

January–March 2014

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Four new drugs go under the microscope

Europe has responded to rising concern over the use of four new drugs by formally requesting a scientific investigation into the health and social risks of the substances. The decision was communicated to the EMCDDA by the Council of the EU on 29 January, in line with a legal procedure designed to respond to potentially harmful new psychoactive drugs in the EU ⁽¹⁾.

The Council requests the EMCDDA Scientific Committee to conduct formal risk assessments of the four new substances — 25I-NBOMe, AH-7921, MDPV and methoxetamine — after harmful effects related to the drugs were reported by the Member States and picked up by the EU early-warning system ⁽²⁾. The substances will be scrutinised by the Committee in Lisbon in April, with the participation of additional experts from the EU Member States, European Commission, Europol and the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

The upcoming risk assessments will include an appraisal of the chemical and pharmacological properties of each drug and their abuse and dependence-causing potential. The health and social risks associated with the drugs, prevalence of use and the involvement of organised crime in their production and distribution will also be probed.

The decision is based on the findings of four EMCDDA–Europol Joint Reports submitted in December to the Council of the EU, the European Commission and the EMA. These reports are available on the EMCDDA website and present the information collected on each substance from the EU Member States, Turkey and Norway ⁽³⁾.

Following the meeting of the Scientific Committee in April, four risk-assessment reports will be submitted to the European Commission and the Council of the EU. On the basis of these



Four new drugs to be risk assessed in the wake of rising health concerns.

documents, the Commission may recommend to the Council that the drugs be submitted to control measures across the EU.

Andrew Cunningham

⁽¹⁾ For more on the Council Decision, see <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32005D0387:EN:HTML>

⁽²⁾ For more on the four drugs and the EU early-warning system, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2014/1 and www.emcdda.europa.eu/themes/new-drugs/early-warning

⁽³⁾ Download the Joint Reports at www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/joint-reports

New EMCDDA Scientific Committee line-up for next three years

On 5 December, the EMCDDA Management Board appointed 15 high-level scientists to serve on the agency's Scientific Committee for the period 2014–16. The selection followed a call for expressions of interest in the *Official Journal of the European Union* in February 2013, which yielded 79 eligible applications.

The 15 members — selected from the EU Member States and Norway — were

chosen, via a public selection process, on the basis of scientific merit as well as their expertise in the most relevant scientific fields linked to the problems of drugs and drug addiction today. One third of the scientists appointed are new members, while 10 previously served on the Committee. As members are appointed in a personal capacity, they are required to give their opinions independently of

their country and of the Community institutions.

The Scientific Committee plays a major role in the EMCDDA's efforts to attain scientific excellence. The agency consults the Committee on the quality of its work programmes and on any scientific matter concerning its activity,

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DRUG SITUATION

ADDICTIONS

Kick-off: Joint action on reducing alcohol-related harm



Harmful and hazardous alcohol use is one of the main causes of premature death and avoidable disease in the EU today. Highlighting the importance of this issue, the European Commission (EC) is funding the *Joint*

action on reducing alcohol-related harm (RARHA) project, which was launched in Lisbon on 31 January. Led by the Portuguese General-Directorate for Intervention on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies (SICAD), the initiative involves 32 associated partners and 28 collaborating partners from both EU and non-EU countries. The EMCDDA is among the project's associated partners and also sits on its Advisory Group.

The kick-off meeting, hosted by the EMCDDA, featured opening addresses from Paulo Macedo, Portuguese Minister of Health; João Goulão, General-Director of SICAD; Wolfgang Götz, EMCDDA Director; Philippe Roux, Head of unit for health determinants at the EC; and Paola D'Acapito, Project officer at the EC's Consumers, Health and Food Executive Agency. The project aims to mobilise countries to develop common approaches in line with the EU alcohol strategy, including: developing methodologies to conduct alcohol surveys and pool data for comparative assessments; translating scientific evidence and knowledge into practical implications for good practice in alcohol-related interventions; and producing a toolkit of potentially transferable interventions with evidence of effectiveness and cost estimates.

For many years, there has been considerable policy concern about the interaction between alcohol and drug use in Europe. The EMCDDA's own remit was broadened in 2006 to include the monitoring of polydrug use, where illicit drugs are taken in combination with licit substances or medication.

Maria Moreira

For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2014/sicad-rarha-conference

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

New EMCDDA toolkit for monitoring infectious diseases

To mark World AIDS Day on 1 December, the EMCDDA released a new toolkit offering countries the latest guidance on monitoring drug-related infectious diseases — mainly HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis (B, C) — among people who inject drugs (PWID) (1). The toolkit is designed to help researchers and health professionals improve bio-behavioural monitoring practice in order to reduce the burden of disease in this vulnerable group and improve the coverage and quality of services delivered. Prepared closely with experts, country

DRUG-RELATED DEATHS

Alarming rise in fatal overdoses in Estonia

Overdose deaths in Estonia rose by an alarming 38% in 2012, with 170 deaths recorded compared with 123 deaths in 2011. The rate of 191 overdose deaths per million adults (15–64 years) in Estonia in 2012 is around 11 times higher than the European average (17 deaths per million adults). Among young males (15–39 years) — the main group at risk — the rate is 17 times above the European average. The trend is mirrored in the capital, Tallinn, where non-fatal overdoses rose by 11% in 2012.

Fentanyl and its derivatives — potent synthetic opioids — have been identified in over 80% of these deaths. Most fentanyls are illicitly produced and trafficked rather than diverted from medicine (1). In addition to fentanyls, amphetamine, benzodiazepines and multiple drug use also reportedly played a role in these events (Tuusov *et al.*, 2012) (2). Nine in 10 cases (90%) occur in males and 72% in those of Russian origin (Russians make up 25% of the Estonian population). Although, over the past decade, the average age of those dying from overdose has increased (24 in 2002; 31 in 2012), very young people (early 20s) are also reported to be dying.

Up until the end of 2013, no specific overdose-prevention programmes were available in Estonia. However, a pilot project was launched in September 2013 using naloxone (an opioid antagonist to revert the effects of opioid overdose). The above developments underline the urgent need to scale up targeted harm-reduction measures in Estonia including improved access to adequate opioid substitution treatment (OST). There is strong evidence that OST can have a positive impact on reducing overdose. Yet, the estimated coverage of this type of treatment in Estonia remains low and is only slowly improving.

Gleb Denissov, Mailis Tõnisson, Jana Tuusov and Isabelle Giraudon

(1) www.emcdda.europa.eu/scientific-studies/2012/trendspotters-report

(2) Tuusov, J., Vals, K., Tõnisson, M., Riikojä, A., Denissov, G. and Väli, M. (2012), 'Fatal poisoning in Estonia 2000–2009. Trends in illegal drug-related deaths', *Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine*, pp. 1–6.

representatives and international and EU agencies, the toolkit updates earlier guidance, and presents monitoring methods and updated indicators in a more flexible and user-friendly format. It is composed of three modules: *Behavioural indicators* (complementing existing biological monitoring and covering risk and protective behaviours, testing and service uptake); *Example questionnaire* (to be used in studies in care centres or other settings); and *Methods of bio-behavioural surveys* (providing guidance on how to implement and use biological and behavioural studies conducted among PWID as a tool in routine surveillance at country and European level).

Lucas Wiessing

(1) For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2013/fs11

RESPONSES

PRISONS

Estimating public expenditure on drug-law offenders in prisons



The EMCDDA has recently estimated a range of values for how much European countries spent on drug-law offenders in prisons between 2000 and 2010. Over this 10-year period, public expenditure on drug-law offenders in 22

European countries is estimated to have been in the range of 0.03%–0.05% of GDP. When applying these percentages to the whole EU for the year 2010, this expenditure ranges between EUR 3.7 billion and EUR 5.9 billion.

A range of estimates was applied because the low estimate considers only those prisoners who have been sentenced for a drug-law offence; while the high estimate also includes pre-trial prisoners who may be sentenced for a drug-law offence.

In the latter case, there is a lack of information regarding the main offence for which the pre-trial prisoner has been prosecuted.

There are additional data limitations which reduce the accuracy of the estimates. Data are missing for eight of the 30 countries that participate in the EMCDDA's network and, for the remaining 22, data series are not always complete. Furthermore, penal statistics do not apply the 'main offence rule' in some countries and data are unavailable for the period of imprisonment and for the proportion of drug-law offenders under special security measures.

This exercise provides an example of a simple-to-apply methodology, which could be used in national projects and help boost comparability of national estimates

For the sake of accuracy, more complete data sets, with further information on the characteristics of prisoners and their costs, would be a valuable asset. Nevertheless, this exercise provides an example of a simple-to-apply methodology, which could be used in national projects and help boost comparability of national estimates.

Cláudia Costa Storti

HOME AFFAIRS

A new European agenda for home affairs

The area of freedom, security and justice is addressed in Title V of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union. It covers policies related to border control, asylum and immigration, judicial cooperation and police cooperation ⁽¹⁾. Over the last two decades, this area has continued to develop, both as a result of changes in successive EU treaties, but also due to a growing need for a more European approach on this issue.

The EU Stockholm Programme, provides a roadmap for the Union's activities in this area for the period 2010–14. As the programme nears completion, a reflection process has now begun on the future European agenda in this field.

The EMCDDA, along with other EU agencies operating in the area of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), has made an important contribution to implementing the Stockholm strategy. In this context, it has: participated in the EU policy cycle on organised and serious international crime; produced a strategic analysis on EU drug markets; and begun developing drug supply reduction indicators. As an implementer of EU home affairs policy, the EMCDDA will now actively participate in various consultative fora set up to contribute to the new process and will examine future EU priorities in this field. The European Council is expected in June to define strategic guidelines for legislative and operational planning in the JHA area in the post-Stockholm period.

Klaudia Palczak

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/glossary/freedom_security_justice_en.htm

HEALTH

Sharing evidence to prevent and reduce harm related to addiction

Sharing evidence to help prevent and reduce harm related to addiction was the focus of a workshop hosted by the EMCDDA from 25–26 November. The two-day event was organised by the European Consumers, Health and Food Executive Agency (CHAFAEA) ⁽¹⁾, in collaboration with the European Commission.

The purpose of the workshop was to look at actions funded under the EU's Health Programme (2008–13) and Drug Prevention and Information Programme (2007–13), with a view to drawing on their results for the EMCDDA's work and better disseminating their outcomes. Twenty-four European experts working on projects relating to drug and alcohol addiction and to prevention and harm reduction in nightlife settings reported on the findings of their work and examples of best practice.

Specialists from the EMCDDA presented the online prevention and harm reduction profiles, developed by the agency since 2010, and discussed how the participating experts could contribute to these, and other, resources. Discussions focused on closing information gaps, improving processes for validating data at national level and increasing the visibility of the profiles. The upcoming conclusions of the workshop will show that this initiative will help develop synergies through better coordination of activities, provision of long-term access to findings and a broader use of results.

Roland Simon and Cinthia Menel-Lemos

⁽¹⁾ For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2013/fs10

BOOKSHELF

Drugs 2.0: The web revolution that's changing how the world gets high



The online market in narcotics is not only changing the way drugs are bought and sold but is also changing the nature of the drugs themselves. This is according to *Drugs 2.0: The web revolution that's changing how the world gets high*, which explores this international, virtual subculture.

Author Mike Power uses research to map the chemical, social, political and economic landscape of the current narcotic underground and its impact on those who consume the drugs that it generates. The book shows how enterprising dealers are using the web to engage highly-skilled foreign chemists to tweak the chemical structures of banned drugs to create legal alternatives.

In 10 chapters, the book looks at issues such as the birth of the online drugs culture and prohibition in a digital age.

Autor: Mike Power
Publisher: Portobello Books
Language: English
Date: 2013
Price: GBP 14.99
ISBN (paperback): 978-1-84627-459-6
Ordering information: www.portbellobooks.com

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

EMCDDA embarks on 2014 work programme



The EMCDDA's 2014 work programme — adopted by the Management Board on 5 December — takes forward work begun in 2013 to implement the core principles of the EMCDDA's 2013–15 strategy and work programme. Three core principles drive this three-year strategy and also shape and focus activities in 2014. These include: delivering a relevant, timely and responsive analysis of the drug situation; achieving efficiency and ensuring that

maximum value is delivered from activities and investments; and enhancing communication and a customer-focused approach.

Following a drop in the EU subsidy to the EMCDDA this year of some 5% (see p. 8), 2014 promises to be a particularly challenging year for the agency. The 2014 activities are therefore framed within the context of the realities we face today, which include a stable/diminishing reporting capacity at Member State level and reduced resources at our disposal. The 2014 budget is set at EUR 15.2 million (down from EUR 16.1 million in 2013).

Following a drop in the EU subsidy to the EMCDDA this year of some 5%, 2014 will be a particularly challenging year for the agency

The agency's scientific work programme concentrates this year on providing high-quality analyses of the European drug situation, through better exploitation of the analytical potential of data resources now held by the agency and maximising the value of its expert networks. In the area of responses, work will focus on implementing the new treatment data collection and analysis

strategy and on providing better estimates of treatment coverage within the different national systems. Additionally, priority will be given to improving the quality of data in the area of supply reduction. The management of the EU early-warning system on new drugs will also be a key task. The rapid increase in the number of new psychoactive substances and the upcoming implementation of a new legal instrument will have a major impact on the work of the agency in 2014.

A top priority in 2014 will be the development of the EMCDDA's web presence in the context of a new integrated and thematic strategic approach. Following the successful concept launched in 2013, the *European Drug Report* package will continue to develop, with delivery on the web being a central theme. The kick-off of a new technical assistance project aimed at enhancing drug monitoring capacity in European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries will be another exciting development in the course of the year (see p. 6).

Narcisa Murgea

For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/work-programmes/2014

2014 EMCDDA scientific paper award

The nomination procedure for the 2014 EMCDDA scientific paper award was launched in February. European research societies, EMCDDA Scientific Committee members, EMCDDA staff, the Reitox national focal points and relevant peer-reviewed journals have all been invited to nominate scientific papers judged to enhance understanding of the European drugs problem. The award ceremony will take place in the autumn in the margins of the Scientific Committee meeting.

For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu

DRUGS-LEX

Latvia speeds up NPS control while Romania sees new Criminal Code

Two EU Member States have changed their laws in recent months with implications for drug control ⁽¹⁾. On 14 November 2013, Latvia activated an amendment to its law on 'Procedures for the legal trade of narcotic and psychotropic substances and medicinal products'. This authorises the National Centre for Disease Prevention and Control to restrict the circulation of a new psychoactive substance for up to 12 months, allowing the authorities time to consider whether it should be moved to the narcotic substance list.

Substances may be restricted if relevant information has been obtained from the EU early-warning system, or based on a report received from at least one of five named forensic authorities or institutions. The maximum penalty for non-compliance with a restriction is a fine of around EUR 1 400 under the Administrative Procedure Law.

In Romania, a new Criminal Code entered into force on 1 February 2014, reducing several penalty ranges for offences relating to the production and trafficking of drugs and to personal possession. The new code is designed to help implement the 'alternatives to punishment' approach first set out in the drug control law of 2004 ⁽²⁾.

For example, the penalty range for the production or distribution of 'risk' drugs is now 2–7 years' imprisonment (down from 3–15 years), and that for 'high risk' drugs is now 5–12 years (down from 10–20 years). Production or possession for personal use will now be punished by 3 months–2 years for 'risk drugs' (the previous minimum was 6 months) and 6 months–3 years for 'high-risk drugs' (down from 2–5 years). The new Code also reduces penalties for the supply of substances suspected of having psychoactive effects (see *Drugnet Europe* 77). For those where the effects were known, the basic penalty is now 6 months–3 years (down from 2–8 years), and higher penalties for causing injury or death are repealed. The penalty for advertising their effects is now 1 month–1 year, rather than 1–3 years as previously the case.

Brendan Hughes, Linda Sîle and Ruxanda Iliescu

⁽¹⁾ For more, see www.dreptonline.ro/legislatie/legea_187_2012_punerea_aplicare_codul_penal_legea_286_2009.php and <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=40283>

⁽²⁾ This approach was delayed due to the need for an amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code. The new Criminal Code removes that need.

INTERNATIONAL

EMCDDA steps up cooperation with Israel Anti-Drug Authority

The European Union and Israel will share information on drugs more systematically in future, thanks to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on 4 February in Jerusalem between the EMCDDA and the Israel Anti-Drug Authority (IADA) ⁽¹⁾. The agreement was signed at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs by EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz and IADA Director-General Yair Geller.

Israel — a country of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) area — submitted a formal request for cooperation with the EMCDDA in 2012. This led to a green light from the EMCDDA Management Board in December that year for the agency to negotiate the MoU with IADA.

The new accord — signed for an initial period of five years — will be implemented through a joint work programme. This will include steps to enhance the partners' monitoring and knowledge base on the drug situation and responses to it, particularly through harmonising key indicators in areas of both supply and demand. Special attention will be given to the regular exchange of information on the availability and use of new psychotropic substances, as well as the technologies employed in their production. The agreement provides for an exchange of technical expertise between the two bodies and the pooling of human and financial resources to launch joint programmes.

Cécile Martel

⁽¹⁾ For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2014/fs2

PARTNERS

Ukrainian study tour to EMCDDA

A delegation of Ukrainian officials visited the EMCDDA on 7 February as part of a study tour sponsored by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) ⁽¹⁾. The delegation was led by Mr Volodymyr Tymoshenko, Head of the State Drug Control Service of Ukraine.

Addressing the visitors, Alexis Goosdeel, EMCDDA Head of unit for Reitox and international cooperation, stressed the importance of cross-border cooperation in helping to build a more accurate picture of the drugs situation, and responses to it, in the EU and its neighbouring countries. 'In the current global social and economic climate, effective and rational responses to both drug supply and drug demand are even more crucial', he said. Following a speech by Mr Goosdeel on providing an evidence base for effective policy and action, Mr Tymoshenko presented the Ukrainian drug strategy and national drug situation.

The EMCDDA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ukrainian Ministry of Health in 2010, establishing cooperation between the agency and the Ukrainian Medical and Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction (UMMCDA).

Ukraine is a priority partner country within the European Neighbourhood Policy and is a member of the Eastern Partnership.

Cécile Martel

⁽¹⁾ For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2014/ukrainian-visit

SPOTLIGHT



Registration open: European drugs summer school

The University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL) and the EMCDDA will be joining forces again in July 2014 to hold the third European summer school on 'Illicit drugs in Europe: demand, supply and public policies' ⁽¹⁾. Registration opened on 15 January for the two-week course, which will take place in Lisbon from 30 June to 11 July. Through a multidisciplinary and interactive approach, EMCDDA scientific experts and ISCTE-IUL professors, along with leading academics, guest speakers and policymakers, will prepare participants to meet the complex policy challenges in this field.

Week 1 of the summer school focuses on 'Defining the problems' and will feature lectures on: problem drug use in Europe; drug supply in Europe; and detecting new drugs. Week 2 explores 'Understanding drug policies and interventions', with lectures on: (inter) national drug policies; prison health; preventing drug use; and harm reduction. 'Keynote lectures', a feature premiered at the 2013 summer school, will be continued in 2014 with a new line-up of speakers.

The first two summer schools in 2012 and 2013 brought together around 60 students from over 15 EU Member States, as well as countries from Asia and Latin America. Profiles of former alumni and their testimonials can be found on the summer school website and statements viewed in a promotional video. In 2014, students will be able to apply for scholarships and take advantage of 'Early-bird' reductions until 15 March.

⁽¹⁾ www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2014/fs1

REITOX

New technical assistance project with ENP countries

On 1 January, the EMCDDA embarked on a new two-year technical cooperation project within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) ⁽¹⁾. The European Commission-funded project, which will run until December 2015, is designed to boost the capacity of ENP partner countries to react to fresh challenges posed by the drug phenomenon. The official kick-off meeting will take place at the EMCDDA from 5–6 March.

The cooperation will feature the exchange of know-how on national drug information systems and observatories and the sharing of information on best practice in demand reduction and on national strategies (including monitoring and evaluation). The project will provide scientific support for collecting and analysing information as well as producing ad hoc products corresponding to national, EU and EMCDDA needs. An important component of the initiative will be the exchange of information, working practices and methodology on the identification of new psychoactive substances with project partner countries.

The new project will boost the capacity of ENP partner countries to react to fresh challenges posed by the drug phenomenon

The project will begin with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Israel, Moldova, Morocco and Ukraine. Other countries from the Eastern and Southern Partnership which have not yet expressed an interest in participating in the project will have an opportunity to join at a later stage.

The ENP aims to forge closer ties with countries to the South and East of the European Union. Through this policy, the EU seeks to strengthen the prosperity, stability and security of all countries concerned.

Cécile Martel

⁽¹⁾ http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/index_en.htm

Portuguese-speaking countries debate drug policy

The 1st International conference on drug policies in the Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP) took place in Praia, Cape Verde, from 15–16 January ⁽¹⁾. Organised by the NGO Piaget Agency for Development (APDES), the event provided a platform for discussing current and future issues and challenges in drug policy.

The event welcomed representatives from the five lusophone African countries — Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe — as well as from Brazil and Portugal. Also represented were international organisations (EMCDDA, UNODC, WHO) and civil society bodies (Kofi Annan Foundation, Global Commission on Drug Policy).

In the margins of the conference, the 'Declaration of Praia' — a Memorandum on drug policies and human rights — was

signed by the international union of Portuguese-speaking judges, the *União Internacional de Juizes de Língua Portuguesa* (UIJLP). This commits the signatories to exchanging best practice and orienting adequate human-rights inspired responses to drug problems.

The conference ended with positive results and a follow-up event is foreseen for 2015 to allow for further reflection on the state of art of drug policies in the PALOP countries. The aim is to allow these countries to prepare a 'common voice' on this issue, ahead of the UN General Assembly Special Session on Drugs to be held in 2016.

Danilo Ballotta

⁽¹⁾ For more, see www.conferenciadrogaspalop.org/en/Paises_africanos_de_lingua_oficial_portuguesa (PALOP). www.conferenciadrogaspalop.org/media/not%C3%ADcias.html

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Exploring methamphetamine trends in Europe



Concerns about the availability and use of methamphetamine in Europe have been growing for some time. Historically, use of the drug has been confined largely to the Czech Republic and Slovakia. However, reports of increasing methamphetamine use from different European countries in 2012 and 2013 sparked an interest in investigating this topic further. The EMCDDA has responded with *Exploring methamphetamine trends in Europe* which aims to increase the overall understanding on this drug in Europe.

The 'EMCDDA Paper', released on 31 January, follows trendspotter meetings held at the agency in September 2013. The report focuses on production and trafficking issues,

prevalence and patterns of use, health and social harms, and responses to the problem.

In some countries, there is evidence to suggest that methamphetamine use is increasing, while new injection trends have been detected among small groups of gay men. Worrying reports are emerging from south-east Europe that crystal methamphetamine smoking is a limited, but emerging, problem, with the possibility of a spread among vulnerable populations. The report concludes that, although methamphetamine use is not a major phenomenon in Europe, even at a relatively low prevalence, this drug has the potential to cause significant harm.

For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/emcdda-papers

For more on the 'EMCDDA Papers' series, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2013/fs12

Focus on multidimensional family therapy



The family can play a vital role in addressing the issue of substance use disorders among adolescents. This is according to the latest edition in the 'EMCDDA Papers' series — *Multidimensional family therapy for adolescent drug users: a systematic review* — released on 6 February.

Adolescence is a period in human development during which individuals are more prone to risk-taking and less prone to impulse control. Some young people experiment with both licit and illicit substances during this time and this can have an impact on their behaviour, their relationships with others and their functioning in society. The new report explores multidimensional family therapy (MDFT), a form of inclusive

therapy involving the young person, their family and their environment. Based on five studies carried out in the United States and the EU, the paper shows how this holistic approach can deliver promising results that are visible both during, and after, therapy.

For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/emcdda-papers

EMCDDA 2014 Work Programme



The EMCDDA's 2014 Work Programme — adopted in December (see p. 4) — sets out the objectives for the second year of the agency's 2013–15 strategy. It builds on measures put in place in 2013 to ensure that the EMCDDA's approach remains appropriate to the challenge of reporting on an evolving drug situation within the context of changing customer needs and expectations. Reflecting the agency's strong commitment to developing a performance measurement system, well-defined performance indicators are presented in the document.

For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/work-programmes/2014

EVENTS



3rd International conference on novel psychoactive substances

The 3rd International conference on novel psychoactive substances will take place in Rome from 15–16 May. The event, which follows on from the first two conferences held in Budapest (2012) and Swansea (2013), will be organised by: the University of Hertfordshire; the EMCDDA; the University of Chieti-Pescara; 'Sapienza' University of Rome; and 'Guglielmo Marconi' University. The event is sponsored by the Società italiana di psichiatria.

Among others, this conference will offer participants an opportunity to share evidence-based information on NPS and improve understanding of prevention, treatment and management approaches in this area. Registration for the conference is now open.

For more, see www.novelpsychoactivesubstances.org

2nd European Harm Reduction Conference

The 2nd European Harm Reduction Conference will be held in Basel from 7–9 May. The conference aims to offer an ideal platform to discuss the present and future of harm reduction and to promote the further development of the concept in different European countries.

The most recent developments in harm reduction practice will be explored at the meeting as well as international models of regulating drugs. Registration for the conference is now open.

For more, see www.harmreduction.ch/en/

Organisations wishing to publicise their events or resources are invited to contact Kathryn.Robertson@emcdda.europa.eu

CALENDAR 2014

EMCDDA meetings

- 5–7 February: Meeting of Latin American and European researchers 'Transferring evidence into public policies related to drugs', COPOLAD, Madrid.
- 25 February: ESPAD–CAN–EMCDDA cooperation meeting, Stockholm.
- 31 March: EMCDDA Scientific Committee meeting, Lisbon.
- 1–2 April: Risk-assessment meeting on four new psychoactive substances, Lisbon.
- 27 May: Launch of the *European Drug Report 2014*, Lisbon.

External meetings

- 19 February: Scottish forum on drug-related deaths, Glasgow.
- 19–20 February: Meeting on WHO guidelines on the management of opioid overdose, Geneva.
- 26 February: Meeting of the Inter-agency coordinating council on combating drug abuse, Ministry of Justice of Georgia, Tbilisi.
- 26 February: Hearing on drug-related deaths, Government Offices of Sweden, Stockholm.
- 13–21 March: High-level segment and 57th session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, UNODC, Vienna.

EU meetings

- 6–7 February: Horizontal working party on drugs and EU–Western Balkans meeting, Brussels.
- 13 February: Heads of EU agencies meeting, Brussels.
- 27 February: Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.
- 10 April: Horizontal working party on drugs, EU–CELAC technical meeting and EU–USA meeting, Brussels.

Statutory bodies

Management Board update

The EMCDDA Management Board adopted in December the agency's work programme for 2014 (see p. 4), with a corresponding total budget of EUR 15.2 million (EU subsidy plus the contribution from Norway). Following a drop in the EU subsidy to the EMCDDA this year of some 5%, a number of belt-tightening measures have been implemented. These include a reduction in the EMCDDA co-financing (with the Member States) of the Reitox national focal points. In practice this means that, compared to 2013, the EMCDDA's maximum contribution for each focal point falls by 20%.

In line with the new European Commission Framework Financial Regulation, the Board adopted a revised financial regulation applicable to the EMCDDA. It also appointed 15 renowned scientists to the EMCDDA Scientific Committee for the period 2014–16 (see p. 1) and discussed cooperation with EU agency Eurojust.

Laura D'Arrigo (France) and Franz Pietsch (Austria) were elected as members to the EMCDDA Executive Committee for a three-year term (2014–16). Vice-Chair Claude Gillard (Belgium) was nominated as an observer on the pre-selection panel for the recruitment procedure of the new EMCDDA Director to start on 1 May 2015.

Monika Blum

Continued from page 1

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 (see p. 1).

The Management Board invited the outgoing Chair (Marina Davoli) and Vice-Chair (Gerhard Bühringer) to continue acting in these roles until elections take place at the first meeting of the new Committee in March. In addition to appointing the members of the new Committee, the Board also established a reserve list. The EMCDDA thanked the outgoing members for their role as guardians and advocates of the scientific integrity of the agency over two consecutive terms (2008–10 and 2011–13).

Maria Moreira

For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2013/fs13

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