



www.emcdda.eu.int

# Drugnet Europe

Newsletter of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

ISSN 0873-5379

## In this issue...

- 2** New perspectives on cannabis
- 3** Social integration efforts 'much needed' for foreign inmates
- 4** Feature: The way forward for EU action on drugs
- 5** Connecting research, policy and practice
- 6** EMCDDA to launch 'Country situation summaries'
- 7** New EMCDDA products and services
- 8** Scientific evidence must underpin new EU drug strategy and action plan

## EMCDDA welcomes 10 new Member States

The enlargement of the European Union by 10 new Member States finally took place on 1 May, 15 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. In the run-up to this event, cooperation between the EMCDDA, the European Commission and the Central and East European Countries progressively became 'accession-driven' and, in this time, much was achieved.

With the help of the European Commission's Phare programme and the EMCDDA, the majority of the new Member States now boast balanced national drug strategies, inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms, Reitox national focal points and drug information networks. The 10 countries are also integrated into the work of the EMCDDA with full rights and obligations (1).

In the coming years, the agency and its Reitox partners will be lending post-accession assistance to the new Member States which have established focal points recently or which need further support to fully implement common key indicators and core data sets. The ultimate goal is to harmonise drug monitoring across the region, thereby developing a truly 'common language' with which to describe the phenomenon.

But this most recent expansion is by no means the end of the enlargement story. Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey are currently concluding their negotiations with the European Commission for EMCDDA membership. Meanwhile, south-east European countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro) are already knocking at the door.

An ongoing evaluation of the EU drug strategy and action plan (2000–2004) will come to a close in October this year (see p.4). On the basis of its results, a new drug strategy and action plan will be drawn up, rising to the challenges that lie ahead for the European Union of 25 countries.

According to EMCDDA Director Georges Estievenart: 'The challenge for an enlarged



The 10 new Member States are now integrated into the work of the EMCDDA with full rights and obligations.

## 26 June: a focus on treatment

'Drugs: treatment works' is the theme of a year-long campaign to be launched by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 26 June, International day against drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking (see Resources, p.7).

### International day against drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking 'Drugs: treatment works'

The purpose of the campaign is to emphasise the importance and effectiveness of drug treatment, both to drug dependent individuals and to the general public.

The UNODC also hopes to diminish the stigma attached to drug users by presenting positive stories of successfully treated individuals who are engaged in a productive life.

To mark the day, the EMCDDA will be presenting new information on the treatment of drug use in Europe. It will also be launching the first-ever European review on the potency of cannabis in its Insights series (see New publications, p.7).

See <http://www.unodc.org> and <http://www.emcdda.eu.int>

Continued on page 8

April–June

# 2004

# Drug situation

## New perspectives on cannabis



**A rethinking of control strategies by governments and new research findings have sparked lively discussions on cannabis in Europe**

Despite being the most commonly used drug in the EU, cannabis is not often at the centre of the debate on the drug phenomenon. To some extent, however, this is changing in Europe, with more lively discussions emerging on issues relating to the drug.

A rethinking of control strategies by governments has prompted some of these discussions. Others have been sparked by new research findings or by concerns

that patterns of cannabis use, or even the make-up of the drug itself, may be changing.

A central role of the EMCDDA is to facilitate the European debate on drugs by underpinning it with accurate and up-to-date information. To respond to the current interest in cannabis, a number of products are planned for 2004 and 2005.

These include:

- the first-ever European review on the potency of cannabis, to be released on 26 June (see p.7);
- a special issue on cannabis in the 2004 *Annual report*;
- a special edition of the EMCDDA policy briefing *Drugs in focus*;
- an online resource reviewing public-health research literature on the drug;
- technical meetings covering topics such as how to define and measure intensive cannabis use; and
- an EMCDDA scientific monograph planned for 2005.

Details of the above products will be posted on the EMCDDA website <http://www.emcdda.eu.int>

## Improving tools for mapping the diversity of the EU drug problem

A central aspect of the EMCDDA's work is estimating the size of the EU drug problem and building up a picture of trends in drug use by comparing estimates taken over time. Some of this information is collected via surveys or by studying drug users in treatment. Additional information is gathered through the EMCDDA's key indicator on prevalence and patterns of problem drug use (1), which includes guidelines on methods for estimating the size of the long-term and chronic population of drug users.

To date, the definition of problem drug use applied by the EMCDDA in this indicator and accompanying methodological guidelines has been sufficiently flexible to cover drug problem patterns across the EU. However, to respond to today's more diverse EU drug situation, the EMCDDA must now review its measurement tools and definitions.

A small expert group met in Sintra from 4–5 May to look at how to refine the definition used in the problem drug use indicator. A number of suggestions emerged that could potentially sharpen our perspective of problem drug use and better identify sub-groups, such as crack cocaine users. These ideas will be further developed at a meeting on the problem drug use indicator in Lisbon in November. A Reitox Academy workshop, to be held in Slovenia in July, will also help develop strategies to generate better problem drug use estimates.

(1) [http://www.emcdda.eu.int/situation/methods\\_tools/key\\_indicators.shtml](http://www.emcdda.eu.int/situation/methods_tools/key_indicators.shtml)  
[http://www.emcdda.eu.int/situation/themes/problem\\_drug\\_use.shtml](http://www.emcdda.eu.int/situation/themes/problem_drug_use.shtml)

## Interpreting and reporting drug-related data

Interpreting and reporting drug-related data from diverse information sources was the focus of a Reitox Academy training course organised from 28–30 April in Lisbon.

Attended by participants from 15 countries, the course was led by Dr Fabrizio Schifano and organised with technical assistance from St. George's Hospital Medical School, University of London.

The EMCDDA's key epidemiological indicators and core data sets were presented to participants along with explanations of how they relate to the Reitox reporting guidelines and structures. In a 'learning-by-doing' exercise, participants were asked to apply this methodology to various sets of data that presented a problem relating to the drug situation in an imaginary country. This exercise looked at issues such as data quality, interpreting and reporting techniques and communicating with the media.

This was the last course in the series to be funded by the European Commission's Phare programme. The Reitox Academy will now continue its activities under the EMCDDA's current three-year work programme (2004–2006) also organising, at the request of the European Commission, periodical training activities for other EU programmes such as Technical Assistance to the Community of Independent States (TACIS).

### Alexis Goosdeel

The Reitox Academy training programme was launched in February 2002 with the aim of boosting the exchange of know-how and best practice between Reitox partners in the then 15 EU Member States and acceding and candidate countries. Courses aimed to foster a 'networking spirit' and focused on themes tailored to the needs of different target audiences. These were particularly beneficial to the former acceding countries, which were relative newcomers to working in the drugs field at EU level.

# Responses

## European conference on money laundering

A European conference on money laundering, held under the European Commission's programme for police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters (AGIS), took place in Santander from 26–29 April. Organised by the Spanish authorities, the event gathered customs and police service representatives from all EU and candidate countries as well as delegates from the European Commission, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Financial Action Task Force, Interpol, Europol and the EMCDDA.

Participants explored how drug demand and market data can contribute to a better understanding of the magnitude of the laundering phenomenon. They also exchanged views on: international intelligence-sharing; implementing legal frameworks; and money-laundering methods.

Anti-money-laundering operations represent one of the most challenging and promising activities against drug supply today. The AGIS programme (2003–2007) aims to provide European citizens with a high level of protection in an area of freedom, security and justice.

**Ignacio Vázquez Molini**

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice\\_home/funding/agis/printer/funding\\_agis\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/funding/agis/printer/funding_agis_en.htm)

## EDDRA: 'Grow up playing'



A new entry in the EDDRA database is *Crescer a brincar* (Grow up playing), a Portuguese primary-school-based prevention programme targeting children aged 6–10.

Launched in April 2002, this project aims to promote protective factors and reduce the risk associated with future drug use, through a range of activities such as cartoon design and games. 'Life skills' are also taught, including communication, assertiveness, decision-making and emotional and thought control. Teachers are provided with a four-year syllabus and offered support from a multidisciplinary team.

A first evaluation of the programme in August 2003 brought promising results. Statistical analysis demonstrated significant differences between the experimental and control group for all of the observed variables. In general, the children improved their cognitive and physical competencies as well as their overall behaviour and self-control.

**Abigail David**

[http://eddra.emcdda.eu.int:8008/eddra/plsql/ShowQuest?Prog\\_ID=3536](http://eddra.emcdda.eu.int:8008/eddra/plsql/ShowQuest?Prog_ID=3536)

## Social integration efforts, 'much needed' for foreign inmates



**Around 40,000 Europeans are imprisoned outside their home country and there are currently around 70,000 foreign nationals in European prisons**

European prison populations today contain an over-representation of social, cultural and ethnic minorities, many being immigrants from outside the EU. This situation can be explained by various societal factors as well as specific characteristics relating to the migrant population (human trafficking, the drug problem, poor professional qualifications, language barriers and culture shock). Other contributing factors are minorities' poor access to health and social services and the labour market, encouraging their involvement in criminal activities.

Evidence shows that the police arrest foreigners more frequently than nationals for the same type of offence. The European Group for Prisoners Abroad, for example, estimates that around 40,000 Europeans are imprisoned outside their home country and that there are currently around 70,000 foreign nationals in European prisons.

Foreign inmates experience difficulties in accessing general care, legal support and addiction services, the main barrier being linguistic. This ultimately jeopardises their chances for social integration as they are more likely to experience health and addiction problems and less likely to be given a chance for parole.

Participants at a recent conference on 'Prisons, drugs and society in the enlarged Europe' (1) called for comprehensive interventions to prevent imprisonment and integrate immigrants into society by facilitating their access to employment, health and social services and education.

Meanwhile, effective in-custody measures cited included peer-support approaches, cultural mediation and repatriation of inmates to prison units in their home country. Other urgent measures proposed related to the prevention of diseases among detainees, especially HIV, hepatitis B and tuberculosis.

**Petra Paula Merino**

(1) Organised by the European Network of Drug Services in Prison (ENDSP) and the Central and East European Network of Drug Services in Prison (CEENDSP). For more on the conference, see <http://prague.ceendsp.net/prague>

## Bookshelf

### INCB 2003 *Annual report*



The impact of drug abuse on crime and violence at community level is one of the key issues addressed by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) in its 2003 *Annual report* launched in Vienna on 3 March.

While recognising the macro-level political and security implications of trans-national drug dealing, the Board urges governments to pay special attention to micro-trafficking, which can lead to community-level violence and poor security. 'Leaving these concerns unattended while focusing on macro-level drug flows leaves societies vulnerable to a long-term decline in safety and living standards' it says.

A further concern in this year's report is the increase in cyber trafficking of pharmaceutical products containing internationally controlled substances. In recent Internet seizures in the US, nearly 90% of orders were for controlled substances such as hydrocodone, diazepam and alprazolam.

The report also calls on governments implementing harm-reduction programmes to carefully analyse their overall impact, warning that they should not become substitutes for demand-reduction initiatives.

**Publisher:** United Nations (INCB)

**Language:** Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish. • **Date:** 3 March 2004

**ISBN:** 92-1-148172-4 • **ISSN:** 0257-3717

**Price:** Free • **Ordering information:**

<http://www.incb.org/E/INCB/2003/1>.  
Sales No. E.04.XI.1).

**Press packs:**

[http://www.incb.org/e/ind\\_pres.htm](http://www.incb.org/e/ind_pres.htm)

*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

### The way forward for EU action on drugs

Officials from the 25 European Union Member States and EU institutions met in Dublin from 10–11 May to map the way forward for EU action on drugs post-2004 (1). The conference prepared the ground for the December European Council, which is expected to approve a new EU drug strategy from 2005 onwards.

Coinciding with the conference, the EMCDDA released the latest edition in its policy briefing series *Drugs in focus* (2). This is dedicated to the final evaluation of the ongoing EU drug strategy and action plan (2000–2004), conducted by the European Commission with technical assistance from the EMCDDA and Europol (results due in October).

At the conference, the EMCDDA presented its role in this first-ever evaluation of a European Union strategy and action plan and provided technical and scientific inputs to the proceedings.

**'There are no better means of shedding light on decision-making on drugs than by making available objective information and complementing it with the findings of evaluation'**

EMCDDA Chairman Marcel Reimen



Speaking at the opening session, EMCDDA Chairman Marcel Reimen stressed the 'essential role that information plays in evaluation'.

'There are no better means of shedding light on decision-making on drugs than by making available objective information and complementing it with the findings of evaluation', he said. This echoes a recent 'opinion' of the EMCDDA Scientific Committee underscoring the importance of scientific evidence in formulating strategies and action plans (see p.8).

The ongoing evaluation looks at the extent to which priorities and actions set out in the strategy and action plan (2000–2004) are implemented. It also aims to throw light on how they impact the drug problem itself. To tackle these objectives, the European Commission, the EMCDDA and Europol have developed a set of evaluation tools, namely: thematic papers, questionnaires and a 'snapshot'. The latter offers baseline information on policy measures and the drug situation at the start of the plan, to be compared with the picture at its close, allowing trends to be traced against set targets.

EMCDDA delegates advised European legislators in Dublin to take the results of the evaluation exercise into account when setting the objectives and targets of the new strategy and action plan for the enlarged EU, calling for future objectives to be 'coherent, realistic, clear and precise' and 'verifiable' through quantitative and qualitative data. They also underlined that existing information systems should be borne in mind, and if necessary developed, to help monitor chosen priorities.

#### Henri Bergeron

(1) Dublin conference: 'EU strategy on drugs: the way forward' (Irish Presidency, 10–11 May). More available at <http://www.eu2004.ie>

(2) Policy briefing: <http://www.emcdda.eu.int/infopoint/publications/focus.shtml>

The briefing defines the concept of evaluation as a means of identifying needs, improving planning and allocating resources more rationally.

News release: [http://www.emcdda.eu.int/infopoint/news\\_media/newsrelease.cfm](http://www.emcdda.eu.int/infopoint/news_media/newsrelease.cfm)

# Partners

## Commission on Narcotic Drugs 2004

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), the central UN policy-making body dealing with drug-related issues, held its 47<sup>th</sup> session in Vienna from 15–19 March.

This year's session opened with a thematic debate on synthetic drugs. Here the CND adopted three resolutions concerning: controls on the manufacture of, trafficking in, and abuse of, synthetic drugs; strengthening systems for controlling chemical precursors and preventing their diversion and trafficking; and improving law-enforcement cooperation in the area of illicit drug profiling.

On behalf of the EU, the Irish Presidency proposed a resolution – later adopted – requesting the UNODC to 'promote the development of integrated drug-information systems by utilising data on both the demand for, and supply of, illicit drugs and by strengthening collaboration with the International Narcotics Control Board, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other international bodies'. Of particular interest to the EMCDDA, this would allow information on drug use to be 'collected in a sustainable manner at low cost' and be made available to help countries formulate sound programmes for the reduction of drug supply and demand.

In the area of supply reduction, a number of resolutions were adopted including one inviting countries to adopt legislation prohibiting the sale of internationally



*HIV/AIDS among injecting drug users will be the focus of next year's CND thematic debate.*

controlled licit drugs via the Internet. Others related to: intelligence-sharing; effective controlled delivery; controlling cultivation and trafficking in cannabis; and opiates used to meet medical and scientific needs.

Finally the debate on demand reduction resulted in a resolution calling on the WHO to produce by next year's session 'Guidelines for psychosocially assisted pharmacological treatment of persons dependent on opioids'. Also debated was the challenge posed by HIV/AIDS among injecting drug users, which will be the focus of next year's CND thematic debate and a WHO international expert meeting in 2005. The UN estimates that HIV/AIDS prevention and care services currently reach only 5% of injecting drug users worldwide.

### Danilo Ballotta

For more on the CND, resolutions adopted and news releases see <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/cnd.html> [http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press\\_releases.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press_releases.html)

## Connecting research, policy and practice

What has been learned in drug research and monitoring over the past 20 years? Are there still gaps in our knowledge? How can we strengthen the research basis for policy-making by promoting evidence-based policies?

These were just some of the questions raised at a strategic conference organised by the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe <sup>(1)</sup> in Strasbourg from 6–7 April. Prepared in collaboration with the EMCDDA, the conference brought together some 70 researchers, policy-makers and practitioners from 25 countries as well as representatives of the group's main international partners.

The conference was based on a background paper <sup>(2)</sup>, prepared by drugs specialist Richard Hartnoll, to which an expert panel responded with perspectives for research, policy and practice.

In plenary, participants addressed how research, policy and practice can meet the challenges of today's increasingly complex drug phenomenon. A further concern was the influence that underlying assumptions and perceptions about the problem can have on questions asked, methods chosen and answers expected.

In a final session on strengthening the research basis of policy and practice, participants

# Visits

## Russian delegation visits EMCDDA

EMCDDA Director Georges Estievenart welcomed a high-level Russian delegation to the agency on 5–6 May for an initial exchange of information and know-how in the area of data collection and drug information systems. The delegation, from the Federal Service for Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Traffic Control, was headed by Deputy Director Alexey Sedov.

The two-day meeting in Lisbon was a Russian initiative, taking place in the context of the 1999 'Common Strategy of the European Union on Russia', which specifies, among others, that the EU will cooperate with Russia in the fight against organised crime, money laundering and illicit traffic in human beings and drugs. It intends to do so among others 'by increasing the cooperation and exchange of experts between Member States and Russia in the context of combating organised crime, including in the field of the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts as well as in the field of prevention. This shall be achieved in cooperation with the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction'.

The meeting came two weeks after a visit to Moscow by EU Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs António Vitorino who held talks with President Vladimir Putin's special aid on security issues, Victor Ivanov.

*Continued on page 7*

analysed how research is used, and acknowledged the diversity of political and scientific paradigms between countries. In particular they drew attention to the fact that many issues still get 'lost in translation' between politicians, practitioners and scientists. In this context, they encouraged the Pompidou Group to enhance understanding in line with its new role as a platform for the exchange and transfer of knowledge between the three areas.

### Dagmar Hedrich

<sup>(1)</sup> [http://www.coe.int/T/E/Social\\_cohesion/Pompidou\\_Group](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Social_cohesion/Pompidou_Group)

<sup>(2)</sup> 'Drugs and drug dependence: linking research, policy and practice. Lessons learned, challenges ahead'.  
E-mail: [pompidou.group@coe.int](mailto:pompidou.group@coe.int)

## Missions

### EMCDDA Chairman visits new Member States

EMCDDA Chairman Marcel Reimen is currently paying a round of high-level visits to the 10 new EU Member States in preparation for the countries' active participation in the EMCDDA Management Board.

The packed programme kicked off in April with a visit to Hungary and will conclude in the autumn with visits to Poland and the three Baltic countries: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The visits include meetings with: Ministers, Secretaries of State, members of parliament, national drug coordinators, national focal points and journalists.

The visit to Hungary, by Mr Reimen and EMCDDA Head of Reitox and Enlargement Wolfgang Götz, took place one week before the country's accession to the EU. This visit featured meetings: at the national focal point; with the Minister and Secretary of State for Children, Youth and Sports; and with the Deputy Secretary of State for the Interior. The EMCDDA delegation also participated in the quarterly meeting of the Hungarian coordination committee on drug affairs, chaired by Gyurcsány Ferenc, Minister for Children Youth and Sports. Here Mr Reimen recalled the current challenges faced by the agency and its 26 Member States, including: participation in the evaluation of the EU action plan on drugs; and the full implementation of the new Reitox reporting system in the new Member States.

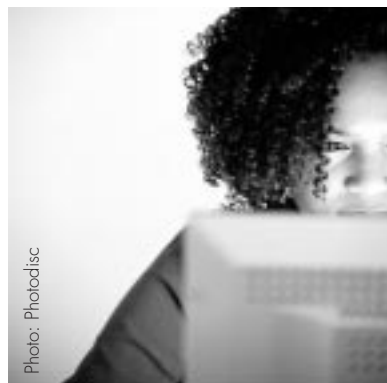
The mission to the Czech Republic took place as the country debates its new national drug strategy. The EMCDDA delegation, comprising Mr Reimen and Director Georges Estievenart, met with Deputy Prime Minister Petr Mareš who was praised on the country's efforts in cooperating with the EMCDDA and promoting evidence-based actions. The visit, which included meetings with the Ministers of Justice, Health and Education, was widely covered in the media. The Director participated in a televised debate on EU and Czech drug strategies.

## Reitox

### EMCDDA to launch 'Country situation summaries'

'Country situation summaries' will be a new feature launched on the EMCDDA website this June offering a fresh look at national drug data in Europe.

These concise overviews are based on national reports and standard tables on the drug situation produced by the Reitox focal points in collaboration with the EMCDDA. Maps of the enlarged EU and of individual countries will help illustrate data.



**This new section of the EMCDDA website will offer users a vast pool of drug-related information from 26 countries and, through selected links, facilitate access to other national information sources**

In June, summaries will be downloadable for the 10 new EU Member States. In October, they will be available for the remaining 15 countries and Norway. Information from old and new Member States will finally be merged this autumn both on the website and in the 2004 *Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in the European Union and Norway*.

This new section of the EMCDDA website will offer users a vast pool of drug-related information from 26 countries and, through selected links, facilitate access to other national information sources provided by the EMCDDA and its partners.

Summaries are also foreseen in the future for the candidate countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey) and other EU neighbours.

*Jennifer Hillebrand*

### Focal points meet for first time in a new EU Member State

New data-collection and reporting tools for 2005 were among the issues discussed at the latest meeting of the Heads of the Reitox focal points held in Warsaw from 13–14 May. In workshop sessions, the participants brainstormed on data-collection methodology and on common criteria for pinpointing selected issues to be published in the EMCDDA *Annual report*.

High on the agenda was also the evaluation of the EMCDDA's quality-feedback exercise relating to 2003 deliveries from all 25 EU Member States (national reports, standard reporting tables, etc.). A major follow-up meeting will be organised in Lisbon from 7–8 October at which the EMCDDA and interested focal points will continue discussions on improving the guidelines for yearly reporting by EU Member States.

This positive and constructive meeting, the 30<sup>th</sup> since the network's creation in 1995, coincided with the end of a four-year cooperation phase between the EMCDDA and the Central and East European Countries (CEECs), in the framework of the European Commission's Phare Programme. This allowed the EMCDDA to offer technical assistance to the 10 CEECs, of which eight joined the EU on 1 May.

The next meeting of the Heads of the Reitox focal points will be held at the EMCDDA from 3–5 November.

*Frédéric Denecker*

# Products and services

## New publications

### Insights No 6:

### *An overview of cannabis potency in Europe*



The latest edition in the EMCDDA Insights series, reviewing the evidence for reports of increasing cannabis potency in Europe, is to be published on 26 June, International day against drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. Among the issues of cannabis potency explored are its high variability, long-term trends and the role that new patterns of production are playing in increasing the drug's potency.

EMCDDA Insights convey the findings of studies and research projects carried out by the agency on topical issues in the drugs field. Issues covered to date in this series include:

new trends in synthetic drugs; outreach work; drug substitution treatment; injecting drug use and risk behaviour and the prosecution of drug users in Europe.

For further information on EMCDDA Insights, see <http://www.emcdda.eu.int/infopoint/publications/insights.shtml>

## Drugs-Lex

### Estonia adopts new national drug strategy

On 22 April, Estonia adopted a new national drug strategy for 2004–2012. The new strategy is divided into six chapters: prevention; treatment and rehabilitation; harm reduction; supply reduction; drugs in prison; and monitoring and evaluation.

This strategy has a strong focus on the issues of financing, performance and implementation, in line with the findings of the EMCDDA study 'Characteristics of drug strategies in the acceding and candidate countries' (see Chapter 4: 2003 *Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in the acceding and candidate countries to the European Union*).

The document is the result of cooperation between the Estonian Ministries of Social Affairs, Justice and Internal Affairs, the national focal point and other relevant bodies.

*Ave Talu and Katri Abel*

*Continued from page 5*

Among the issues considered were cooperation between Russia and the EU on drugs, and potential cooperation with Europol and the EMCDDA.

In recent years, the European Commission and the EMCDDA have been instrumental in developing, in the 10 new EU Member States, balanced national drug strategies, inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms, national drug information networks and monitoring centres. At the meeting, the agency shared this experience with the visiting delegation as well as its expertise in defining and implementing a set of harmonised indicators to monitor the drug phenomenon in the EU.

The Russian delegation provided an overview of the national drug situation as well as information on data-collection practices. Mr Sedov thanked the EMCDDA experts for their presentations, particularly the methodological information given on the agency's monitoring tools. This information will be used in Russia to develop the national monitoring system, in the framework of the forthcoming Federal programme on drugs 2005–2009.

Mr Sedov also expressed a wish to initiate a cooperation process with the EMCDDA.

A news release is available at [http://www.emcdda.eu.int/infopoint/news\\_media/newsrelease.cfm](http://www.emcdda.eu.int/infopoint/news_media/newsrelease.cfm)

## Resources

### Useful materials and events on the drugs issue



### 26 June: a focus on treatment

'Drugs: treatment works', UNODC's year-long campaign launched on 26 June, will be complemented by a number of campaign materials available on the UNODC website or on CD-ROM.

These include:

- *Success stories*: containing first-hand accounts of people who have successfully overcome drug dependence through treatment programmes (available as postcards and posters).
- *Radio spots*: 30-second radio spots based on these success stories.
- *Fact sheets*: educating the general public and the media about the vocabulary of treatment and the different types available.
- *Radio interviews*: including a short interview on treatment with UNODC Executive Director António Maria Costa.
- *Treatment toolkit*: containing three publications that draw on research, evaluation reports and field expertise to illustrate the value of treatment.
- *Newsletter*: the June issue of *Update*, also focusing on treatment.

Visit UNODC's website at <http://www.unodc.org> for more on 'Drugs: treatment works' and to access campaign materials.

Organisations wishing to publicise their newsletters, magazines, websites, CD-ROMs or any other resources are invited to contact [Kathryn.Robertson@emcdda.eu.int](mailto:Kathryn.Robertson@emcdda.eu.int)

**Drugnet Europe** is a newsletter published by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Lisbon. The newsletter is published four times a year in Spanish, German, English, French and Portuguese. Original language: English. Any item may be reproduced provided the source is acknowledged.

For free subscriptions, please specify your requirements via e-mail: [info@emcdda.eu.int](mailto:info@emcdda.eu.int)

Rua da Cruz de Santa Apolónia 23-25, 1149-045 Lisbon, Portugal  
Tel. (351) 218 11 30 00 • Fax (351) 218 13 1711  
[info@emcdda.eu.int](mailto:info@emcdda.eu.int) • <http://www.emcdda.eu.int>

## Calendar 2004

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

- April–September: EMCDDA high-level visits to the new EU Member States.
- 26 April: EMCDDA Scientific Committee meeting, Lisbon.
- 28–30 April: Reitox Academy training course on interpreting and reporting drug-related data, Lisbon.
- 4–5 May: Problem drug use definition meeting, Sintra.
- 5–6 May: Visit of Russian delegation to EMCDDA, Lisbon.
- 13–14 May: 30<sup>th</sup> Heads of Reitox focal point meeting, Warsaw.
- 25–26 May: Expert meeting on drug availability in population surveys, Lisbon.
- 26 May: Expert meeting on joint analysis of the population surveys databank, Lisbon.
- 27–28 May: Expert meeting on the population surveys key indicator, Lisbon.
- 27 May: EMCDDA Bureau meeting, Lisbon.
- 28 June: National meeting of the Italian early-warning system, Milan.
- 7–9 July: EMCDDA Management Board meeting, Lisbon.
- 14–16 July: Reitox Academy on problem drug estimates, Ljubljana.

### External meetings

- 6–7 April: Pompidou Group conference: connecting research, policy and practice, Strasbourg.
- 25–27 May: 'Addicted to Party' conference, Fachverband Drogen und Rauschmittel (FDR) and the Ministry of Thuringia for social affairs, family and health, Erfurt.
- 31 May–4 June: 30<sup>th</sup> Annual alcohol epidemiology symposium of the Kettil Bruun Society for social and epidemiological research on alcohol, Helsinki.
- 16–18 June: Pompidou Group annual meeting on European airports, Brussels.
- 26 June: International day against drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking.

### EU meetings

- 10–11 May: Conference 'EU strategy on drugs: the way forward', Irish Presidency.
- 15 June: Meeting of EU national drug coordinators, Dublin.
- 21 June: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.
- 22 June: Dublin group meeting, Brussels.
- 23 June: Troika EU-USA, Brussels.

## Statutory bodies

### Scientific evidence must underpin new EU drug strategy and action plan

The upcoming EU drug strategy and action plan post-2004 should be underpinned by scientific evidence and should set 'measurable targets'. So stated the EMCDDA Scientific Committee in an 'opinion' adopted at its 21<sup>st</sup> meeting in Lisbon on 26 April. This opinion was later presented at the Dublin Conference 'EU strategy on drugs: the way forward,' organised under the Irish Presidency from 10–11 May (see p.4).

The opinion states that the future strategy and action plan should draw on lessons learned from their predecessors (2000–2004) and be based on the results of an ongoing evaluation due to conclude this October. The Committee also stressed the important role played by national and EU data-collection systems in monitoring the European drug situation, noting that considerable progress has been made in improving the availability, quality and comparability of information.

The main focus of the meeting, however, was to provide feedback on the Centre's draft 2004 *Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in the European Union and Norway*. The Committee supported the decision to produce a single report in 21 languages this year covering all 25 Member States and Norway. It also welcomed the new integrated structure, which brings together the situation and responses by drug, and highlights various transversal issues such as treatment policy, prevention and crime. The report concludes by focusing on three selected issues (evaluation of national drug strategies, cannabis problems in context and co-morbidity). An online version enriched with tables and graphics will also be available in 21 languages as will the first-ever statistical bulletin containing comprehensive epidemiological datasets.

#### Roumen Sedefov

Continued from page 1

Union will be to help new Member States build together a more comprehensive and more sustainable response to this complex (drugs) issue. It will probably require new initiatives to set up the appropriate tools' (2).

#### Wolfgang Götz and Alexis Goosdeel

(1) They will contribute to the decision-making and scientific development of the Centre by participating in the EMCDDA Management Board and Scientific Committee. As members of Reitox, their main obligations relate to: collecting, harmonising and analysing national information in line with EMCDDA standards; monitoring and analysing national scientific, legal and policy developments; and disseminating EMCDDA and Reitox outputs at national level.

(2) *Drugs in focus*, Issue No 8 (March–April 2003): 'EU enlargement and drugs – Challenges and perspectives'. See news release at <http://www.emcdda.eu.int/data/docs/45en.pdf>

<http://www.emcdda.eu.int/partners/candidates.shtml>  
<http://candidates.emcdda.eu.int/en/home-en.html>