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EMCDDA scientific paper award applauds excellence in drug-related research

The four winners of the 2013 EMCDDA scientific paper award were honoured in Lisbon on 7 November at the third annual ceremony of this kind hosted by the agency ([1]). The winners — based in Germany, Austria, Norway and at the EMCDDA — received a non-monetary prize for their articles at an event held in the margins of the latest EMCDDA Scientific Committee meeting (see p. 8).

The prize, inaugurated in 2011 by the EMCDDA and its Scientific Committee, celebrates scientific writing and distinguishes high-quality research in the field of illicit drugs. This year, five groups were invited to nominate papers: European research societies; EMCDDA Scientific Committee members; the Reitox national focal points; EMCDDA staff; and European drug research peer-reviewed journals.

The 2013 winners (primary authors) are: Sophia Schneider (Germany); Rudolf Rosenauer (Austria); Knut Boe Kielland (Norway) and Dagmar Hedrich (EMCDDA). Abstracts of the winning papers are available on the agency's website in English, along with full details of the shortlisted papers (see also p. 4) ([2]).

The EMCDDA scientific paper award celebrates scientific writing and distinguishes high-quality research in the field of illicit drugs.

This year, 37 eligible entries were received and judged on the criteria of: scientific originality; scientific quality; clarity and quality of writing; and EU relevance.

([1]) For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2013/12

([2]) www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2013/scientific-awards

Europe takes decisive step forward in monitoring drug supply

A set of Council conclusions on improving the monitoring of drug supply in the European Union was adopted by the Economic and Financial Affairs Council meeting in Brussels on 15 November ([1]).

While much progress has been made in the EU in recent years to improve the monitoring of drug demand, drug supply remains an area requiring further analysis. Recalling the conclusions of two European conferences on drug supply indicators in 2010 and 2012 ([2]), the Council states in this document that accurate, reliable, comparable and high-quality data on drug supply would help 'assess the drug situation, the dynamics of the illicit drug market, the burden of drug-related crime and the effectiveness of supply-oriented policies'.

In order to obtain sound data in this area, the Council acknowledges the need for key indicators at EU level, developed around a set of sub-indicators (seizures; purity and content; drug prices; drug production facilities dismantled; drug law offences; drug availability in the population; and market size). The paper recommends an approach which builds on existing data-collection and reporting structures and ensures that activities are cost-effective, realistic, feasible and deliver clear value at EU level.

The EMCDDA is called upon to work with Europol, the Reitox network and other relevant EU networks on improving data collection in this area, supported by its reference group on drug supply indicators (set up in 2013).

Member States are invited to collaborate with the European Commission, the EMCDDA and Europol with a view to improving the comparability and quality of data collected in the area of drug supply, as well as submitting available datasets to the agencies in a timely way, using existing reporting tools and channels.

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DRUG SITUATION

WASTEWATER ANALYSIS

Testing the waters: conference proceedings

Wastewater analysis can reveal what drugs are being used, where they are being consumed and even on which days of the week.

Early in 2014, the international journal *Science of the total environment* (STOTEN) will publish a special edition dedicated to the proceedings of 'Testing the waters', the first international multidisciplinary conference on illicit drugs in wastewater, held in Lisbon from 6–8 May ([1]). The event was organised by the EMCDDA, in collaboration with the: EU-funded SEWPROF project; the Italian Mario Negri Institute; and the Norwegian Institute for Water Research ([2]). The special edition follows a call for papers launched at the conference.

Over 100 participants from 20 countries attended the event and explored the potential of drug wastewater analysis. The conference concluded that this rapidly developing scientific discipline can provide a clear picture of the quantities of illicit drugs consumed by a given population and make a major contribution to monitoring drug trends in Europe.

This emerging scientific field has a strong multidisciplinary character, involving both environmental and social sciences. The special issue of the journal will make an important contribution to the integration of different types of knowledge on patterns and trends in illicit drug use.

Liesbeth Vandam

([1]) STOTEN is a scientific journal which publishes original research into the environment and its relationship with humankind www.journals.elsevier.com/science-of-the-total-environment

([2]) www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/2013/testing-the-waters

KEY INDICATORS

New-style EMCDDA expert meetings promote integrated approach to monitoring

The EMCDDA is boosting the utility of its expert meetings, following an assessment of its annual key epidemiological indicator (KI) meetings undertaken in 2012. The exercise, which examined the strengths and weaknesses of these meetings, underlined the need for more cross-indicator analyses and recommended that the annual KI meetings be organised in an integrated way. The analysis also proposed that the agency's work in other areas — such as drug policy, interventions and new drugs — be included in the discussions as appropriate.

In the light of these findings, the agency organised, from 23–27 September, the first EMCDDA week on 'Measuring, understanding and responding to drug problems in Europe' ([1]). The event brought together three inter-related meetings on: the problem drug use indicator (PDU); the treatment demand indicator (TDI); and the future of treatment monitoring. The week allowed experts to hold common sessions and to participate across the different programme areas. From 16–18 October, the EMCDDA organised a combined meeting of: the drug-related deaths indicator (DRD) and the drug-related infectious diseases indicator (DRID). In addition to parallel sessions, this event included joint plenary sessions, among others, on: overdose prevention interventions and on regional HIV risk assessments. Also on the agenda were sessions on: cannabis-related emergencies; new drugs; hepatitis; deaths related to medicines; and cohort studies.

Through events of this kind, the agency hopes to obtain greater value from the KI meetings, strengthening what have become, over the last 15 years, valuable networks of excellence. The initial feedback from participants has been positive, highlighting the broader scope of the debate and a better focus on policy needs.

Julián Vicente and Roland Simon

([1]) www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2013/fs6

Focus on Croatia

New Member State Croatia is among a growing number of countries currently applying alternative approaches to monitoring drug use trends, such as wastewater analysis. In 2011, the Ruđer Bošković Institute participated in a European research project on identifying psychoactive substances in municipal wastewater ([1]). The research was conducted for the first time in 19 European cities (including Zagreb) over a single week in March. Urinary biomarkers of cocaine, amphetamines, ecstasy, methamphetamine and cannabis were analysed using optimised and validated analytical methods (Thomas *et al.*, 2012). However, the first Croatian research in wastewater analysis in Zagreb dates back to 2009.

Croatia was also one of the partners in an EMCDDA co-funded demonstration project aimed at illustrating the potential of wastewater analysis for estimating community drug use ([2]). This project generated comparable data covering 25 European cities (including Zagreb), thanks to an agreed common sampling approach. In May 2013, Croatian expert, Senka Terzić, addressed the 'Testing the waters' conference ([3]). Croatia is also partner of the SCORE group, a European collaborative group on illicit drugs in sewage ([4]).

Sandrine Sleiman and Cécile Martel

([1]) www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969712008959
([2]) www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/online/2012/77/article13
([3]) www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/2013/testing-the-waters
([4]) www.niva.no/en/SCORE

RESPONSES

HARM REDUCTION

Harm reduction in Europe 2003–13

The second progress report on the state of play of the Council Recommendation of 18 June 2003 on the prevention and reduction of health-related harm associated with drug dependence was published on 15 October ([1]). The report was compiled on behalf of the European Commission by experts from the Austrian *Gesundheit Österreich Forschungs- und Planungsgesellschaft mbH* (GÖ FP GmbH) and SOGETI, in close collaboration with the European Executive Agency for Health and Consumers, the EMCDDA and the European Commission's DG SANCO and DG JUST.

The report offers an updated overview of the implementation of the Council Recommendation in the 28 EU Member States and candidate countries. Among others, it features country overviews on harm-reduction policies, services and facilities as well as analyses of epidemiological trends. Also assessed in the study is the availability of, access to and coverage of harm reduction measures based on answers to a policy survey and a survey among field organisations.

The available scientific evidence on interventions to prevent and reduce health-related harms associated with drug dependence was analysed during the exercise and four systematic literature reviews produced (peer naloxone programmes; prison release management; needle exchange in prison; measures to change the route of administration). The report ends with a set of 13 conclusions and suggestions for follow-up to the Council Recommendation. Based on these conclusions, the authors have identified three priority areas of action: the reduction of drug-induced deaths; the improvement of harm reduction in prisons; and the reduction of harm caused by drug-related infections. The report draws substantially on data collected by the EMCDDA from the Reitox national focal points.

Martin Busch, Alexander Grabenhofer-Eggerth, Dagmar Hedrich, Charlotte Klein and Marion Weigl

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/news/news280.html (the first progress report was published in 2006). See also www.emcdda.europa.eu/themes/harm-reduction

PREVENTION

Prevention systems: how to transform evidence into practice?

Quality standards are as good as their implementation, which in turn depends on human, technical and administrative infrastructures. This was the starting point of a discussion between experts from 12 EU Member States at a meeting on 'Prevention systems: how to transform evidence into practice?', organised by the EMCDDA from 9–10 October.

Approaches currently adopted in Europe at regional level — which often depend on countries' administrative traditions — range from the implementation of manualised evidence-based programmes in Castilla-León (Spain) and Lower-Saxony (Germany) to multi-stakeholder interventions at local level in South-Tyrol (Italy), Sweden and Poland. Central administrations may also influence quality control, for example through conditional funding criteria (Portugal) or accreditation systems for professionals and programmes (Czech Republic). Additional factors at local and environmental level may also come into play when implementing prevention and influencing its quality.

The EMCDDA has recently published a 'quick guide' version of its *European Drug Prevention Quality Standards* (EMCDDA Manual No 7), which will now be implemented in the EU Member States ([1]). Better knowledge on different prevention systems in Europe will help identify potential and overcome obstacles in this implementation process. The EMCDDA is planning to provide descriptions of different prototypes of prevention systems in its prevention profiles in 2014.

Gregor Burkhart

([1]) www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/adhoc/prevention-standard

BEST PRACTICE

Best Practice Portal revamp

The EMCDDA's Best Practice Portal (BPP) is a valuable web-based tool for disseminating information on effective interventions and their implementation across Europe. Since 2009, the EMCDDA has been collaborating with a number of international organisations at the forefront of research in this area in order to ensure that the portal is up-to-date, linked to relevant guidelines and standards and in line with advanced methods for disseminating evidence. Among the bodies consulted by the EMCDDA have been: the Cochrane Group on Drugs and Alcohol; the GRADE working group; and the EU-funded DECIDE project ([1]).

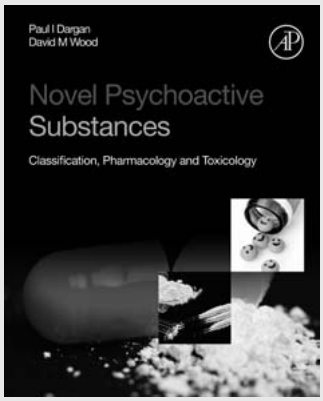
In 2014, the BPP will be revamped with a view to becoming more user-friendly and better integrating its current components (synthesis of evidence, guidelines and standards and examples of implemented projects). With this in mind, experts convened in Lisbon on 22 October to discuss the new concept for the BPP and to test one of the evidence frameworks developed by the DECIDE project leaders (based on an EMCDDA systematic review on media campaigns to prevent illicit drug use among young people). The new, improved portal will be launched in May 2014 to coincide with the release of the *European Drug Report 2014*.

Marica Ferri

([1]) http://cdag.cochrane.org/ • www.gradeworkinggroup.org • www.decide-collaboration.eu

BOOKSHELF

Novel psychoactive substances



Novel psychoactive substances: classification, pharmacology and toxicology provides readers with a comprehensive overview of the classification, detection, supply and availability of novel psychoactive substances ('new drugs'), often sold as 'legal highs'.

The book delivers a detailed and authoritative review of the pharmacology and toxicology of some of the novel psychoactive substances that have recently emerged onto the drug market, including: mephedrone, piperazines, indanes and the synthetic cannabinoid receptor agonists found in 'Spice'/'K2'. It also looks at: the legal classification of these substances from an international perspective; global monitoring of the use of these drugs; and related social issues.

Written by international experts in the field, and featuring contributions from specialists from the EMCDDA, this multi-authored book is a valuable reference work for scientists, clinicians, healthcare professionals, academics, biochemists and regulatory and law-enforcement professionals.

Editors: Paul Dargan and David Wood
Publisher: Elsevier
Language: English
Date: 30 September 2013
ISBN (print book): 9780124158160
ISBN (eBook): 9780124159112
Ordering: http://store.elsevier.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.

HISTORY

EMCDDA: 20 years

On 30 October 2013, the EMCDDA marked 20 years since the entry into force of its founding regulation. Over this period, the agency has established strong mechanisms in Europe to carry out regular and sustained monitoring of developments in the drugs field as well as to ensure rapid responses to new substances. A central challenge for the EMCDDA today is to continue to deliver high-quality analyses on established topics while, at the same time, extending its work in less developed but strategically important areas, with the same or fewer resources. As the European drugs problem evolves, the agency strives to ensure that its tools and approaches keep pace with developments and remain fit-for-purpose. The EMCDDA's current three-year strategy and work plan rest on the recognition that the achievements the agency has made since its inception have been delivered by maintaining clarity of purpose, technical rigour and a long-term vision.

LEGISLATION

EC calls for stronger EU action on new drugs

The European Commission (EC) proposed on 17 September fresh legislation to address new psychoactive substances. The proposal follows an unprecedented rise in the number of new drugs detected in Europe in recent years and a Commission review of the EU's current legal mechanism for monitoring and acting on these new substances ([1]). With the aim of building on the strengths of the current mechanism, addressing its shortcomings and speeding up common EU responses, the EC proposed a:

- Regulation on new psychoactive substances, repealing and replacing Council Decision 2005/387/JHA of 10 May 2005 on the monitoring, risk assessment and control of new psychoactive substances; and a
- Directive amending Council Framework Decision 2004/757/JHA of 25 October 2004 laying down minimum provisions on the constituent elements of criminal acts and penalties in the field of illicit drug trafficking ([2]).

Before becoming law, the proposals will need to be adopted by the European Parliament and by the Council of the EU.

([1]) Council Decision 2005/387/JHA, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/activities/action-on-new-drugs

([2]) For more, see European Commission press items: IP/13/837 and MEMO/13/790.

EMCDDA PAPER AWARD WINNERS 2013

The four winning articles of the 2013 EMCDDA paper award are:

- 'Risk taking and the adolescent reward system: a potential common link to substance abuse', primary author Sophia Schneider, Dipl.-Psych. (Germany). Published in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* 2012, 169: 39–46.
- 'A combined approach using transporter-flux assays and mass spectrometry to examine psychostimulant street drugs of unknown content', primary author Dr Rudolf Rosenauer (Austria). Published in *ACS Chemical Neuroscience*, 2013, 4: 182–190.
- 'All-cause and liver-related mortality in hepatitis C infected drug users followed for 33 years: a controlled study', primary author Dr Knut Boe Kielland, M.D. (Norway). Published in the *Journal of Hepatology* 2013, 58: 31–37.
- 'The effectiveness of opioid maintenance treatment in prison settings: a systematic review', primary author Dagmar Hedrich, Dipl.-Psych. (EMCDDA staff member). Published in *Addiction* 2012, 107: 501–517.

DRUGS-LEX

Slovakia introduces control system on new drugs and lowers the penalty for minor trafficking offences

In 2013, Slovakia has enacted two significant changes to its drug control legislation. The first change — dated 5 February and effective from 1 April ([1]) — has been to introduce a new section to the law to control new psychoactive substances.

The new Article 16a of the drug control law establishes a category of 'hazardous substances', to be named in a list maintained by the Ministry of Health (designed to be faster to update than the government-maintained list of controlled drugs). Substances may be included in the list 'if there is reasonable suspicion that abuse is persistent or sporadic and deliberate, accompanied by harmful physical or mental reactions'. Substances may be kept on this list for a maximum of three years, after which they should be classified as controlled drugs or removed from it.

The first list, naming 17 substances, was issued with effect from 1 October 2013 ([2]). There is no penalty for personal possession of a substance on this list and the penalty for supply offences will be based on consumer and health protection legislation, rather than criminal law.

The second significant change — dated 25 June and effective from 1 August — has been to lower the minimum penalty for minor drug trafficking offences. Under Criminal Code section 172(1) ([3]), the penalty for possessing more than 10 'one-shot' doses of a controlled drug ([4]) will now start from three years' imprisonment (down from 4 years). This move is designed to allow the judge to impose a suspended sentence of imprisonment with probation supervision, rather than being obliged to impose a sentence of immediate imprisonment. This modification was inspired by current practice and aims at cases of illicit possession of drugs which slightly exceed the 10-dose limit for personal possession.

Brendan Hughes and Alexander Kunosik

([1]) Law 40/2013 of 5 February amending and supplementing Law no. 139/1998 Z. z. of narcotics, psychotropic substances and preparations, as amended.

([2]) Decree of the Ministry of Health 298/2013 on the list of hazardous substances.

([3]) www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2013-204

([4]) In Slovakia the limit for personal possession is 10 doses of a controlled drug.

INTERNATIONAL

Thematic twinning initiative

'Analysing, interpreting and disseminating drug-related data to facilitate decision-making' was the focus of a training course hosted by the EMCDDA from 30 September to 2 October in Lisbon. The event, a thematic twinning initiative of the EU's Cooperation Programme between Latin America and the European Union on Drugs Policies (COPOLAD), was organised in cooperation with the Portuguese General-Directorate for Intervention on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies (SICAD) and the Inter-American Observatory on Drugs (OID) of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission of the Organization of American States (CICAD–OAS) ([1]).

The training course featured a series of presentations on contemporary approaches to drug monitoring that can be used at national level and across different sectors. Activities were also designed to allow participants to share their countries' experiences in interpreting and disseminating drug-related data to elaborate drug policies. The three-day course offered a unique opportunity to reflect on further ways to strengthen the added value of observatories within institutional and political contexts. The training programme is the second of three courses jointly organised by the EMCDDA and Charles University (Prague) in the context of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two bodies in 2012. The first took place in April 2013; the third will take place in Prague in 2014 for the countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Patricia Jiménez Barceló

([1]) For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2013/fs7

PARTNERS

Workshop showcases Croatia's national drug monitoring system

EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz opened a workshop in Zadar (Croatia) on 22 October in his first official visit to the country since its accession to the EU in July 2013. The two-day workshop, which focused on Croatia's national drug monitoring system, was organised by the European Commission's Technical Assistance and Information and Exchange Instrument (TAIEX), in cooperation with the EMCDDA and the Office for Combating Drug Abuse of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (Reitox focal point). The aim of the workshop was to showcase Croatia's achievements to date in developing its national drug information system and to increase the visibility of the EMCDDA and the national focal point in the country. The event gathered over 30 experts from across Europe.

The Director opened the inaugural session on 'Why monitoring of the drug situation and related responses matters' with a speech on 'Providing the evidence base for effective policy and action'.

Following an introduction by Mr Željko Petković, Director of the Office for Combating Drug Abuse, Mr Alexis Goosdeel, EMCDDA Head of unit for Reitox and international cooperation spoke on reference frameworks for monitoring the drug situation and issues of quality assurance ([1]).

Alexis Goosdeel

([1]) For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2013/fs8

SPOTLIGHT

2014 European summer school on illicit drugs

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: supply, demand and public policies' ([1]). The decision follows the positive evaluation by students of the first two summer schools held in Lisbon in 2012 and 2013. Profiles of former alumni and their positive testimonials can be found on the official summer school website.

The first two events brought together around 60 students from over 15 EU Member States as well as countries from Asia and Latin America. In 2013, students were able to apply for scholarships from ISCTE–IUL and from the International Programme of the US National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).

Premiered in the 2013 summer school were the 'keynote lectures', delivered by Björn Hibell (ESPAD project coordinator); Professor Gabriele Fischer (Medical University of Vienna) and Professor Robert West (University College London). This feature will be continued in 2014, with a new line-up of keynote speakers scheduled to address the course.

Adopting a multidisciplinary and interactive approach, the two-week course will prepare participants to meet today's complex policy challenges in the drugs field. Trainers will include EMCDDA scientific experts, guest speakers, policymakers and ISCTE-professors.

Renate Hochwieser, Liesbeth Vandam and Maria Moreira

([1]) 'Early bird' fee reductions will be available as in previous years. For more, see www.drugsummerschool.cies.iscte-iul.pt

REITOX ACADEMY

Preventing and controlling infectious diseases among people who inject drugs

Preventing and controlling infectious diseases among people who inject drugs (PWID) was the focus of the latest EMCDDA Reitox Academy held in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) from 29–30 October. The event gathered over 20 experts from five candidate and potential candidate countries to the EU ([1]).

Building on a guidance report on the same topic, published by EMCDDA and ECDC in 2011 ([2]), the participating experts discussed with EMCDDA staff a range of policies and measures to prevent and control infectious diseases among PWID. Special attention was given to exploring the availability of data on the epidemiological situation and on the provision of recommended prevention measures.

A set of proposals was agreed at the meeting aimed at strengthening national drug monitoring systems and reaching an adequately high coverage of prevention measures in the participating countries.

This Reitox Academy was the first regional event organised in cooperation with the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It formed part of a series of training activities organised within the framework of a technical cooperation project with candidate and potential candidate countries, launched by the EMCDDA in January 2012.

Patricia Jiménez Barceló, Ilze Jekabsone, Alessandro Pirona and Lucas Wiessing

([1]) www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/partners/cc

([2]) www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/ecdc-emcdda-guidance
www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2011/5

NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES

Implementing Decision submits new drug 5-IT to EU-wide controls

The Council of the EU adopted an implementing Decision on 7 October to submit the new psychoactive substance 5-(2-aminopropyl)indole (5-IT) to EU-wide control measures, following a risk assessment conducted by the extended EMCDDA Scientific Committee on 11 April 2013 ([1])([2]).

5-IT, a synthetic stimulant drug, was reported to the EU early-warning system (EWS) in 2012 and appears to have been available in Europe since around November 2011. The substance was linked to 24 fatalities and 21 non-fatal intoxications, which occurred over a period of five months in 2012, raising concerns for public safety.

Recognising the threats posed by this substance, a number of EU Member States have already taken steps to control it under their own drug legislation. According to the Decision: 'Subjecting the substance to control measures across the Union would help avoid the emergence of obstacles to cross-border law enforcement and judicial cooperation and protect users from the risks that its consumption can pose'.

> **By 13 October 2014, Member States must take the necessary measures, in accordance with their national law, to subject 5-IT to control measures and criminal penalties**

By 13 October 2014, Member States must take the necessary measures, in accordance with their national law, to subject 5-IT to control measures and criminal penalties, as provided for under their legislation complying with their obligations under the 1971 United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances.

Andrew Cunningham and Ana Gallegos

([1]) Published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (L 272/44) of 12.10.2013: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:272:0044:0045:EN:PDF

([2]) Risk-assessment report: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st08/st08693.en13.pdf

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

New series of EMCDDA papers to be launched this autumn

In line with its 2012 Communication strategy which promises to produce briefer web-based products and fewer lengthy volumes in print, the EMCDDA will be launching this autumn a new series of 'EMCDDA papers' to be available in electronic format only. Upcoming topics to be addressed by the series include: drug policy advocacy organisations; psychiatric co-morbidity; public expenditure related to detainees for drug-law offences; multidimensional family therapy; and drug squads.

For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/upcoming

EMCDDA publications recognised by the American Library Association

Three of the EMCDDA's publications have recently been recognised among the 'notable government documents 2012' by the American Library Association (ALA). The three publications are the: *EU drug markets report: a strategic analysis*; *Cannabis production and markets* and *New heroin-assisted treatment: recent evidence and current practices of supervised injectable heroin treatment in Europe and beyond*.

The EMCDDA was informed of this accolade on 3 September by the Notable Documents Panel of the ALA's Government Documents Roundtable (ALA/GODORT). Publications are nominated which meet or surpass around 10 criteria. These include: the extent of lasting value and reference and bibliographic value of the publication; the degree to which the document expands knowledge or shows innovation; and the extent to which the document enhances quality of life and furthers understanding of government processes, functions, or agency missions. The physical appearance, browsability, searchability and usability of the publication are also acknowledged.

For more on the nomination process and selection criteria, see www.wikis.ala.org/godort/images/7/72/Chapter24_PublicationsCmte.pdf

EMCDDA hosts EACD regional debate

'Public affairs: enhancing engagement with EU institutions' was the subject of a regional debate of the European Association of Communication Directors (EACD), hosted by the EMCDDA on 24 October. The EACD, founded in Brussels in 2006, is a European network of communication professionals set up to foster professionalism in communications and to promote cultural diversity. The EACD regional debates bring together PR and communications professionals in the different European regions for informative discussions and networking opportunities (regional coordinator for Portugal: Rui Martins, Dianova). In focus at the event were: the EMCDDA's communication strategy; the work of the Jacques Delors Centre in communicating Europe in Portugal; and an Inforpress public affairs campaign around a 100-year disease, paramyloidosis. The EACD has recently published the *European Communication Monitor 2013,* the results of a survey on the status quo and trends of communication management across Europe.

For more, see www.eacd-online.eu/information/survey/survey-european-communication-monitor-2013

RESOURCES

2014 ISSDP conference

The 8th annual conference of the International Society for the Study of Drug Policy (ISSDP) will be held in Rome from 21–23 May 2014. In a first call for papers, the organisers are inviting abstracts (200–400 words) and panel proposals (for up to four papers) from researchers and practitioners interested in advancing knowledge regarding the development, assessment, or evolution of drug policy nationally or internationally (deadline: 20 January 2014 — cibb@uniroma2.it). PhD students and scholars from developing countries are encouraged to submit entries.

For more, see www.issdp.org

SENAD releases new studies on crack cocaine

On 19 September, Brazil's National secretariat on drug policy (*Secretaria nacional de políticas sobre drogas*/SENAD), released the results of the world's largest studies on crack cocaine to date. The first study, which estimates the number of crack cocaine users in the country (*Estimativa do número de usuários de crack e/ou similares nas capitais do país*) draws on interviews with over 22 000 individuals. The second study, which explores the profile of these users (*Perfil dos usuários de crack e/ou similares no Brasil*), follows interviews with over 7 000 individuals. The interviews were conducted in a sample of 27 Brazilian cities, metropolitan regions and medium and large municipalities. The studies are availaible in Portuguese with Spanish and English versions planned for November. A more detailed analysis will be released in January 2014.

For more, see www.obid.senad.gov.br/portais/OBID/index.php

CALENDAR 2013

EMCDDA meetings

22 October:	Exchange meeting on 'How to communicate evidence?', Lisbon.
22–23 October:	TAIEX, EMCDDA, national focal point event on Croatia's national drug monitoring system, Zadar.
29–30 October:	Regional Reitox Academy on the prevention and control of infectious diseases and other health-related consequences among people who inject drugs, Sarajevo.
7–8 November:	Scientific paper award and 39th Scientific Committee meeting, Lisbon.
21–22 November:	ECDC–EMCDDA Reitox Academy on infectious diseases, Tallinn.
27–29 November:	49th Reitox Head of focal point meeting, Lisbon.
5–6 December:	48th EMCDDA Management Board meeting, Lisbon.

External meetings

5–7 November:	2013 European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Disease, Epidemiology (ESCAIDE) (http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/escaide/Pages/ESCAIDE.aspx), Stockholm.
13–15 November:	4th international conference of the European Society for Prevention Research (EUSPR) (http://euspr.org/fourth-euspr-conference-1315-november-2013-paris-france-2/), Paris.
26–27 November:	73rd meeting of the Permanent Correspondents, Pompidou Group, Athens.

EU meetings

12 November:	EU–Central Asia senior officials' meeting on drugs, Lithuanian Presidency, Brussels.
13 November:	Dublin Group meeting, Lithuanian Presidency, Brussels.
14 November:	Horizontal working party on drugs, Brussels.

Statutory bodies

New EMCDDA Scientific Committee to start in 2014

With its second mandate drawing to a close at the end of this year, the current EMCDDA Scientific Committee held its last meeting in Lisbon from 7–8 November. During the proceedings, the Committee adopted a formal opinion on the EMCDDA 2014 work programme, discussed recent developments in the risk assessment of new drugs and explored how to better advise EU bodies on drug-related research priorities and on the scientific evaluation of policies and interventions ([1]). The EMCDDA 2013 scientific paper award ceremony took place in the margins of the meeting on 7 November (see p. 1).

Chairman of the EMCDDA Management Board João Goulão and EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz thanked the 16 Committee members for their role as guardians and advocates of the scientific integrity of the agency over two consecutive terms (2008–10 and 2011–13). Following the publication of a call for expressions of interest in the *Official Journal of the European Union* in February this year, the Management Board will appoint, at its meeting in December, 15 new members to serve on the Committee from 2014–16. The new members will be chosen, following a public selection process, on the basis of scientific merit and independence and their expertise in the most relevant scientific fields linked to the problems of drugs and drug addiction today.

Maria Moreira

([1]) For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/sc

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The need to scale up the monitoring of illicit drug supply in Europe is an important component of the current EU drugs strategy (2013–20). The strategy sets a priority for the EU to work towards more effective policies in the field of drug supply reduction, by reinforcing policy evaluation and analysis to improve the understanding of drug markets, drug-related crime and the effectiveness of drug-related law enforcement responses.

([1]) 15189/13 CORDROGUE 107 ENFOPOL 329.

([2]) Organised by the European Commission and the EMCDDA with the active involvement of Europol:
www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/online/2011/73/article3
www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/online/2012/78/article2

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