



## Gothenburg hosts World Mayors' Forum

The City of Gothenburg decided in the end of October to apply to ECAD for hosting a World Mayors' Forum as part of the pre-

The municipality of Gothenburg, its political leadership on all levels have over the years worked for restrictive and humane



Photo: Wikipedia; Carl Milles' Poseidon is one of symbols of the city

paratory events before the UN General Assembly Special Session on Narcotic Drugs, UNGASS 2009.

In the decision, the municipality stated that:

According to a UN report ("Sweden's successful drug policy: review of the evidence"), Sweden has one of the lowest levels of drug problems in Europe. The country spends significantly more resources on drug control than the EU average. Sweden represents an example of a restrictive and humane drug policy. That is why it would be appropriate if, on the threshold of UNGASS, a Swedish city would host a conference for the mayors from all around the world.

Over the years, Gothenburg has enjoyed good cooperation between authorities involved in the anti-drug fieldwork: municipality, health care, police, customs, prison system, public prosecutor and others. Social detection activities among the adolescents and outreach work among the drug addicts have been practised since the 1970s-80s. These efforts are marked by good continuity and high competence. Gothenburg has regularly adjusted the resources according to the needs.

drug policies. Their attitude has always been negative towards the measures aiming in the first place at harm reduction in form of needle exchange and poorly controlled programmes for methadone/subutex distribution.

*"We in Sweden are used to political consensus in regard to drug issues. We put a lot of resources into anti-drug fieldwork. In many other countries, the situation looks quite different. We hope that this Forum will encourage those who try to do something in spite of small resources."*

*Ove Lundgren, Gothenburg's representative in ECAD*

Instead, the city authorities prioritised creating connections between preventive and outreach activities, restrictive approach to drugs, high quality treatment and channels for efficient communication. The overall aim being to help individuals to receive the best possible support in leaving the misuse behind them. Naturally, harm reduction measures are practiced in the city as well. In this case, in form of social and physical care applied through providing housing under supervision and easy access to health care.

### Scotland has much to learn from Sweden

Wide media coverage of Swedish politicians' visit to Scotland.

*"Scotland desperately needs a new agenda and a fresh approach to tackling drug epidemic."*

*Scottish Tory leader Annabel Goldie*

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### Reykjavik Forum:

*Linking research, policy and practice*

On October 18-19, Reykjavik hosted a Forum for coordinators and researchers within the Youth in Europe programme. Several cities have already completed school surveys on drugs. At the same time, new cities have joined the programme. With so many partners involved, there is no wonder why communication and other practical issues dominated the discussions.



The Patron of the project, President of Iceland Olafur Ragnar Grimsson visited the Forum. In his address to the delegates, His Excellency emphasised importance of Prevention Day for the development of the anti-drug work on the island. ECAD congratulated the new Mayor of Reykjavik, Mr. Dagur B. Eggertsson who chaired the steering group during several years.

Next meeting will take place on January 18, 2008 in Riga, Latvia. Read more on [www.youthineurope.org](http://www.youthineurope.org).

## Scotland has much to learn from Sweden

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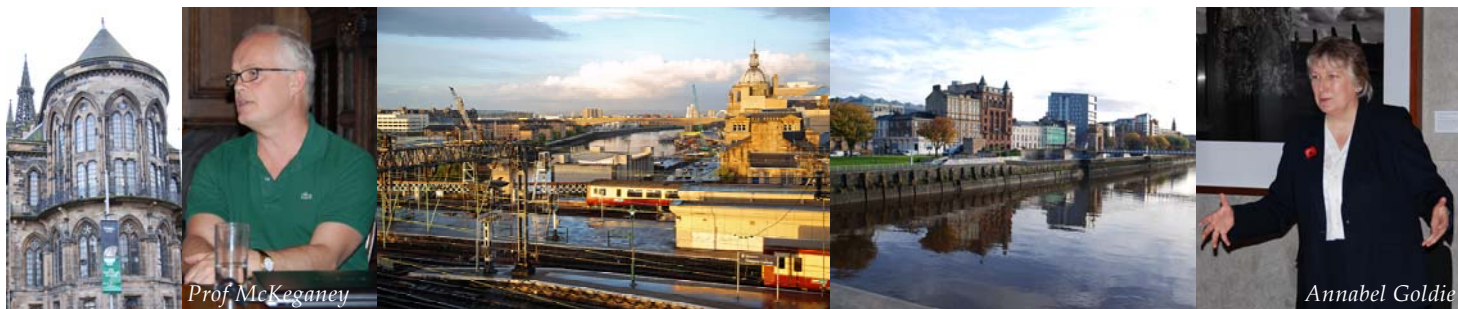
Senior Swedish politicians and drug experts visited Scotland on 28-29 October. The 12-strong delegation included Tomas Hallberg, Director of the European Cities Against Drugs. The group met with the Conservative leader Annabel Goldie and a leading drug professor Neil McKeganey, head of Glasgow University's Centre For Drugs Misuse Research.

During the two-day long visit, the Swedes gave more than 5 interviews for leading Scottish media within TV/ Radio broadcasting and the periodical press.

McKeganey who said ("Expert rejects methadone treatment for addicts", **The Press and Journal**, 30<sup>th</sup> October): "The drugs problem will challenge our society to a greater degree than anything else. We are already stressing our prison system, social work and health system - they are already struggling to cope."

Scotland has an estimated 50,000 heroin addicts in a population of just over 5 million, "making it one of the most drug-affected societies in Europe", **The Press and Journal** points out.

Scottish Tory leader Annabel Goldie said (**The Scottish Daily**



**The Herald** writes ("Call to adopt Sweden's zero tolerance on drugs", 30<sup>th</sup> October):

"The politicians discussed and compared the problems and approaches faced by both countries. Sweden has a zero-tolerance policy to all illegal substances and claims one of the lowest levels of drug use in Europe.

"Professor Neil McKeganey said in his presentation to the delegation that "Scottish drug policy should adopt a zero tolerance approach too and that the drift towards decriminalisation needs to be reversed."

**The Scottish Daily Mail** ("Swede way to go", 30<sup>th</sup> October) compares Sweden and the Netherlands and points out that "Sweden has cracked down on drug abuse, targeting even cannabis, with impressive results. Drug abuse in Sweden is now at a low level, whereas in the liberal Netherlands it has soared out of control. The message is clear: zero tolerance works, liberal pussyfooting does not. "

Regarding the present situation in Scotland, the media refer to Prof

**Mail**, "Just say Nej!", 30<sup>th</sup> October): "Scotland has much to learn from the approach to drugs misuse taken by Sweden since the 1970s. Indeed, as our analysis shows, their attitude and their policies have brought results which are in marked contrast to the experience of the Netherlands, which embarked on a radically different road 30 years ago.

"Sweden has an overwhelming aim of creating a drug-free society. The Netherlands went for laissez-faire and harm reduction. Drugs misuse in Sweden fell dramatically - drugs misuse in Holland rapidly increased. The lessons for us are plain.

"I also noted with interest that, in Swedish prisons, there are 400 drug-free units with a capacity for 4,200 prisoners. Those who do not want drug treatment are put in special wings. In Scotland, the drug-free wing is an exception.

"In Sweden, heroin substitute methadone is used but such harm-reduction measures are the last resort, not the first case as here."

## Harm reduction coming to an end in Australia

The Australian Parliamentary Committee studying the impact of illicit drug use on families is recommending an end to harm reduction practices which confirms the Canadian government is also on the right track, says Ben Jenkins, president of the Drug Prevention Network of Canada.

The 377 page report recommends that new policy be developed that replaces the current focus of the National Drug Strategy on harm minimization with a focus on harm prevention and treatment that has the aim of achieving permanent drug free status for individuals with the goal of enabling drug users to be drug free and only provide fund-

ing to treatment and support organizations which have a clearly stated aim to achieve permanent drug free status for their clients or participants.

We now see many countries are legitimately questioning the lack of success of harm reduction programs and that is why we see these type of unsuccessful trial balloons in Canada disappearing for a focus on Prevention, Treatment and Enforcement says Randy White, founder and Past President of the DPNC.

Jenkins says the DPNC is actively participating in the International Task Force on Strategic Drug Policy and is excited about

the new focus on programs that will get results around the world.

### ★ COMMENTARY

As one witness said to the committee "I survived harm minimization because it literally threatened to destroy my life and my family's life through the messages that it can implant into that structure and the way it threatened to tear us apart, literally. It was almost like that was its objective; it did not want me to escape my addiction, it wanted me to stay stuck there".

Motgift Gotland

## EU Parliament voted for legal opium in Afghanistan

"Method can give an opposite effect"

### Call to produce legal analgesics instead of illicit opium in Afghanistan:

The European Parliament is urging the Council to put forward a plan to the Afghan government which would include the possibility of a pilot project to turn part of the illicit poppy crop into legal opium-based analgesics.

In an own-initiative report drafted by Marco **Cappato**, and adopted in Strasbourg, the House notes that "insurgents, warlords, the Taliban and terrorist groups are obtaining their major source of funding through trade in illicit narcotics", thereby jeopardising the political

**Hamid Ghodse**, Professor, International Drug Policy at St George's, University of London, (Former President of the International Narcotics Control Board, INCB) for The Times, August 30, 2007:

"According to the UN International Narcotics Control Board, which regulates the production and trade of controlled drugs, global demand for opium-based medicines (such as morphine and codeine) is fully satisfied."

stability and economic development of Afghanistan.

MEPs want the Council to look at "the possibility of pilot projects for small-scale conversion of parts of the current illicit poppy cultivation into fields for the production of legal opium-based analgesics".

The report also urges the Council to devise and submit to the Afghan government a "comprehensive plan and strategy aimed at controlling drug production in Afghanistan", by "tackling corruption at the highest levels of the Afghan administration", especially the Ministry of the Interior.

Lastly, the report calls for measures to improve rural development in the poorest areas of the country, especially in those not

yet producing opium on a large scale, by "carefully and selectively engaging in manual eradication".

You can read the full text of the report here:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/030-12347-295-10-43-903-20071024IPR12332-22-10-2007-2007-false/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/030-12347-295-10-43-903-20071024IPR12332-22-10-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm)

### "Method can give an opposite effect"

EU Parliamentarians voted to allow Afghan farmers to produce opium for legal opium-based analgesics. UNODC representative in Afghanistan Christina Oguz is of the opinion that this is not well thought out and can worsen the situation for the locals. She quoted this to the Swedish news agency EKOT.

- I think this is a naive proposal. It shows a lack of understanding of the situation as it really is in Afghanistan.

Christina Oguz means that such a method would have an opposite effect and encourage those farmers who do not produce opium to start doing that.

- People need security, access to health care and education for their children. This is available in the northern parts of Afghanistan where the farmers have turned away from opium and started supporting themselves by alternative livelihoods, says Christina Oguz, UNODC representative in Afghanistan.

### Ahmad Zia Massoud, First Vice-President of Afghanistan for Sunday Telegraph

"If we fail this will become a war of attrition, and more of the soldiers of Afghanistan, Britain, and other countries will be needlessly killed. As an old Afghan proverb says: 'In fighting wars you don't hand out sweets.'"

## EMCDDA Annual report 2007

*Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in Europe addresses two fundamental questions: What do we currently know about drug use in Europe? And what have we learnt about responding effectively to drug-related problems?*

After over a decade of rising drug use, Europe may now be entering a more stable phase, says the EU drugs agency, the EMCDDA. Not only are there signs that heroin use and drug injecting have become generally less common, but new data suggest that levels of cannabis use may now be stabilising after a sustained period of growth. Nevertheless, positive messages are marred by high levels of drug-related deaths and rising cocaine use.

- **Cannabis:** Use stabilising and signs of popularity waning among the young. But intensive cannabis use causing health concerns - around 3 million may be using it on a

daily, or almost daily, basis.

- **Cocaine:** Estimates rise again. Around 4.5 million Europeans report using the drug in the last year. Record cocaine seizures in Europe: 107 tonnes in 2005, up over 45% on quantities seized in 2004.

- **HIV:** Overall positive assessment, but 3 500 new infections among drug injectors in 2005 underline need for continued efforts. Up to 200 000 drug injectors live with HIV. Up to 1 million live with HCV, Europe's hidden epidemic.

- **Deaths:** Europe risks failing to meet targets to reduce drug-related deaths. Between 7 000 and 8 000 overdose deaths per year, with no downward trend detectable in the most recent data.

This year, the Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in Europe offers data from the 27 EU Member States, Norway and Turkey. Individual chapters dedicated to

specific drugs present the latest European overview of prevalence and patterns of use, supply and availability and treatment and other interventions. These are complemented by chapters relating to: new and emerging drug trends; policies and laws; responding to drug problems; and infectious diseases and drug-related deaths.

### ★ STATISTICS

The report and press pack will be available in 23 languages (21 EU plus NO and TR) and accompanied by three Selected issues in English. This year, these in-depth reviews cover drugs and driving; drug use and related problems among the under 15s; and the public health impact of cocaine and crack cocaine use.

For detailed information, please visit [www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/2007/annualreport.cfm](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/2007/annualreport.cfm)



## Heroin down, cannabis up

Study visit of Russian drug experts to Stockholm



A 37-strong group of drug experts, psychologists, teachers and social workers from St. Petersburg, Russia visited ECAD on November 21-23 to learn about Swedish approach to drug combat.

The group was specially interested to learn about methods practised in Stockholm which are based on collaboration between police, social services and addiction care services. These methods are developed for different groups, from teenagers previously unknown as drug abusers to established drug addicts.

Other program points of the study visit included Maria Addiction Centre which in co-operation with the Karolinska Medical University carries out a research aimed to gather information on how many of Stockholm's injectors are HIV and Hepatitis infected and what are the ways of spreading of these infections. The group visited the Municipal drug prevention centre Precens and participated in a seminar with representatives for non-governmental organisations working in the drug field and interested in co-operation with Russia.

The drug policy in Russia is still undergoing rapid changes. The latest we have learned was strengthening of state control over the drug combat by setting up a new committee empowered to lead federal and regional authorities in their work against drugs.

General trends in regard to drug misuse in this second largest Russian city show drastic decrease of heroin abuse and increasing abuse of cannabis, followed by amphetamines and ecstasy. This may create abuse patterns in St. Petersburg that will be similar to those of Swedish and other European cities.

Swedish approach which combines restrictive policy based on the UN Conventions on drugs with developed social care system is of interest for the Russian drug experts.

On the other hand, ECAD's work in Russia benefits from turning to the well established Russian educational system with deep traditions of scientific evaluation of methods and policies within drug combat.

## Sweden: New Organisation

for National Drug Policy Coordination

The Government office introduced on October 20 a new organisation for National Drug Policy Coordination.

The Government will annually present an Action plan defining guide lines for drug prevention. A coordination body is set up consisting of two Secretariats, ANT (Alcohol, Narcotics, Tobacco) and SAMANT (interdepartmental coordination of alcohol, narcotics, doping and tobacco policies) together with a new Council which will function as an advisor to the Government. The council will include representatives for governmental and non-governmental bodies.

## ★ STATISTICS

A total allocation of about 29 million Euros yearly is marked for the implementation of the ambitious policy to decrease the use of illicit drugs.

The new organisation replaces the Office of the Swedish National Drug Policy Coordinator, Mobilisation Against Drugs commissioned by the previous government.

*“The new organisation creates conditions for working on alcohol, narcotics, doping and tobacco questions within a permanent and sustainable structure”.*

*says Maria Larsson, Minister for Elderly Care and Public Health.*

*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 societies' well-being.*