

European Update

EMCDDA

Risk assessment of new psychoactive substances — operating guidelines

The principal aim of these guidelines is to put in place a sound methodological and procedural basis for carrying out each risk assessment, by using a semi-quantitative assessment procedure.

<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index100978EN.html>

Albania

A group of six Albanian nationals was caught in the act of smuggling 50 kilos of cannabis into Greece by border police in the mountains of Grevena.

<http://www.ana.gr/anaweb/user/showplain?maindoc=8597182&service=142>

Belgium

Self-Help Web Tool For Cocaine Addicts Launched In Belgium. The 'DrugLijn', Belgium's Dutch-speaking phone information service on drugs, alcohol or medicine-related problems, has launched 'Zelfhulp cocaïne', a self-assistance module for cocaine addicts via the site.

<http://www.egovmonitor.com/node/35476>

Bosnia

Bosnian police seize cannabis, arrest 7 suspects. Authorities in Bosnia say border police confiscated 155 kilograms of cannabis and arrested seven suspects who tried to smuggle the drugs into Bosnia from Montenegro.

http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=1221998&lang=eng_news

Guernsey

Mephedrone will be reclassified as a class B drug, Guernsey's health authorities have announced.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/guernsey/8618651.stm>

Ireland

A European anti-drugs campaigner has accused the Government of falsely blaming EU laws for the delay in banning head shop drugs such as mephedrone.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/116682>

The Netherlands

Decriminalizing cannabis in the Netherlands and regulating the back-door of the coffee-shops and cultivation of cannabis would save 160 million euro on expenses by the police and the criminal justice system and bring in 260 million euro in tax revenues.

http://www.ungassondrugs.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=293&Itemid=65

Russia

Russia's War on Drugs is identical to its American and British counterparts: it's a failure. Russia's in the grip of a heroin epidemic. Russia has 2.5m heroin addicts and 30,000 of them will die this year.

http://english.pravda.ru/opinion/columnists/07-04-2010/112906-war_drugs-0

Spain

Spanish police say they have seized more than 800kg (1,760lbs) of cocaine from a lorry disguised as an official backup vehicle for the Dakar rally. The lorry was infiltrated into the race, which now takes place in South America, and loaded with cocaine before being shipped to Spain. The final destination for the drugs was the Spanish island of Ibiza, home to a major drugs trafficking ring.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/8618428.stm>

United Kingdom

Mephedrone banned under misuse of Drugs Act. Following the completion of the parliamentary process, mephedrone and other cathinone derivatives will become illegal as Class B drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, with effect from 00.01 on 16 April 2010.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/detail.aspx?ReleaseID=413027&NewsAreaID=2&HUserID=895,777,894,852,783,867,710,705,765,674,677,767,684,762,718,674,708,683,706,718,674&ClientID=-1>

United Kingdom

The UK is currently experiencing a lot of media attention to Mephedrone. From the TeacherNet site a fact sheet the DCSF have produced on Mephedrone: Where does mephedrone come from? Mephedrone belongs to a group of drugs known as cathinones which are stimulants similar to amphetamine compounds, but they can also have ecstasy-like effects. Cathinone itself is a naturally occurring stimulant found in the khat plant

<http://drugeducationforum.wordpress.com/2010/03/22/mephedrone-dcsf-fact-sheet/>

United Kingdom

Mentor International Prevention Awards 2010.

The Awards celebrate promise and achievement in drug abuse prevention globally. Awards are open to all non-government organizations working in the field of drug abuse prevention. Cash prizes will be awarded in three categories: Achievement, Innovation and Youth; Big Idea, recognizing evaluated, promising and youth-led drug prevention initiatives.

<http://awards.mentorfoundation.org/>

World Update

UNODC

UNODC 2010 Annual Report

This Report shows how health, security and justice are the antidotes to drugs, crime and terrorism. <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2010/April/unodc-2010-annual-report-released.html>

UNODC

Synthetic drugs have become a growing problem globally, with a market estimation as high as \$65 billion. Amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) pose new challenges due to their availability, affordability and adaptability to shifts in consumer trends. In East and Southeast Asia the successful reduction in opium cultivation and production over the past decade and a half, has unfortunately been mirrored by a simultaneous increase in the use and trafficking of ATS. It is estimated that about half of all ATS users worldwide live in East and Southeast Asia.

http://www.unodc.org/eastasiaandpacific/en/2010/03/smart/story.html?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter

Afghanistan

Afghan farmers reap cannabis harvest worth £61m. Afghanistan, already the world's top opium supplier, is now the world's biggest producer of cannabis, according to United Nations drug experts.

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/afghan-farmers-reap-cannabis-harvest-worth-pound61m-14765178.html>

Colombia

The Colombian intelligence service seized over 738kg of cocaine which was hidden in secret compartments of two trucks which were parked in the town of Yumbo, Valle del Cauca. According to a statement from the intelligence service, the drugs were bound to the United States and with the street value being an estimated \$25 million.

<http://www.nationalturk.com/en/25-million-cocaine-us-seized-colombia-87684983>

Costa Rica

Costa Rican police have seized more than a tonne of cocaine transported from Colombia and arrested four Colombians, a Nicaraguan and two Costa Ricans. 2 boats laden with 525 kg of cocaine and 2 vehicles loaded with another 520 kg were seized along with GPS trackers and an AK-47 assault rifle from the men. Police said the drugs were to be shipped to North America or Europe.

<http://www.prokerala.com/news/articles/a123951.html>

India

Border Security Force (BSF) officials seized heroin worth 1.8 millions. Acting on information, BSF personnel seized contraband items like heroin and fake currency from the Pakistani nationals out of whom one was shot dead by the security personnel. They recovered 26 kilograms of heroin, fake Indian currency, one pistol, 5,000

live rounds. <http://sify.com/news/heroin-worth-millions-seized-in-punjab-news-national-kdtmkggiidb.html>

New Zealand

Customs says it is reviewing the way it targets rising levels of imports of the party drug mephedrone, which has been linked to some deaths in Europe. A Class C drug in New Zealand, the stimulant has been increasingly abused.

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10632986

Pakistan

KARACHI: The High Court allowed shifting of three convicts - a travel agent, his wife and son - to Islamabad so that they could be interrogated by a visiting Saudi Arabian delegation probing the Jeddah heroin trafficking case of 2009. The ruling said "The government is directed to ensure that under no circumstances, Sarwat Hussain, Shafia Khanum and their son Faraz Hussain shall be sent to Saudi Arabia without the permission of this court,"

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C04%5C03%5Cstory_3-4-2010_pg12_3

Russia

To help curb its heroin epidemic, Russia wants Britain and the United States to do more to eradicate opium poppy production in Afghanistan. Russian officials accuse Nato troops of refusing to destroy poppy fields in Afghanistan.. The head of Russia's drug control agency described Russia's heroin problem as a "tsunami" sweeping over the country.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/news/2010/04/100402_russia_heroin_hs.shtml

Turkey

Police in Istanbul have seized 20 kilos of heroin and detained 72 drug dealers in the frames of simultaneous police operations conducted in the city. Police also confiscated 5 kilos of hashish and 500 grams of heroin.

<http://www.focus-fen.net/index.php?id=n214580>

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan's special police force have confiscated more than 46 kilograms of narcotics during a police operation. The drug raid occurred in a residential home near the border with Tajikistan. During the search of a residential home, police found two bags stuffed with 43.4 kilograms of opium and 2.8 kilograms of heroin.

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20100320/158260219.html>

Vietnam

5 Vietnamese have been sentenced to death in a heroin smuggling case that corrupt law enforcement officials initially suppressed. 11 people received life prison terms. Among the guilty were former policemen, court officials and judges who accepted bribes to ensure the acquittal of the accused at their first trial.

<http://www.mysin Chew.com/node/36941>

Drug Update

Recently published Reports

Situational Analysis of Drug and Alcohol Issues and Responses in the Pacific 2008-09 (Report)

The report provides considered recommendations for framing appropriate responses coordinated at the regional level, via regional and international coordinating mechanisms and donors [Australian National Council on Drugs] http://www.ancd.org.au/images/PDF/Researchpapers/rp21_situational_analysis.pdf

Afghanistan Cannabis Survey

Afghanistan, the world's biggest producer of opium, is also a major producer of cannabis. These are the findings of the Afghanistan Cannabis Survey, the first ever UNODC report on cannabis in Afghanistan, which was released today. The Survey estimates that between 10,000 and 24,000 ha of cannabis plant are grown in Afghanistan every year.

http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/Afghanistan_Cannabis_Survey_2009.pdf

Drug Misuse Statistics Scotland 2009

An annual compendium presenting the latest available information from a range of national data sources relevant to drug misuse. <http://www.drugmisuse.isdscotland.org/publications/09dmss/09dmss-000.htm>

National Drug Threat Assessment 2010 (USA)

This report provides policymakers, law enforcement executives, resource planners, and counterdrug program coordinators with strategic intelligence regarding the threat posed to the United States by the trafficking and abuse of illicit drugs. <http://www.justice.gov/ndic/pubs38/38661/38661p.pdf>

Drug User Survey - 2010. Britain's Biggest Drugs Survey

The IDMU survey is the only comprehensive annual survey studying consumption patterns and prices of all commonly-used drugs. <http://www.idmu.co.uk/new-survey.htm>

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 and Roger van de Sompel**

Items for inclusion in future issues should be forwarded to paul@paul-cook.net

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