



FACT SHEET from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

QUOTE BANK 2005

A selection of quotations by Marcel Reimen, Chairman of the EMCDDA Management Board and Wolfgang Götz, Director of the EMCDDA

Marcel Reimen

12.1.2005 (News release No 1/2005: Overdose: a major cause of avoidable death among young people)

'Overdose in the EU currently accounts for many more deaths among injecting drug users than does any other cause, including AIDS, but in the past the issue has been accorded only limited attention. It is encouraging that many countries are now introducing measures to cut overdoses, but much remains to be done to prevent these deaths.'

'Without timely investment in proven and effective responses, the new EU Member States may now be about to face increases in overdose deaths similar to those observed in the 1980s and 1990s in west European countries, as heroin injecting could well rise in several of them.'

12.1.2005 (News release No 2/2005: Co-morbidity: drug use and mental disorders)

'Cooperation and coordination between services at all points in the treatment chain is essential for the successful treatment of co-morbidity and for ensuring a continuum of care and aftercare. Treatment is effective if highly structured, integrating multi-professional teams, and customised via individual case-management. This is both time-consuming and demanding on human and organisational resources but in the end is cost-effective.'

24.11.2005 (News release No 9/2005: Cocaine, amphetamines, ecstasy and cannabis: latest trends)

'Many European countries have strong links to parts of the world where methamphetamine problems exist. Given that the European market for stimulants is expanding, the potential for the spread of methamphetamine use cannot be ignored. On the contrary it remains a crucial area for vigilance and preventive action.'

24.11.2005 (News release No 12/2005: New developments in drug policy and law)

'When we talk about drug-related public nuisance we are not only referring to crime, but also to a broader range of anti-social behaviours that disrupt the safety, health and tidiness of a community, jeopardising the quality and enjoyment of life of its inhabitants. The current concern over drug-related public nuisance that we are now witnessing in the policy arena is a response to these negative influences in our own neighbourhoods.'

Wolfgang Götz

1.5.2005 (Fact sheet No 3/2005: Profile - Wolfgang Götz)

'It is with great satisfaction and motivation that I take up the post of Director of the EMCDDA as the agency enters its second decade and embarks on an exciting new phase in its life. The Centre has achieved a great deal over the last 10 years, establishing the all-important networks, mechanisms and tools to gather sound and comparable drug data across the European Union. But we now need to build on these foundations. Among my top priorities will be to safeguard and enhance the scientific quality of our outputs, demonstrate scientific independence and boost our reputation as the European centre of excellence in the drug information field. Our job is not to dictate drug policy but to provide the evidence necessary for informed decision-making. Sound information is the key to an effective strategy on drugs. This is our core business.'

23.6.2005 (News release No 6/2005: International day against drugs: Youth media uncover emerging drug trends among young people)

'Fashions and lifestyles are as relevant for understanding patterns of illicit drug use as they are for consumer research in general. Youth magazines that contain references to drugs or alcohol can reveal a great deal about young people's drinking and drug habits and add value to the picture we acquire from more routine data sources.'

'While it is clear that the youth media provide valuable insights into the lifestyles of young people, the jury is still out on the extent to which they actually *influence* young people's behaviour. More work is required to study this influence and to determine how to constructively engage with media-makers to explore the possible role of the youth media in communicating factual information on drugs to young people.'

23.9.2005 (News release No 7/2005: Vice-President of the European Commission at EMCDDA)

'The drug phenomenon is both a complex and emotive issue and we need to be guided through its many facets by an impartial and scientifically rigorous analysis of the problem. Across Europe we now share a common experience of the harm that drugs can cause, both to those who use them and to the societies in which they live. We must now match this common experience with a common understanding of the problem, based on a firm foundation of knowledge and objective monitoring.'

24.11.2005 (News release No 9/2005: Cocaine, amphetamines, ecstasy and cannabis: latest trends)

'Analysis of the public health impact of drug use today needs to take into account the complex picture of the inter-related consumption of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and tobacco. Focusing on trends in one substance can be misleading, if the inter-relationship between different types of drug is ignored.'

24.11.2005 (News release No 11/2005: Over half a million European now receive substitution treatment)

'Over the last 10 years, we have seen the provision of substitution treatment for those with opiate problems increase dramatically in Europe. While we applaud this achievement, we must recognise that further investment is still required. We cannot forget that our overall goal is to ensure that treatment options are available to *all* those who need them, regardless of where they live and what drug they use.'

24.11.2005 (News release No 13/2005: Annual report 2005: focus on crime and prison)

'Diverting drug-using offenders to treatment can contribute to reducing crime and other harms to society as well as to helping those with drug problems improve their health and social well-being. Adequate treatment facilities are essential to underpin this approach. But motivation on the part of the offender is also a vital component in making it a success.' The new EU drugs action plan 2005–2008 asks Member States to 'make effective use of, and develop further alternatives to, prison for drug abusers who commit drug-related offences'.