

## European Update

### EMCDDA

Europe's top scientific papers on drug-related topics will be acknowledged this year in a new award launched by the **EU drugs agency (EMCDDA)**. The prize giving, to take place annually in Lisbon, will celebrate excellence in scientific writing in this area of critical concern to EU citizens. Details: <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2011/fs-1>

### Belarus

Methadone substitution therapy helps prevent new HIV infections in Belarus. According to the UNAIDS, UNODC and WHO, Opioid substitution therapy (OST), with methadone or buprenorphine, is highly effective in reducing injecting behaviour that put people who use drugs at risk for HIV.

<http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2011/march/20110302methadonebelarus/>

### Bulgaria

Bulgaria's police have captured a shipment of 96 kg of heroin at the country's border with Turkey in an anti-narcotics operation coordinated with DEA. The drugs were found at the Kapitan Andreevo border crossing in a truck with Bulgarian license plates bringing cement into Bulgaria from Turkey.

[http://www.novinite.com/view\\_news.php?id=125924](http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=125924)

### Denmark

Denmark's health minister has called for free sterilisation for female alcoholics and drug addicts to help prevent birth defects in children.

<http://www.icenews.is/index.php/2011/02/25/minister-calls-for-free-sterilisation-for-addicts/>

### France

French customs have intercepted a cartel smuggling an Ecstasy-like stimulant into the country from China and have seized 52 kilos of the drug.

<http://www.english.rfi.fr/france/20110225-ecstasy-style-chinese-drug-seized-france>

### Italy

In a move that has the largely unanimous backing of health unions the Italian government is planning random drug testing of clinical staff. Under the plans medical and nursing staff will be notified 24 hours

before an impending test for drug misuse.

<http://www.bmj.com/content/342/bmj.d1185.extract?ct>

### Spain

The Spanish Supreme Court found the Romanian man not guilty of a crime against public health. A Romanian drug trafficker who sold 'healthy' cocaine has been found not guilty in the Spanish Supreme Court on appeal. The drug had been cut so much the remaining content of cocaine was so low, it was considered to have null effect on users.

[http://www.typicallyspanish.com/news/publish/article\\_29494.shtml](http://www.typicallyspanish.com/news/publish/article_29494.shtml)

### The Netherlands

The Dutch city of Utrecht wants cannabis smokers to grow their own marijuana in a cooperative, a move which would go against the Netherlands' drive to discourage soft drug use. It also would be illegal, the government said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/03/10/us-dutch-cannabis-idUSTRE7296YJ20110310>

### The Netherlands

The Development of International Drug Control: Lessons learned and strategic challenges for the future. The emergence of more pragmatic and less punitive approaches to the drugs issue may represent the beginning of change in the current global drug control regime.

<http://www.tni.org/paper/development-international-drug-control>

### United Kingdom

Drug overdose deaths highlight Britain's recent heroin shortage. Batches of rogue high-quality heroin thought to have triggered deaths due to users' reduced tolerance levels.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2011/mar/15/heroin-shortage-britain-overdose-deaths?INTCMP=SRCH>

### United Kingdom

Continued cannabis use and risk of incidence and persistence of psychotic symptoms: 10 year follow-up cohort study. Cannabis use is a risk factor for the development of incident psychotic symptoms.

<http://www.bmj.com/content/342/bmj.d738.full?sid=6bfa444b-178d-46d4-8fa5-dfbf21029dca>

## World Update

INCB: Annual Report of the International Narcotics Control Board on the Availability of Internationally Controlled Drugs: Ensuring Adequate Access for Medical and Scientific Purposes.

[http://www.incb.org/pdf/annual-report/2010/en/supp/AR10\\_Supp\\_E.pdf](http://www.incb.org/pdf/annual-report/2010/en/supp/AR10_Supp_E.pdf)

### Australia

#### National Drug Strategy 2010-2015

The Strategy maintains the cooperative venture between the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, as well as the non-government sector, to build safe and healthy communities by minimising alcohol, tobacco and other drug-related harms.

<http://www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/internet/drugstrategy/publishing.nsf/Content/consult>

### Bolivia

The former head of Bolivia's counter-narcotics police has been arrested in Panama and sent to the U.S. to face charges he ran a cocaine trafficking ring. The arrest of retired police general Rene Sanabria and the further arrests in Bolivia of three other senior officers are widely seen as an embarrassment for President Evo Morales.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1361384/Bolivias-drugs-police-head-Rene-Sanabria-face-cocaine-trafficking-charge-US.html?ito=feeds-newsxml>

### Honduras

A security official in Honduras says a cocaine processing lab found in a remote mountain area may have been run by Mexico's Sinaloa cartel.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/03/11/AR2011031106198.html>

### Hong Kong

A Hong Kong judge agreed with a Philippine congressman that the cocaine he brought into the southern Chinese territory was for his personal use as he considered a sentence for the politician. Rep. Ronald Singson was caught with 0.24 ounces (6.67 grams) of cocaine while transiting through the Hong Kong airport en route to the neighboring gambling enclave Macau in July. He has admitted to a charge of trafficking in a dangerous drug. Under Hong Kong law, the mere act of bringing drugs in the territory amounts to trafficking.

<http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleId=660183>

### India

An international smuggler from a village in Jaisalmer district was arrested after 2 years on the run. He is the main accused in the 2009 case of smuggling of 58 kg heroin -- the largest ever consignment brought from the Indo-Pak border.

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-02-28/jaipur/28641905\\_1\\_kg-heroin-smuggler-indo-pak-border](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-02-28/jaipur/28641905_1_kg-heroin-smuggler-indo-pak-border)

### India

Mumbai: The crime branch on Tuesday arrested deputy superintendent of police Ashok Baburao Dhavale (53) after he was found with 1.5 kg heroin in a police vehicle.

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-02-23/mumbai/28625976\\_1\\_police-jeep-police-car-munna](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-02-23/mumbai/28625976_1_police-jeep-police-car-munna)

### Kenya

The Kenyan government is taking an innovative approach to reducing HIV among injecting drug users. In a bold new initiative, the government is set to give drug users free access to HIV prevention and treatment services.

<http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2011/february/20110223aunodc/>

### Thailand

Police in northern Thailand have seized almost 200 kilograms of heroin and arrested 12 people suspected of involvement.

[http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/asiapacific/news/article\\_1620429.php/Thai-police-seize-200-kilograms-of-heroin](http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/asiapacific/news/article_1620429.php/Thai-police-seize-200-kilograms-of-heroin)

### USA

A drugs squad in California has found a 1.5 million-dollar (£920,000) marijuana-growing operation at a house along with an unusual security guard - a 4ft-long alligator named Wally.

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/breaking-news/offbeat/alligator-protects-cannabis-stash-15109627.html>

### Zambia

The Drug Enforcement Commission has seized 6.5 tonnes of cannabis and arrested 71 people countrywide in one week in connection with possession of psychotropic substances.

<http://www.dailymail.co.zm/media/news/viewnews.cgi?category=8&id=1300060106>

## Drug Webwatch

### Reports

#### Northern Ireland

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has published a Statistical Bulletin summarising information from the Northern Ireland Addicts Index. This bulletin includes information on: The number of persons registered at 31 December 2010 and the number of new notifications and removals in 2010; Gender and age of the person registered; Health and Social Care Trusts where registered; Drugs used, injecting behaviour, and duration on Index. <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/media-centre/news-departments/news-dhssps/news-dhssps-030311-statistics-from-the.htm>

#### EMCDDA

Thematic paper on Hepatitis C and drugs. In Europe, injecting drug use is a major transmission route for hepatitis C virus (HCV) infections. Estimates suggest that around 1 million people who have injected drugs may be living with HCV in the EU today. Typically between 40 % and 90 % of injecting drug users are infected, and many contract the disease soon after their first injection.

<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/themes/hepatitis>

#### USA

The 2011 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR) is an annual report by the Department of State to Congress prepared in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act. It describes the efforts of key countries to attack all aspects of the international drug trade in Calendar Year 2010. Volume I covers drug and chemical control activities. Volume II covers money laundering and financial crimes.

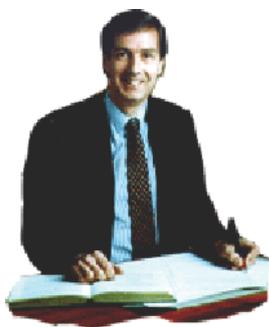
<http://www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2011/index.htm>

#### 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 at Substance Misuse. Items for inclusion in future issues should be forwarded to [paul@paul-cook.net](mailto:paul@paul-cook.net)

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**Paul Cook**



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