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# Drugnet Europe

Newsletter of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

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## Over 40 new drugs reported in 2010

New psychoactive substances are becoming widely available at an 'unprecedented pace'. This is according to the EMCDDA–Europol 2010 report on new drugs entering the European market (1), released on 11 May at the Annual meeting of the EMCDDA–Reitox early-warning system (EWS) network (see opposite). Once again, in 2010, a record number of new drugs were officially reported to the EMCDDA and Europol via the EU early-warning system (EWS) on new psychoactive substances.

According to the report, 41 new psychoactive substances were officially notified for the first time to the two agencies in 2010. This represents the largest number of substances ever reported in a single year, considerably up on 2009 (24 substances) and 2008 (13 substances).

The full list of substances notified, annexed to the report, shows a 'rather diverse' group, including: synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones, synthetic derivatives of well-established drugs as well as one plant-based substance (arecoline) (2).

Under the so-called 'Spice' phenomenon (3), 11 new synthetic cannabinoids were picked up in 2010, bringing the total number of these substances monitored by the EWS up to 27. Responding to health concerns, at least 16 European countries have now taken legal action to ban or otherwise control 'Spice' products and related compounds.

The report gives an account of the risk assessment of the synthetic cathinone derivative, mephedrone, which led to the decision for Europe-wide controls on the drug in December 2010 (4). A further 15 synthetic cathinone derivatives were detected during the year. Also documented is the first-time appearance of derivatives of two established drugs: ketamine and PCP (phencyclidine).

With a large number of new unregulated synthetic compounds marketed on the Internet as 'legal highs', the report describes the EMCDDA's activities in monitoring the online shops selling these substances.

Commenting on this year's findings, EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz said: 'Given the speed at which new developments occur in this area, it is important to anticipate future challenges.'

Continued on page 8



Photo: istockphoto.com

*New psychoactive substances are becoming widely available at an 'unprecedented pace'.*

## First international forum on new drugs

Leading European and international experts in the field of new psychoactive substances met in Lisbon from 11–12 May for the First international multidisciplinary forum on new drugs (1). Ahead of the event, EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz referred to the dynamic nature of the new drugs phenomenon and the timeliness of an event of this kind. 'The purpose of the forum is to arrive at a comprehensive vision for the future regarding how these substances will impact on drug use, responses and policies,' he said.

The aim of the forum was to take stock of the current state of the art in this area and identify common anchor points to inform future actions. The programme focused on early-warning systems, risk assessments and controls, as well as options for prevention and treatment. In discussions, the experts traced how this phenomenon has developed over the last 10 years and compared, through case studies, differing national experiences. The 100-strong forum included: forensic scientists; epidemiologists; clinicians; law-enforcement experts concerned with new drugs; as well as technical staff from EU and international institutions.

The forum was organised in conjunction with the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting of the EMCDDA–Reitox early-warning system (EWS) network. The EWS provides EU Member States with an information exchange mechanism for reporting on the emergence of new psychoactive substances. It is a key element in the European fast-track system for assessing and responding to new drugs.

*Roumen Sedefov and Ana Gallegos*

(1) [www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/2011/new-drugs-forum](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/2011/new-drugs-forum)

April–June

# 2011

# Drug situation

## HIV in the European region: unity and diversity

Leading experts in the area of infectious diseases will come together in Tallinn from 25–27 May for a major European conference: ‘HIV in the European region: unity and diversity’ (1). Key issues regarding the epidemiology, prevention and care of HIV/AIDS in Europe will be debated at the event, along with the benefits of regional cooperation and networking. The EMCDDA takes part in the conference Scientific Board and Organising Committees.

The comprehensive programme will cover: people living with HIV; local collaboration; tuberculosis and HIV; quality of services; HIV in prisons; and injecting drug users (IDU). Also high on the agenda will be optimising testing and earlier care for HIV, a subject taken up in the

latest edition in the EMCDDA Manuals series: *Guidelines for testing HIV, viral hepatitis and other infections in injecting drug users* (2)(3). Launched on World AIDS Day 2010, the guidelines recommend a strategy to increase the uptake of testing for HIV and other infections among IDUs. This would enable earlier treatment of infected individuals, which would lower the risk of infection spreading to the wider population.

The EMCDDA estimates that 30–50% of HIV positive IDUs in Europe are unaware of being infected. The manual provides guidance at a practical level, proposing a series of standard tests to be undertaken regularly and on a voluntary basis. Among these are serology tests for HIV, viral hepatitis (A, B, C, D) and other

sexually transmitted infections; general blood tests; and tests for TB. The new guidelines may benefit thousands of service providers and potentially hundreds of thousands of IDUs in Europe and beyond.

(1) The event is organised by the Estonian National Institute for Health Development in cooperation with the World Health Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and other international organisations. For more, see [www.aids2011.com/en/home](http://www.aids2011.com/en/home)

(2) See news release No 14/2010 and [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/manuals/testing-guidelines](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/manuals/testing-guidelines).

(3) Wiessing, I; Blystad, H (2010), ‘EMCDDA publishes guidelines on testing for HIV, viral hepatitis and other infections in injecting drug users’. *Eurosurveillance*, Volume 15, Issue 48, 2.12.2010. Available online at [www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=19735](http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=19735)

## ‘Monitoring the future’: adolescent drug use in the US

Drug trends in Europe often, although not always, follow those in the United States, albeit with a delay of a few years. For this reason, even when there are signs of current stabilisation or decline in European drug trends, it is important to monitor closely trends in the US.

The 2010 ‘Monitoring the future’ study (1) — an annual national survey of American teenagers, first launched in 1975 — reveals that marijuana use continues to rise, in contrast to the considerable US decline of the preceding decade. On some measures, levels of marijuana use are even higher than levels of cigarette smoking: 16.7% of 10<sup>th</sup> grade school students (approximately aged 15–16) had used marijuana in the past month, while only 13.6% had smoked cigarettes. Ecstasy use appears to be making

a comeback, following a considerable decline recently in the belief that its use is dangerous. Yet alcohol use, and specifically occasions of heavy drinking among teenagers, continues its long-term decline, reaching historically low levels.

The authors conclude that use of a substance is often determined by how the young person perceives the benefits and adverse outcomes associated with the drug. Unfortunately, states the report, word of the supposed benefits of using a drug usually spreads more rapidly than information about the adverse consequences. The EMCDDA will continue to monitor the extent to which trends in Europe replicate those in the US or follow diverging paths.

*João Matias and Deborah Olszewski*



Photo: istockphoto.com

### Alcohol use among teenagers in the US continues its long-term decline and reaches historically low levels

(1) Johnston, L. D., O’Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2011). *Monitoring the future. National results on adolescent drug use — overview of key findings, 2010*. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan. [www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/mtf-overview2010.pdf](http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/mtf-overview2010.pdf)

## EMCDDA project explores the importance of ‘survey context’

General population surveys are one of the main tools for collecting data on drug use in Europe. Since the 1990s, every EU Member State has conducted at least one, mostly focusing on substance use (drug, alcohol and tobacco), but sometimes on other topics, such as health and healthy lifestyles.

An EMCDDA project, launched in 2010, has been investigating the important issue of ‘survey

context’. Comparing ‘health surveys’ with ‘drug surveys’, the project explores the methods used, and drug use prevalence estimates resulting from, the two contexts.

The final report of the project, published on the EMCDDA website in April (1), reveals that, in many countries, health surveys produce lower prevalence estimates than specific substance use surveys. However, the mechanism of distortion

remains unclear, as usually there are additional differences in survey design (e.g. privacy level, interviewer’s level of training, etc.). The report provides an overview of possible sources of bias and future methodological research needs.

*Katerina Skarupova and Deborah Olszewski*

(1) ‘Comparison of methods and resulting drug use prevalence estimates of health surveys versus drug surveys methods’ at [www.emcdda.europa.eu/themes/key-indicators/gps](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/themes/key-indicators/gps)

# Responses

## Opioid substitution treatment: the role of general practitioners

General practitioners are becoming an increasingly important provider of drug treatment services in Europe and are helping to reduce inequalities in the accessibility and availability of opioid substitution treatment (OST). GPs now provide OST to heroin dependent users in 14 EU countries, usually under shared care arrangements with specialised treatment centres. It is estimated that around a third of the estimated 670 000 clients in OST in Europe receive their treatment through GPs.

While specialist drug treatment services remain the EMCDDA's main data suppliers in this area, GPs and other service providers can be a key additional information source, helping to improve reporting on overall treatment provision in Europe. Such information is pivotal in assessing the availability and accessibility to effective treatment as well as gauging the unmet needs of drug users.

Under its 2011 work programme objective 'to develop and explore potential new data sources on drug treatment and harm reduction', the EMCDDA is investigating strategies for collecting treatment data from GPs. It is also facilitating the exchange of experience between



**It is estimated that around a third of the 670 000 clients in opioid substitution treatment in Europe receive their treatment through GPs**

GPs and scientists in the EU regarding the benefits of GP involvement in this type of treatment (e.g. client health management, continuity of care) and the challenges in current medical practice (e.g. managing polydrug use, diversion of medications) (1).

*Alessandro Pirona*

(1) 'European exchange on the practice and current issues in opioid substitution treatment in general practitioners' settings' — [www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index2062EN.html](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index2062EN.html)

## Mapping 'drug squads' in Europe

Drug supply reduction is a broad, diverse and complex field where drug law enforcement plays a central role. In a step towards identifying the law-enforcement activities and bodies that contribute to reducing drug supply in Europe, the EMCDDA has launched a mapping project on 'drug squads', the units specialising in enforcing national drug legislation.

'Improving our knowledge of drug squads in the Member States is an essential first step for developing our understanding of drug supply reduction interventions in Europe', said EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz as the project kicked off in March. 'It is a prerequisite for the development of drug supply reduction indicators'.

In the period March–May, the EMCDDA drew up and tested a questionnaire on drug squads which will be used to survey key informants in

the EU Member States (with the support of the Reitox network) in June and July. This will lead to an overview of the number, institutional affiliation and mandate of specialised drug squads in Europe. A final report on the project is expected in June 2012.

The EU drugs action plan (2009–12) urges more effective law enforcement at EU level to counter drug production and trafficking, based on an intelligence-led approach. Action 67 of the plan calls on the European Commission, EMCDDA, Europol and the EU Member States to develop key indicators in the area of drug supply and drug supply reduction (1).

*Rainer Kasecker*

(1) Action 67: To develop key indicators for the collection of policy-relevant data on drug-related crime, illegal cultivation, drug markets and supply reduction interventions and to develop a strategy to collect them.

## European Action on Drugs: national event

The European Commission and the Portuguese NGO Dianova organised in Lisbon on 15 March a national event of the European Action on Drugs (EAD).

The EAD is a campaign launched by the European Commission on 26 June 2009 to mobilise society and raise awareness on the dangers of illicit drug use. Building on the principle of shared responsibility, the initiative encourages individuals and groups to make practical commitments to address the drugs problem in their daily lives.

To date, 1 316 EAD commitments have been signed (946 of which are online) by individuals, celebrities, companies, schools, NGOs and other bodies across the 27 EU Member States. The EMCDDA was among the first organisations signing up to the EAD on the day of its launch in 2009.

This, the fifth national EAD event held since the campaign began, centered on the prevention of drug use and of drug-related juvenile delinquency. Six Portuguese EAD signatories gave progress reports on how they had fulfilled their commitments in 2010, while five new signatories described how they would do so over the coming year. In total there are now 34 commitments signed in the country (15 of which are new).



EUROPEAN ACTION ON DRUGS

Chairman of the EMCDDA Management Board Dr João Goulão signed a commitment in his capacity as President of the Portuguese Institute for Drugs and Drug Addiction (IDT).

Previous EAD national events have been organised in Rome (2009) and Berlin, London and Warsaw (2010).

For more see <http://ec.europa.eu/ead/html/index.jsp>  
[http://ec.europa.eu/ead/docs/leaflets/European%20Action%20on%20Drugs\\_Leaflet\\_LR\\_EN.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/ead/docs/leaflets/European%20Action%20on%20Drugs_Leaflet_LR_EN.pdf)

## Bookshelf

### Sociologie de la drogue



The use of psychoactive substances, classified by law as 'narcotics', is an established social fact today.

While this practice

remains generally recreational and occasional, a certain number of consumers are regular, and often compulsive, users.

What are the reasons behind the spread of drug use since the 1950s?

How can we understand the behaviour of an individual who continues to use drugs when he/she would often prefer to give up?

And what are the social processes and policies governing whether a certain substance should be classified as a narcotic?

*Sociologie de la drogue*, published in French in the *Repères* series, explores the current sociological literature to shed light on these and other questions relating to drug addiction. In four parts, the work explores: drugs, culture and society; interdiction, control and regulation; drugs, delinquency and crime; and the sociology of deviance, drug use and addiction.

**Author:** Henri Bergeron, Scientific coordinator of the Health Chair at Sciences Po, Paris, researcher at the *Centre national de la recherche scientifique* (CNRS) and member of the EMCDDA Scientific Committee.

**Publisher:** Éditions la découverte, collection *Repères*, No 536.

**Language:** French

**Price:** EUR 9.50

**Date:** 2009

**ISBN:** 978-2-7071-3869-9

**Ordering information:**

[www.editions-ladecouverte.fr/catalogue/index.php?ean13=9782707138699](http://www.editions-ladecouverte.fr/catalogue/index.php?ean13=9782707138699)

*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

### Khat use in Europe — implications for European policy

'The number of khat users in Europe appears to be growing, yet the scale and nature of the problem is poorly understood'. This is according to the latest EMCDDA publication on the issue to be released in June.

'*Khat use in Europe: implications for European policy*' is published in the EMCDDA's policy briefing series *Drugs in focus* (see page 7) (1).

Khat (also known as 'qat' or 'chat') refers to the young leaves and shoots of the khat tree (*Catha edulis*), cultivated in the Horn of Africa, Southern Arabia and along the East African coast. Khat contains stimulant substances that have amphetamine-like properties (e.g. cathinone) which, in their pure forms, are internationally controlled substances. The leaves, however, are not controlled and no consistent approach exists to khat within the EU.

In Europe, khat is controlled in some, but not all, countries and this has resulted in both legitimate and criminal transportation networks. 'European khat markets appear to be growing but data sources are weak, pointing to a need to improve monitoring', states the briefing.

In Europe, khat is primarily used by migrant communities. Despite concern that use might diffuse from migrant groups into the general population, there is no significant evidence that this has occurred. Somatic and mental health problems have been associated with the excessive use of khat and migrant users need to be better



**Khat users need to be better informed about its potential health, social and legal consequences**

informed about its potential health, social and legal consequences.

'Among migrant communities from sub-Saharan Africa, khat use is both common and commonly overlooked', says Chairman of the EMCDDA Management Board, Dr João Goulão.

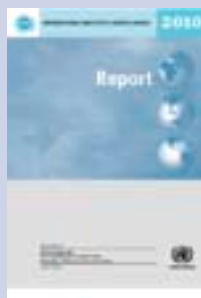
'We must ensure that people working with these communities are aware of the need to identify and respond to any negative consequences that can result from the use of this substance'.

Over the last three decades, khat has become a major source of employment, income and revenues in producing countries around the Horn of Africa. The most recent data available show that khat is treated as an illegal drug in 15 EU Member States and Norway.

*Liesbeth Vandam*

(1) *Drugs in focus* No 21 at [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugs-in-focus](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugs-in-focus)

### INCB launches 2010 Annual report



The *2010 Annual report* from the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) was launched in Vienna on 2 March.

This year the report highlights the role of corruption in drug trafficking as well as concerns around designer drugs, synthetic cannabinoids and

precursor chemicals. Also presented are regional developments and recommendations for governments. The INCB issued a special supplement to the report on the topic of ensuring availability of controlled drugs for medical and scientific purposes. The report was launched by Professor Hamid Ghodse, INCB President.

Report: [www.incb.org/pdf/annual-report/2010/en/AR\\_2010\\_English.pdf](http://www.incb.org/pdf/annual-report/2010/en/AR_2010_English.pdf)

Press kit: [www.incb.org/pdf/annual-report/2010/Press\\_Kit/English/PressKit\\_english\\_2010.pdf](http://www.incb.org/pdf/annual-report/2010/Press_Kit/English/PressKit_english_2010.pdf)

# Partners

## EMCDDA active at CND

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), the central UN policymaking body in drug-related matters, held its 54<sup>th</sup> session in Vienna from 21–25 March (1). During the meeting, which it attended as observer, the EMCDDA provided technical support to the European Commission and EU Member States, facilitating discussions around resolutions on data collection, drugs and driving and drug treatment.

This year, the EMCDDA co-organised a side event with UNODC and the European Commission entitled ‘Enhancing cooperation in global data collection — the way forward’. This event, which drew around 50 participants, provided a forum to reflect on the opportunities that now exist at global, regional and national level to improve capacity to report on the drug situation. During the proceedings, the EMCDDA and CICAD showcased their joint manual on *Building a national drugs observatory*. UNODC presented a new global programme on drug supply and use statistics (PROMISE).

The CND offers the EMCDDA an ideal opportunity to present its work to an international audience and to hold informal meetings with its partners in Europe and worldwide. Held in the margins of this year’s session were meetings with UNODC, the WHO and the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CSSA).

**Kludia Palczak**

(1) For more, see [www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/2011/cnd](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/2011/cnd)

# Visits

## High-level Polish delegation visits EMCDDA

Under-Secretary of State at the Polish Ministry of Health, Adam Fronczak, headed a high-level delegation visiting the EMCDDA in March in the context of the upcoming Polish presidency of the EU (1). The purpose of the visit was to present the programme of the six-month mandate (July–December), review recent changes in Polish drug policy and explore future cooperation and information-exchange between the EMCDDA and Polish bodies working in the drugs field. Representatives from the European Commission (Directorate-General for Justice) also participated.

‘Providing technical advice and support to EU Member States is an important task of the EMCDDA’, said EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz at the start of the two-day visit on 7 March. ‘It is crucial for us to receive feedback on our work directly from our stakeholders, such as members of this delegation, in order to better meet their needs and expectations’.

He referred to the ‘very successful cooperation’ between the EMCDDA and Poland over the years, characterised by excellent working relations with the Reitox national focal point, experts, scientists and regional drug coordinators.

The work of the EMCDDA and its role as interface between policy and science was presented during the visit. Particular attention was paid to the issue of psychoactive substances not controlled under drug laws, following a new law passed in Poland in 2010 controlling head shops and ‘legal highs’ (2). Key drug-related events under the upcoming presidency will include: a drugs and driving symposium (17–18 July, Montreal); a conference on cooperation between the EU and Eastern Europe/Russia (26–27 October, Warsaw); and a national drug coordinators’ meeting (21–22 November, Poznań).

(1) See Fact sheet No 2/2011 at [www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2011/fs-2](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2011/fs-2)

(2) See *Drugnet Europe* 73 for more.

## Drugs-Lex

### Technical expert seminar on ‘threshold quantities’ for drug offences

Countries frequently grade the severity of a drug-related offence by assessing the quantity of drugs involved in the case. Quantities below a certain threshold may lead to one level of offence or punishment, while quantities above it can lead to harsher consequences. The amounts determining the threshold between these levels (‘threshold quantities’) can vary greatly between nations.

The issue of ‘threshold quantities’ was explored in an international context during an EU-supported technical expert seminar on the issue held in Lisbon in January. Some 20 experts from five continents attended the event, among them members of the judiciary, domestic and international policymakers,

academics and representatives of NGOs. The EMCDDA’s 2009 ‘Topic overview on threshold quantities’, enriched with presentations from other continents, provided a solid basis for the discussion (1).

The group agreed that, where threshold quantities are used to delimit offences, they should be clear and practical both for citizens and for the authorities. In order to ensure a proportionate outcome, they should be non-binding and part of a comprehensive package to accommodate each circumstance.

Clarifying the aims of established thresholds — e.g. achieving public health targets —

was also considered important. As such aims are rarely stated, it is impossible to evaluate their ‘success’ scientifically and thus difficult to devise an ideal system of quantity-setting.

The experts concluded that no single model was likely to be appropriate even within the EU. Legal systems, police operations and prevalence and patterns of drug use vary greatly between countries, as do resources and the integrity of the institutions and officials overseeing and enforcing the schemes. Models should thus be sensitive to national contexts and local factors.

**Brendan Hughes**

(1) [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/online/2010/70/article13](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/online/2010/70/article13)

## Spotlight

### Drug use among the prison population



Photo: istockphoto.com

'Drug use among the prison population: scope and responses', was the focus of the latest Reitox Academy held in Lisbon from 1–2 March. The Academy brought together 40 experts from across the EU, as well as from Croatia, Turkey and international organisations. Delegates represented a variety of professional backgrounds and fields, including prison institutions, health and social services (inside and outside prison) and drug treatment workers.

High on the agenda was supporting the national focal points in writing their national contributions to an EMCDDA Selected issue publication on prisons, due for release in 2012. The meeting also provided a platform to exchange information on data-collection methodologies and the tools available to monitor drug use, related problems and health responses in prison settings today.

The discussions underlined the increasing importance attributed to the issue of drugs and prison, both at national and international level. In an exchange of national experiences, several countries confirmed that they had established and implemented instruments to collect data and information in this environment. Yet data collection in prison faces several limitations. Major obstacles to collecting valid and reliable information include the lack of standardised instruments and the issues of privacy and fear of control.

As outlined in the 2011 EMCDDA work programme, the Academy confirmed the need for a more standardised approach to data collection in prisons, including European standard monitoring tools. The EMCDDA will work towards this strategy by involving national partners from across Europe.

*Linda Montanari, Ilze Jekabsons and Dagmar Hedrich*

## Reitox

### IPA project progressing in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The EMCDDA is currently offering technical assistance to eight candidate and potential candidate countries to the EU under the European Commission's Instrument for Pre-accession (IPA) programme (1). The EUR 900 000 project, which kicked off in April 2010 (IPA3), will run until November 2011. It is designed to help the eight partners establish national drug information systems in line with EU standards (2). Important partners in the project are 'Reitox coaches', representatives from EU national focal points (NFP), assigned to assist the partners in running national activities according to EU norms.

The latest meeting of national stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina took place in Sarajevo from 22–24 February. This follows three previous meetings in the country during which an initial work plan was drawn up and a national advisory group of seven experts established (adopted by the national inter-ministerial drug commission). This group is representative of the complex administrative structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which consists of two entities (the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska) and one independent district (Brcko). It plays a central role in preparing a number of the project's outputs.

At the February meeting, the group and the designated 'Reitox coaches' reviewed

progress on the various outputs underway including: a data information map; a Country overview; and a comprehensive National report to the EMCDDA. A national action plan for a drug information system is also under development, designed to improve data availability and fill gaps in existing systems. The preparation of these products is proceeding according to schedule. Three key indicators have been prioritised for implementation (treatment demand, drug-related deaths and general population surveys — including the ESPAD survey).

Synergy between IPA3 project activities and ongoing national plans and decision-making processes will be a key factor in contributing to implementation and sustainability of project results in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

*Viktor Mravcik, Alan Lodwick (Reitox coaches), Milana Skipina (national correspondent) and Frédéric Denecker (EMCDDA)*

(1) [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/financial-assistance/instrument-pre-accession\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/financial-assistance/instrument-pre-accession_en.htm)

(2) The eight partners are: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99), Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

See [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/online/2010/70/spotlight](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/online/2010/70/spotlight)

### Turkish–German twinning project success

An EU twinning project aimed at strengthening the Turkish Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction (TUBIM), was successfully completed in February after a 24-month implementation period (1). Turkey's main partner in the project was the Institute of Therapy Research (IFT) — which hosts the German national focal point (NFP) — with the Greek focal point participating as junior partner. Other short-term expertise and input was provided by the Czech, French and Polish NFPs. The project focused on five components (2).

As a national centre for drug monitoring, coordination and prevention, TUBIM's capacity increased in many aspects, especially organisational structure. Thanks to the project: media awareness was raised; interest of universities in the field was enhanced; TUBIM's capacity for conducting and coordinating scientific studies, data collection and reporting increased; and experience during joint activities with EU experts in prevention and treatment was shared.

*Frédéric Denecker*

(1) The EU twinning programme, launched in 1998, aims to help countries develop modern and efficient administrations needed to implement the EU acquis. For more, see: [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/technical-assistance/twinning\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/technical-assistance/twinning_en.htm)

(2) See list at [www.tubim-twinning.org](http://www.tubim-twinning.org)

# Products and services

## Salvia divinorum — new online drug profile



The psychoactive plant *Salvia divinorum*, or the 'diviner's sage', is a rare member of the mint family and the latest substance to be added to the EMCDDA's online 'drug profiles'. Since the late 1990s, the use of the plant as a 'legal' herbal hallucinogen has been increasing, partly due to its availability. Smoking the dried and crushed leaves provides short-lived but intense hallucinations. The effective dose of salvinorin A, the active ingredient of the plant, is comparable to that of the synthetic hallucinogens LSD or DOB. This latest addition brings the total number of drug profiles up to 18.

Drug profiles, available in German, English and French at [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drug-profiles](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drug-profiles)

## EMCDDA prevention profiles

What are countries in Europe doing to prevent illicit drug use? The EMCDDA's 'prevention profiles' aim to answer this question by providing information on the level of implementation of different prevention measures in 30 European countries (27 EU Member States, Croatia, Turkey and Norway).

Each 'prevention profile' consists of a structured overview of prevention measures in a country, according to the four main types of prevention: environmental strategies, universal prevention, selective prevention and indicated prevention. In addition, the data can also be displayed on a map of Europe which allows the user to examine differences and similarities between countries in their implementation of different prevention measures. The profiles, launched in October 2010, will undergo a number of updates in May on the basis of new data. In the process, interactive elements will be improved and additional information included on family-based prevention.

Available in English at [www.emcdda.europa.eu/country-data/prevention/about](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/country-data/prevention/about)

## Coming soon — General report of activities 2010



The EMCDDA *General report of activities* is an annual statutory publication providing a detailed progress report of the agency's achievements over a 12-month period. The 2010 edition, due for release in June, describes how the EMCDDA implemented its annual work programme, highlighting the key activities and accomplishments of the year. The results are presented by broad 'overall objectives' as opposed to 'individual project goals'. This structure is designed to facilitate the cross-checking of results against expected work programme outcomes and, in so doing, provide a strong management tool for the agency and European institutions alike.

Available in English at [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/general-report-of-activities](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/general-report-of-activities)

## Khat use in Europe: implications for European policy

The latest edition in the EMCDDA's policy briefing series, *Drugs in focus*, will explore khat use in Europe and the implications for European drug policy. The number of khat users in Europe appears to be growing, yet the scale and nature of the problem is poorly understood. Research studies are therefore required to better assess the market for the drug, evolving patterns of use, as well as the extent of any socio-economic and health consequences (see page 4).

*Drugs in focus* No 21, coming soon in 25 languages at [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugs-in-focus](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugs-in-focus)

## Resources

### Events and materials on the drugs issue



#### Eurolib meeting

The EMCDDA plays host on 19–20 May to the annual plenary meeting of Eurolib, the organisation of European Community and Associated libraries. Eurolib aims to:

promote a wider awareness of the contributions made by libraries to the institutions they serve; provide a forum for the exchange of professional ideas and information; and facilitate the development of a common approach to shared challenges. Items on the agenda include cataloguing electronic documents, grey literature and social media.

For more, see [www.eurolibnet.eu](http://www.eurolibnet.eu)

#### International symposium on dismantling transnational illicit networks

The European Union and the United States will co-host an International symposium on dismantling transnational illicit networks from 17–19 May in Lisbon. The event is organised by the European external action service, in close collaboration with the European Commission and the US Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement. On 18 May, participants from the symposium will visit the EMCDDA.

For more, see <http://eeas.europa.eu/us/events/symposium2011/>

#### Symposium: hepatitis care

The 2<sup>nd</sup> International symposium on hepatitis care in substance users will take place from 15–16 September in Brussels organised by the International Network on Hepatitis in Substance Users (INHSU). Working sessions will cover: organising the management of hepatitis in substance users; the treatment of patients in prisons; and the virological aspects of infection, reinfection and superinfection. Deadline for abstracts: 30 June.

For more, see [www.inhsu.com.halito.be/program/](http://www.inhsu.com.halito.be/program/)

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

## Calendar 2011

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

- 11–12 May: 11<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting of the Reitox early-warning system network and First international multidisciplinary forum on new drugs, Lisbon.
- 16–17 May: EMCDDA Scientific Committee meeting, Lisbon.
- 18 May: Executive Committee and Budget Committee, Lisbon.
- 18–20 May: 44<sup>th</sup> Reitox heads of focal point meeting, Lisbon.
- 30–31 May: Expert meeting on the revision of the treatment demand indicator, Lisbon.
- 21–22 June: Expert meeting on the population surveys indicator, Lisbon.
- 24 June: EMCDDA celebration of International day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, Lisbon.
- 4 July: Executive Committee and Budget Committee, Lisbon.
- 4–5 July: EMCDDA Management Board meeting, Lisbon.

### External meetings

- 17–19 May: International symposium on dismantling transnational illicit networks, Lisbon.
- 19–20 May: Eurolib annual plenary meeting, Lisbon.
- 26 June: International day against drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking ([www.un.org/en/events/drugabuseday/](http://www.un.org/en/events/drugabuseday/)).
- 17–18 July: Symposium on drugs and driving, Montreal.

### EU meetings

- 10 May: Meeting of the national drug coordinators, Budapest.
- 21 June: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.
- 27–29 June: XIII High-level meeting between EU and LAC countries, Colombia.

## New prize for top scientific papers

### EMCDDA to acknowledge excellence in scientific writing

Europe's top scientific papers on drug-related topics will be acknowledged this year in a new award launched by the EMCDDA on its website on 4 March (see *Drugnet Europe* 73). The prize-giving, to take place annually in Lisbon, will celebrate excellence in scientific writing in this area of critical concern to EU citizens.

The inaugural event will take place in the margins of the EMCDDA Scientific Committee meeting, being held in the Portuguese capital from 14–15 November. Articles being judged this year will have been published in 2010 in peer-reviewed scientific journals, with the primary author based in an EU Member State or Norway.

Nominations for the award closed on 2 May and the 50 entries will now be examined by the jury, composed of members of the Scientific Committee and EMCDDA staff.

Articles eligible for nomination for this annual award focus on illicit drugs, although findings on licit substances may also be included. Entries are considered in any of the 23 languages of the European Union or in Norwegian, along with an abstract in English.

The importance of scientific publishing has been underlined regularly by the EMCDDA Scientific Committee as evidence of scientific excellence. The upcoming (non-monetary) prize originated in these discussions.

*Margareta Nilson*

## Over 40 new drugs reported in 2010

Continued from page 1

While our early-warning system has recently upped its operational capacity to react rapidly to new substances and products identified, it currently lacks the ability to anticipate emerging threats. This could be addressed by actively purchasing, synthesising and studying new compounds and by improving capacity for investigative forensic analysis and research at European level<sup>1</sup>.

*Roumen Sedefov and Ana Gallegos*

<sup>(1)</sup> 'EMCDDA–Europol 2010 annual report on the implementation of Council Decision 2005/387/JHA. In accordance with Article 10 of Council Decision 2005/387/JHA on the information exchange, risk-assessment and control of new psychoactive substances'. The report is available at [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/implementation-reports](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/implementation-reports)

For more on the Council Decision, see [www.emcdda.europa.eu/drug-situation/new-drugs](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/drug-situation/new-drugs) and [www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index40105EN.html](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index40105EN.html)

<sup>(2)</sup> See Annex 2.

<sup>(3)</sup> [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/thematic-papers/spice](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/thematic-papers/spice)

<sup>(4)</sup> See Risk assessment report at: [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/risk-assessments](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/risk-assessments)