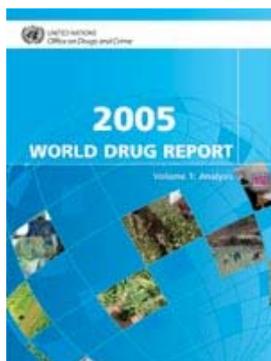




World Drug Report launched in Stockholm

According to the 2005 World Drug Report, issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), some 200 million people, or 5% of the world's population aged 15-64, have used drugs at least once in the last 12 months. However, this estimate remains lower than the number of persons using licit psychoactive substances (about 30% of the general adult population use tobacco and about half use alcohol).

The number of cannabis users worldwide is now close to 160 million people or 4% of the population age 15-64. Estimates of the number of ATS users – 26 million people using amphetamines and 8 million using ecstasy – are slightly lower than those of the last year's World Drug Report (WDR), reflecting declines of



methamphetamine use in South-East Asia (notably Thailand) and of ecstasy use in North America (notably in the USA).

The number of opiate users is estimated to have risen slightly to around 16 million people (11 million of which abuse heroin), mainly reflecting increasing levels of opiate abuse in Asia. No significant changes were observed in most other parts of the world. The number of cocaine users – close to 14 million people – rose slightly.

Those 200 million people who abuse drugs is an increase of 15 million in comparison with the last year's estimates. Almost half of them have used drugs during the last month and approximately 22 million people worldwide are considered to be heavy drug-addicts, according to the UNODC.

Antonio Maria Costa stressed the need, however, to look beyond year-to-year drug increases or declines. At the launch of the report in Stockholm, he said:

"Looking at the number or percentage of people using drugs does not tell us all we need to know. We need a 'full body scan' as they call it in medicine, that allows us to see whether, how and through which mechanisms this cancer is attempting to invade human, social, and economic bodies around the world".

Antonio Maria Costa, UNODC Executive Director said at the press-conference in Stockholm that these results show that the drug policy we stick to is working.

According to him, it is cannabis that represents our biggest problem. First of all because it can damage the brain. Second, it is the drug with which many people start their drug-abuse career to be followed by cocaine and opiates later.

UNODC director added that cannabis has a double role to play which makes it extremely problematic. Unfortunately, not all governments and civil citizens are aware of that role cannabis has to play.

The World Drug Report contains both good and bad news about drug problems in the world. Opium production in Afghanistan has increased during the last years. This year UNODC expects that at least the number of plantation areas are going to be reduced. Despite this there is no guarantee that the harvest is going to be smaller than the last year because the weather has been much more favourable for the cultivation of opium this year.

The biggest success in working against drug production was made in the Golden Triangle, the area where Laos', Burma's, Thai and Chinese borders meet.

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For the complete version of the Report, please, visit www.unodc/world_drug_report.html,

Picture comes from the same webpage.

US Supreme Court decides on cannabis

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) welcomes the decision of the United States Supreme Court, made on 6 June, reaffirming that the cultivation and use of cannabis, even if it is for "medical" use, should be prohibited.

"INCB has for many years pointed out that the evidence that cannabis might be useful as a medicine is insufficient", said Professor Hamid Ghodse, President, INCB. *"Countries should not authorise the use of cannabis as a medicine until conclusive results based on research are available..."*

Any research into cannabis as a medicine should involve the World Health Organization, as the responsible international health agency."

INCB has expressed concern that organizations advocating the legalization of cannabis, and of narcotic drugs in general, are using the issue of medical cannabis as a "back door" to legalisation. *"Cannabis is the most widely abused drug in the United States and in the world,"* Professor Ghodse said.

"Cannabis is classified under international



conventions as a drug with a number of personal and public health problems. It is not a 'soft' drug as some people would have you believe. There is new evidence confirming well-known mental health problems, and some countries with a more liberal policy towards cannabis are reviewing their position..."

In its decision, the United States Supreme Court noted that medical cannabis statutes in California were open to abuse, and even cannabis cultivated for personal use as medicine could end up being supplied to the illicit market.

Source: INCB.gov

World Drug Report launched in Stockholm

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It was once one great opium production area. The development has been remarkable. UNODC expects Laos to be free from opium cultivation by the end of this year. Antonio Maria Costa also expressed an opinion that if the development proceeds the way UNODC supposes to declare the Golden triangle opium-free in 2007.

Cocaine-production has decreased significantly during the last years from 925 tons in 1999 to 687 tons in 2004, thus representing 25% reduction. However, there was a small growth between 2003 and 2004.

A negative development has happened in Bolivia. There is no government there and because of that criminality spreads all over the country.

USA remains the largest cocaine-abuser, approximately 2,3% of the whole population use drugs. Cocaine is less ordinary in Europe, but it is getting more typical. Europe leaves heroin aside and starts to take fancy for cocaine, according to Antonio Maria Costa.

UNODC is busy classifying common drug problems of the world. This index is going to make a summary of problems connected with production, smuggling and abuse of drugs and will make it possible to compare the situation in different countries of the world.

Sources: UNODC, Drugnews

Drug Treatment Courts

The work of Drug Treatment Courts (DTCs) was highlighted at the recent Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna, where an international panel of judges and treatment professionals showcased the results of these courts.

Since their introduction in the United States in 1989 Drug Treatment Courts have seen tremendous growth throughout the world. There are currently around 1,600 drug courts in the United States and the use of DTCs is growing in Europe, Canada, South America, the Caribbean and Australasia.

A Drug Treatment Court is a special court given the responsibility to handle cases involving substance-abusing offenders. Eligible participants undergo treatment and rehabilitation programmes instead of facing the traditional prosecution process and possible imprisonment. Compliance is monitored by frequent substance-abuse testing, and non-compliance sanctioned.

"In 1999 the UN pulled together a group of experts from around the world, and we came up with 12 key principles which essentially set out the key components of any DTC," said the Chairman of the International Association of Drug Treatment Courts, Canadian Judge Paul Bentley. He added: "So although the courts in Australia may be somewhat different from those in Canada, they all operate on these 12 key principles that guide the courts around the world."

According to figures from North America, DTCs also provide a more cost-effective method of dealing with drug-using offenders than either probation or prison. Incarceration costs between US\$ 20,000-50,000 a year. In contrast, a comprehensive drug court system typically costs between US\$ 2,500 and US\$ 4,000 annually for each offender. Furthermore, evaluations consistently show that Drug Treatment Courts effectively reduce recidivism.

Karen Freeman Wilson, Chief Executive Officer of the United States National Association of Drug Court Professionals said: "Not only are the cost savings found in the judicial arena, but you find another body of tax-paying citizens who traditionally would not be paying taxes. If you're using drugs you can't hold down a job, you can't contribute to society."

DTCs are sometimes criticized as being "soft on crime", however, Judge Paul Bentley said for many people it is more difficult to spend a year on a treatment programme than a year in jail.

"When people come into the programme, we give them 30 days to change their mind and some do. They say, -'you know it's too difficult to come to court twice a week, to go to treatment four-five times a week. I'd rather do my time, just sentence me judge,'" said Mr Bentley.

By UNODC.org

June 26 - International Day Against Drug Abuse

Initiated by the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) the 26-th of June was observed all over the world as a day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

Secretary General Kofi Annan:

"On this international day we celebrate the choice that millions of people around the world have made to live healthily, and we applaud the courage shown by those who have stopped using drugs. In doing so, we send a positive message to all people who use or might be tempted to use drugs: "Value yourself... make healthy choices".

Making healthy choices also means choosing a lifestyle that has a positive effect on the body and mind, including, for example, participation in sports to improve health and well-being, teach the value of teamwork and discipline, and build self-confidence."

In many countries, as, for example, in

Logo: © www.runiceurope.org



China, Libya and Pakistan some hundreds of kilos of drugs were burned publicly. 750 kilos of heroin, 3 million amphetamine tablets, 180 kilos methamphetamine and 90 kilos ephedrine were destroyed by fire in Burma and 30 tons drugs were burned in Afghanistan, both countries being the biggest drug producers in the world. This is

the first time when so much drugs were exterminated at once.

In Russia the event was observed by a 18-hours long TV-marathon "The whole world against drug aggression!" in Nizhniy Novgorod. The region where this city is situated drug situation is considered to be critical. According to the local statistics there is 114 000 persons registered in the drug-treatment institution only in this region.

Aiming to draw public attention to the drug problem marathon participants discussed drug-control aspects, UN Conventions and Russian law as well as the organised crime and corruption issues in the country.

By UNDOC.org; DN-TT-AFP; Narkotiki.ru; www.runiceurope.org

Marijuana users' rates by SAMHSA:

new report of 331 local US areas

A new report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) estimates that Boston and Boulder, Colorado, are among the areas with the highest rates of marijuana use in May in the United States. Boston had an estimated 12.2 percent of the population ages 12 and older; Boulder, 10.3 percent. Northwestern Iowa and Southernmost Texas were among the areas with the lowest estimated rates at 2.3 percent and 2.6 percent, respectively.

The marijuana data highlighted in the short report show that of the 15 localities with the highest rates of marijuana use in May in the United States, five were in Massachusetts, three were in California and two were in Colorado. Four of the fifteen areas ranked with the lowest rates of marijuana use in May 2005 were in Iowa.

"As a nation we have made real progress in reducing drug use. These new data provide us with a powerful new tool that

can be used to focus and refine our substance abuse prevention and treatment strategies," SAMHSA Administrator Charles Curie said. "Future survey findings will be very helpful to states and localities as they report on progress made in reducing substance abuse



and apply for federal funding."

The reports reveal large variations in past month marijuana use across states. For example, rates of use in California ranged from a low of 4.9 percent in Orange County and Los Angeles County, to a high of 9.2 percent in Marin County, San Mateo County and San Francisco County. Rates in Colorado ranged from 6.3 percent in 27 counties covering eastern Colorado to 10.3 percent in Boulder County.

Among other areas with the highest rates of

past month marijuana use were: Northern California; Western Colorado; part of the District of Columbia; the Island of Hawaii; Multnomah County, Ore.; Washington County, R.I.; and Northwestern Vermont.

Among other areas with the lowest rates of past month marijuana use were: Western Idaho; Eastern Kansas; Eastern Nebraska; North Dakota's Lake Region, South Central, Badlands and West Central regions; Southeastern Oklahoma; and parts of Eastern South Dakota.

The larger report, available online, details each of the over 300 substate areas and gives rates for 11 other indicators: past month use of any illicit drug; incidence rate of marijuana use; past month use of any illicit drug other than marijuana; past year use of cocaine; past month use of alcohol; one or more packs of cigarettes a day.

By SAMHSA.gov., for full report see <http://oas.samhsa.gov/substate2k5/toc.htm>

Dutch police discovers international cocaine gang

The police in Amsterdam has recently seized 8 people involved in international cocaine smuggling chain. The arrested, whose age range from 18 to 61 years were regarded suspected from the earlier case of smuggling drugs to Switzerland, according to the police.

Two Amsterdam residents were taken into custody at the Zurich airport on the New Years eve. They had specially designed shoes on that were meant for smuggling of hundreds of grams of cocaine. Custom officers discovered later that these people had also a particular kind of underwear for

carrying drugs.

After this case there were six more persons arrested thanks to the information given to the police by the parents of one of the men held in custody in Zurich.

During police investigation the houses of the suspected in Amsterdam, Purmerend and Almere were searched and the police confiscated the designed shoes, the underwear, large amounts of cocaine as well as firearms and more than 100 000 euros in cash. All eight people remain arrested.

Source: Expatica news

Needle exchange:

official discontent in the USA

Reuters published an article about needle exchange programmes in the USA (from Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report). According to the statistics from Atlanta-based US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of needle exchange programmes has diminished from 154 to 148 during 2000-2002. This is the first occasion in 8 years. Public financing for these sank by 18%. Despite that the total number of exchanged syringes grew by 20.2% and overall budget expanded by 7.4%.

Source: Reuters Health

The EU Drugs Action Plan:

(2005-2008)

European Council endorsed the EU drugs Action plan in June 2005. The Action plan follows the structure and the objectives of the EU drugs strategy (2005-2012). It focuses on two policy domains - demand reduction and supply reduction - and two cross-cutting themes - international cooperation and research, information and evaluation. It lists around 100 specific actions to be implemented by the EU and its Member States by the end of 2008. The Commission will carry out its impact assessment in 2008.

By EMCDDA.eu.int

Russia and Tajikistan

fight against drug trafficking

On the 10-th of July came together the chief of the Transport department of the Russian Federation and his colleagues from Tajik Transport department at the work session in Astrakhan. During the meeting it was decided upon more efficient cooperation to be achieved through intensive information exchange about drug dealers.

The situation with drug trafficking from Tajikistan is considered to be very alarming. It has even deteriorated with the fact that Russian troops from the Tajik-Afghan border left the country. The most significant about fighting drug smuggling seems to be the introduction of measures against railway and airport drug trafficking, writes Itar-Tass.

According to Russian Federal Drug Control Service the biggest part of opiates comes into Russia via so called "northern way" from Afghanistan through Tajikistan. For the time being organised groups of drug smugglers use the "transparency" of the Russian borders (meaning here the lack of surveillance and weapons) to make new contacts for drug trafficking. According to Russian and foreign experts opium production in Afghanistan is not going to be diminished in the coming 2-3 years.

Source: Itar-Tass Ural.ru

UN praises Holland and criticizes Sweden

Pelle Olsson, Swedish author of many books about fighting against drugs ("Emergency queen" (1993), "Three died, one went crazy" (1994), "Wake up, Wolfgang!" (1995)) analyzed the last INCB annual issue for the Swedish national association "For a drug-free society". We publish with pleasure his article here.

Financially strong lobbying organisations go on with their guerrilla war against UN drug policy. At the same time the support from the national governments comes unceasing. As many as 180 countries have ratified the UN Drug Conventions. Only Andorra has not done it in Europe. The latest UN meeting in Vienna in 2003 showed that there is a broad public support behind the conventions. It seems that this support has given courage for the INCB, International Narcotics Control Board that monitors the implementation of the conventions. In the latest annual issue of the INCB Report comprising knowledge and discussions about drug situations all over the world in barely 100 pages, dubious laws on cannabis are criticized together with various harm reduction measures.

Demand reduction instead of harm reduction goes as one red thread through the report. That is why all resources should

not be invested into supply reduction.

INCB by all means supports methadone and buprenorphin (Subutex) substitute treatment - there is a scientific prop-up in the report that shows that it improves health condition and curtails lethal outcomes. INCB denounces the countries that do not accept such programmes.

At the same time there is a warning about buprenorphin leakage to the illegal market that takes place in many countries.

The benefits of cannabis are, however, seen as very limited. INCB is concerned about the generous medical use of this drug in Canada, Holland and to a certain extent in the USA. Canada was also criticized for decriminalizing smaller drug doses in its new bill. The same worry is expressed about Portugal. Their law texts are appropriate, the application, though, is too liberal.

INCB is troubled by "certain countries in Western Europe" that allow drug propaganda in the media. This is not acceptable according to the UN convention of 1988, which was also pointed out in the previous annual report. This year the overall critique is sharper. Official encouragement to abuse drugs, for example advertising cannabis cultivation, must be penalized.

According to the conventions, it is not al-

lowed to open particular premises to inject illegal drugs, the so called "injection rooms". The same reproach goes for prescribing heroin treatment. There are no countries named, but it is clear that it mostly pertains to Switzerland and Holland. INCB's criticism of the above is also a warning for those who discuss the possibility of introducing this treatment, as for example, Denmark does.

Holland is commended for the changes in its cannabis policy. The official message there now is "cannabis is not harmless". There is even a campaign planned against the use of this drug, which reinforced the measures against drug tourism, home cultivation of drugs and drug trafficking in the streets. Holland continues also to decrease the number of coffee shops.

Sweden has always been commended by the INCB earlier, but in September 2004 UN experts visited the country and observed that it was complicated for drug addicts to get a treatment. The Swedish government must give drug treatment higher priority and increase the budget for the treatment of drug abusers essentially, for it is one of the corner stones in the whole drug policy area.

Source: www.rns.se

Magic mushrooms become class A drugs

The Drugs Act 2005 about hallucinogenic mushrooms came into force on the 18-th of July in Great Britain.

Starting this date magic mushrooms or any other fungus containing *psilocin* are classified as class A drugs.

According to the latest research in the UK 12 to 15% of sixteen-year-olds claim that they have used magic mushrooms at least once. Young people in Scotland and Wales

are more inclined to abuse these drugs. One of every five 16-year-olds has tried magic mushrooms.

Amanita muscaria or fly agaric and *psilocybe semilanceata* or liberty cap are some of hallucinogenic mushrooms that grow in many countries of the world and in England in autumn. Eating certain types of *amanita phalloides* and *amanita virosa* can be lethal. Only one mushroom of *amanita muscaria* or

fly agaric is enough to cause toxic symptoms as stomach-aches, vomiting, lack of coordination and much more. More serious poisoning can result in convulsions and death.

Despite this fly agaric was not included in the Drugs Act.

Source: Drugscope.org.uk

*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 **common** 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
ECAD, Stadshuset
105 35 Stockholm, Sweden
Tel. +46-8-5082 93 62 Fax +46-8-5082 94 66
e-mail: ecad@ecad.net www.ecad.net
ECAD Regional office in Russia www.ecad.ru
zazulin@ecad.ru Phone +7-812-328 96 65
ECAD Regional office in Latvia
vilnis.kipens@kurzeme.rcc.lv
Phone +371-7037330 Fax +371-7037331