



Combating drug dependency within the EU



Brussels

In adopting a resolution on drug dependency, the European Parliament welcomed the Commission proposals on the prevention and reduction of risks associated with drug dependency. MEPs emphasised that local communities play a key role in taking active measures to help drug users. Local and national authorities should take practical action in response to new drug patterns, for example the widespread use of designer drugs and the much higher level of drug users at

raves and night-clubs. Standard rules should be drawn up to ensure safety inside and outside such venues. Governments should pay more attention to high-risk environments such as prisons.

The Commission is asked to co-operate with the candidate countries, the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe, the WHO, the UN International Drug Control Programme and other relevant European and international organisations and network active in the field.

According to HNN, it is important to remember that prevention of drug dependency and reduction of risks are the competencies of the Member States of the European Union and should remain that way. It would be disaster area if somebody would come up with the idea that European drug policy should be harmonised in line with the Dutch system.

The UK's new scheme to prevent drug crime

A new project called the Prospects scheme will be launched in the UK to assist those leaving prison to stay off drugs. The Prospects scheme will be tested in five areas across England and will provide support for short-term prisoners leaving prison.

Home Office Minister Hilary Benn said, "We know that 61 per cent of men and 56 per cent of women sentenced to less than 12 months would normally re-offend on release, with each one costing the taxpayer in the region of £65,000. This pilot is seeking to demonstrate that an integrated approach, provided in a residential setting, can significantly cut this rate.

The scheme will be available to those prisoners with a history of drug use and who may have been persistent offenders, but who do not have a history of serious offences and have been sentenced to less than 12 months prison.

The pilot projects will be tested in Exeter, Preston, Merseyside and the wider Bristol area under the UK Detention Services (UKDS), Stonham Housing Association and the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO).

ECAD NEWS

"Plant to eat, not to kill"

The Interior Minister of Lebanon, Elias Murr, urges the country's farmers to refrain from planting drug crops. For the sake of Lebanon's children the slogan of the farmers should be; "Plant to eat, not to kill", Murr said.

The Interior Minister was attending a workshop at the UNESCO when he made the statements. He added that the government is determined to carry on the war against drug cultivation and will not stop until "what is right wins over what is wrong." Lebanon is carrying out the campaign against illegal crops without the financial support of any foreign country. Murr

urged donor countries to support the development of substitute crop programs as the country's farmers have difficulty maintaining themselves and their families. These programs cost less than pursuing drug dealers and rehabilitating drug addicts, Murr pointed out. The Minister also said it was up to the government, the municipal councils, land owners, civil society and NGOs to share the responsibility in the fight against drugs production.

During last year's anti-drug campaign in Lebanon more than 2,000 drug dealers were arrested and around 120 million m² of drug crops were destroyed.

INCB: New annual report

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) published on February 26 its annual report. INCB is the independent and quasi-judicial monitoring body for the implementation of the United Nations international drug control conventions. It was established in 1968 in accordance with the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961. It had predecessors under the former drug control treaties as far back as the time of the League of Nations.

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Europe — Sweden — Karlskrona

Karlskrona, an active ECAD member city, has arranged a one day seminar to discuss drug policies from European, Swedish and local perspectives. Tomas Hallberg, ECAD, gave an overview of the policies on the European scene. Björn Fries, the Swedish National Drug Policy Co-ordinator, concentrated on principals of the Swedish approach. Börje Svensson, Karlskrona drug prevention work co-ordinator and his colleague from municipality's alcohol and drug section, Sören Trolle, informed about local experiences in combating illicit drugs. The speakers agreed on that though common European and national strategies are important, the key role in combating illicit drugs was the attitude of the local community towards the drug problem. The latter is crucial to the success of any anti-drug measures.

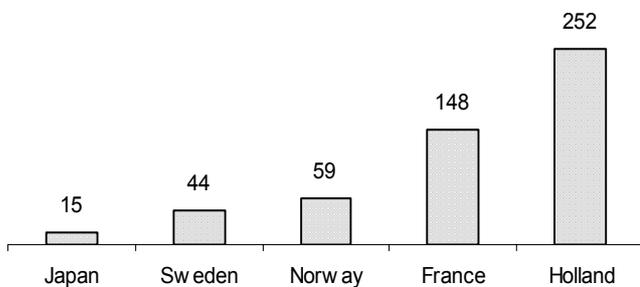
Besides that, Walter Kegö, responsible for custom and police issues within the governmental Mobilisation Against Drugs Committee,

spoke about ways illicit drugs are being smuggled into Sweden. Karlskrona which lies on the south-east coast of Sweden is located right in the middle of what is considered illicit drug trafficking routes. This due to its geographical position, at a node of shipping routes in the Baltic sea.

Illicit drugs misuse and violent crimes go together was one of the concepts that Tomas Hallberg brought up. To support it, he showed statistics with regard to the prevalence of violent crime and use of cannabis. The statistical data comes from countries with different approaches to illicit drugs and their use/misuse. Validity of such a comparison requires further research. None the less we can put forward the question whether or not this is by sheer coincidence that these curves overlap.

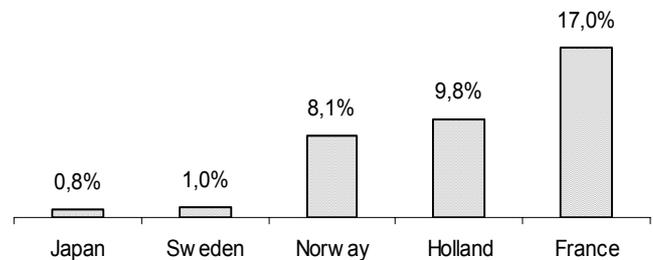
See the figures below

Serious crime per 100,000 inhabitants. Interpol, 1998



Last 12 months use of cannabis among adults.

EMCDDA, 2002



Comprehensive new study on Afghanistan opium economy

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna has published a comprehensive new study, *The Opium Economy in Afghanistan: An International Problem*, analysing developments that made Afghanistan the world's number one producer of illicit opium and suggesting ways and means to deal with that problem over the long run.

In a preface to the study, Antonio Maria Costa, executive director of the UNODC, characterises the Afghanistan opium economy as an intensely complex phenomenon which - over the past quarter of the century - "reached deeply into the political structure, civil society and economy of the country".

The UNODC has conducted annual opium poppy surveys in Afghanistan since 1994. Surveys provide the international community with valuable information on the location and extent of opium cultivation, production and prices. Afghanistan's opium production increased more than 15-fold since 1979, the year of the Soviet intervention. By the year 2000, the country was the source of 70 per cent of all the illicit opium produced in the world. Following a decline in 2001, production resumed at high levels in 2002, again making Afghanistan the world's largest producer (followed by Myanmar and Laos), accounting for almost three-quarters of global opium production.

The study goes beyond reporting on a single year's production and value. It examines Afghanistan's opium economy in order to under-

stand its dynamics, the reasons for its growth, its beneficiaries and victims, and the problems it has caused domestically and abroad. The purpose of the study is to assist the country and the international community in developing and implementing a comprehensive response to this challenge.

"This report exposes such roots as a contribution to the common effort against illicit drugs", Mr. Costa said.

The report deconstructs the opium economy of Afghanistan into its main components: cultivation, production, finance, trade and consumption. Then, by reconstructing the country's development processes, the report - according to Mr. Costa - points to the following essential elements of a sustainable counter-narcotic policy: "to help poor farmers decide in favour of licit crops; to replace narco-usury with a proper credit system and micro-lending; to provide jobs to women and to itinerant workers; to provide education to children, particularly girls; to turn opium bazaars into modern commodity markets; and to neutralise traffickers' and warlords' efforts to keep the evil trade alive".

In presenting the study on February 3, Mr. Costa was joined by Mr. Sandeep Chawla, chief of the UNODC's Research Section, which did the study, synthesising 10 years of UNODC's work on the problem.

You will find the Study (PDF-format) at www.unodc.org/pdf/afg_opium_economy_www.pdf

INCB: arguments of the supporters in favour of legalisation "do not reflect the truth"

The UN International Narcotics Control Board, INCB, published on February 26 its annual report. The INCB this year pays a lot of attention to illicit drugs and economic development and how illicit drug production prevents long-term economic growth, destabilises states, destabilises economies and civil societies.

In regard to illicit drugs legalisation

the INCB states, "Some distractions, however, come from groups that advocate legalisation or decriminalisation of drug offences, and others come from groups that favour a crusade focusing only on 'harm minimisation' or 'harm reduction'. Contrary to all available evidence, such lobbyists have persisted in proclaiming that there are safe ways to abuse drugs.

"Supporters of such legalisation pursue their goals through aggressive, well-founded campaigns and with missionary zeal. Their arguments, however, do not reflect the truth. The truth is that there are no safe ways to abuse drugs. The truth is that drug abuse creates problems for the drug abusers, for their immediate environment and, ultimately, for society as a whole. Most people are all too familiar with the pain experienced by the family members of a drug addict and with the disintegration of families as a result of drug abuse. And many people are aware of the loss of productivity that occurs in companies whose employees abuse drugs.

"The sight of unkempt drug abusers on street corners and in train stations, begging for money to finance their drug habits, cannot be ignored by responsible Governments. States have a moral and legal responsibility to protect drug abusers from further self-destruction. States should not give up and allow advocates of legalisation to take control of their national drug policies. Governments should not be intimidated by a vocal minority that wants to legalise illicit drug use. Governments must respect the view of the majority of lawful citizens; and those citizens are against illicit drug use".

Major developments in Europe

"In Europe, there continues to be considerable illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, particularly MDMA (Ecstasy), which are then smuggled not only within the region, but also into other regions throughout the world, predominantly North America and Oceania and, to a lesser extent, Africa and parts of Asia. Although there is no estimate of the volume of illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, large seizures of such drugs indicate that there is a constant supply and high availability. The Board believes that further international co-operation between law enforcement authorities is necessary to target large-scale trafficking in MDMA (Ecstasy) world-wide. At the same time, Governments should enhance their drug abuse prevention activities and provide potential abusers of synthetic drugs with carefully selected information on the harmful pharmacological effects of such drugs; for example, recent research indicates that the abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) may cause irreversible brain damage." (Paragraph 477)

Comparable national surveys

"In Europe, the problem of drug abuse appears to show no sign of abating. However, because comparable national surveys have been carried out regularly in only a few countries in Europe, it is difficult

to monitor regional developments in drug abuse over time. Noting with appreciation the work in that area by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, the Board invites all Governments to carry out more regularly comparable surveys in line with those carried out by the European Monitoring Centre, with a view to enabling them to ascertain whether their policies are having the desired impact." (Paragraph 478)

Trafficking routes

"The Balkan route, which is used for smuggling drugs through Bulgaria, is supplemented by a route going to and through the Russian Federation, as evidenced by the sharp increase in seizures of illicit drugs in the Russian Federation: Russian law enforcement agencies confiscated over 75 tons of narcotic drugs, including 3.5 tons of heroin, in 2001. On several occasions, the Bulgarian police have succeeded in disrupting operations involving trafficking in not only heroin but also cocaine and amphetamine-type stimulants. Albania and some countries that were formerly republics of Yugoslavia will remain vulnerable to transit trafficking, particularly as infrastructure such as road networks develops." (Paragraph 482)

Treaty adherence in Europe

"Of the 44 States in Europe, 43 are parties to the 1961 Convention, 42 are parties to the 1971 Convention and 41 States and the European Community are parties to the 1988 Convention. With the exception of Albania, which has not yet acceded to the 1971 Convention, all of the States in Eastern Europe and the CIS member States are parties to all of the international drug control treaties." (Paragraph 482)

"The Board encourages the Holy See, Liechtenstein and Switzerland to become parties to the 1988 Convention, which is the basis for effectively addressing illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and other activities related to illicit drugs." (Paragraph 485)

The report is available at www.INCB.org

Statistics on Drug Use in Australia

Statistics on Drug Use in Australia 2002 is the tenth in a series originally titled Statistics on Drug Abuse in Australia. The report provides a comprehensive summary of major drug use statistical collections, with references to sources of more detailed information. Data represented on patterns of drug use (including trends and attitudes to use), international comparisons, drugs and health, special population groups, crime and law enforcement, polydrug use and drug avoidance and moderation. New to this edition is a chapter on treatment services and data describing drug use by police detainees and drug use and drug-related offences by male prisoners. This report and others in the Drug Statistics Series are useful resources for policy-makers, planners and researchers interested in drug-related matters.

For more information please contact the HNN International Centre www.hnnsweden.com

Struggle, Prosecution & Falsification – All About Drugs



A new stage of the struggle against drug spreading has started in Russia. A special briefing was held in Russia's Ministry for Internal Af-

Doctors, scientists and public immediately objected to this measure. Head of the department for clinical research in the Narcology Institute, Vladimir Altschuler said in an interview to Russia's radio Echo Moskv that if the suggestion is realised, this may cause quite an opposite effect. Drug addicts won't be able to appeal for medical aid legally. He says that introduction of criminal responsibility for usage of drugs will drive people suffering from drug addiction underground.

fairs on February 20, where Deputy Chief of the investigation department of the Interior Ministry Committee of Inquiry, Justice Colonel Yury Alekseyev delivered a report. He said that over the past ten years the number of crimes connected with drug trafficking increased 11 times. The share of criminal cases connected with drug trafficking made up 13% - 16.5% of the total amount of instituted criminal proceedings.

It was suggested at the briefing that it was necessary to introduce criminal responsibility for drug usage. At present, a packet of documents designed to toughen criminal responsibility for illegal drug circulation is being considered in the State Duma (Parliament). At that, the Committee of Inquiry suggests that a clause must be introduced into the Russian Criminal Code to oblige drug addicts to undergo obligatory narcological treatment. At that, it is suggested that the clause #228 of the Russian Criminal Code, that currently provides for criminal responsibility for purchase and sale of drugs, must be divided into two parts, each of them will separately provide for criminal responsibility for purchase and sale of drugs. It is said that criminal responsibility for sale of drugs must be toughened up to extreme penalty.

The problem of drug spreading in Russia is actually very serious. As it was stated at the briefing in the Ministry for Internal Affairs, over 50% of all drugs are delivered to Russia from abroad, about 90% of heroin come from Afghanistan and Tajikistan. At present, the drug market in Russia is oriented at heroin and opium. Recently, prices for these drugs almost doubled.

It is often that drugs are fabricated like any other goods. It is reported that fabricated heroin was delivered from Afghanistan. Sometimes substance sold as pure heroin turns out to be pounded pills of an antimalarial medicine that is abundant in Afghanistan. Even experts can mix up the medicine with heroin by its colour and bitter taste. At best, there are only 5-10% of pure heroin in substances that drug dealers sell as heroin. Drug dealers often add powdered sugar, lactose, caffeine and analgin to heroin. Drug addicts usually buy falsifications instead of heroin.

Unfortunately, statistics provide no information concerning the problem whether usage of falsified drugs reduces the number of drug addicts.

By www.Pravda.ru/February 2003

ECAD Youth Conference in Stavanger, Norway 24-27 April, 2003



City of Stavanger

★ CONFERENCES



The conference theme is Trend drugs.

Each of the ECAD members can nominate two persons aged 15-20 to represent their cities at this conference.

We hope that up to 75 member cities' representatives from different European countries will attend the conference!

Welcome to Stavanger!

*For more information please visit
www.ecad.net*

10th Anniversary Mayors' Conference

All information about the Conference is now available at the ECAD web site,
www.ecad.net

- Programme
- Registration form
- General information
- Conference materials as PDF-files

Welcome!

*Our European societies have experimented and evaluated both tolerance and intolerance to illicit drug use and drug abuse. It is our reflection upon this which guides us towards non-use. This in regard to our **children's** well being.*



ECAD is Europe's leading organisation promoting a drug free Europe and representing millions of European citizens. Drug dealing and drug abuse cause enormous problems in Europe. Nations and their citizens are affected by the consequences of drug abuse. ECAD member cities work to develop initiatives and efforts against drug abuse supporting the United Nations Conventions which oppose legalisation and promote policies to eradicate drug abuse worldwide. Has your city joined ECAD?

European Cities Against Drugs

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