined in a new EMCDDA comparative study on 'Drug users and the law: prosecution, concepts and practices'. The study, co-ordinated by the UK National Focal Point Drug-Scope and the University of Ghent, focuses on the practical responses by law-enforcement authorities (police, prosecutors, courts) to drug use and related offences.

The study concludes that, in most Member States, prosecution of the use or possession of drugs per se is actively dealt with by the police and prosecutors (the police are likely to carry out investigations, make arrests and prepare reports for the prosecutors). However, once cases are initiated, prosecutors and/or the courts tend to look for opportunities to discontinue legal proceedings or, failing that, to find an arrangement falling short of strong criminal

punishment. In virtually all EU Member States, higher priority is given today to the policing or prosecuting of drug trafficking and property crime (regardless of whether the latter have been committed by drug users) than to the policing or prosecuting of drug use or possession per se.

Practical responses by law-enforcement authorities to drug use and related offences

Daniilo Ballotta

The study will be published by the EMCDDA in the course of 2001. For further information contact: Daniilo.Ballotta@emcdda.org

Reitox Cluster group meeting

'Data-quality assurance and global networking improvement' was the topic of a REITOX 'cluster group' meeting held in Brussels on 29 November. The meeting, involving the EMCDDA's REITOX Co-ordination department and the Belgian, Dutch and French National Focal Points, explored the various means employed by the national centres to guarantee quality data on drugs. It also examined the national networks on which the centres rely for the daily accomplishment of their national and European tasks.

The cluster meeting stressed that, in order to obtain a global assessment of the national drug situation, National Focal Points needed to receive sufficient political and financial support in their country. The participants also recommended that a common methodology be used by all national data-collecting partners in order to ensure cross-regional and, at European level, cross-national comparability. This was considered especially relevant in Belgium where data are gathered by very different sub-Focal Points in four communities (Flemish, French, German and Brussels-Capital). Finally, the importance of well-developed and co-ordinated national networks was underlined both for information gathering and quality control. The three Focal Points involved in this meeting all employ national, regional or local data partners and have developed instruments for systematic data-quality checks.

The EMCDDA will continue its cluster meetings on this topic with the remaining National Focal Points over the coming months and hopes to draw conclusions by early summer. These will in turn be submitted to the external contractor conducting an evaluation of the REITOX Focal Points in 2001.

Frédéric Denecker and Linda Montanari

Spotlight Irish National Focal Point: Health Research Board

The Irish National Focal Point of the REITOX network has recently launched a biannual newsletter entitled *Drugnet Ireland*. The newsletter plays an important role in the dissemination of information, news and research among health professionals and interested parties involved in the drugs field in Ireland.

Another recent release is *Knowledge, Attitudes & Beliefs*, a publication based on a nationwide survey on drugs. This outlines the Irish public's knowledge and experience of, and attitudes towards, illicit drugs and drug users.

Ongoing research studies include: 'Drug Use among Prisoners – An exploratory study'; 'Drug Misuse in Rural Areas'; 'An Annotated Bibliography of Drug Misuse in Ireland'; and 'The Mobile Clinic Study – An assessment of the needs and experiences of service users'.

Further details can be accessed on the web at <http://www.hrb.ie> or obtained from the: Drug Misuse Research Division, Health Research Board, 73 Lower Baggot St, Dublin 2, Ireland. E-mail: dmd@hrb.ie.



UN Vienna Civil Society Award Posthumous award for Roger Lewis

The EMCDDA's late colleague, Roger Lewis, was among those honoured by the UN Vienna Civil Society Award presented in the Austrian capital on 5 December. The award, which acknowledges 'outstanding contributions to the global campaign against drug trafficking, organised crime and terrorism', was presented by Mr Pino Arlacchi, Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). Attending the ceremony was Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden, who is active in the worldwide campaign against drugs.

**He left a
sterling human
legacy that is
an inspiration
to us all**

Roger worked for 30 years to bridge gaps in understanding of drug problems and their wider context at local, national and international levels. He was an ethnographer with a special gift for research into the workings of drug markets and the associated structures of organised crime. As such, he helped to make drug-market research an indispensable tool for understanding the drug problem. In the late 1980s, Roger worked in Edinburgh to provide health services for drugs users, prostitutes and gay men, while promoting understanding of HIV/AIDS. He also co-founded the NGO, Release, one of the first organisations in the UK to offer support to those with drug-related problems. His posthumous award was accepted in his memory by his wife Deborah who donated it to Release. Roger headed the EMCDDA's REITOX Co-ordination department from July 1998 to April 2000.

Speaking at the award ceremony, Mr Arlacchi, said: 'Roger Lewis provided a valuable academic legacy that will influence drug and crime policies for many years to come. He also left a sterling human legacy that is an inspiration to us all'.

Products and services



Publications New EMCDDA Insights

On the eve of World Aids Day, the EMCDDA launched the third edition in its Insights series *Reviewing current practice in drug-substitution treatment in the European Union*. The report offers an overview of latest patterns and trends in substitution treatment across the 15 EU countries and presents national country profiles covering the period from 1995 to the new millennium. These profiles map the key characteristics for each Member State, including the role of substitution treatment in national drug strategies.

Substitution treatment is one of the most widely discussed drug-related topics in Europe today. It has grown steadily in the EU since its introduction in the 1960s and is now more widespread and accepted than ever before.

Launching the report, EMCDDA Director Georges Estievenart said: 'In many countries, substitution treatment developed, often reluctantly, in response to the HIV risk associated with injecting opiates and other drugs'. He added 'it has now proved its worth, playing a key role in cutting HIV transmission'.

The study also reports indications that such treatment can improve psychological and social well-being and reduce criminality among addicts.

A news release launching this publication is available at <http://www.emcdda.org/press/press.shtml>

Coming soon

- *Modelling drug use: methods to quantify and understand hidden processes*, EMCDDA Scientific Monograph No. 6. Available in English.
- *General report of activities 2000*. Available in English, French and German.
- *Injecting drug use, risk behaviour and qualitative research*, EMCDDA Insights No. 4. Available in English.

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

Documentation

ELISAD meeting: 'Linking together'

Over 30 documentation and information specialists from 11 European countries met in Prague from 9–11 November for the 12th annual meeting of the European Association of Libraries and Information Services on Alcohol and Drugs (ELISAD). The event was hosted by the Czech National Institute of Public Health. Entitled 'Linking together', the meeting aimed to enhance knowledge sharing and networking among ELISAD members and to strengthen co-operation between the network and Central and East European Countries (CEECs).

Three practical workshops focused on:

- information and policy: writing a charter for librarians and information specialists on alcohol and other drugs;
- electronic communication technologies: building a website and linking and editing an electronic journal; and
- the ELISAD subject gateway: building a European Internet directory.

The first workshop drafted an Ethical Charter related to the task of librarians as gatekeepers of information. Once approved by the ELISAD members, this will be available at <http://www.geocities.com/aodlib>. The Charter addresses issues such as confidentiality of information services and the principle of freedom of information.

The remaining workshops looked at the technicalities of creating websites and electronic journals; and the development of the ELISAD subject gateway on drugs. This gateway will provide access to selected and reliable online information on drugs and will be integrated into the ELISAD website in the coming months.

Adelaide Seita Duarte

Resources Useful products in the campaign against drugs

Websites

<http://www.checkyourdrugs.at> is the homepage of the Austrian social project Check-It! which works in the field of harm reduction. Among others, users can access information on the properties of illicit drugs and their dangers.

Newsletters

The Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe now publishes a newsletter three times a year in English and French. To download, access the Pompidou Group's website at:

<http://www.pompidou.coe.int/framnewsletter/framnewsletter.html>
<http://www.pompidou.coe.int/framnewsletter/n11f/nl1f1.htm>

CD-ROMs

The Observatorio Vasco de Drogodependencias, Spain, has released its fifth edition of *Drogodependencias*, a bibliographic database on drugs in CD-ROM format. The CD-ROM contains more than 17,000 references of specialised publications and articles on drugs issues.

Further information is available from: Centro de Documentación de Drogodependencias, Reina Regente, 5 bajo, 20003 Donostia, Spain. Tel: ++ 34 9 43 42 36 56/42 36 57. Fax: ++ 34 9 43 29 30 07. E-mail: Siis@sarenet.es

The Documentation Centre of the Spanish Asociación Drogalcohol, has published a CD-ROM containing the extensive material of its REDOC database (bibliographic files covering the documentation collection). The CD-ROM carries over 20,000 records spanning a wide range of topics related to drugs, alcohol and other addictions.

For further details, please contact: Amparo Gisbert, Asociación Drogalcohol, Centro de Documentación sobre drogodependencias REDOC, Avda. Navarro Reverter, 17 bajo, 46004 Valencia, Spain. Tel: ++ 34 9 63 52 54 78.

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



Calendar 2001

EMCDDA meetings

- 10–12 January:** 21st meeting of the EMCDDA Management Board, Lisbon.
- 19–24 January:** Visits to the Irish, Portuguese and Spanish National Focal Points, concluding with a cluster meeting in Madrid.
- 8–10 February:** European expert group on population surveys, Lisbon.
- 14 February:** Meeting of the Bureau of the EMCDDA, Lisbon.
- 14–16 February:** 21st meeting of the Heads of the REITOX Focal Points, Lisbon.
- 26 February–3 March:** Visits to the Austrian, German and Italian, National Focal Points, concluding with a cluster meeting in Munich.
- 19–22 March:** Visits to the Greek, Luxembourg and United Kingdom National Focal Points, concluding with a cluster meeting in London.
- 2–5 April:** Visits to the Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish National Focal Points, concluding with a cluster meeting in Oslo.

External meetings

- 18–19 January:** EUR-OP meeting on co-operation with the EU agencies, Luxembourg.
- 24–26 January:** UNDCP meeting on Global Assessment Programme, Vienna.
- 8–9 February:** EUMC workshop on documentation and archives, Vienna.
- 22–23 February:** IREFREA annual meeting, Vienna.
- 8–10 March:** European Conference on Drug Telephone Helplines, Berlin.
- 16–17 March:** Force European Seminar on HIV and Hepatitis in Prison, Lisbon.
- 27–31 March:** 1st World Congress on Women's Mental Health, Berlin.

EU meetings

- 22 January:** Horizontal Working Party on Drugs, Brussels.
- 16 February:** Horizontal Working Party on Drugs, Brussels.
- March:** Horizontal Working Party on Drugs, Brussels.
- 19 April:** Horizontal Working Party on Drugs, Brussels.
- 28 May:** Horizontal Working Party on Drugs, Brussels.
- 18 June:** Horizontal Working Party on Drugs, Brussels.

Statutory bodies Developing a centre of excellence

The EMCDDA should continue to be promoted as a 'centre of excellence' among drug experts, researchers and practitioners by producing information of a high scientific standard. So stated the EMCDDA's Scientific Committee in a formal opinion on the Centre's draft work programmes (2001–2003 and 2001) adopted at its meeting in Lisbon from 11–12 December.

In addition to examining the work programmes ahead of the January Management Board meeting (see page 1), the Committee discussed and formally approved draft technical tools and guidelines for the implementation by the EU Member States of the Centre's five key epidemiological indicators. The Committee recommended that these indicators be widely implemented within the EU.

Other items discussed at the meeting were medium-term perspectives for the Centre and the effects of the agency's internal reform plan on the Scientific Committee. Finally, the Committee received updated information on the follow-up of the risk-assessment reports on GHB and ketamine.

Lena Westberg

2001: New year, new perspectives

Continued from page 1

meeting for 2001. Of this, 33% of resources are earmarked for monitoring the drug situation; 28% for monitoring responses; 16% for the REITOX network; 15% for monitoring strategies and their impact; and 8% for implementing the Joint action on new synthetic drugs.

Both programmes are consistent with the EU Action Plan on Drugs (2000–2004) and adopt the project-based approach to planning as proposed by the reform plan. The programmes mark a turning point in the EMCDDA's development, both in its working methods and in the scope of its activities.

Also adopted by the Board were an EMCDDA communication strategy; its *General Report of Activities 2000*; a human resources strategy; and a Memorandum of Understanding between the EMCDDA and Interpol.

A new look for 2001

Drugnet Europe was launched in September 1996 and has been published on a bimonthly basis for the last four years. Over that period a number of changes have been made to improve its content, quality and impact. As another step in this evolution, the Centre has adopted a new look for the newsletter for 2001 aimed at offering easier access to EMCDDA news. Any suggestions on how to improve the newsletter further are welcome and may be addressed to the editor: Kathryn.Robertson@emcdda.org



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