



## FACT SHEET from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

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### TOWARDS SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE

#### **New Scientific Committee for EU drugs agency**

(5.12.2007, LISBON) The EMCDDA Management Board today selected 15 high-level scientists from the EU Member States to be members of the agency's Scientific Committee.

The Scientific Committee plays a major role in the agency's efforts to attain scientific excellence. The new EMCDDA regulation adopted on 16 January this year stipulated that the Committee — previously composed of one representative of each EU Member State — be slimmed down to 15 members chosen through a public selection process on the basis of scientific excellence and independence.

A call for expressions of interest was launched in the *Official Journal of the European Union* and on the EMCDDA website on 1 September 2007. In total, 103 eligible applications were received relating to seven areas of expertise (see notes).

A committee, chaired by the EMCDDA Director and consisting of two former chairpersons of the Scientific Committee and two internal senior scientists, carried out a first evaluation of candidates in November. The former chairpersons underlined the impressive quality of the applications received, stating that this mirrored the significance of the agency for the scientific community. The pre-selection then formed the basis of a final proposal to the Management Board, prepared by the agency's six-member Executive Committee which advises the Director and prepares decisions of the Board.

The EMCDDA consults its Scientific Committee on the quality of its work programmes and on any scientific matter concerning the agency's activity, which the Management Board or the Director may submit to it. The Committee also plays a pivotal role in the agency's risk assessment of new psychoactive substances (<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nnodeID=17869>).

The new Scientific Committee (see web link below) is composed of members from 11 EU Member States. One scientist from Norway, also selected for scientific excellence and independence, will also sit on the Committee (Norway is an observer member of the agency). As the members are appointed in a personal capacity, they are required to give their opinions independently of their country and of the Community institutions. The new Committee will convene for its first meeting in February 2008.

#### **Notes:**

Areas of expertise:

1. Epidemiology
2. Best practice and interventions
3. Political and institutional framework
4. Legal and criminal justice issues
5. Economic issues
6. Methodological issues
7. Risk assessment of psychoactive substances and basic research

For details on the call for expression of interest and list of new members, see:  
<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index35030EN.html>