

N/I/E/U/W/S/bank interactief Nederlands persbureau

www.nieuwsbank.nl

Tel: 030-2881286

E-mail: info@nieuwsbank.nl

EMCDDA and EUROPOL launch in-depth review of cocaine market



Datum nieuwsfeit: **29-04-2010**



Vindplaats van dit bericht



Bron: **Europol**

Europol

The Hague, 29 April 2010

EMCDDA and EUROPOL launch in-depth review of cocaine market

Latest analysis of cocaine market highlights 'secondary extraction' laboratories in Europe

The Hague - The Netherlands.

Increasingly sophisticated techniques to conceal and smuggle cocaine into Europe are reviewed in a new EMCDDA/Europol market analysis - Cocaine: A European Union perspective in the global context (1). Published today, the review provides insight into how cocaine is produced and trafficked into the EU, the people involved, routes taken, and the scale of the problem in Europe. Also analysed are some of the supply reduction initiatives already developed at European level (2).

One innovative technique identified in the report involves incorporating cocaine base or hydrochloride (HCI) into other materials (e.g. beeswax, plastic, clothing), then extracting it in special laboratories set up inside EU borders. Around 40 of these cocaine so-called 'secondary extraction' laboratories were seized in the EU in 2008, says the report, an issue of increasing concern to the two EU agencies. These differ from laboratories found in South America which manufacture cocaine base or HCI from coca leaves or coca paste (3).

Europe has become an important destination for cocaine manufactured in South America. In 2007, an estimated 73 800 seizures in EU Member States, Croatia, Turkey and Norway resulted in the interception of

almost 77 tonnes of cocaine. With these figures, Europe ranked third in the world for the amount of cocaine confiscated, after South and North America.

With a significant proportion of the global cocaine output now destined for Europe, new cross-Atlantic trafficking routes have emerged. The report describes the three main Europe-bound cocaine smuggling routes (Northern, Central, West African). It also shows how law enforcement data point to shifting landing points within Europe's main gateway regions - the Iberian Peninsula and the Low Countries (Belgium and the Netherlands) - as well as to the spread of trafficking networks eastwards. According to the report, this increases the risk of cocaine use diffusing into central and eastern European countries which, to date, have been comparatively little affected (see also EMCDDA 2009 Annual report: the state of the drugs problem in Europe).

Commenting on the report, EMCDDA Director Wolfgang GGtz said: 'Cocaine use and cocaine-related problems have increased markedly in Europe since the mid-1990s and around three million young adults report to have used the drug in the last year. I am particularly concerned by our latest analysis which illustrates the growing sophistication and innovation of cocaine traffickers in circumventing the law and the potential for the supply-led diffusion of cocaine into central and eastern European countries'.

In 2007, worldwide seizures of illicit shipments of potassium permanganate - the chemical precursor used in the manufacture of cocaine - reached a total of 153 tonnes (101 tonnes in 2006). Colombia accounted for 94% of the 2007 seizures (144 tonnes). The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) monitors the international trade in (and diversion of) this chemical, with South America being subject to special scrutiny. With close examination at home, illicit potassium permanganate importers from South America may now be using Africa as a transit territory, says the report. It is also likely that countries in West Africa are being used to carry out the final stages of the cocaine manufacturing process.

Europol Director Rob Wainwright said: 'At Europol we are working closely with law enforcement agencies in the EU Member States, providing on-the-spot assistance to investigations, dismantling cocaine laboratories and supporting operational analysis. Through our Project Cola, we help countries prevent or combat criminality by collecting intelligence on suspected criminal organisations involved in the production, processing or trafficking of cocaine. In so doing, we keep law enforcement agencies in the EU up-to-date on new methods of cocaine smuggling and heighten awareness of global drug trafficking trends.'

Most of the cocaine available in the world today is produced from coca grown in Colombia, where the plant contributes significantly to the local economy. Various measures to prevent coca cultivation and offer alternative livelihoods to the growers have been developed and supported by the EU and its Member States. However, the concentration of land ownership plus the ongoing armed conflict make effective and long-term action difficult. While underlining the need to boost cocaine interception efforts, the report also presents arguments for complementary initiatives to address the underlying causes that encourage cocaine production and trafficking.

Contact:

Kathy Robertson, Media relations, e-mail:

Kathryn.Robertson@emcdda.europa.eu, Cais do Sodrr, 1249-289 Lisbon, Portugal, Tel. (351) 211 21 02 00, Fax (351) 218 13 17 11, press@emcdda.europa.eu, www.emcdda.europa.eu

Soren Pedersen, Corporate Communications, Europol, e-mail: Soren.Pedersen@europol.europa.eu, Raamweg 47, PO Box 90850, The Hague, The Netherlands, Tel. (31) 70 302 50 01, www.europol.europa.eu

Notes:

(1) The report is available in English and Spanish at www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/joint-publications. This is the second title in an EMCDDAAEuropol joint publication series launched in 2009 covering key aspects of European drug markets. www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_78482_EN_Europol_brochure_WebOptimisedversion.pdf The first volume was dedicated to methamphetamine. (2) See p. 31 Supply reduction initiatives at EU level (e.g. EU-LAC cooperation, MAOC-N, CeCLAD-M, Project Cola). (3) There are two forms of cocaine in Europe: cocaine powder (HCl, a hydrochloride salt) and the less common crack cocaine (a free base).

Tweet This! // Vindplaats van dit bericht

Dit is een bericht uit het Nieuwsbank persberichtenarchief. Gegevens in dit bericht kunnen verouderd zijn. Overname is toegestaan onder **voorwaarden**. Eventueel in dit bericht vermelde (e-mail) adressen en telefoonnummers zijn uitsluitend bedoeld voor journalisten.

Terug naar boven
