

## European Update

### EMCDDA

**Portugal profile** - The EMCDDA Drug policy profiles aim to describe some of the main characteristics of national drug policies in Europe and beyond. The profiles do not attempt to assess these policies, but instead outline their development and main features. The objective is to help readers — from researchers to policymakers — gain a better understanding of the way in which countries control drugs and respond to drug-related security, social and health problems. <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drug-policy-profiles/portugal>

### EMCDDA

**Khat use in Europe: implications for European policy.**

Khat leaves are cultivated in the highlands of the Horn of Africa, Southern Arabia and along the East African coast. In many countries, chewing khat is an age-old tradition. More recently, the mass migration of people from the Horn of Africa has been associated with the spread of khat usage to neighbouring countries, Europe and the rest of the world. Exact numbers of regular khat users on a worldwide scale do not exist, however estimates range up to 20 million. This paper presents the challenges associated with the spread of khat consumption. <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugs-in-focus/khat>

### Germany

Police in Brandenburg who discovered a large plot of cannabis called on the neighbouring house only to find an 84-year-old woman who had been feeding her rabbits with the plants. "The rabbits really like it," the woman told officers who called on her. <http://www.thelocal.de/national/20110625-35889.html>

### Netherlands

The Netherlands, famous for its liberal soft drugs policies, said it may label some highly concentrated forms of cannabis as a hard drug on a par with cocaine or heroin, because of the risk of addiction. With many coffee shops openly selling cannabis to customers and a tolerance of home-cultivation of marijuana plants, the Netherlands attracts attention

in the global debate about soft drugs policies. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/24/us-dutch-cannabis-idUSTRE75N4T220110624>

### Russia

A home-made heroin substitute is having a horrific effect on thousands of Russia's drug addicts. The home-made drug is known as krokodil, or "crocodile". It is desomorphine, a synthetic opiate many times more powerful than heroin that is created from a complex chain of mixing and chemical reactions, which the addicts perform from memory several times a day. While heroin costs from £20 to £60 per dose, desomorphine can be "cooked" from codeine-based headache pills that cost £2 per pack, and other household ingredients available cheaply from the markets.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/krokodil-the-drug-that-eats-junkies-2300787.html>

### Spain

Spanish police intercepted in Venezuela more than 7 tons of cocaine hidden in a consignment of machinery bound for Spain. Thirteen people were arrested, five of them in Spain and eight in Venezuela, during the operation, which allowed authorities to break up major drug trafficking organizations. During the operation, which was coordinated with Venezuelan security forces, police conducted eight raids in Spain, one of them against a heavy machinery company through which the network laundered the money it obtained from drug trafficking. <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2011/07/07/7-tons-spain-bound-cocaine-seized-in-venezuela/>

### United Kingdom

A drug for epilepsy and anxiety is increasingly being misused by young people in the UK, researchers say. Phenazepam was developed in the 1970s for the treatment of epilepsy, alcohol withdrawal syndrome, insomnia and anxiety. <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/epilepsy-drug-misuse-on-the-rise-2308422.html>

## World Update

### UNODC

#### Afghanistan Cannabis Survey 2010

Annual survey report.

[http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/Afghanistan\\_Cannabis\\_Survey\\_Report\\_2010\\_smallwcover.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/Afghanistan_Cannabis_Survey_Report_2010_smallwcover.pdf)

### Australia

THE number of Australians receiving treatment for dependence on opioids such as heroin is on the rise and the proportion of older clients is also increasing, according an Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report. The report found that on a snapshot day in 2010 there were over 46,000 clients who received pharmacotherapy for opioid dependence.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/elderly-becoming-invisible-drug-and-alcohol-addicts/story-e6frg6so-1226079887126>

### Australia

Australian Minister for Home Affairs Brendan O'Connor says a new legislation passed by Parliament would enable internal body scanning technology to be used at airports to stop drug couriers. Customs and Border Protection will test internal body scanning technology as a way to boost the detection of drugs that are being imported inside the bodies of drug couriers.

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2011/7/5/nation/20110705134311&sec=nation>

### Bolivia

Bolivia is set to withdraw from an international narcotics convention in protest at its classification of coca leaves as an illegal drug. President Evo Morales, who is also the leader of one of the country's main coca producers' unions, has asked Congress to pass a law that would take Bolivia out of the 1961 United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. The government says the convention contravenes the Bolivian constitution, which says the country is obliged to preserve and protect the chewing of coca leaves as a cultural heritage and ancestral practice.

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/bolivia-fights-for-its-natural-narcotic-20110624-1qjjq.html>

### India

Heroin seized by Delhi Police in the national capital in the first six months of 2011 is 3 times more than the quantity recovered in the corresponding period last year. During this period, opium seizures have grown 5 fold as compared to last year.

<http://www.inewsone.com/2011/07/02/heroin-seizures-in-delhi-up-three-times-over-2010/60381>

### Lebanon

It's destruction season in the Bekaa Valley. Caravans of army trucks and civilian tractors rumble through the area, upturning massive fields of illegally grown cannabis. The farmers, haven't bribed the cannabis eradicators, a method that is rumored to be the only way to stave off eradication. In fact, their cannabis is legal. They're growing industrial hemp, a variety of cannabis that contains little or no THC, the component of the plant that is a drug.

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Local-News/2011/Jul-09/Hemp-offers-cannabis-farmers-legal-alternative.ashx#axzz1RqnAHtXV>

### Peru

Peru has passed Colombia as the major source of cocaine. FARC has adapted in some parts of Colombia by encouraging farmers to grow genetically modified strains of marijuana (with up to 17 percent THC, the active ingredient). Farmers make much more from this than from food crops. Cocaine production has been falling sharply in Colombia over the last three years, as anti-drug and anti-FARC operations grew more and more successful.

<http://www.strategypage.com/gnd/colombi/articles/20110701.aspx>

### St. Maarten, Caribbean

Authorities seized 1.1 tonnes of cocaine worth 42 million euros (\$61 million) aboard a yacht sailing from the Caribbean to Europe, the German Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) said. The 13-metre (43-foot) yacht was intercepted by French customs officials near the Caribbean island of St. Maarten on after setting sail from Grenada.

[http://af.reuters.com/article/southAfricaNews/idAF\\_LDE7641G820110705](http://af.reuters.com/article/southAfricaNews/idAF_LDE7641G820110705)

### USA

U.S. decrees that marijuana has no accepted medical use. The decision by the DEA comes almost nine years after medical marijuana supporters asked the government to reclassify cannabis to take into account a growing body of research that shows its effectiveness in treating certain diseases.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-marijuana-20110709,0,1346255.story>

### Venezuela

Venezuela's top security official says authorities have seized more than 5.5 tons of cocaine. Justice Minister Tareck El Aissami calls the drug seizure in eastern Venezuela one of the country's hardest blows to drug traffickers in recent years.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2011/06/25/501364/main20074421.shtml>

## Drug Webwatch

### Reports

#### UNODC

##### World Drug Report 2011

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/WDR-2011.html>

#### UNODC

##### The Transatlantic Cocaine Market

While almost all of the cocaine produced globally comes from the Andean region (Colombia, Peru and the Plurinational State of Bolivia), the location of demand has shifted drastically in the last decade.

[http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Transatlantic\\_cocaine\\_market.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Transatlantic_cocaine_market.pdf)

#### Ireland

##### An Overview of New Psychoactive Substances and the Outlets Supplying Them

Report represents the outcome of a review of new psychoactive substances within the Irish context. National Advisory Committee on Drugs, Ireland.

[http://www.nacd.ie/publications/Head\\_Report2011\\_overview.pdf](http://www.nacd.ie/publications/Head_Report2011_overview.pdf)

#### Australia

##### Illicit Drug Data Report 2009 - 10

The report is recognised as one of the most valuable tools for law enforcement agencies, policy and decision makers, research bodies and other stakeholders in combating illicit drugs.

[http://www.crimecommission.gov.au/publications/iddr/files/2009\\_10/IDDR\\_2009-10.pdf](http://www.crimecommission.gov.au/publications/iddr/files/2009_10/IDDR_2009-10.pdf)

#### Georgia

##### Drug situation in Georgia 2010

<http://altgeorgia.ge/cms/en/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Drug-Situation-in-GEORGIA-2010-En.pdf>



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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