

European Update

EMCDDA

New Scientific Committee for EU drugs agency. The EMCDDA Management Board have selected 15 high-level scientists from the EU Member States to be members of the agency's Scientific Committee [EMCDDA]
<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/?nNodeID=33863#82435>

Council of Europe

The Council recognises the serious effect on the countries of Latin America, the Caribbean and increasingly West and North Africa, of cocaine production and trafficking, including drug use, harm to the social and political fabric and contribution to armed conflict, as well as the significant impact of such illegal activities on the EU itself. See press release.
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/97460.pdf

Czech Republic

Annual Report on the 2006 Drug Situation in the Czech Republic has been prepared. It sums up information about the situation in the field of drug use and its consequences, in the field of legislation, strategies, and drug policy coordination, and about interventions, especially in the areas of drug demand reduction, drug crime, and drug markets in the Czech Republic in 2006, as well as trends in the above-mentioned fields. http://www.drogy-info.cz/index.php/english/publications/annual_report_the_czech_republic_2006_drug_situation

Finland

New guidelines are to be drawn up for the medical use of cannabis. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health wants to clarify legislation so that prescribing cannabis to sufferers of chronic pain would no longer be automatically illegal. <http://www.yle.fi/news/left/id77759.html>

Ireland

Drugs may become the greatest blight on Ireland since the famine. Marijuana is certainly less habit-forming than alcohol or tobacco. There is a need for a proper and informed debate about legal and illegal drugs. <http://www.irishexaminer.com/irishexaminer/pages/story.aspx-qqgg=opinion-qqgm=opinion-qqga=general-qqqid=49861-qqqx=1.asp>

The Netherlands

Amsterdam's drug police demand right to keep on smoking cannabis. Officers in the capital of the Netherlands are in open revolt against a new code of behaviour that

orders them to stop taking drugs in their free time. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article3098016.ece>

Portugal

'The Effects of Decriminalisation of Drug Use in Portugal'
In 2004, the Beckley Foundation reported on the legal changes that took place in Portugal in 2001, which effectively decriminalised the possession and use of all drugs, and diverted those arrested into education or treatment programmes (Allen, Trace, & Klein, 2004). This report aims to provide an updated overview of the effects of these changes. http://www.idpc.info/php-bin/documents/BFDPP_BP_14_EffectsOfDecriminalisation_EN.pdf.pdf

United Kingdom

The Government has welcomed recommendations from UK Sport to modernise the UK's approach to anti-doping, leading to the creation of an independent National Anti-Doping Organisation with far reaching new powers. http://www.uksport.gov.uk/news/plans_for_new_national_anti-doping_organisation_announced/

United Kingdom

A new piece of research examines the way that the Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) engages and directs Class A drug misusers from the point of arrest or charge to the point of treatment, and examines their offending levels before and after identification by DIP. <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs07/horr02b.pdf>

United Kingdom

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation have a new paper on cannabis supply and young people. They say this is a snapshot of "how young people in a large city and rural villages obtain cannabis". It is based on interviews with 182 cannabis users aged 11 to 19. <http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/pdf/2175.pdf>

United Kingdom

2007 National Report (2006 data) on the drug situation to the EMCDDA by the UK Reitox National Focal Point. <http://www.ukfocalpoint.org.uk/documentbank/UK%20Focal%20Point%20Annual%20Report%202007.pdf>

World Update

UNODC

Should drugs be legalized? The Executive Director of UNODC, Antonio Maria Costa, put forward his views on the topic.

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/free-drugs-or-drugs-free.html>

UNODC

A new report has been published 'Cocaine Trafficking in West Africa: the threat to stability and development - with particular reference to Guinea-Bissau. (pdf).

http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/west_africa_cocaine_report_2007-12_en.pdf

UNODC

4 action plans have been published to address increasing the number of opium poppy free provinces in Afghanistan; strengthening cross border counter narcotics cooperation between Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan; securing Central Asia's borders through intelligence cooperation and border management; and the reduction of smuggling pre-cursor chemicals into Afghanistan.

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/regional/central-asia.html>

International Harm Reduction Association.

IHRA release a major report calling for an end to the use of the death penalty for drug offences around the world. The report concludes that the on-going execution of drug offenders is a violation of international human rights law.

<http://www.ihra.net/News#IHRALaunchDeathPenaltyReport>

Afghanistan

The USA is putting pressure on the Afghan government to officially adopt the strategy of eradicating the opium poppy through aerial spraying of the crops with the herbicide glyphosate.

<http://www.tni.org/policybriefings/brief25.pdf>

Canada

The Drug Situation Report 2006 provides a strategic overview of the illicit drug trade in Canada. This year, the Report features two new sections: Drug-generated Proceeds and Emerging Trends.

http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/drugs/drugs_2006_e.htm

China

China is expected to pass its first anti-drug law. Law-makers will review a final draft of the bill that included raising the age limit for compulsory rehabilitation to 16. Opium, heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine hydrochloride -- commonly known as "ice" -- as well as morphine and cocaine are listed as banned drugs.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/23/AR2007122300293.html>

China

Chinese police seizures of party drugs have more than doubled this year, reflecting the increasing use of such drugs. In the first 11 months of the year, Chinese police detained 60,000 suspects, netting 2 million Ecstasy tablets, 6.2 tons of "ice" and 5.2 tons of Ketamine.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20071226/wl_nm/china_drugs_dc

Ecuador

The joint UNODC-World Customs Organization container control programme has seen numerous successes in its short history. Recently, almost two tons of cocaine was seized in the port of Guayaquil, Ecuador - the biggest in a series of seizures this year.

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/curbing-the-cocaine-flow.html>

Iran

Some 2,500 tonnes of narcotics enter Iran from neighbouring Afghanistan annually, more than a quarter of which are consumed in the Islamic republic.

"Afghanistan produces 8,200 tonnes of narcotics, 2,500 of which enter Iran," said Mohammad Reza Jahani, deputy head of Iran's anti-narcotics organisation.

"Of this amount, 700 tonnes are consumed in the country, 500 tonnes are seized by the police and the rest, which is about 1,300 tonnes, is transited through the country."

<http://www.iranmania.com/News/ArticleView/Default.asp?NewsCode=56531&NewsKind=Current%20Affairs>

Kazakhstan

Kazakh National Security Committee operatives have closed 21 drug trafficking channels and arrested 252 people on suspicion of involvement in drug trafficking in 2007. More than a tonne of narcotic substances, including 688 kilograms of heroin and opium, has been seized from illegal trade. This is 65% of the total volume of drugs of this type that have been seized in 2007 by all Kazakh security agencies involved in action against drug trafficking.

http://www.interfax.ru/e/B/0/0.html?id_issue=11935250

Oceania

Oceania, most notably Australia and New Zealand, has emerged as the region with the highest rate of consumption of amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), including ecstasy, a disproportionately large share in relation to the population in the area. [Australian Institute of Criminology]

<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/rpp/81/rpp81.pdf>

Senegal

In Senegal drug traffickers stand to face 10 to 20 years of hard labour, double the current punishment, under a new law adopted in parliament.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=75953>

Drug Webwatch

Foundation for Alcohol and Drug Education

A New Zealand web site to help individuals, families, friends, workmates and the community to learn more about drugs and alcohol. Its resources include a news page, basic information, research and education material including an online facility to order books, CDs, videos and posters. See: <http://www.fade.org.nz/>

World Forum Against Drugs

The first ever World Forum Against Drugs, WFAD, will be held in Stockholm, Sweden, September 8-10 2008. The aim is to create an opportunity for people from all around the world working against illicit drugs to exchange ideas and share experiences on how we all can develop our methods and move in the direction of the visionary goal of a world free from drug abuse. Full details at: <http://www.wfad08.org>

Mentor International Prevention Awards 2008:

The Mentor International Prevention Awards event will take place in France in June next year. Applications for projects that have achieved and those that show promise are required from any organisation from around the world undertaking practical prevention work. Details and application forms will be sent out and obtainable on the Mentor web site from 11 January (closing date for applications 31, March 2008). <http://www.mentorfoundation.org/>

Future Issues

I would like to express thanks to those persons around the world who have contributed to this issue in particular to Jim Young at Substance Misuse. Items for inclusion in future issues should be forwarded to paul@paul-cook.net

If you feel the information in this newsletter is of interest to members of your national drug information network then please feel free to translate and circulate copies to them.

Paul Cook



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