



FACT SHEET from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

EMCDDA PROMOTION: ONLINE INFORMATION SYSTEM HITS MILESTONE

EU drugs agency welcomes 500th EDDRA entry

(18.3.2005, LISBON) The **EU drugs agency (EMCDDA)** this week welcomes the milestone 500th entry in its online information system EDDRA (Exchange on Drug Demand Reduction Action).

EDDRA was set up in 1997 to promote the scientific evaluation of drug prevention, treatment and harm-reduction programmes in the EU. The project forms part of a broader EMCDDA strategy ⁽¹⁾ to develop an 'evaluation culture' through high-quality evaluation criteria and the routine assessment of results.

Eight years on, EDDRA is now a well-established repository and data-collection tool on best practice in responding to drug use. It offers multilingual information on a broad range of evaluated projects and facilitates the exchange of professional expertise, knowledge and hands-on experience.

'The 500 entries in the EDDRA system not only convey the comprehensive scope of interventions and practice in Europe, but also reveal interesting differences between countries', says Margareta Nilson, EMCDDA Programme coordinator on responses to drugs.

'It has taken a great deal of hard work, training and cooperation between Member States to develop common quality standards and to hit our 500th project', adds Nilson. 'EDDRA's main strength has been its continued capacity to promote across Europe discussion on the quality of drug demand reduction responses'.

Over the years, EDDRA has been a catalyst in the creation of national drug prevention databases in the EU. In some countries, its quality criteria have also been incorporated into national requirements for the funding of prevention projects.

Training sessions organised by the EMCDDA and its EDDRA partners have sparked a steady improvement in the structural design and quality of project entries. This demonstrates the value of EDDRA as a didactic tool, helping practitioners better plan, describe and deliver their interventions.

Project 500: 'Searching family treasure'

The milestone 500th entry, 'Searching family treasure', specifically targets families, with children aged 6–12 years, which may be at risk of developing future drug problems.

Run by a voluntary organisation in the north of Portugal, the project uses a treasure trail scenario to improve family interaction. In particular, it offers parents and children training in strategies and skills to reduce risk factors (e.g. irregular educational practices, behavioural problems, physical abuse). It also aims to tackle tell-tale signs of future drug use through the promotion of protective factors (e.g. family cohesion, parental involvement). Over half (58%) the parents who had received the training felt it had brought them closer to their children. Meanwhile all of the participating children reported to have noticed a change in parental behaviour.

For further details see: http://eddra.emcdda.eu.int/eddra/plsql/ShowQuest?Prog_ID=5136

(¹) EMCDDA strategy

The EMCDDA's strategy to promote the scientific evaluation of drug prevention, treatment and harm-reduction programmes in the EU, comprises the following initiatives and products:

1997 – First European conference on the evaluation of drug prevention

1998 – *Guidelines for the evaluation of drug prevention: a manual for programme-planners and evaluators* (EMCDDA Manuals)

1998 – *Evaluating drug prevention in the European Union* (EMCDDA Monographs)

1999 – Second European conference on the evaluation of drug prevention

2000 – Evaluation Instruments Bank

2001 – *Guidelines for the evaluation of outreach work: a manual for practitioners* (EMCDDA Manuals)

2001 – Eight 'Workbooks on Evaluation of Psychoactive Substance Use Disorder Treatment' (2001) in cooperation with the WHO and UNDCP (now UNODC)

Evaluation Instruments Bank (<http://eib.emcdda.eu.int>)

Interested users can now track the precise evaluation tool used to evaluate a project in EDDRA thanks to a direct link to the Evaluation Instruments Bank (EIB). In order to encourage more links between the two repositories, programme leaders are being invited to deliver their EDDRA and EIB entries simultaneously.

The EIB is a multilingual online document archive of over 200 instruments and tools for evaluating drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction programmes. It is designed to assist researchers and professionals in evaluating services and, in so doing, helps promote an evaluation culture in the EU.