



ECAD in Russia - 5 years: Anniversary Conference



Mariinsky Palace in St. Petersburg, Grand Meeting Hall

ECAD Regional Office in Russia held its anniversary Conference at the Mariinsky Palace, historical premises for Legislative Assembly's plenary sessions in St. Petersburg.

Anniversary conference attracted around 140 people. Deputy mayors, Russian Federal Drugs Control Service officers, St. Petersburg State University professors and students, municipal representatives from almost 30 Russian cities and autonomous republics, Helsinki deputy Mayor Mrs. *Paula Kokkonen*, guests from Riga Prevention Centre and Stockholm and Riga ECAD offices stood for the strong connection within ECAD network.

The Conference agenda was very tight, with the focus on particular functions of Russian federal, regional and local legislative organs, determining their roles in state anti-drug policy. In this respect it seems of utmost importance to evolve the new project of Russian state anti-drug policy Concept. This new Concept is based on the conflict method and developed by ECAD Anti-Drug

Policy Centre in St. Petersburg.

Conference participants discussed present drawbacks of anti-drug policy in the country, the policy, which did not exist 5 years ago.

Victor Fadeyev, chief executive of the North - Western higher education Institute for Russian Federal Drug Control Service, summarised the main ways of Russian anti-drug policy to deal with the topic today:

"We are tackling this issue on the interdepartmental level today... We also need to focus on the interdisciplinary solutions to the drug abuse problem and conflictology method has a great deal to offer us here, since it embraces many approaches, from psychological to political..."

Conference participants were unanimous about the fact that the powers of the municipal authorities in anti-drug policy question should be specified in Russian state laws. This legislative basis is lacking today and it stands in the way of many anti-drug policy routines on the local level.

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FDA: Smoked Marijuana is not a Medicine!

FDA Press Release

Claims have been advanced asserting smoked marijuana has a value in treating various medical conditions. Some have argued that herbal marijuana is a safe and effective medication and that it should be made available to people who suffer from a number of ailments upon a doctor's recommendation, even though it is not an approved drug. Marijuana is listed in schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), the most restrictive schedule. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), which administers the CSA, continues to support that placement and FDA concurred because marijuana met the three criteria for placement in Schedule I (e.g., marijuana has a high potential for abuse, has no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States, and has a lack of accepted safety for use under medical supervision).

Furthermore, there is currently sound evidence that smoked marijuana is harmful. A past evaluation by several Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) agencies, including the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA), concluded that no sound scientific studies supported medical use of marijuana for treatment in the United States, and no animal or human data supported the safety or efficacy of marijuana for general medical use. FDA, as the federal agency responsible for reviewing the safety and efficacy of drugs, DEA as the federal agency charged with enforcing the CSA, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy, as the federal coordinator of drug control policy, do not support the use of smoked marijuana for medical purposes.

Read more on <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2006/NEW01362.html>

Riga signs Letter of Intent and holds ECAD seminar "Life without drugs"



Aelita Vagale, Riga Addiction Prevention Centre Director, Tomas Hallberg, ECAD director and Modris Jaunups, deputy director of Riga City Council, Security and Order Committee

Security and Order Committee *Modris Jaunups* opened the conference with words that stressed the regards about the younger generation in the common fight against drug abuse and addiction prevention questions. He said:

"Our main task today is to know how to help young people to escape perils that the wrong choice implies, how to provide them with the fair information about the evil that drugs inflict, how to offer them healthy alternatives that are enthralling and hilarious."

Conference participants have acknowledged that while they stick to a long-term and constant anti-drug policy in the context of "Life without drugs" it is of crucial importance to be aware of the present situation. It seems vital to get to know the problems of drug prevention and drug fighting, to learn national legislation and prevention praxis as well as to find out about perspective strategies and addiction prevention plans.

ECAD director, Mr. Tomas Hallberg has stressed at the conference:

" I am against the syringe exchange programmes, which were accepted by the Swedish government on the 26th of April. The next

step on their part could be opened injection rooms, and then distribution of clean and safe needles to the addicts, and then, probably, teaching the thugs where to kick people lying on their backs so that they wouldn't become cripples afterwards."

Aelita Vagale, Riga Addiction Prevention Centre director, expressed the opinion that the most significant benefit of the conference was the possibility to learn about the methods of drug prevention in the neighbouring countries, and also brainstorming of the future cooperation strategy formation among different institutions.

During the conference, Riga City Council represented by the deputy director of Security and Order Committee, *Modris Jaunups* and *Aelita Vagale*, Riga Addiction Prevention Centre director signed Letter of Intent to participate in ECAD drug prevention programme "Youth in Europe". Involvement in this project gives the opportunity for Latvia to be one of 11 European countries that will not only make the researches, but also learn and exchange the best drug prevention methods on the local administrative level.

Andrejs Vilks, ECAD Regional director in Riga

ECAD Regional Office in Riga, Latvia in cooperation with Addiction Prevention Centre in Riga, information agency "Rosbalt" and Riga *Stradina* University held conference "Life without drugs" in Riga, Latvia on the 27th of April.

The conference, which was launched in Riga local Parliament, attracted participants from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Russia and Sweden. The ultimate goal of the participants was to become aware of the present situation and its tendencies regarding drug abuse in the Baltic sea region countries, also to determine the main directions of joint cooperation in the field, as well as fight and prevention.

Deputy director of Riga City Council Secu-

Youth in Europe researchers met in Stockholm

Researchers and contact persons from 11 European cities met in Stockholm on the 28th of April to discuss the details of the questionnaire of the drug prevention programme "Youth in Europe".

The project is about to enter its first practical phase in October 2006.

However to come to this very date was not that easy - sociological tradition of launching a questionnaire at schools in Helsinki, Stockholm, Sofia or some other cities differs.

One of the project leaders, Mrs. *Kristin Arnadottir* from the Municipality of Reykjavik presented a Progress Report at the meeting and a coming web-site of the Programme (www.seidur.is/youthineurope). That was followed by a great deal of practical questions to Icelandic researchers Mrs. *Inga Dora*



Researchers from 11 European cities met in Stockholm

Sigfusdottir and Mr. *Thorolfur Thorlindsson*. The participants also described some of the main prevention initiatives practised in their cities.

A suggestion was made on the part of the coordinators to form a support team that could visit the new project signatories and tell more about the practical issues of the programme implementation. The idea seemed very reasonable for the researchers and the first tour of visits will be made in

June 2006 to Riga, Vilnius, Sofia and some other cities.

After having discussed major practical details of conducting the questionnaire, the researchers could talk to the Icelandic coordinators personally and discuss some specific cultural particulars of managing the study or possible difficulties they could encounter. One of the discussion subjects here became a choice of the sample (random or other) and how big the sample actually should be.

At the end of the meeting *His Excellency President of Iceland Olafur Ragnar Grimsson* addressed the participants. He shared some of his personal experiences about being the Patron of this prevention programme and spoke ardently about the importance of cooperation in the field of drug prevention.

Russian policemen get ECAD education

At the end of April ECAD in its combined effort with Veliky Novgorod City administration organised a seminar about the police work against illegal drug spread. Approximately 30 conference participants included police professionals from various Russian cities, Moscow as well.

The head of law enforcement, Mr. *Walter Kegö* also came to the seminar to lecture from the Swedish side. Mr. Kegö works for the Swedish governmental authority Mobilisation Against Drugs and is responsible for the police work in this question.

The participants discussed among other topics the significance of launching a professional police unit specialising on illicit drug dealing in the streets and working with active drug abusers. The most important seemed to avoid concentrating the police task force and its all resources on hunting

big drug smugglers, instead, the priority should be preventing open drug dealing out there, in the streets.

A vital discussion came up about the cooperation between the police and social services in the long run. Young addicts must be identified and they should get support quickly, so that their commencing drug abuse would be halted.

Walter Kegö emphasised the way Swedish laws stipulate that having a drug amount in the blood and drug consumption in itself is a crime that must be punished. This implies possibilities to work with young addicts more efficient from the grass roots of their abuse.

The conference was impeccably organised by V. Novgorod's Deputy Mayor Boris Spitsyn and Olga Vasilyeva, ECAD's project leader in this city.

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St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly parliamentarians and ECAD Advisory Board members Mr. *Arkady G. Kramarev* and Mr. *Igor B. Matveyev* have done their best to make this anniversary conference a success.

ECAD Head Office highly appreciates all the work done by the ECAD Anti-Drug Policy Centre and its head Mr. *George Zazulin*.

On behalf of all Conference participants ECAD Head Office would like to thank Conference hosts for the genuine Russian hospitality and the possibility to participate in the excursion to the most marvellous Catherine Palace as well as to visit one of the favourite restaurants of the Russian President.



IVth BALKAN CONFERENCE
Burgas, Bulgaria
First Announcement!
**Creation and Development of the ECAD Balkan Network
of Drug Prevention**
October 5-6, 2006

More treatment for Methamphetamine and prescription drugs in the USA in 2004

New data released today by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) show admissions to substance abuse treatment involving methamphetamine and narcotic pain medications continued to rise in 2004. Methamphetamine admissions to treatment rose 11 percent between 2003 and 2004, and 25 percent between 2002 and 2004. For opiates other than heroin, there was a 21 percent increase in admissions to treatment since 2003 and a 42 percent increase from 2002-2004. Opiates other than heroin are largely prescription pain medications.

Admissions to treatment for methamphetamine as the primary substance of abuse rose from 105,981 in 2002 to 117,259 in 2003 to 129,179 in 2004. Admissions to treatment for prescription opiates as the primary substance of abuse rose from 46,972 in 2002 to 53,120 in 2003 to 63,243 in 2004.

"Treatment admissions for methamphetamine abuse and nonmedical use of prescription pain medications continue to rapidly increase," SAMHSA Administrator Charles Curie said. "With appropriate treatment and support services people with an addiction can attain and sustain recovery. Because there are many pathways to recovery, we continue to work with the states to provide flexible funding sources to meet emerging trends in treatment need. In addition to the \$1.8 billion block grant to states for substance abuse treatment and prevention, the President has proposed almost \$100 million in FY 2007 for new Access to Recovery grants to states. This

proposal includes \$25 million for treatment for methamphetamine abuse."

While nationally 8 percent of admissions were due to methamphetamine as primary substance of abuse, Arkansas, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oklahoma, and Utah had 20 percent or more of their admissions due to methamphetamine. Methamphetamine admissions ranged from a low of 0.1 percent in Rhode Island to a high of 41 percent of admissions in Hawaii.

Nationwide, 3.4 percent of admissions to substance abuse treatment were due to abuse of opiates other than heroin, while heroin admissions were higher, at 14.2 percent, but Maine had 14.3 percent of admissions due to narcotic pain relievers and 9 percent due to heroin, and West Virginia had 13.6 percent of admissions due to narcotic pain relievers and only 3.1 percent due to heroin. Louisiana had 1.5 percent of admissions due to heroin, but non-heroin opiates amounted to 8.8 percent of admissions. In Vermont, heroin and opiate pain relievers each accounted for over 9 percent of admissions.

The report presents highlights from the Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) for 2004. This summary report is based on 1.8 million annual admissions to treatment for abuse of alcohol and drugs in facilities that are licensed or certified by the state substance abuse agency. The full TEDS report will be available later this summer.

By SAMHSA.gov

EMCDDA: Women and drug use in Europe

The EMCDDA has been monitoring gender differences in drug use and drug addiction since 1995. This year, in response to a growing recognition of gender differences in drug use, a selected issue on this topic will be published as an accompaniment to the EMCDDA 2006 Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in Europe.

Developing services that meet the needs of women with drug problems in Europe

Research indicates that women with substance use problems are more likely than men to have: a partner with a substance use problem; more severe problems at the beginning of treatment; trauma related to physical and sexual abuse; and concurrent psychiatric disorders (UNODC 2004, Substance abuse treatment and care for women: case studies and lessons learned – summary, report). Consequently, gender is gaining recognition as a key dimension for service planning across Europe.

Barriers to treatment access

Women may be disinclined to enter inpatient treatment services, where they often represent an even smaller minority of clients than they do in outpatient services. Consequently, there has been a development of inpatient treatment facilities exclusively for female clients, which exist now in at least ten EU countries – although the availability of this kind of provision is still relatively low.

Low-threshold facilities for women

There is a notable trend among low-threshold agencies to re-orient their services and opening hours to respond better to the needs of female problem drug users. They usually involve outreach, information and advice, particularly safer sex advice, provision of sterile injecting equipment, condoms and lubricants, and referrals to further health, social and treatment services.

There is some provision, but much less so, for male sex workers, and this is usually not specifically targeting drug users.

Focus on sexual health and pregnancy

Outpatient and low-threshold facilities increasingly include basic medical care and have orientated service provision for sexual health, contraception advice, and free infectious disease testing and treatment, as well as pregnancy tests.

Pregnant drug users are defined as a priority group and staff help them to 'jump' the drug treatment queue.

Is the gender gap in drug use narrowing?

Historically, prevalence rates of drug use among men have been considerably higher than those found among women. Although this remains the case, recent surveys show prevalence estimates for drug use are now more similar for male and female school students than for adults. This suggests a narrowing of the gender gap among the younger generations, which may result in an increase in the overall levels of prevalence in the future (EMCDDA 2005).

The proportion of females is generally lower among frequent cannabis users.

Prevention activities

The extent to which drug prevention strategies across Europe are gender specific varies considerably between countries. In general, few Member States have developed prevention programmes that are gender specific. A more commonly strategy is to address gender issues within a broader context of normative beliefs that are inextricably linked to gender identity.

You can find complete EMCDDA report on www.emcdda.eu.int/index.cfm?nnodeid=7291

Belgian-Dutch drug policies

Brussels. Dutch MPs met with Belgian municipal and justice authorities in the town of Lanaken on Monday to discuss the cross-border aspects of the Dutch drugs policy.

It is the first time that a hearing of the Dutch Parliament's justice committee took place outside of the Netherlands. Lanaken is situated in the Belgian province of Limburg. The hearing focused on the cross-border problems of the Dutch drugs policy and the Netherlands' toleration of cannabis plantations.

A contentious issue was also the proposal raised by Maastricht Mayor Gerd Leers to move seven 'coffee shops' closer to the Belgian border. Coffee shops refer to tolerated cannabis retail outlets in the Netherlands and the new locations will soon be made public.

"I have a good understanding with Mayor Leers, except when it comes to soft drugs," Lanaken Mayor Alex Vangronsveld said. "We maintain in Lanaken a zero tolerance policy. The dispersal plan from Leers is not acceptable for us. Maastricht already has 4,500 drug tourists a day."

Other speakers at the hearing included the Belgian mayors of Maasmechelen, Voeren and Riemst, news agency *Belga* reported. The Hasselt public prosecutor Marc Rubens and the Tongeren prosecutor Ivo Delbrouck were also scheduled to address the hearing, as was the Maastricht mayor.

By www.Expatica.com



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?

★ NEW ECAD MEMBER



ECAD welcomes the City of Kajaran, Armenia!

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