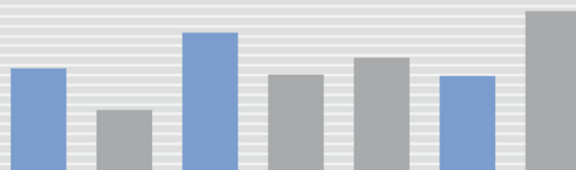




Fact sheet

from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon



MONITORING HOSPITAL EMERGENCIES AND ACUTE DRUG TOXICITY IN EUROPE

Euro-DEN Plus network expands reach by welcoming eight new centres

(9.3.2017, LISBON) Data from hospital emergency departments show that every year in Europe thousands of individuals experience drug-related toxicity and other harms, resulting in emergency presentations to hospital ⁽¹⁾. Supported by the **EU drugs agency (EMCDDA)**, the **European Drug Emergencies Network (Euro-DEN Plus)** monitors drug-related emergency presentations across Europe to provide unique insight into acute health harms related to drug use ⁽²⁾. In the course of 2017, the network will be expanding its reach by collecting data from new hospital 'sentinel' centres in eight European cities.

The eight new centres — located in **Antwerp, Helsinki, Kaunas, Ljubljana, Monza, Riga, Sofia and Vilnius** (see map) — bring the network to a total of 29 sentinel centres in 21 European countries. The centres were strategically chosen by **Euro-DEN Plus** and the **EMCDDA**, not only to expand geographical coverage of data monitoring, but also to reinforce the network, where it had been under-represented, and to target areas where specific drug-related harms are raising concern.

Euro-DEN Plus regional meeting — a focus on the Baltics

Today, the **EMCDDA** and **Euro-DEN Plus** open a two-day network meeting in **Tallinn** (Estonia) aimed at providing an overview of the project and its data-collection model, specifically for the forthcoming centres in **Latvia** and **Lithuania**. During the meeting, the participants will take part in a roundtable on **Euro-DEN Plus** data collection in the Baltic region and will discuss the timeline and work plan for the contribution of the new centres.

Indications of specific patterns of drug use and related harms in the Baltic region were behind the proposal for recruiting three new sentinel centres in the region in 2017: one in **Latvia** (Riga) and two in **Lithuania** (Kaunas and Vilnius). Sentinel centres have existed in **Estonia** (Parnü and Tallinn) since 2013. This Baltic regional meeting will finalise the formal recruitment of the three new centres into the project.

Among the concerns highlighted in the region, and triggering the recruitment of the three new centres, were: the high prevalence of fentanyl use in **Estonia** ⁽³⁾; a recent increase in drug-related deaths in **Lithuania** ⁽⁴⁾ and signs that drug-related deaths may be underestimated in **Latvia** ⁽⁵⁾. In addition, there are reports across the **Baltic region** of: pockets of high HIV prevalence in intravenous drug users ⁽⁶⁾; and the relatively high reported prevalence of NPS in the **Baltic countries** in the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD)⁽⁷⁾.

The participants will include: members of the Euro-DEN Plus Steering Group; a representative of the EMCDDA; clinicians from the Estonian sentinel centres; Estonian forensic toxicologists; clinicians from the proposed new centres in Latvia and Lithuania; and representatives from the Reitox national focal points in the three Baltic countries. This broad participation is designed to facilitate discussions on how the Euro-DEN Plus data collection can serve as a novel data source, feeding into the EMCDDA's more established monitoring of drug use and drug-related harms in the region.

This week's meeting, with the three Baltic countries, will focus in particular on improving data availability and insight into fatal and non-fatal drug toxicity, from the different perspectives of forensic toxicologists, doctors in hospital emergency rooms, the Reitox national focal points and the **EMCDDA**.

The **EMCDDA** adopts a multi-indicator approach to drug monitoring on the principle that no single measure can provide a full picture of the drug situation. It views hospital emergency data-collection as a useful addition to its monitoring toolkit.

Notes

⁽¹⁾ See EMCDDA Rapid communication (August 2016) — *Hospital emergency presentations and acute drug toxicity in Europe* — Update from the Euro-DEN Plus Research Group and the EMCDDA.

Available at www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/rapid-communications/2016/hospital-emergencies

See also Final report of the European Drug Emergencies Network (Euro-DEN), March 2015. Available in eight languages at: www.emcdda.europa.eu/activities/emergencies

⁽²⁾ The Euro-DEN network was set up in 2013 to improve knowledge at European level on acute drug toxicity relating to established illicit drugs and new psychoactive substances. It was funded by the European Commission from April 2013 to March 2015. After this, the network continued its work and renamed itself 'Euro-DEN Plus' as it grew. The EMCDDA has participated in the network's Steering Committee since the outset and facilitates synergies between projects. The 29 centres participating in the project are located in: Antwerp, Barcelona, Basel, Bern, Bratislava, Copenhagen (subsequently moved to Roskilde), Drogheda, Dublin, Gdansk, Helsinki, Imsida, Kaunas, London (2), Ljubljana, Mallorca, Monza, Munich, Oslo (2), Paris, Pärnu, Prague, Riga, Sofia, Tallinn, Yekaterinburg, York and Vilnius.

⁽³⁾ EMCDDA Trendspotter report 2012 — www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/scientific-studies/2012/trendspotters-report

⁽⁴⁾ EMCDDA drug-related deaths meeting 2016 — www.emcdda.europa.eu/meetings/2016/DRD — www.emcdda.europa.eu/system/files/attachments/3238/Evelina_Pridotkiene-DRD_in_Lithuania_E_Pridotkiene.pdf

⁽⁵⁾ EMCDDA overdose deaths — Methodology — Latvia — www.emcdda.europa.eu/data/stats2016

⁽⁶⁾ EMCDDA Rapid communication — Drug-related infectious diseases in Europe in 2016
www.emcdda.europa.eu/system/files/publications/3393/TD0416796ENN.pdf

⁽⁷⁾ ESPAD Report 2015 — www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2016/10/espada-report — www.espad.org/report/home