



FACT SHEET from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

EU DRUGS AGENCY SHOWCASES NEW PRODUCT: 'EMCDDA PAPERS'

EMCDDA launches first four studies in a new series targeting policymakers and specialists

(12.12.2013, LISBON) The **EU drugs agency (EMCDDA)** publishes today the first four studies in its brand new series of 'EMCDDA Papers'. Primarily targeting policymakers and specialists, the papers are designed as brief and timely web-based products on a variety of topics in the drugs field. To be published several times a year, the papers will cover all aspects of Europe's drug phenomenon, from consumption and markets to health and social consequences as well as the responses of the EU and its Member States to drug problems.

Drug policy advocacy organisations in Europe — Civil society organisations engaging in drug policy advocacy in Europe are today organised, high-profile and impact-oriented. Presenting the results of a mapping study of such bodies in Europe, this paper describes how their development has been driven by greater ease of communication (facilitated by new technologies) as well as by the greater number of formal mechanisms through which policymakers can now be reached. For the purpose of the study, drug advocacy organisations were defined as bodies with a website-based Internet presence that contained a clearly stated aim to influence drug policy. Of the 218 organisations identified, 69 % operated on a national basis, around one-fifth (17 %) had a local or regional remit and over one-tenth (14 %) had a European or international remit. The paper concludes that changes in the nature, methods and impact of advocacy in the drugs area are evolving against a backdrop of economic crisis. And as drug services and law enforcement agencies come under increased financial pressure, it is likely that the number and type of policy actors engaged in advocacy will grow.

Drug squads: units specialised in drug law enforcement in Europe — Drug law enforcement is likely to be the intervention contributing the most to reducing drug supply in Europe. While important statistical datasets on drug seizures and drug law offences emerge from drug law enforcement activity, little is known about how drug law enforcement is organised in Europe. Based on a survey in 26 countries, this report provides the first European overview of units specialising in drug law enforcement ('drug squads') and identifies knowledge gaps. As such, the paper provides a monitoring baseline against which future changes can be compared. Data on the number of staff, institutional affiliations, mandates and functions of the more than 1 000 drug squads operating in Europe are presented and put into perspective.

Drug supply reduction and internal security policies in the European Union: an overview — The production and trafficking of illicit drugs pose complex and interlinked problems, which have a negative impact on public health and the security and stability of society. In responding to the dynamics of a globalised drug market, the EU and its partners are involved in actions within and outside the EU. Focusing on actions directed at the EU's internal security situation, this paper explores who sets the policy, what legal and funding basis for action has been established, and what priorities have been drawn up. In doing so, the paper looks at the EU institutions and agencies predominately involved in managing drug supply reduction and internal security issues. It explores relevant EU treaties and legislations that provide a means to target illicit drug supply, as well as the financial instruments and programmes supporting this action.

Co-morbid substance use and mental disorders in Europe: a review of the data — This paper reviews information on the co-morbidity of mental disorders among individuals with psychoactive drug or alcohol use problems. Findings from key European and non-European studies are presented, along with an overview of the information on co-morbidity reported to the EMCDDA by EU Member States and Norway in the last six years. While studies on the prevalence of co-morbidity have been carried out in other parts of the world, few have been conducted in Europe. The European studies presented here show a wide variation in prevalence levels, which may reflect methodological limitations, including the lack of harmonised European reporting on co-morbidity. Suggestions are made to stimulate the accumulation of knowledge and the comparability of information in this area in order to improve the evidence base available to policymakers.

EMCDDA Papers are in line with the EMCDDA Communication strategy which promises, in the name of efficiency and value, to produce briefer web-based products and fewer lengthy volumes in print. Available in English at: www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/emcdda-papers