

News release

from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon



EMCDDA chairs JHA agencies' network and focuses on the theme of the internet

(6.1.2017, LISBON) This week, the **EU drugs agency (EMCDDA)** embarks on a year-long presidency of a network of **nine EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies** ('JHA network'), which play key advisory, operational and coordination roles in implementing EU priorities in the areas of freedom, security and justice (¹).

Taking over from the Vienna-based **Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)**, the **EMCDDA** will act as chair of the network until 31 December 2017, before handing over to the Vilnius-based **European Institute for Gender Equality** in 2018 (²). The agencies work together on a wide range of issues, including human trafficking, migration and border management, drug trafficking and combating organised crime.

The network was established in 2006 to boost cooperation in the migration and security fields and to develop synergies in areas of common interest (e.g. operational work, training, external relations). In 2017, the agencies will continue to provide technical support and deliver cross-agency evidence-based input to the policy- and decision-making processes at EU level.

EMCDDA Director Alexis Goosdeel said: 'Current migration and security situations in Europe call for ever closer cooperation between the EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies. Through this small network, the nine agencies assess how to improve their collaboration in areas such as information exchange, strategic analysis or work on the ground in migration "hotspots", in order to respond in a timely and efficient way to a dynamic and changing situation in the areas of migration and internal security. Strong cooperation within this cluster of agencies over the last decade has shown what can be achieved when agencies build solid working relationships and exchange ideas on issues of common interest'.

Focus on the internet

The theme chosen by the network for 2017 will be the internet. From 20–21 April, a group of experts will address: 'The expanding influence of the internet, the exploitation of cyberspace and the transformational nature of new technologies — challenges and opportunities for the work of the JHA agencies'. Discussions will focus on: monitoring open source information; drug supply on the darknet; and online secure communication.

Key meetings, outcomes and reporting

Three regular network meetings will take place at the **EMCDDA** in the course of the year, culminating in a fourth and final meeting in November bringing together the Directors of the nine agencies to assess results (see 'Calendar of meetings'). Additional expert meetings in 2017 will be organised to: provide for a for discussion; trigger relevant cooperation between the agencies; and help coordinate joint actions in strategic areas. Among the themes being addressed by the agencies are the: coordination of capacity-building activities in the EU Member States and non-EU countries; enhanced and joined-up support in

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migration 'hotspots' in Greece and Italy; operationalisation of EU classified information (EUCI); and the exchange of non-classified sensitive information at EU level.

Since 2009, the JHA agencies have been required to report jointly to the Council's **Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI)** (³) on the progress and the achievements on bilateral as well as multilateral cooperation in the network. A formal report, to be endorsed by the Heads of the JHA agencies in November in Lisbon, will be presented to COSI by the end of the year.

Calendar of meetings	
Regular JHA network meetings	
1 st JHA network meeting	9–10 February 2017
2 nd JHA network meeting	20–21 June 2017
3 rd JHA network meeting	28–29 September 2017
Head of JHA meeting	
Heads of JHA agencies' meeting	9–10 November 2017 (to be confirmed)
Expert meetings	
Informal network of agencies' experts on external	3–4 April 2017
relations and EC meeting with the JHA agencies on	
the 'external dimension'	4 April (to be confirmed)
Internet and new technology expert meeting	20–21 April 2017
ICT expert meeting	9 June 2017
Training experts' meeting	19 June 2017

Notes

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⁽¹⁾ The nine agencies are CEPOL, EASO, EIGE, EMCDDA, eu-LISA, Eurojust, Europol, FRA and Frontex. For more, see brochure and video at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/about/files/jha_agencies_en.pdf www.youtube.com/watch?v=4LppnTJ3eIA

⁽²) Presidencies to date: 2016 FRA; 2015 eu-LISA; 2014 EASO; 2013 CEPOL; 2012 Frontex; 2011 Eurojust; 2010 Europol. The EMCDDA joined the network in 2012.

⁽³⁾ COSI www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/preparatory-bodies/standing-committee-operational-cooperation-internal-security/