European Monitoring Centre
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

EMCDDA/52/22

FINAL MINUTES OF THE SIXTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD (15–16 DECEMBER 2022)

15 DECEMBER 2022

1. Introduction by the Chair

The **Chair, Mr Franz Pietsch,** welcomed the participants at the 66th EMCDDA Management Board meeting. The meeting was held in hybrid format, at the EMCDDA and by video conference through Microsoft Teams, with on site and remote simultaneous interpretation in English, French and German as active languages, and Dutch, Polish and Portuguese as passive languages.

The Chair welcomed the new members present at the meeting. Ms Ida Lyngbeck Jensen, Head of Section at the Ministry of Health, was nominated as substitute member for Denmark. Estonia nominated Ms Kristiin Mikko, Adviser at the Public Health Department of the Ministry of Social Affairs, as member. Ms Vesna Marinko, Head of Division of Health promotion and prevention of addiction at the Ministry of Health, was nominated as substitute member for Slovenia. Mr Paolo Molinari, Head of Department at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, was nominated as member for Italy. Hungary was not present at the meeting, but gave its proxy vote to Austria.

The German delegation was accompanied by Ms Marina Horn. Mr Andreas Weinseiss accompanied the Chair for Austria. The Vice-Chair and member for Luxembourg, Mr Xavier Poos, was excused. Ms Ana Sofia Santos, Head of the Department for International Relations of SICAD, accompanied the Portuguese member.

The European Commission (EC) was represented online by Mr Laurent Muschel, Director for Law Enforcement and Security of DG HOME, Ms Floriana Sipala (DG HOME), Mr Philippe Roux (DG SANTE), as well as on site by Mr Péter Mihok (DG HOME) as observer.

The UNODC was not represented at the meeting.

The Chair reminded the participants that the Budget and the Executive Committee met on 14 December in order to prepare the Management Board meeting.

The Chair summarised the main parts of the agenda of the meeting. A restricted session took place only with the officially nominated members and substitute members of the Management Board for the election of a member to the Budget Committee.

The Director paid tribute to the long and outstanding service of several Management Board members to the EMCDDA on 15 December during lunch. Mr Goosdeel handed over an award to Mr Claude Gillard, member for Belgium, Dr João Goulão, member for Portugal, Dr Franz Pietsch, member for Austria and Prof Dr Meni Malliori, representative of the European Parliament.

2. Adoption of the agenda

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The **Chair** suggested anticipating agenda item 13.2. on the Ministerial Conference of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe, which was organised on 13–14 December in Lisbon to the end of the afternoon of the first meeting day, before the election of a member to the Budget Committee.

Decision: The Management Board adopted the revised agenda of the meeting.

PART I: *Exchange of views*

3. Exchange of views on the drugs situation in Ukraine and neighbouring countries

3.1. Presentation by a Ukrainian expert (online) and by the EMCDDA

Mr Oleksandr Bukrieiev, Head of International Cooperation Unit at the Institute of Psychiatry, forensic psychiatric examination and drug monitoring of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, presented an overview on the drugs situation in the country to the Management Board members.

Data collection has become more complicated due to military operations, occupation of territories, regular shelling, destruction of infrastructure, loss of databases, and changes in government priorities in all areas of life. In general, the drug situation in Ukraine has not changed significantly after the Russian invasion. The drug demand remains high due to worsening social and economic situation in the country. Drug dealers have been searching and trying new channels of smuggling and selling substances, as the traditional ones have been broken. An increase in manufacturing dangerous new synthetic cathinones is expected. The trend of importing drug and precursor-containing medications, that are not registered in Ukraine, from India, China, and Turkey remains. The most common substances in Ukraine for internal users are cannabis, methadone, amphetamine family substances.

Ms Jane Mounteney, Head of the Public Health Unit, updated the Management Board members on the EU responses in addressing drug/related needs of displaced PWUD from Ukraine in EU countries bordering Ukraine, since the information provided at the Management Board meeting of 21 June 2022.

The **Director** reminded that the EMCDDA started the exchange with Ukraine in the framework of the BUMAD (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova against Drugs) programme. The Agency has provided ad hoc support for the establishment of a national drug monitoring centre before 2010, when the first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Health of Ukraine was signed. Due to changes in the institutional framework, the Ministry of Health recently requested to sign a new Working Arrangement (WA) with the EMCDDA. The EMCDDA Director signed the Working Arrangement in July 2022, and it was sent to the Kiev for countersignature through diplomatic channels with the Embassy of Ukraine in Portugal. The Embassy informed that the WA will be signed by the Minister of Health on 16 December. Since the MoU has been in force, experts from Ukraine were invited to attend the annual expert meetings and the extended Reitox meeting. The counterpart of the EMCDDA in Ukraine is the Institute of Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatric Examination and Drug Monitoring of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine. However, the EMCDDA also cooperates with the Public Health Centre, Ministry of Interior and the non-governmental and research institutions within the scope of their activities. Since 2019, EMCDDA technical and scientific cooperation with Ukraine has accelerated in the framework of the EU4MD project, funded by the EU (DG NEAR). The second phase of the EU4MD project will continue supporting the capacity and role of the national drug observatory, and to integrate it into the EU networks. European Universal prevention Curriculum (EUPC) trainings should be rolled out, as feasible. Increased capacity building based on the needs, focusing on monitoring and responses and support to studies (focus on integration into European research networks) is also foreseen. Ukraine submits its annual reports on the drug and alcohol situation to the EMCDDA, which are accessible from the EMCDDA website.

An EMCDDA webinar was held on 14 December 2022 on 'Displaced people and EU preparedness and responses – lessons from Ukraine'. The Director stated that substance abuse such the abuse of benzodiazepines can be noted not only among drug users in Ukraine, but also among vulnerable groups in the population. The EMCDDA continues to provide as much support as possible to Ukraine, and cooperates with other Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Agencies in this area.

3.2. Discussion

Ms Sipala, representative of the EC, thanked Mr Bukrieiev for his professional and valuable insight into the drugs situation in Ukraine. The EU stands with the Ukraine, and will continue to take measures to assist Ukraine and the neighbouring countries in the area of public health, and in particular for access to treatment. Ms Sipala also thanked the EMCDDA and Europol for following closely the drug situation in Ukraine, and providing policy makers at national and European level with a precise description on drug production and trafficking, consumption and treatment.

WHO has coordinated its response together with the Public Health Centre in Ukraine in the context of its working group on medicines, medical supplies and procurement, which involves TB, HIV, OST and access to medication. A programme review of this large-scale working platform has been conducted in October 2022, which included

access to OST treatment, and the final report will be shared soon. WHO is willing to continue its collaboration with Ukraine.

CZ emphasised the common EU support to Ukraine. Over 500.000 Ukrainian refugees, mostly women and children, reside in CZ (the country counts 11 million inhabitants). Ukrainian drug users who seek drug services have problems with Hepatitis C, HIV and tuberculosis. CZ provided 1000 doses naloxone to drug services in Ukraine, and expressed its readiness to provide also methadone if needed.

PL expressed support and solidarity with the Ukrainian people suffering because of Russia's invasion since 24 February 2022. According to the Polish Border Guard about 8.5 million Ukrainians, mainly women and children, have crossed the Polish border since the beginning of the conflict, and 6.5 million Ukrainian citizens crossed the border from Poland to Ukraine. It is estimated that there are currently about 3 million Ukrainians in Poland. Ukrainian problematic drug users very rarely appear in Polish stationery and outpatient addiction treatment facilities, except for substitution treatment. For some Ukrainians who have applied for substitution treatment in Polish treatment facilities, Poland is only a temporary place of residence. Polish institutions dealing with the treatment of addicts sometimes act as intermediaries in establishing contact with substitution treatment programs at the destination where citizens from Ukraine go after leaving Poland. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, about 300 people have gone through Polish substitution treatment programs, and at the beginning of December 2022, 100 people from Ukraine were in substitution treatment, out of 3.500 in Poland.

Since the beginning of the conflict with Russia, antiretroviral treatment has covered about 2.647 refugees from Ukraine. It is not known how many of them contracted HIV through injecting drug use. Substitution treatment and antiretroviral treatment, as well as other health services, are free for refugees from Ukraine.

From 1 September 2022 about 185.000 children from Ukraine attended nursery and primary schools in Poland, of which 40.000 children in nursery schools. There are approximately 700-800.000 Ukrainian children of school age residing in Poland. Most of them follow distance learning conducted by Ukrainian schools from Ukraine. The National Centre for Addiction Prevention, like many other entities in Poland, commissioned assistance activities for Ukrainian citizens (psychological support and help in crisis, support to the social and professional adaptation of refugees, etc.). A joint research study by the Catholic University of Lublin and the Shevchenko National University in Kiev is being carried out to identify factors that influence the quality of life of Ukrainian children and youth in a situation of refugee status in Poland due to the war, and plan preventive measures. The National Centre for Prevention of Addictions also commissioned a project of selective prevention activities, addressed to immigrants from Ukraine residing in Poland (Warszawa, Lublin, Białystok), in particular mothers and their children at risk of developing risky behaviour patterns, including the use of psychoactive substances (NPS). PL will continue providing help and cooperating with Ukraine.

TR will continue its contribution to Ukraine, and wondered if Ukraine was a target or transit country for drug trafficking. Mr Bukrieiev confirmed that Ukraine is usually a target country.

FR thanked Mr Bukrieiev for his comprehensive overview, both on public health and security aspects, and emphasised the work of all professionals in drug services in Ukraine and its neighbouring countries. Ms d'Arrigo stressed the united commitment and solidarity of the EU towards Ukraine. It is important to put prevention measures in place in Ukraine and bordering countries, as the traumatic stress caused by the war can lead to dependencies. Young people and children in these conditions have to be accompanied in the EU to guarantee the best possible future for them.

The **Chair** thanked Mr Bukrieiev and the EMCDDA for their comprehensive presentations, and assured Ukraine, on behalf of the Management Board, of the EU's and EMCDDA's solidarity.

PART II: *Items for decision and information*

4. State of play of the negotiations on the EC proposal for a new Regulation on the EU Drugs Agency

4.1. Oral report by the European Commission

Ms Sipala, representative of the EC, updated the Management Board members on the revision of the EMCDDA founding Regulation.

Taking the last external evaluation of the agency as a starting point, the EC discussed the main elements for the modernisation of the agency closely with the EMCDDA, the Management Board and Member States. The

proposal from the EC of 12 January 2022 for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the EU Drugs Agency does not propose a dramatic change of the scope of the EMCDDA's work, which will continue to focus on drugs as known within the current remit of the agency. However, it is suggested to give the EMCDDA an explicit responsibility to work more on the interactions between drugs and other substance-based addictions, analysing interlinkages and lessons learnt. The EMCDDA should also be mandated to increase its capability to assess risks and present threat assessments. The Agency should be the initiator and manager of a proper threat assessment/risk assessment cycle in terms of drugs, in all its dimensions. The EMCDDA should also have access to a virtual forensic and toxicological laboratories network. The Reitox network, one of the prime ways of functioning of the agency, will be significantly strengthened, by giving additional legal certainty to activities already undertaken by the NFPs, and adding legal possibilities to be more agile in terms of collecting, analysing and keeping data. Upon request by the Member States, the EMCDDA should be able to certify initiatives put in place at national level to help building best practices and improving the comparability between the Member States. The EMCDDA's capability to support Member States in prevention and awareness raising campaigns with key messages and components will be strengthened. Finally, the EMCDDA mandate regarding international activities should be clarified and strengthened.

The legislative proposal will be supported with an additional budget of EUR 63 Mill. and 40 supplementary posts in the establishment plan up to 2027. The agreement between the Council and the EP is expected for mid-2023, so that the new Regulation could enter into force and the additional resources could start to become available in mid-2024.

4.2. Oral report by the Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU

The FR Presidency launched the discussion on the proposal by the EC on the revision of the new Regulation at the Horizontal Working Group on Drugs (HDG) in February 2022, and succeeded in having the general approach of the Council of the EU approved in June 2022. The main goal of the EC proposal is to strengthen the monitoring and scope of the future European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA), but also integrate the common approach with other EU Agencies, which is a basic legislative framework mandatory for any EU Agency.

The CZ Presidency has continued the negotiations on the proposal during the second half of 2022, and focused on the regular contacts with the EP and the rapporteur for the Committee of Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE). The LIBE Committee adopted its report on 1 December 2022, in which it highlights the health, social and human rights dimensions of drug and substance use, and made sure that its research and data collection take into account gender perspectives. The LIBE Committee supports an evidence-based, integrated, balanced and multidisciplinary drugs policy in full compliance with human rights obligations. The Agency's broader mandate is also intended to allow it to respond to polysubstance use, or the consumption of multiple substances at once or in quick succession. The LIBE Committee opinion was adopted with 52 votes in favour, 1 against, and 2 abstentions.

It was expected that the trilogue – the negotiation between the Council, the European Parliament and the EC – would be launched and conducted during the CZ Presidency. However, regarding the busy schedule of all included actors and also the unpredictable results of negotiations in the European Parliament, the trilogue will not be opened under CZ Presidency.

The LIBE Committee report will be discussed by the EP in plenary on 14 December 2022, after which it will form the EP's position in negotiations with the Council on the final form of the legislation. In view of the upcoming inter-institutional negotiations with the European Parliament, the EU delegations will start examining the amendments proposed by the EP, while bearing in mind that the partial general approach agreed by the Council in June 2022 will serve as the basis for those negotiations. The trilogue should start in January 2023 during the SE Presidency of the Council of the EU.

5. Key elements of the preparation of the EMCDDA for the entry into force of the new Drugs Agency

5.1. Presentation by the Director — EMCDDA/28/22

The **Director** thanked the EC for its proposal for a Regulation of the EP and the Council on the EU Drugs Agency, as well as the FR and CZ Presidencies and the EP for their work.

The Director presented the outlines of the first EMCDDA implementation plan, based on the EC proposal, which will have to be adjusted once the final text had been adopted. The proposal for the new Regulation, which partly merges the two existing legislations, represents a true and complete change of mission for the monitoring Agency which was founded in February 1993. It is based on three main pillars, which are strengthened monitoring,

preparedness for action and competences development. The priority and ultimate goal will be 'preparedness for action' by better anticipating, alerting and responding. Preparedness is the 'Ability to anticipate and to respond effectively to the impact of likely, imminent or current hazards, events or conditions', as defined by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The six expected results and benefits of the kaleidoscope of activities of the Agency for the EU and its Member States will be a strategic diagnosis of drug-related challenges and emerging threats, a real-time European alert system for all drugs and threats and rapid risk assessments. The Agency will offer a digital platform for toxicology, pharmacology and forensic detection, analysis and responses, provide an interactive resource for early intervention and response and a structured instrument for research, innovation and foresight.

The EMCDDA will continue in the next months to examine the questions linked to the implementation of these medium and long-term outputs, who will be involved both internally and externally, including profiles of posts to be published, key milestones and budgetary resources. The preparatory work grouped the different activities and tasks in work portfolios: 1) Extending monitoring and reporting capacities, 2) Developing more proactive services and increasing preparedness through threat assessment, drug alerts, and early warning systems, 3) Developing forensic and toxicological capacity, 4) Competence development, training and capacity building services and 5) Research, innovation and foresights. The existing activities will continue to be carried out with the Reitox network and other partners, while some of them will have to change, others to be complemented, and some may take a different dimension in the future.

The Director highlighted some outputs. In the area of forensic and toxicological capacity, the Management Board will have to appoint the laboratories for the European network in December 2023, if the Agency wants to be able to start immediately the first activities when the Regulation becomes applicable. The implementation plan also foresees key tasks and milestones for statutory bodies, for which the Management Board will have to take decisions, starting in June 2023 with the preparation of the call for expression of interest for the new Scientific Committee. The Management Board will have to adopt the tasks and co-financing scheme for the Reitox NFPs. The Board will be asked to take a decision to restore the Reitox co-financing to its original level before the budgetary crisis of 2014 and 2020, and the balance between the EU and the national funding, in December 2023. The Management Board will have to adopt a new cooperation framework ('Reitox Alliance') with the NFPs and mandatory, complementary and optional tasks, discussed and negotiated with the NFPs, by December 2025.

The implementation plan also includes tasks and milestones for preparing the EMCDDA staff, the premises (infrastructure) and communication and customers relations to the expected change.

Furthermore, the Director informed about the recruitment procedure for the post of Head of the Human Resources sector, and for which he will take a decision very soon. The recruitment procedures for the new posts foreseen in 2024 and 2025 will have to be adapted with the use of external consultancy through framework contracts. A survey has been conducted on the well-being of the EMCDDA staff since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Two staff members participated in a Mental Health First Aid training organised by the EP and will train other colleagues, providing support to staff. The EMCDDA is the first EU Agency to adopt this methodology.

The Director thanked the Management Board members for their support, and all staff for their efforts to prepare this first implementation plan.

The **Chair** clarified the nature of the EMCDDA implementation plan by email to the Management Board members on 6 December 2022. The document follows a strategic approach including operational elements and intends to inform the discussion within the Management Board. It introduces the preparatory work to be carried out between 2023-24 and provides some tentative key milestones for the implementation of the new mandate until the end of the current MFF in 2027. It is by its very nature a preliminary and living document and was drafted based on the information currently available, taking into account the many existing uncertainties. In line with possible future developments and the input received from Management Board members, the document will be updated and refined, and presented again to the Management Board for its June 2023 meeting.

The Chair invited Management Board members to send any written comments until the end of January 2023.

NL thanked the Director for the document, and underlined the importance of reflecting the balance between public health and law enforcement. The division of tasks for the Reitox network and the reestablishment of the appropriations for the Reitox co-financing deserve particular attention. NL also welcomed the update from the Director in his presentation on the EMCDDA staff, which should be a recurrent item at Management Board meetings.

CY observed that the implementation plan, which describes the process and outcomes of the preparation for the expected new Regulation, should be presented to all involved stakeholders at national level.

NO updated the Management Board on the developments concerning the significant economic and practical consequences for Norway's membership in the EMCDDA/EUDA, as stated at the Board meeting in June. Norway hopes to continue as member of the Agency, but an increased contribution from Norway to the Agency's budget will probably mean the reduction of staff at the NFP. The Norwegian Parliament will have to adopt a new agreement with the EMCDDA/EUDA. Discussions are being held at national and EU level.

TR welcomed the balanced approach of the new Regulation, but reiterated its concern about an increase of Türkiye's annual contribution to the budget of the EMCDDA/EUDA as of 2024, which may hinder Türkiye's participation in the work of the Agency. As it is not possible for non-EU Member States to benefit from the Reitox co-financing, it will be necessary to find other solutions. The Minister of Foreign Affairs will contact the EC on this issue. TR also wondered with which international organisations expert groups or networks will be set up in the area of forensic and toxicological capacity, and what will be the methodology for establishing the European drug alert system.

FI welcomed the first draft implementation plan as a good start. FI expressed interest in receiving more information about the preliminary budget implications and how the additional resources will be used, and some concern that the main tasks should rely on sufficient funding. The terms 'customers and services' should be clarified (what are the services which will be provided by the EMCDDA and to whom).

AT thanked the Director and his team for this first implementation plan, which is very well structured. It is important to have concrete proposals for the implementation of the priorities and the use of the future additional resources. AT stressed that the Management Board should timely adopt the draft budget for 2024 and the draft SPD 2024–26.

Ms Yiasemi, Spokesperson of the Reitox NFPs, reported that the Heads of NFPs discussed at their November meeting some challenging questions regarding new reporting tools and tasks, resources and the role between the Agency and the network of partners. The new Regulation will influence the data collection exercise, establish new partnerships or formalising existing ones. NFPs tried to divide the future new tasks based on the three main pillars of monitoring, preparedness for action and competences development, and decided to create a working group to envision the new tasks for the Reitox network. The NFPs are pleased to be involved in the implementation process.

Indirectly related to new tasks and reports, the Reitox network expressed however a deep concern about the balance between supply and demand reduction in the EDR 2022. The report focuses strongly on market developments, while responses (treatment, harm reduction and prevention) are hardly covered. The EMCDDA should explore ways to achieve a better balance in this flagship report.

FR welcomed the opinion of the EP on the EC proposal for a new Regulation, and stressed the convergence between the Council and the EP on several subjects. On this basis it is realistic to expect the adoption of the new legislation under SE Presidency. It is important that the Agency anticipates the preparation for the entry into force of the new Regulation.

In terms of human resources, the main challenge will be to associate the existing staff to the upcoming change, and allow them to adhere to the innovation. The cooperation with the Reitox network is fundamental while strengthening the monitoring capacity of the Agency, and Ms d'Arrigo invited the Management Board members to support the NFPs in their countries. It is necessary to maintain the quality of the data analysis and publications. Finally, the Agency should continue to achieve an excellent budget execution, which will be followed by the Member States. FR welcomed the proposal to provide the Management Board with an update of the implementation plan in June and December 2023, and offered its support to the Agency.

LT thanked the Director and the EMCDDA for the well-structured and comprehensive document, and wondered which stakeholders will monitor the implementation of the tasks and activities included in the plan.

Ms Sipala, representative of the EC, stressed that the new Regulation will represent radical changes for the better in the mandate and tasks of the EMCDDA and the Reitox NFPs. It is necessary to prepare for this important change, and the implementation plan presented by the Director allows to see the ways forward and discuss the proposed timeframe.

The Agency should give strict priority to the tasks for which the future Regulation includes specific deadlines, such as the creation of a new Management Board, first meeting of the new Management Board, agreement with OLAF, etc. The EC pointed out several priorities: attention needs to be given to the monitoring capacity, which presents substantial changes, and to the new threats assessments, for which the EMCDDA should propose a methodology before 2024–25. The work on the European drug alerts system should be prioritised, as the milestones are not

completely satisfactory. The EC agreed with the planning in the area of the network of forensic and toxicological capacity.

The NFPs must continue to be the backbone of the Agency. The Reitox network will have to work to the EMCDDA to define the specific tasks, before their adoption by the Management Board. For the assessment of the NFPs, the implementation plan should take into account the changes introduced by the Council to the EC proposal. The legislative financial statement, which accompanies the EC proposal, foresees an increase of EUR 800 000 per year for the Reitox co-financing. The Management Board will have to decide on the amount of the Reitox appropriations in the context of the future annual budgets of the Agency as of 2024.

The EC recently held meetings with representatives of Norway and Türkiye on the consequence of the new legislation for these two countries. The EC acknowledged the valuable contribution of these countries in the work of the Agency, and hope that they will continue their cooperation in the future. The EC proposal provides for a legal continuity of the agreements with Norway and Türkiye. The increase of their contributions to the Agency's budget should be seen in the context of the profound change of the EMCDDA, which will benefit the Member States and all participants in the Agency's work. The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) could facilitate the continuation of Türkiye's work with the EMCDDA, as it might allow a financial assistance of 40% of its annual budget contribution.

The **Director** stressed that the implementation plan will have to be adapted in the light of the final text of the new Regulation, but the fixed deadlines for the EMCDDA and its Management Board will have to be respected. The Management Board will have to take a decision concerning the Reitox tasks and Reitox co-financing of variable geometry. Also, the proposal on how to implement the network of laboratories will be presented to the Management Board. The term 'customers' was at the heart of the EMCDDA Strategy 2025 and the New Business Model, which have been adopted by the Management Board. Finally, the Director stated that the EMCDDA will take into consideration the comments made by the EC, but reminded that in 2023 the Agency will have serious limits in its resources, as only 6% of its budget will be available for operational activities.

The **Chair** concluded that the EMCDDA Director will regularly report to the Management Board on the progress of the preparation of the Agency for the expected new Regulation. The implementation should be monitored and evaluated. The tasks of the Reitox network and the Reitox co-financing are essential elements. The Management Board valued the cooperation with Norway and Türkiye and acknowledged the issue of the budgetary implications of the new Regulation for these two countries. The EMCDDA will provide further details on the budgetary breakdown of the additional resources that will accompany the adoption of the new Regulation.

Decision: The Management Board unanimously endorsed the presented EMCDDA implementation plan, and mandated the Director to elaborate further details for the next Executive Committee meeting of April 2023 and Management Board meeting of June 2023.

6. Activity reports:

6.1. Report on the activities of the Chair — EMCDDA/29/22

No comments were made.

6.2. Report from the Budget Committee — EMCDDA/30/22

The **Chair of the Budget Committee** reminded that the EC granted a 'top up' of EUR 700 000 to the EMCDDA 2022 budget. This amount was entered into the EMCDDA 2022 budget via the second amending budget adopted by the Management Board by written procedure. On this basis the EMCDDA has sent the required debit note to the EC services and the process for the payment of this 'top up' is ongoing.

The additional appropriations will be committed, as much as much as possible, until the end of 2022. However, considering the late adoption and availability of the 'top up' at the end of 2022, the EMCDDA will assess whether some of these appropriations will have to be carried over to March 2023, in accordance with the applicable financial rules. According to these rules, the Management Board has to adopt the proposed carry-overs by 15 February 2023. The Budget Committee recommended to the Executive Committee that the Management Board should adopt by 15 February 2023 the proposed carry-overs by written procedure.

6.3. Report on the external activities of the Director — EMCDDA/31/22

No comments were made.

7. Presentations by EU Presidencies

7.1. Presentation on the conclusions of the Czech Presidency EMCDDA/32/22

Mr Vobořil presented the first conclusions of the **CZ** Presidency of the Council of the EU in the area of drug policy.

The CZ Presidency set the priority for the drug policy area on the human rights-based approach in drug policies. Discussions mainly focused on the promotion of human rights in drug policies, on destigmatizing and non-discriminatory approach in order to support the public health responses to the world drug situation, on providing and applying the principle of adequate, proportionate and effective response to drug-related offences in line with national frameworks. The aim was to share and exchange best practices between EU Member States. The CZ Presidency prepared the Council Conclusions on human rights-based approach in drug policies, which were approved by the Council of the EU on 8 December 2022.

Dialogues were organised with third countries, such as Central Asia countries, China, US, CELAC countries, as well as with representatives of the Civil Society Forum on Drugs. These meetings allowed to share information on the current developments in drug policies in these regions, and to discuss the situation in Ukraine and Afghanistan and its impact on drug policies. The CZ Presidency also represented the EU Member States in international fora such as Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), and coordinated the EU common position supporting an evidence-based and balanced approach between demand, supply and harm reduction, the implementation of international commitments, especially the UNGASS outcome document, and human rights obligations or emphasized specific needs of vulnerable groups of society. The CZ Presidency started the preparation for the 66th CND session, as well as for the follow-up mid-term review of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration.

The CZ Presidency focused on the recent developments in Ukraine and their impact on the drug situation, especially on drug services and its capacity, but also on the monitoring of infectious diseases or the availability of opioid agonist treatment, since the most common drugs in Ukraine are opioids. In this context, some aspects that are problematic across the EU Member States have been identified, such as a low availability of substitution treatment, high risk of spread of infectious diseases or low capacity of drug services in the context of time and local availability but also of staff. Many EU Member States also carried out activities to help refugees, such as providing information, assistance, counselling, links to accommodation, health care and other activities, also in Ukrainian.

The CZ Presidency launched the discussion on trends in methamphetamine, both on the supply and demand side. These discussions confirmed that new trends in production and supply indicate that the production, supply and use of methamphetamine have grown beyond the traditional countries – CZ, SK, DE – to other European countries and thus represent a threat to the entire EU. It was recommended to continue the analysis of the current legislation on precursors' control, to establish and deepen cooperation with non-European countries, especially from Latin America, to perform a forensic analysis of the seized methamphetamine to better map its production and distribution, to continuously monitor illegal on-line trafficking of methamphetamine, to distinguish cases related to methamphetamine and amphetamine, i.e. in treatment demands, to evaluate the development in the areas of use and related adverse consequences and to share information on new trends and best practices with EU Member States.

In the supply reduction area, discussions on synthetic opioids, especially fentanyl and its derivates, in postal consignments and safety of customs officers and also the issue of drug trade in the virtual environment took place at EU level.

The CZ Presidency continued in negotiations on a new Regulation for an EU Drugs Agency in accordance with the common approach of the Council of the EU approved in June 2022 in order to strengthen the role of the Agency. The CZ Presidency has continued the negotiations during the second half of 2022, and focused on the regular contact with the European Parliament and the rapporteur for the LIBE Committee. The LIBE Committee adopted a report on 1 December 2022, which was discussed by the EP in plenary on 14 December 2022. The first political trilogue between the Council of the EU, the EP and the EC should be launched in January 2023 under Swedish Presidency.

Mr Vobořil thanked the EMCDDA for the strong support offered during the CZ Presidency.

On behalf of the Management Board, the **Chair** congratulated the CZ Presidency for its achievements.

7.2. Presentation of the programme for the Swedish Presidency EMCDDA/33/22

Ms Borgny thanked CZ for its work and presented the main priorities in the field of drugs of the **SE** Presidency during the first half of 2023.

The SE Presidency aims to contribute to the implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan 2021–2025 and to have a balanced approach between the supply and demand side in all of its work. A first step in this direction has been to appoint two co-chairs of the HDG, which will be Ms Malin Skäringer from the Swedish Ministry of Justice and Mr David Lorentzon from the Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

In addition, work will be continued in the context of the priorities of the trio-partners FR and CZ, and to contribute to the work on drugs of the Member States in the EU.

The most substantial commitment during the SE Presidency in the HDG concerns the trilogue negotiations regarding the EC proposal for the Regulation on the EU Drugs Agency. Preparation for these negotiations have started, and it is hoped that the mandate can be adopted as soon as possible during the SE Presidency.

The thematic priorities of the SE Presidency, which were announced at the HDG on 7 December, will concern drugs and children and young people, gender and drugs and synthetic opioids. These priority areas will be addressed in thematic discussions at HDG meetings and at the National drug coordinators meeting, which will take place in Malmö from 2 to 4 May 2023. This meeting will kick off in the evening of 2 May followed by the actual meeting on 3 May and a study visit in the morning of 4 May. The theme of the National drug coordinators meeting will be 'Drugs and children and young people'.

The SE Presidency will organise EU dialogues with several third countries, such as the US, Brazil, the Western Balkans, and a technical meeting with CELAC, in order to enhance the international cooperation regarding drugs. There will also be a dialogue with the Civil Society Forum on Drugs in the margins of the CND session.

Ms Borgny shared the complete calendar of the HDG with the Management Board members. The 66th CND session will take place during the SE Presidency. It might be a challenging session for different reasons, not least because of the geopolitical situation. The SE Presidency looks forward to preparing and coordinating the EU's participation together with the EU Member States, EEAS, the EC, the EMCDDA and others.

On behalf of the Management Board, the **Chair** wished SE good luck for its Presidency, and assured SE of the full support from the Member States and the EMCDDA.

8. Operational and financial programming:

8.1. EMCDDA Draft budget for 2023 EMCDDA/34/22

The **Chair of the Budget Committee** summarised the main figures of the draft EMCDDA budget (DB) for 2023.

The amount foreseen for the EU subsidy to the EMCDDA in the preliminary draft budget for 2023 adopted by the Management Board in December 2021 was about EUR 18.8 million.

In the EC proposal for the EU draft budget for 2023, the amount for the EU 2023 subsidy to the EMCDDA reflected the 2022 amount plus a 2% increase, according to the 2021–27 Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF), as well as an additional 2% increase to consider the high inflation rate. As a consequence, the EU subsidy to the EMCDDA for 2023 amounts to about EUR 17 640 000. The Council proposed to cut the EC proposal by EUR 500 000, but the EP voted in plenary for an amendment to reinstate the EU 2023 subsidy to the EMCDDA to the level of the EC proposal. Mr Gillard thanked DG HOME for its support.

The EMCDDA draft budget for 2023 includes about EUR 2.8 million for technical assistance projects (EU4MD II, IPA 8 and COPOLAD projects). The appropriations for the Reitox co-financing are the same as in 2022.

The EC expressed its openness to analyse a request from the EMCDDA for a 'top up' to its 2023 budget. Such a request should be duly justified, in particular by providing sound arguments that the EMCDDA's operational activities will be jeopardised in case additional resources are not made available in 2023. The Budget Committee asked the Director to prepare as soon as possible a realistic and justified request for a possible 'top up' to the EMCDDA budget for 2023.

The Budget Committee recommended to the Management Board to adopt the proposed EMCDDA DB for 2023.

Mr Muschel, representative of the EC, stressed that the amount of the EMCDDA EU 2023 subsidy to the EMCDDA represents an increase of 4% compared with the initial EMCDDA 2022 budget, and that later on the EC granted a 'top up' of EUR 700 000 to this EMCDDA 2022 budget. The final amount of the EMCDDA EU 2023 subsidy to the EMCDDA is in line with the outcome of the budgetary procedure. The EC will provide support to the EMCDDA for a possible request of a 'top up' budget in 2023.

Decision: The Management Board unanimously adopted the EMCDDA budget for 2023.

8.2. EMCDDA Single Programming Document for 2023–25 and work programme for 2023 **EMCDDA/35/22**

The **Director** acknowledged the comments from the EC and the Scientific Committee in their formal opinions, as well as the valuable feedback received from the NFPs and key partner EU agencies.

The programming period 2023–25 will see the transformation of the EMCDDA into the EU Drugs Agency, one of the most exciting developments since its creation almost 30 years ago. Much of the work in 2023–25 will be dedicated to the preparation and initial implementation of this transformation. At the same time, this new programming period will mark the end of the EMCDDA Strategy 2025, which was adopted by the Management Board in 2016. In a time when Europe is facing ever higher health and security threats, it is necessary to reflect on how the Strategy has helped the Agency to deliver on its vision to support the EU's response to those threats. The EMCDDA will build on the customer-centric and digitally-enabled new business model to design and deliver new products and services, in line with its customers' evolving needs. The period 2023–25 will also see the end of key EU policy documents such as the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan 2021–25. One of the key priorities for the EMCDDA will be to contribute, as requested, to the successful closure of these documents.

The main focus and challenge will be to getting set for a rapid organisational and institutional growth while ensuring that existing core activities are implemented and key deliveries maintained; this has to be achieved while operating in a highly volatile environment and within a context of critical resources constraints in 2023.

Concerning the 2023 work programme, an overarching priority will be the ongoing re-imagining of the EMCDDA's portfolio of products and services, with a customer focus and an emphasis on the digital transformation, and aligned with the EU's digital and green priorities. The Director summarised the main activities of the 2023 work programme.

Flagship outputs:

- The new *integrated EDR model* will continue to offer timely information on emerging threats, and interlinked access to digital data and graphics on core trends and developments, but will offer a new narrative shading light on the main highlights.
- The online modular version of the EMCDDA *European Responses Guide* will continue to underpin much of the agency's work undertaken in the area of health and social responses to drug-related problems, and new mini-guides and mirrored online content will be produced in 2023 on important topics, with existing modules updated as necessary. Webinars will increase access to the content and ensure that the key themes from the mini guides are disseminated widely among European policymakers and professionals.
- The fourth edition of the *EMCDDA–Europol EU Drug Markets Report* will incorporate in 2023 new modules on new psychoactive substances, heroin and cannabis, while the full report will move to an online ecosystem concept to be launched during the year.
- Among others, in 2023 and beyond the EMCDDA will scale-up its focus on developing resources in the area of cannabis interventions as part of its horizon-scanning activities. An EMCDDA support package will be implemented to better assist policy makers and planners with cannabis policy development and evaluation in their countries. Outputs include a cannabis policy web page based on frequently asked questions, and an EMCDDA cannabis toolkit. This work will be complemented by the further enhanced cannabis news alert initiative.

Drug monitoring developments:

- *Core monitoring*: core epidemiological monitoring and complementary methodologies, as a foundation for a reliable knowledge base that supports evidence-informed public health and security policy development, will be further integrated.
- The development of dashboards to support the performance indicators of the EU Action Plan 2021–25 will also continue.
- *COVID-19*: the pandemic has had an immediate impact on many behaviours linked to drug demand and supply and the operation of the drug market, as well as disrupting some healthcare provision and law

enforcement activities. In 2023 the EMCDDA will continue to monitor how the drug market is affected and how responses are adapted, as well as considering what lessons can be learned from the pandemic in order to adapt monitoring, support decision-making and increase the resilience of policy responses in this area in future.
- The Agency will also continue to develop its database of up-to-date information on drug-related harms. Following up on the impact of COVID-19, the work to enhance monitoring of comorbidity of drug dependence and mental health issues will be prioritised.
- *EU Early Warning System (EWS)*: together with its national and European partners, the EMCDDA will continue to ensure that the EU maintains its world-leading capacity and capability to detect, assess and respond to public health and social threats caused by NPS, through the robust implementation of the EWS and risk assessment of NPS as required by the applicable EU Regulation.

Work with non-EU countries:

- 2023 will mark the first year of the implementation of the IPA8 and EU4MDII projects.
- The project EMCDDA4GE will be finalised in May 2023.
- It will be the second year of the implementation of the COPOLAD III project.

Mr Muschel, representative of the EC, thanked the EMCDDA for the document, which is drafted in line with the EC opinion. The top priority in 2023 will be the preparation for the implementation of the expected new Regulation. Another important aspect is the fact that Europe is becoming a major drugs producer, which justifies increased research on this issue. The SPD includes several references to the developments in cannabis policies, and the EC encourages the Agency to carry out more research on the impact of these policies on health, safety and security in third countries (US, Canada) and in Europe.

Ms Comiskey, Chair of the Scientific Committee, noted that the Scientific Committee expresses its full support and endorsement to the EMCDDA SPD for 2023–25 and 2023 work programme. The document anticipates the considerable amount of preparatory work that will be needed to comply with the expected entry into force of the Regulation and new mandate of the European Union Drugs Agency in 2024.

In the area of Health, the Scientific Committee welcomes the work of the EMCDDA around monitoring cannabis policies, and considers this work to be highly relevant to informing the current and future debate on public health and drugs policy in Europe. Mental health problems and comorbidities linked to drug use are key issues impacting on the quality and implementation of service provision in this area. The Scientific Committee suggests that the EMCDDA continues to explore the evidence base in this area, including considering the promotion of mental health in prevention, treatment and harm reduction interventions.

In the area of Security, the Scientific Committee welcomes the ongoing work in the area to improve and further develop the core monitoring of the drug market and crime-related data. The Committee emphasises the need for higher visibility of the EMCDDA's efforts in this area and encourages the agency to further explore a) estimates on the market size and number of users; b) the option to widen the monitoring of drug-related homicides to include data and information on drug-related violence, including high-impact crime such as shootings and violence episodes in open scenes; c) the collection of data on cannabis production sites and d) exploring the use of new technologies to improve monitoring and reporting in this area.

The Committee notes that the possible introduction of a new Regulation and extended mandate will make the period covered by this SPD both particularly important and particularly challenging. It will be necessary to ensure that the outputs of the Centre during this period maintain the reputation of being both scientifically sound and policy relevant.

DK thanked the Director for this important document, and suggested add a reference to the Reitox NFPs under the activity B2.2. on page 26. The sentence should read as follows: 'Strengthen national drug expert networks and develop, if necessary, *and while keeping the national focal points informed in a timely manner*, new networks to ensure the Agency has sufficient expertise to accomplish the Strategy's objectives.'

NL complimented the EMCDDA on the document, which gives a good insight in the activities planned by the EMCDDA. NL stressed the importance of the focus on cannabis and the development of cannabis policies, and stated that the Dutch NFP will support the EMCDDA in this area. The medical use of psychedelic substances is also an interesting topic.

Ms Yiasemi, Spokesperson of the Reitox NFPs, noted that the impact of the reduction of the Reitox co-financing has been significant on some NFPs.

The **Director** observed that additional savings will be made on operational activities in 2023, outside of the Reitox co-financing. The follow-up on cannabis developments is very important for the EC and for the Member States. Very interesting presentations were given at the Lisbon Addictions Conference on this topic. Furthermore, the EMCDDA publication on the medical use of cannabinoids will be updated.

Decision: The Management Board adopted unanimously the final EMCDDA Single Programming Document for 2023–25 and work programme for 2023, including the reference suggested by DK.

8.3. EMCDDA Preliminary draft budget for 2024 **EMCDDA/36/22**

The Chair of the Budget Committee informed that the EMCDDA Management Board should adopt the EMCDDA 2024 PDB in December 2023, i.e. before the expected conclusion of the ongoing EU legislative process concerning the deepening of the EMCDDA mandate (and the proposed increase of the EMCDDA's 2024 budget, as encompassed by the relevant legislative proposal). In this context, the EMCDDA 2024 PDB relies on the figures set by the last updated EC programming for the EU subsidy to the EMCDDA within the EU 2021–27 MFF, with an amount of EUR about 18 million for the EU subsidy to the EMCDDA 2024 budget. It includes an increased contribution by Norway (EUR 526 332) and Türkiye (EUR 322 193) to the EMCDDA.

The EC considered at the Budget and Executive Committees of 14 December that the EMCDDA budget for 2024 should be based on the current financial programming, as well as on the additional appropriations brought by the revision of the mandate, of EUR 14.1 million, broken down by budget titles. The EMCDDA prepared an Addendum with the breakdown by title of the additional 2024 resources likely to be brought by the revision of the mandate, which was submitted as room document to the Management Board for adoption. A technical meeting will be organised between the EMCDDA and EC services (DG HOME and DG BUDG), before the EMCDDA submits at the end of January 2023 its request/input for the EC's preparation of the EU 2024 draft budget, pursuant to the usual relevant procedure.

The Budget Committee recommended to the Management Board to adopt the proposed EMCDDA PDB for 2024, together with this Addendum.

Decision: The Management Board adopted the EMCDDA preliminary draft budget for 2024 and the Addendum, with the abstention of the European Commission for institutional reasons.

8.4. EMCDDA Preliminary draft Single Programming Document for 2024–26 and preliminary draft work programme for 2024 **EMCDDA/37/22**

The **Director** informed that the next external evaluation of the EMCDDA will start in 2024.

After the formal transmission of the EMCDDA draft SPD for 2024–26 and the work programme for 2024 by 31 January 2023 to the EC, the EC will adopt its formal opinion as usual after an inter-service consultation.

Decision: The Management Board adopted the EMCDDA Preliminary Single Programming Document for 2024–26 and preliminary draft work programme for 2024, with the abstention of the European Commission for institutional reasons.

13. Any other business:

- **Outcome of the Ministerial Conference of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe (Lisbon, 13–14 December 2022)**

Mr Goulão, President of the Permanent Correspondents of the Pompidou Group since 2019, provided feedback on the 18th Ministerial Conference of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe, which was organised by Portugal on 13–14 December 2022 in Lisbon. The conference focused on 'Human rights at the heart of drug and addiction policies', and counted with around 150 participants, including Ministers and representatives of 46 governments. PT thanked the EMCDDA Director and staff members who participated in the Conference. The Pompidou Group work programme for 2023–25 and the Lisbon declaration were adopted at the Ministerial Conference. The Executive Secretary of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe and the EMCDDA Director signed the appendix to the Memorandum of Understanding between both organisations. IT will assume the Presidency of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe as of 2023, with CH as co-chair. PT wished both countries a lot of success.

IT thanked the PT Presidency for the excellent work undertaken in the last four years, and in particular Mr Goulão for his Chairmanship. IT is very pleased to take over the Presidency of the Pompidou Group of the Council of

Europe until 2025, and to be able to rely on the support of Secretariat of the Permanent Correspondents for the implementation the work programme for 2023–25. The work programme takes into consideration the new statute of the Pompidou Group which was adopted in 2021, which enhanced the mandate of the organisation, opening up to different forms of addictions. The IT Presidency will be committed to the promotion of demand reduction policies, in particular prevention and treatment, and focus on young people as a vulnerable group in respect with drug addictions and other dependencies. Synergies and coordination with EMCDDA will be sought to avoid duplication of activities.

Mr Huber, Executive Secretary of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe, highlighted some key points of the 18th Ministerial Conference. The Lisbon declaration sets up the framework of the work of the Pompidou Group for the next three years. The major new feature of the new work programme will be the creation of an expert group on online addictions. The Pompidou Group and the EMCDDA regularly revise their common priorities in an appendix to their Memorandum of Understanding of 2010. These priorities include cooperation on the gender dimension in drug policies, drug treatment in prison and harm reduction. Besides, a new framework for law enforcement activities has been set up, and the third European seminar on drug consumption rooms will take place in May 2023 in Strasbourg.

PART III: *Restricted session*

9. Restricted session:

The **Chair** reminded that the votes on the election of a member to the Executive Committee and on the reclassification of the Director will take place in restricted session – only with the presence of the members and substitute members of the Management Board, without the observers. The Chair proposed that the following EMCDDA staff members stay in this session:

- Mr Fabian Pereyra, Head of the Executive Office
- Ms Monika Blum, Senior Policy Officer to the Management Board
- Ms Magdalena Popova, Ms Susana Mota and Mr Marco Costa for administrative assistance

The members and substitute members of the Management Board who participated online in the meeting (Bulgaria, Malta, Slovakia, Mr Muschel and Ms Sipala from the European Commission) received an e-mail from 'DIGIT-EUSURVEY@nomail.ec.europa.eu' with the link to vote at the e-mail address that they provided for the restricted session.

According to the rules of procedure of the EMCDDA Management Board, its decisions are adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members with the right to vote. Annex I to these rules of procedure stipulate that decisions shall be taken by a two-thirds majority of its members, by secret vote. The 27 EU Member States have one vote each, the European Commission 2 votes and the European Parliament 2 votes (total: 31 votes). Hungary did not participate in the meeting and gave its proxy vote to Austria. Norway and Turkey are members of the EMCDDA without voting rights.

9.4. Election of one Budget Committee member — EMCDDA/38/22

Ms Sanja Mikulić, substitute member for HR on the Management Board, was the only candidate for becoming member on the Budget Committee.

31 votes were expressed. The Chair, Mr Villalbí Hereter and Ms Malliori opened the secret ballots and received the result from the online voting from the EMCDDA.

Decision: The Management Board elected unanimously Ms Sanja Mikulić, substitute member for HR on the EMCDDA Management Board, as member of the Budget Committee for a mandate from 1 January 2023 on, until the new Regulation becomes applicable.

Ms Sanja Mikulić thanked the Management Board members for the renewal of her mandate.

PART IV: *Items for decision and information*

10. International cooperation:

10.1. Outcomes of cooperation with non-EU countries, international organisations and other EU agencies — EMCDDA/39/22

The **Director** highlighted some strategic developments in the area of international cooperation, and emphasised the very good collaboration with the European Commission in this field.

The EMCDDA worked closely with the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe and participated in the 18th Ministerial Conference. The Executive Secretary of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe and the EMCDDA Director signed the appendix to the Memorandum of Understanding between both organisations on 14 December 2022. The Director will pay an official visit to the UNODC in spring 2023.

The EMCDDA participated in an online meeting on 23–24 August 2022 with Global Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) Partners, i.e. the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) from the US State Department, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organization of American States (OAS), UNODC, WHO, the EC and other organisations. INL is very active in supporting treatment, prevention activities at global level, such as establishing a Universal Prevention Curriculum and a Universal Treatment Curriculum, but it is not mentioned in the US Drug Policy and there is no supervision of its work. The expected new mandate will increase the EMCDDA's capacity to support EU Member States for the development and implementation of quality criteria and national curricula for prevention and demand reduction activities, and it might be helpful to report periodically to the Management Board about activities in this important area.

The MoU between the EMCDDA and WHO Europe signed in 2000 will have to be updated next year, in the perspective of the new mandate, after exploring with which branch of WHO the agreement should be signed (WHO headquarters or WHO Regional Office for Europe), and having consulted the EC and received the approval of the Management Board.

The cooperation with CICAD was very limited during the pandemic. The Director had an exchange of views with Ambassador Namm, Executive Secretary of CICAD, on 13 December in Lisbon. The second volume to complement the joint EMCDDA–CICAD Handbook on building National Drug Observatories will be launched in 2023.

The cooperation with EU Enlargement and European Neighbourhood (ENP) countries is at the heart of the EMCDDA's international cooperation. A first bilateral, technical project (EU4GE) with one of these countries, Georgia, was proposed by the country and supported by the EU delegation in Georgia. The Director paid an official visit to Georgia in September 2022, where he signed the WA with the Minister of Justice. The EU delegation in Georgia expressed its positive appreciation of the very satisfying results of the work. Georgia appointed a National Drug Observatory, worked on the quality standards for treatment, helped the investment in a future EU Treatment Curriculum and implemented the EU Prevention Curriculum. Technical assistance projects are very important but represent also some challenges. The EU should remind the annual Ministerial Forum of Justice and Home Affairs that the drugs issue has to be discussed, the Western Balkans still play an important role in the region in terms of drug markets and drug trafficking. A new Working Arrangement with Ukraine was signed between the EMCDDA Director and the Minister of Health of Ukraine. The Director foresees a visit to Switzerland in the second half of 2023 to discuss a joint work programme. The EMCDDA will sign the contracts with the EC for the EU4MD II and IPA 8 projects in December 2022.

The third edition of COPOLAD (Cooperation Programme between Latin America, the Caribbean and the EU on drugs policies) started in February 2021, for a duration of 48 months, and aims at strengthening drug policies in Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries. The programme is being led by the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies, Spanish Cooperation (FIIAPP), with a consortium of different Member States and the EC. The Director noted that the EMCDDA should sign such contracts in the future directly with the EC.

The EMCDDA has been cooperating with Central Asian countries in the framework of previous CADAP projects since their beginning (2002). The 7th phase of the EU-funded Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP 7) is being implemented by the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies, Spanish Cooperation (FIIAPP). The WA between the EMCDDA and FIIAPP will allow Internships at the EMCDDA

for selected national experts and the participation of Central Asian experts in EMCDDA annual expert meetings on key indicators and other core data, with a minimum workload for EMCDDA staff.

- Candidate and potential candidate countries:

10.2. Overview of the drugs situation in the Western Balkans **EMCDDA/40/22**

No comments were made.

10.3. The EMCDDA/IPA 7 and EMCDDA/IPA 8 projects (Instrument for Pre-Accession) **EMCDDA/41/22**

No comments were made.

- European Neighbourhood Countries:

10.4. 'EU4 Monitoring Drugs' (EU4MD) and EU4MD II projects **EMCDDA/42/22**

No comments were made.

10.5. Technical cooperation project EMCDDA–Georgia **EMCDDA/43/22**

No comments were made.

10.6. COPOLAD III (Cooperation Programme between Latin America, the Caribbean and the EU on Drugs Policies) **EMCDDA/44/22**

No comments were made.

10.7. Working Arrangement between the EMCDDA and DEVIDA (Peru) **EMCDDA/45/22**

The **Director** informed that he cancelled his mission to Peru scheduled for February 2023, due to the recent developments in the national political situation.

Decision: The Management Board took full note of and agreed with the Working Arrangement with DEVIDA (Peru), and mandated the Director to sign such Working Arrangement on a date and place to be jointly decided.

10.8. CADAP 7 project – Working Arrangement between the EMCDDA and FIIAPP (Fundación Internacional y para Iberoamérica de Administración y Políticas Públicas) **EMCDDA/46/22**

Decision: The Management Board took full note of and agreed with the Working Arrangement with FIIAPP (Fundación Internacional y para Iberoamérica de Administración y Políticas Públicas), and mandated the Director to sign such Working Arrangement on a date and place to be jointly decided.

11. Performance and internal controls:

11.1. Implementation of the EMCDDA action plan to follow up on the recommendations of the EMCDDA's external evaluation **EMCDDA/47/22**

The **Director** informed that the EMCDDA has implemented most of the recommendations stemming from the last external evaluation, which are also largely covered by the EC proposal on the new Regulation. He suggested replacing this agenda item by a recurrent point on the monitoring of the EMCDDA implementation plan for the expected new Regulation.

11.2. State of implementation of the recommendations issued by the Internal Audit Service (IAS) **EMCDDA/48/22**

The **Director** informed that four of the six 'important' and 'very important' recommendations from the 2021 IAS audit on 'Human Resources Management and Ethics in the EMCDDA' have been closed. The target dates for the planned follow up to the two remaining recommendations were September and December 2023.

The next IAS audit to be performed at the EMCDDA in 2023 will focus on international cooperation.

12. Prevention and management of conflicts of interest:

12.1. Assessment of the implementation of the EMCDDA Policy for the prevention and management of conflicts of interest for Management Board members, substitutes and observers **EMCDDA/49/22**

The **Director** assessed that the declarations submitted by the new members of the Management Board until 12 December 2022 show no existing conflicts of interest. One recently nominated substitute member has not yet forwarded the declaration of interest.

The Director drew the attention of the Management Board members to the fact that some of them are also Heads of NFPs. If the Management Board will discuss a decision on the Reitox co-financing scheme, the members/substitute members representing an NFP would have a conflict of interest. Then the Management Board would have to apply mitigating measures.

Decision: The Management Board took note of the outcome of the assessment carried out by the EMCDDA Director that has revealed that for the moment there is no conflict of interest.

13. Any other business:

- **Lisbon Addictions Conference 2022 (Lisbon, 23–25 November 2022)** **EMCDDA/50/22**

PT provided feedback from the fourth European Conference on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies – *Lisbon Addictions 2022*, which took place from 23 to 25 November 2022. The conference was once more jointly organised by the Portuguese General Directorate for Intervention on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies (SICAD), the journal Addiction/Society for the Study of Addiction (SSA), the EMCDDA and the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors (ISAJE). *Lisbon Addictions 2022* was attended by over 1700 participants from 88 countries, making this year's edition even more wide-ranging than the previous one.

The overarching theme for 2022 was 'Global Addictions'. It was explored from a variety of angles, from international policies and interventions to innovative methods and human rights, in order to reflect the evolution and increasing complexity of addictions, the emergence of new addictive behaviours and the changing communities. Under this general theme, the programme was organised around different main areas, fully developed by their respective co-producers. Mr Goulão stressed the area of 'Global perspectives on addictions and drug markets', co-produced by Inter-GLAM (Intercontinental Perspectives on Global addictions and Drugs Markets). The Inter-GLAM project was funded by the European Commission, co-produced the track on 'Global perspectives on addictions and drug markets' and organised an international video competition. It provided 120 international bursaries awarded to early career addiction professionals through a merit-based competition and funded 30 selected speakers for the conference sessions.

Mr Goulão thanked the EMCDDA, and in particular Mr Paul Griffiths and Ms Maria Moreira, and for their active commitment on the Programme and Organising Committees and for the excellent cooperation. The knowledge and scientific support of the EMCDDA were, once again, crucial in the preparation of this major event on addictions.

The Fifth European Conference on Additive Behaviours and Dependencies – *Lisbon Addictions 2024* will take place from 23 to 25 October 2024, under the overarching theme 'Empowering the workforce of the future'.

The **Chair** congratulated SICAD, the EMCDDA and the co-organisers for the highly professional organisation of the conference and its success.

The Chair thanked the Director and the EMCDDA staff for the preparation of the meeting, and the Board members for their contributions. The Chair also expressed his thanks to the interpreters.

The next meeting will take place on 29 June 2023.

Franz Pietsch
Chair of the Management Board

Annexes: I List of participants
II List of decisions and conclusions
III List of action points

Copy: Members, substitutes and observers of the Management Board