

Europe's Action Plan on Drugs: Cooperation and Collaboration for the Reduction of Demand and Supply



Tuesday, 7th November 2017

Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre,
Brussels



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Overview

According to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the drug market remains the largest and most dynamic illicit market in the EU. Each year, illicit drugs worth approximately 24 billion Euros are being sold, whilst two in every three organised crime syndicates are involved in drug trafficking. The most popular drug is Cannabis, with over 80 million European citizens having used it at least once. Cocaine and amphetamines are also prominent, being consumed by 17.5 and 12.5 Million Europeans respectively. As the drug marketplace becomes more complex, an increasing number of new psychoactive substances (NPS) can also be found, despite the health risks of such substances remaining largely unknown. With many lawmakers rethinking and even decriminalizing drug policy around the globe; Europe must develop a balanced and coordinated response to tackle the growing dangers of drug contraband.

To tackle these challenges, the European Union set up the EU Drug Strategy 2013-2020 and the EU Action Plan on Drugs 2013-2016, a comprehensive political framework aiming to contribute to a reduction in drug demand and supply, whilst minimizing the health and social risks caused by drugs. Earlier this year, the Commission proposed an updated strategy for 2017-2020, in order to strengthen existing pillars and account for new developments and challenges. National drug strategies implemented by Member States have also been produced to complement these initiatives. With the internet now serving as the main marketplace for illicit drugs, such strategy is also linked to the digital economy and cyber security strategy, with changes being made later this year. Greater national and cross-border collaboration, as well as improved dialogue and data collection, will be needed to ensure that implementation is effective.

Despite efforts, innovation in drug development and new patterns of use mean new challenges for policymakers and public health authorities. There is a need to provide consumers with prevention and rehabilitation responses, and for improved cooperation between drug treatment and sexual health services, to reduce infections and diseases such as HIV. NPS and highly potent synthetic opioids are another growing health threat, with usage and overdoses rising. Drug abuse does not simply harm these users with high mortality rates, but also poses a significant burden to society as a whole, bringing high social and public health costs. In order to stem the flow of illegal substances, minimize risk and eliminate criminal activity, Europe must reform and readjust to the fast-moving pace of change in illicit markets.

This international symposium provides a timely opportunity for practitioners, responsible authorities and stakeholders across Europe to discuss the latest challenges and consider the necessary steps forward to win the fight against illicit drug trafficking and substance abuse. The symposium will support the exchange of ideas and encourage delegates to engage in a thought-provoking topical debate.



"The drugs phenomenon continues to evolve, and so must our policy"

- **Dimitris Avramopoulos, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, European Commission, June 2017**

Venue and Accommodation

Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre
Avenue du Boulevard 17
1210 Brussels
Belgium



Why Attend?

- ✓ Examine the revised 2017-2020 EU framework on illicit drugs and its relationship to national member state strategies and frontline practice
- ✓ Discuss upcoming law enforcement measures promoted at the European level to fight against drug trafficking and criminal activity, including cybercrime
- ✓ Evaluate treatment and rehabilitation measures, collaborative plans and prevention strategies to reduce drug consumption
- ✓ Learn about recent developments and current drug data trends across Europe and the potential impact of policy changes on frontline services
- ✓ Determine successful strategies to respond to new emerging challenges such as rises in NPS and synthetic opioids
- ✓ Share best practice of successful initiatives and projects in treatment and rehabilitation
- ✓ Build strong and lasting partnerships with diverse groups of stakeholders working in the field of drugs at the national and international level

Who Should Attend?

- National Police Agencies
- Public Health Agencies
- Drug Rehabilitation Professionals
- Drug Addiction Centres
- Border Control Agencies
- Rehabilitation Centres
- Research Institutes
- Psychologists
- Lawyers
- Ministries of Interiors
- Pharmaceutical Industry
- Employee Relations Advisers
- Legal Criminal Advisers
- Campaigning Organisations
- National Health Employers
- Local Authority Officers and Councillors
- Police and Fire Service
- National Drug Research Communities
- Central Government Departments and Bodies
- Regulatory Bodies
- Citizens' Advice and Third Sector Practitioners
- Academics and Researchers
- Public Health Authorities
- Ministries of Health
- Social Services
- Social Workers
- Youth Workers
- International Associations
- Hospitals
- General Practitioners
- Homelessness Assessment and Prevention Officers
- Housing Associations
- Tenants and Residents' Associations
- Local Strategic Partnerships
- Social Exclusion Officers
- Health and Safety Executives
- Chemical Industry

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Programme

- 09:15** Registration and Morning Refreshments
- 10:00** Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 10:10** **Strengthening the Policy Response to Drug Consumption, Abuse and Trafficking**
- Assessing Progress on the Updated EU Drug Strategy 2017-2020
 - Lessons Learnt and Ways Forward: The EU Action Plan on Drugs 2013-2016
 - Monitoring Recent Drug Trends and Diverse Developments Across Member States
- 10:40** **First Round of Discussions**
- 11:10** Morning Coffee Break
- 11:30** **Discussing Law Enforcement Measures and Emerging Challenges**
- Discussing the Legalisation of Illicit Drugs and Divergence Between Member States
 - Rethinking Drug Prohibition and Criminalisation Approaches
 - Tackling Drug Production and Trafficking: Strengthening the Cooperation Between Stakeholders at National and International Level
 - Improving and Securing Border Controls as a Response to Drug Trafficking
- 12:00** **Second Round of Discussions**
- 12:30** Networking Lunch
- 13:30** **Understanding the Role of the Internet as an Enabler for Drugs**
- Drug Trafficking Online and its Relation to the EU Cyber Security Strategy
 - Developing Strategies to Eliminate Drug Sales via Online Platforms
 - Fostering Improved Cross-Border Cooperation to Tackle Drug Cybercrime
 - Utilizing the Internet for Awareness-Raising, Engagement and Prevention
- 14:00** **Third Round of Discussions**
- 14:30** Afternoon Coffee Break
- 14:50** **Promoting Specialized Drug Treatment Services, Education and Prevention Programmes**
- Awareness Raising, Cooperation and Prevention: Examples of Best Practice
 - Providing Accessible, Affordable, and Competent Treatment Services
 - Reducing Drug Consumption Through Alternative Approaches
 - Targeting Youth: Developing Prevention Programmes in Schools and Nightlife Settings
- 15:20** **Fourth Round of Discussions**
- 15:50** Chair's Summary and Closing Comments
- 16:00** Networking Reception
- 16:30** Close

** Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice **

Event Details

- Date:** Tuesday 7th of November 2017
Time: 10:00am – 4:30pm
Venue: Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre, Brussels



Forthcoming Events

Eliminating Energy Poverty Across Europe: Monitoring Progress for an Inclusive Energy Union

5th September 2017

Cross-border Healthcare in Europe: Promoting Patients' Rights and Boosting Cooperation

12th September 2017

Promoting Migrant Integration for a Powerful, Diverse and Multicultural Europe

14th September 2017

Boosting the Electric Vehicle Market in Europe: Plugging the Sustainability Gap

19th September 2017

Updating the European Cyber Security Strategy: Partnerships for Prevention and Preparedness

3rd October 2017

Tackling Childhood Obesity in Europe through Awareness and Prevention

12th October 2017

Fighting Air Pollution in Europe: Ramping Up Efforts for a Healthier Environment

18th October 2017

Young Runaways and Missing Migrant Children in Europe: Towards Improved Cross-Border Cooperation

24th October 2017


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