



**EMCDDA, Reitox Heads of Focal Points
Lisbon, 25 – 27 November 2015**

**53rd meeting
Agenda item:
Plenary session I**

**Document: REITOX/53/01a
52nd Reitox Meeting Heads of Focal Points – draft conclusions**

Version 18/06/2015

Strategy and work programme 2016-2018

The Reitox Focal Points appreciate to be consulted on the draft Strategy and Work Programme 2016-2018 and on the draft Work Programme 2016. They understand that the new work programme presents the objectives and activities of the Centre following a more strategic and comprehensive approach, which gives a new perspective to the work of the EMCDDA and of its potential impact for the European and national stakeholders.

However, the fact that this comprehensive and strategic approach is not yet adopted at national level may raise some issues for the long-term development of the national focal points in a few countries.

While they welcome the new presentation of the work programme, and the link to a clearer long-term strategic goal that highlights the added value of the whole European Drug Information System, the Heads of Focal Points would like to call the attention of the EMCDDA on three important challenges for the whole network:

- With this new presentation of the work of the Centre, the emphasis that was given to the work on the 5 Key Epidemiological Indicators, which is the core of the routine data collection of the EMCDDA since it was established, is becoming less visible and may suggest for a reader non familiar with the work of the Centre that it is becoming less important;
- The presentation of new areas of work and/or of new tools for data collection is a natural part of the permanent improvement and development of the European Drug Information System. However, in the present circumstances, with the budgetary constraints that already have a negative impact on the existing monitoring tools at national level in many countries, the issue of the feasibility of developing those new tools and areas might be a concern in some Member States;
- The Focal Points welcome the more comprehensive reference framework presented for data collection, but expressed the concern that, given the format of this top-level document, that gives less visibility to the means needed to achieve the objectives, their role may become less apparent and/or their national mandate may not mirror the activities of the Centre any more.

Therefore the Heads of Focal Points kindly ask the EMCDDA to assess where the text of the Strategy and Work Programme 2016-2018 could be rephrased in such a way that those issues are addressed to the best possible extent.

The Heads of Focal Points expressed also their interest in the future developments and possible impact of the following activities: the next European Drug Market Report and of the first European Responses Report, the supply and supply reduction indicators, and new topics such as misuse of medicines.

Following a proposal made by the Reitox Coordination, the Heads of Focal Points agreed to prepare for the next Reitox Heads of Focal Points meeting a working paper on the Reitox Development Strategy that would be communicated to the Management Board as a supporting document to the strategy, and that would highlight the challenges and the strategic objectives for the network for the period 2016-2018, and the corresponding needs for support at national level.

Budgetary perspectives 2016

The Focal Points take note that the EC proposal, as adopted on 27/05/2015 by the European Commission, foresees a EU subsidy of EUR 14 794 000 (14 724 000 from EU 2016 budget appropriations + 70 000 from surplus of EU 2013 subsidy), which differs from the Draft Budget adopted by the EMCDDA's Management Board of December 2014 that was EUR 15 447 000.

They also take note that if the proposal of the EC was to be confirmed by the Budgetary Authority, this would mean that the budget available for the Reitox Grants would not be indexed and would remain the same as in 2015.

The Heads of Focal Points kindly ask the EMCDDA to keep them informed about the budgetary perspectives as soon as a formal decision is taken by the Budgetary Authority.

European Drug Report package

The Focal Points welcome the improvements and new developments of the European Drug Report package, as well as the results of the first impact assessment presented by the EMCDDA.

EMCDDA and Focal Points agree to check bilaterally the lists of journalists and media where necessary, as some journalists have changed of position or of area of interest, and in some countries the drug issue is not a fashionable topic any more.

EMCDDA and NFPs recognize that for some languages, the proofreading process was not going so smoothly, and NFPs expressed the need for a guide that would present more in details what is expected from NFPs.

In the countries where a national launch was organised with the participation of the EMCDDA, Focal Points have expressed their positive appreciation for the presentations and interventions from EMCDDA staff and reported a positive impact on the press and on the national stakeholders. However, in some cases, the agenda of the European launch did not match with the national agenda, as the late confirmation of the dates of the launch did not correspond with other national events that had been planned much before and could not be changed to be compatible with the launch of the report..

Some NFPs reported that the launch of the EDR was to be followed a few days/weeks later by the presentation of the results of the Global Addiction Survey, which may have distracted some journalists from reporting on the European situation.

New National Reporting Package

The Reitox Focal Points and the EMCDDA agree that they have both entered in an iterative "learning by doing" process, and that it is still premature to make any conclusions about the challenges and possible way forward of the new package. For instance at EMCDDA level, working on the feedback on the Treatment Workbooks, gave the opportunity to learn a lot from the exercise and to think about further developments, in particular as far as the feedback on the Workbooks will be organized in the future.

At this stage of the implementation, that is at its very beginning, the discussion took place in a plenary session, but in the future the EMCDDA will propose a more interactive and in subgroup or bilateral approach, through the organisation of "Workbook clinics". This should substitute some of the plenary sessions at the agenda of the Reitox meeting and would allow for more interaction and for a better mutual understanding of the drug situation in the Member States.

A first positive results presented by the EMCDDA was that the staff involved in the preparation of the feedback on the pilot Treatment Workbooks found the experience very useful and interesting, which suggests that one of the main objective of the revision, which is rationalising and making better use of the information, will be met.

There are however some issues that will need to be addressed together, as foreseen during the discussion on the Implementation Plan in November 2014, such as the development of some more standardised outputs at EMCDDA but also at national level, in particular for the NFPs who need to use their reporting to the EMCDDA to compose their own national report.

In that perspective, some NFPs explained that the transition might take more time than expected for the implementation of the 10 Workbooks, and EMCDDA explained that it was ready to consider these constraints in the context of the implementation of the Grant Agreements. Therefore, the EMCDDA suggested that the countries that have announced to provide 10 Workbooks but will not be able to do so could stick to the 5 mandatory and should inform the EMCDDA accordingly.

Revision Reporting Tools on Prevention

The Heads of the Focal Points took note of the proposal to proceed in 2015 with a limited revision of the Structured Questionnaire on Prevention, and to prepare a more substantial revision of the reporting tools on Prevention in 2016, when the Workbooks on Prevention will be filled in.

They also welcome the possibility to discuss already during the Reitox Technical Meeting of October this year the issue of the Experts ratings, on the basis of a document to be presented by EMCDDA. The Centre will inform on due time the NFPs whether it is ready to present such a document by October 2015 or if it will be for the more in-depth revision process in 2016.

Data management

Following the presentation of the revised Statistical Bulletin and its subsequent consultation process, some NFPs explained that it is impossible to check all the data in the Statistical Bulletin when focal points being asked, at the same time, to check the updated country overview; to undertake the linguistic checks of the press releases and to do other urgent tasks at the request of the EMCDDA. In principle, NFPs prefer to focus on making sure that FONTE is fool proof, with a view to have less work in checking the data contained in the Statistical Bulletin. The Heads of Focal Points always inform their national experts to check FONTE when there are some enquiries about data validation.

The Heads of Focal Points committed themselves to better follow-up on the clarification requests in 2015 and to solve open issues before Christmas.

Supply/supply reduction and 2016 drug market size estimates

The EMCDDA gave an overview of the state of play regarding seizures, drug law offences guidelines and standard tables, including the organisation of the next Reference Group meeting. Heads of Focal Points were asked to contact Eurostat to get the data, as agreed earlier, and to inform the EMCDDA in case of difficulties.

In preparation for the forthcoming second European Drug Markets Report - and in response to a request from EU Commission - the EMCDDA will be collecting information to generate market size estimates for Cannabis, Cocaine, Amphetamines, Ecstasy and Heroin. The Heads of Focal Points received information about this project, amongst others the methods for developing the new estimates and to identify other data sources/studies which are not yet available at EMCDDA, as well as to agree on the next steps.

It was suggested to share experiences and best practices from countries that are more advanced in this specific field during the next November Reitox HFP meeting.

Reitox meetings in 2015 and 2016

The next Reitox meetings in 2015 will be organised as follows,:

- 52nd Reitox meeting of the Heads of Focal Points: 16-18 June 2015 starting on a Tuesday (instead of Wednesday as was done before)
- 4th Reitox Week and 53rd Reitox meeting of the Heads of Focal Points: 23-27 November 2015
- 54th Reitox meeting of the Heads of Focal Points: 14-16 June 2016 starting on a Tuesday (instead of Wednesday as was done before)