

## European Update

### EMCDDA

#### Drugnet Europe 83

In this issue: Screening for hepatitis B and C infection in Europe | Second international conference on novel psychoactive substances | EMCDDA report explores models of addiction | New Zealand enacts innovative regulatory system on new drugs | 5-IT recommended for control at EU level.

<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drugnet/83>

### Albania

Lazarat is known as Albania's drug capital, notorious for its cannabis and lawlessness. The annual crop earns almost \$6 billion, according to the Italian financial police. Although local police dispute that figure, they admit that marijuana production is booming.

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/europe/130815/europe-marijuana-capital-lazarat-albania>

### Belgium

Police in three countries have pulled off one of the biggest synthetic drug hauls Europe has seen, seizing 60 million ecstasy pills with a street value of €1.3 billion. During 30 raids in Belgium, the Netherlands and Poland, 11 people were under arrest charged with possession, production and trading in drugs as part of a criminal gang.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/belgium/10263175/Ecstasy-pills-worth-1.3bn-found-in-Europes-biggest-drugs-raid.html>

### Germany

In one German town, growing cannabis has become the new method of civil disobedience. A group of students has been sowing the plant throughout the town. Forcing local police to hunt around in hedgerows for the seeds of their protest.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7hlluPN4Vc>

### Italy

A Venetian gondolier had used cocaine and hashish before a collision that killed a German tourist and injured one of his children, Italian police said.

[http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/World-News/2013/08/23/Police-Gondolier-involved-in-fatal-crash-had-used-drugs/UPI-26241377287286/](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2013/08/23/Police-Gondolier-involved-in-fatal-crash-had-used-drugs/UPI-26241377287286/)

### Russia

A Russian surgeon, who took a cut for himself when removing heroin from the stomach of a drug mule in Siberia for the police, faces up to 15 years in prison for theft and drug possession.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/13/russia-police-surgeon-stole-heroin-mule>

### Spain

The British Consulate in Ibiza has told Newsbeat that police on the island are not doing enough to stop drug smuggling. They say although Civil Guard officers work "extremely hard" there is a wider issue with border controls.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/23707782>

### Switzerland

Spanish and Swiss police smashed a South America-linked cocaine ring, leading to 19 arrests. The gang moved cocaine from South America to Spain, from where it was shipped to Switzerland and Italy.

<http://www.focus-fen.net/index.php?id=n314215>

### Ukraine

The executive director of Cascade-Medical trade house LLC, the exclusive representative of Heel (Germany) in Ukraine, in July 2013 for the production of counterfeit drugs was sentenced to four years in prison with the confiscation of counterfeit medicines, raw materials and equipment for their production.

<http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/head-of-counterfeit-heel-drugs-producer-to-be-imprisoned-for-4-years-with-confiscation-328411.html>

### United Kingdom

AN accountant at a national care home firm stole £184,000 from dead residents' bank accounts after he developed a cocaine addiction to deal with the stress of the credit crunch, a court has heard.

<http://www.sunderlandecho.com/news/crime/cocaine-addicted-care-home-accountant-stole-184-000-from-dead-residents-bank-accounts-1-6020191>

### United Kingdom

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs has recommended the control of three prescription medicines.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/acmd-advises-the-government-on-the-control-of-prescription-drugs>

## World Update

### UNODC

UNODC published a 54-page report highlighting organized crime in Eastern Africa. It said the local market for heroin was worth approximately \$160 million and as much as 22 tons of the illicit drug is trafficked to the region each year.

[http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/Special/2013/09/05/Heroin-traffic-increasing-through-East-Africa/UPI-49071378391177/?spt=hs&or=tn](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2013/09/05/Heroin-traffic-increasing-through-East-Africa/UPI-49071378391177/?spt=hs&or=tn)

### Argentina

Drug dealers who used carrier pigeons to distribute marijuana across Argentina have been arrested. The dealers made up to 20 deliveries a day to a distributor in Lomas de Zamora, who would collect the drug from pouches on the birds' legs.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2402403/Drug-dealing-gang-used-carrier-pigeons-distribute-cannabis-Arentina-arrested.html>

### Australia

More than 1,500 pounds of cocaine seized from a yacht on the island of Vanuatu was probably headed for Queensland in Australia.

[http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/World-News/2013/08/23/Cocaine-believed-bound-for-Australia-seized-en-route/UPI-79431377281427/?spt=hs&or=tn](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2013/08/23/Cocaine-believed-bound-for-Australia-seized-en-route/UPI-79431377281427/?spt=hs&or=tn)

### Bolivia

Farmers are poisoning their own plants through excessive use of weedkillers, it seems. Agricultural officials carried out tests in the central Chapare region, where more than 5% of the 7,000 hectares of legally-grown coca plants were drying out.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-23711966>

### Colombia

Upto the late 1980s, the US military did not believe that a union between Colombia's guerrilla groups and drug trafficking would take place, a declassified military document revealed. In the 1980s, drug trafficking helped the FARC to grow so big in the 1990s, that the Colombian state was about to collapse under the guerrilla pressure and the US felt it necessary to intervene and create Plan Colombia, a joint US-Colombian military strategy'.

<http://colombiareports.com/u-s-underestimated-links-between-farc-and-drug-trafficking/>

### Colombia

Colombian authorities seize one ton of cocaine hidden in limes, worth \$59 million. More than 1,400 boxes were ready to be shipped to Belgium.

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/colombia-authorities-seize-ton-cocaine-hidden-limes-article-1.1442392>

### Dominican Republic

Authorities in the Dominican Republic have discovered an underground lab for processing cocaine, the first ever found in a Caribbean country that has been experiencing a surge in drug seizures.

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/crime/dominicans-bust-cocaine-lab-article-1.1443820>

### Guyana

Authorities in Guyana say smugglers have found yet another way to smuggle cocaine out of the country. The Customs Anti-Narcotics Unit says a man was caught trying to ship 16 kilograms of the drug to the U.S. in hollowed out okra pods.

<http://www.boston.com/news/world/caribbean/2013/08/15/cocaine-found-inside-okra-plants-guyana/Fo6DXaceg6svqdqZgHqocl/story.html>

### Hong Kong

Hong Kong customs seized a record haul of cocaine at its international airport, foiling two passengers who tried to smuggle US\$7.5 million worth of the drug in their luggage. One man arrived from São Paulo, Brazil, after transiting in Beijing with 48 kilograms of cocaine wrapped in quilts inside his suitcases, the largest amount ever seized from an individual passenger in the city's history.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2013/08/15/hong-kong-sets-record-cocaine-haul/>

### Iran

UN statistics estimate that roughly 2.2 percent of Iranian adults are hooked on drugs, the highest rate in the world. Experts elsewhere say that number could be much higher, reaching 5 percent of the total Iranian population. That would mean of 80 million Iranians, 4 million are hooked on drugs.

<http://news.msn.com/world/iran-drug-addiction-rate-highest-in-world>

### Paraguay

Paraguay officials have seized almost two tons of cocaine near the border with Brazil. Special drug agents said they found a one-ton cargo of cocaine at a ranch in the state of Presidente Hayes, about 240 miles north of the capital, Asuncion.

<http://www.kens5.com/news/world/220864701.html>

### Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan customs seized 250 kilograms of heroin worth \$19 million from a container sent from Pakistan. The heroin was found Friday at a terminal in the capital, Colombo. The heroin was concealed inside 17,500 small grease cans packed into a large container sent from Karachi.

<http://www.thefrontierpost.com/article/37363/>

## Drug Webwatch

### Reports

#### United Kingdom

The UK has become the drug and alcohol "addictions capital of Europe", a think tank has warned. The Centre for Social Justice - set up by Work and Pensions Secretary Iain Duncan Smith - said drink and drug abuse cost the UK £36bn a year. Its report warned that the UK has become a hub for websites peddling potentially dangerous "legal highs".

<http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/UserStorage/pdf/Pdf%20reports/addict.pdf>

#### United Kingdom

##### Statistical bulletin: Deaths Related to Drug Poisoning in England and Wales, 2012

This statistical bulletin presents the latest figures from the Office for National Statistics on deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales for the last five years. Data from 1993 are available to download, and are discussed in the commentary to provide context to the latest data. Figures are presented by cause of death, sex, age, substance(s) involved in the death, and by country and region.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/subnational-health3/deaths-related-to-drug-poisoning/2012/stb---deaths-related-to-drug-poisoning-2012.html>

#### United States

Cocaine use linked to rapid growth of new brain structures in mice. Mice that grew the most spines developed the strongest preference for returning to the enclosure where they received cocaine.

[http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2013-08/uoc--gcs082213.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2013-08/uoc--gcs082213.php)



I would like to express thanks to those persons around the world who have contributed to this issue. Items for inclusion in future issues should be forwarded to

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