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NOTE

from: Hungarian Regional Chair for the Western Balkans
(Co-Chair: Austria)

to: Dublin Group

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Subject: Regional Report on Western Balkans

Due to its geographic position at the crossroads of South-Eastern and Western Europe the Western Balkan region remains an area of particular interest regarding illegal activities related to the trafficking of drugs. Although the role of an alternative route via Russia and Ukraine tends to increase, the Balkan route continues to be the main corridor for the smuggling of heroin and opiates between the production sites in Afghanistan and the main European markets. Seizures prove that over the past years the Balkan route has been more and more used also for trafficking cocaine from South America towards Western Europe.

The coastline, especially some significant ports of the region are considered to be major hubs for narcotics shipment. The region also has a role of warehouse to stockpile and often to repack drugs before they are transported further along the above mentioned route towards European markets.

Smugglers adapt very quickly to changing circumstances and employ all means of transport: besides sea transport, bus trucks as well as passenger vehicles. Geographic factors are sometimes also reinforced by economic problems, which tend to be an encouragement for getting involved in drug trafficking.

Illegal activities related to drugs are one of the most widespread forms of organized crime in the region. Local groups controlling tends to be linked at regional and also international level. Their Western European “partners” are very often migrant people originating from the area.

Authorities in the region are aware of the phenomenon and its wide international context. In many countries counter-narcotics efforts are significantly increased, and the need is generally felt to further better responses to the ever changing law enforcement challenges.

Narcotics cultivation in the Western Balkan countries is not significant but in some countries evidence shows that what once used to be described as “small-scale marijuana production for personal use” has been increasing recently at an alarming rate. Local synthetics narcotics producing, refinement and production are negligible.

The region is not a hot spot in terms of production of drugs or demand. At the same time, due to economic and social changes the number of drug users appears to be increasing, especially in urban areas and mainly among the younger population. Opiate, cannabis and designer drugs consumptions tend to be more and more widespread. It still remains low though, in comparison to other European countries. Growth of trafficking and the availability of cheap synthetic drugs are feared to further enhance local consumption in the future.

The importance of the region is proved by the fact that in its drug strategy for the period of 2005-2012 the European Union stresses the co-operation with the Balkan States as main priority in its external relations. That is why each year an EU – Balkan States meeting is organized where the parties give an update on the development of their co-operation and on the drug situation of the Balkan States. The experts of the EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction) have also a close relationship with the region, Western Balkan countries are among the candidate and potential candidate countries of the EMCDDA.

1. REPORT ON THE DRUG SITUATION IN ALBANIA

1.1. General situation in the country

In 2010 Albania could achieve very positive results in its constant fight against drug crimes and international drug business. 2010 was the year of the development and implementation of a new National Strategy, a strategy which fully complies with common EU- standards compiled for the period 2009 to 2011. Equally the Albanian Government extended the so-called speed boat moratorium- a law which prevents Albanian citizens from possessing speed boats of a certain size, which could be used for drug-transfers to Italy- for another three years.

The new Inter-Institutional Centre in the port of Durres for an extended control of vessels on the sea is fully operating 24h a day and shows a state-of-the-art technology. With that equipment already five smuggling attempts to Italy could be detected right in time.

With regard to plants cultivation and its successful detection local police forces instead of State Police Anti-drug units are responsible for these tasks as from 2011. They are showing a far better knowledge of possible locations and have much better and closer contacts to local Government and Law Enforcement bodies in order to react more rapidly than in the past.

Training and equipment of the Albanian Border Police has further improved during 2010 and MEMEX-information system is operating on all border crossing points now. With regard to the actual drug situation in Albania the following can be reported:

- **Regarding cultivation:** a special action plan has been introduced. On the one hand it includes special assessment and preventive measures and will raise public awareness; on the other hand as from 1st of June 2010 more than 30 monitoring operations carried out by helicopters had been executed. Some 170 plant-sites had been discovered and some 37260 cannabis plants could be destroyed and the cultivation area is 40% less than in the previous year. All in all a decrease of some 14 % of narcotic plant production could be registered during 2010.

- Regarding **marihuana**: in principle the situation has not changed during 2010. There are problems with trafficking via the green border into Greece and to Italy via the port of Vlora. Some 352 cases of seizure can be reported for the year of 2010.
- Regarding **heroine**: situation is rather unchanged; it has however been observed that more persons have been arrested but fewer quantities seized. This seems to be the result of a shrinking heroine production in Afghanistan. In 2010 Albania seized some 16 kg heroine and arrested some 160 persons with regard to that. It is evident that Albania together with Kosovo acts as a kind of storage and processing facility where heroine is both bunkered and stretched with additive substances like Paracetamol and Caffeine. The Common smuggling route runs from Turkey via Bulgaria, FYROM, Albania/ Kosovo, Montenegro further on to Italy and Western Europe.

The current “trading” prices of drugs is as follows: 1 gr of heroine = 25 EUR, 1 kg of heroine = from 10.000 to 13.000 EUR, 1 kg of cocaine = 40.000 EUR, 1 g of cocaine = from 60 to 80 EUR, 1 kg of marihuana = 300 EUR, 1 marihuana cigarette = 1,3 EUR.

Regarding to **cocaine** there is a slight increase in the number of smuggling in cases. Cocaine seems to arrive in Albania in small quantities mainly by couriers or post deliveries from the USA and/or countries of South America traditionally known for its production. During 2010 was noticed the first cases of cocaine transportation with a container and the first case of transportation in the stomach by a courier. Sometimes, cocaine is trafficked further in small quantities, primarily to Greece and Italy. In 2010, the price of 1 gram of cocaine was from 50 to 70 EUR.

A successful operation of the Albanian police together with US and German authorities led to the detention of 57 persons. **Albanian Law Enforcement**- as to Police Officer Selfollari- increasingly carries out special investigation operations and managed to destroy some 47 criminal groups countrywide.

Currently there is a special investigation project carried out together with FYROM called “Besa” with the participation of Interpol, Montenegro and Serbia working towards the common regional targets.

Albania concludes its remarks by stating that the bilateral co-operation with Kosovo is very good and will be further improved during 2011. Albania currently maintains anti-drug liaison officers in Turkey, Greece, Italy, UK, Serbia, Germany and the Netherlands (Europol).

PAMECA adds that it has successfully organized various training opportunities for Albanian Law Enforcement officers. The co-operation between customs and police is further improving while comprehensive intelligence sharing among all kinds of police forces as well as increased common patrols will be a key issue for the future.

1.2. Strengthening of Capacities

A reorganisation of police force was completed in June 2010. Antidrug units got 11 new officers as a result (1 in the central unit and 10 in the regional units). The overall number of specialised officers working in the antidrug units now is 119 (before it was 108).

The drug units and border police were further trained and better equipped not only by the State Police but also in cooperation with international partners like the EU, UNODC, PAMECA, ICITITAP, etc. 25 specialised trainings were conducted during 2010 for the antidrug units and border police; 108 police officers, 2 prosecutors and 5 custom officers have benefited from this training.

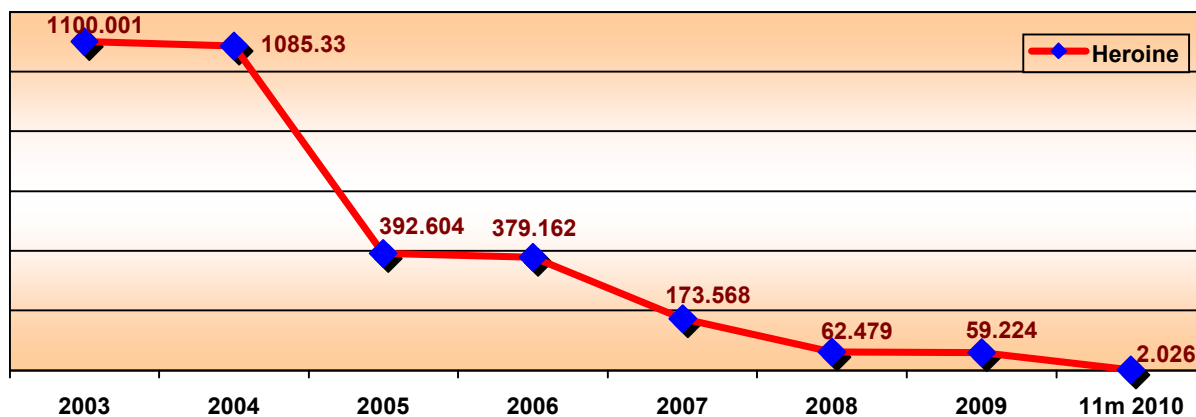
1.3. Drug related statistics

Drug related statistics compiled by the Albanian State Police (1 January – 30 November 2010) is provided below in the table.

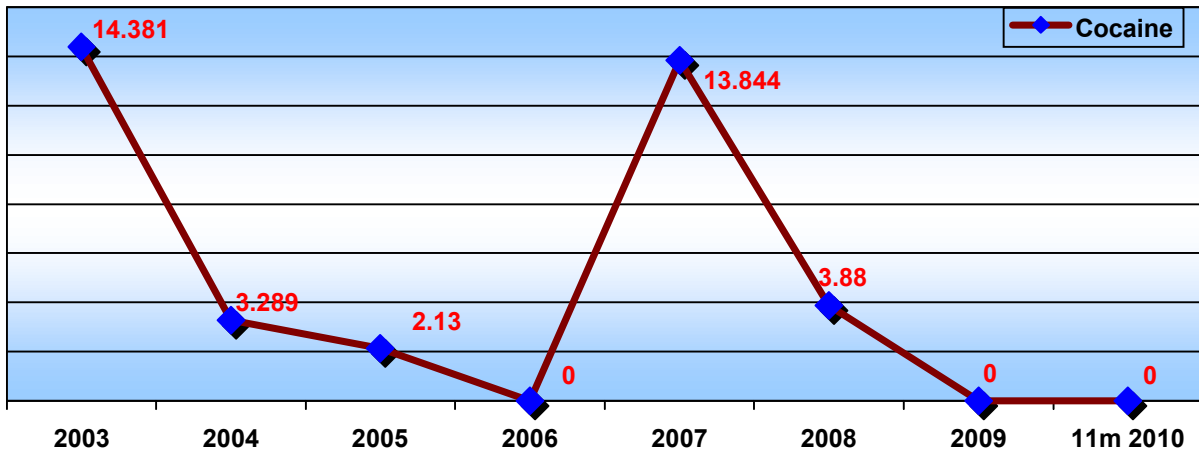
Type of Drug	No. Of Cases	Quantity	Persons penalty proceeded			
			Total	Arrested	Proceeded In free situation	Wanted
Heroin	95	15 kg 504 gr	163	144	14	5
Methadone	2	31.4 gr	3	1	2	0
Cocaine	40	2 kg 851.9 gr	61	49	8	4
Marijuana/Hashish	349	6885 kg 332.1 gr	521	389	91	41
Cannabis (Cultivation)	178	37216 plants	79	52	13	14
Cannabis seeds	2	3 kg 44.8 gr	2	2	0	0
Cutting substances	6	44 kg 105 gr	13	13	0	0
SUM	672		842	650	128	64

According to Italian statistics, during 2010 the flow of drugs towards other countries was further decreased.

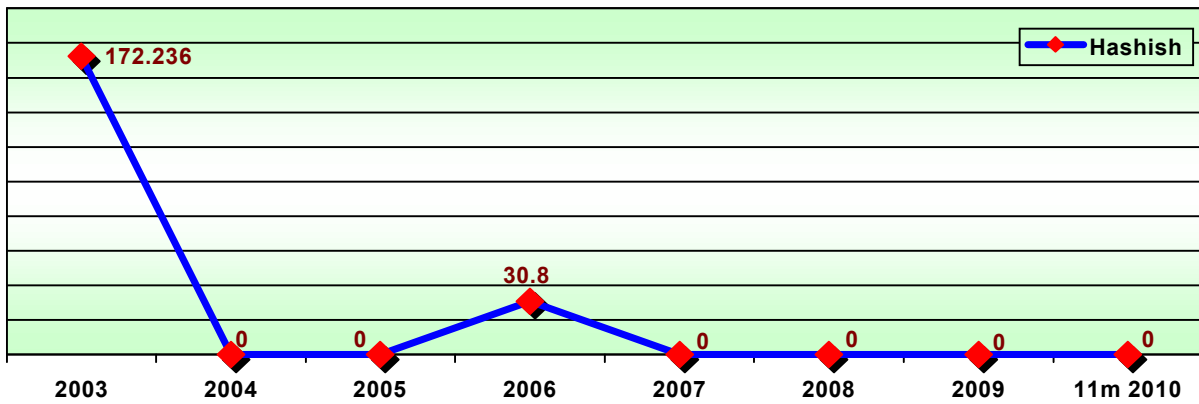
Heroin seized in Italy transited through Albania (kg)



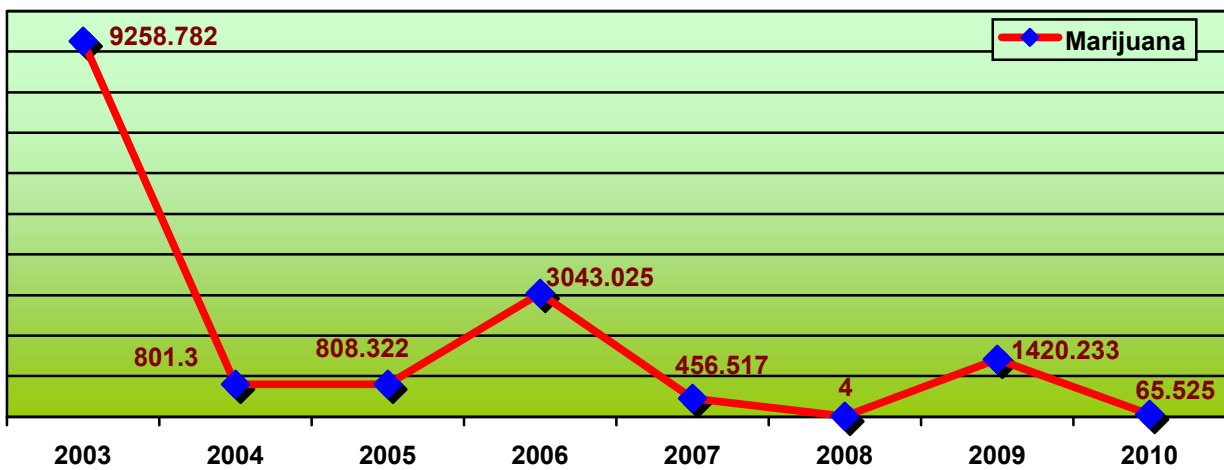
Cocaine seized in Italy transited through Albania (kg)



Hashish seized in Italy with Albanian origin (kg)



Marijuana seized in Italy with Albanian origin (kg)



During the first 11 months of 2010:

- 45 operations were conducted successfully using the special investigation means, among these two “controlled delivery” operations implemented in cooperation with authorities of the Netherlands and the US.
- 47 criminal groups involved in narcotic trafficking and distribution were dismantled and 220 their members were arrested.
- 33 international cooperation operations were conducted. 61 persons were arrested in Albania during these operations.

1.4. Fight against the cultivation of narcotic plants

Each year the Albanian Ministry of Interior implements a special action plan for the fight against cannabis cultivation. The action plan no. 920/1 2010 “On the prevention and fight against cultivation of cannabis” adopted on 30 March was implemented during the course of 2010. The local government and other state institutions were involved in the implementation of the plan. The action plan was implemented in two phases, consisting of the prevention and awareness rising phase and the operational phase.

The first phase of the plan was focused mainly on the assessment of the situation, implementation of preventive measures and increase of public awareness regarding this problem.

Many activities were organised during this phase. The central and regional working groups headed respectively by the General Director of the State Police and the heads of prefectures were established. Central and regional officers organised conferences, meetings, following the approved calendar with heads of communes, members of local councils, elder men, school children etc. TV programs, advertisement spots and continuous contacts with the population of the problematic zones were also conducted during this period.

On 24 March 2010 at hotel Tirana International the national conference for the prevention of cultivation of narcotics took place where the Prime Minister Sali Berisha, Ministers and other heads of government institutions took part.

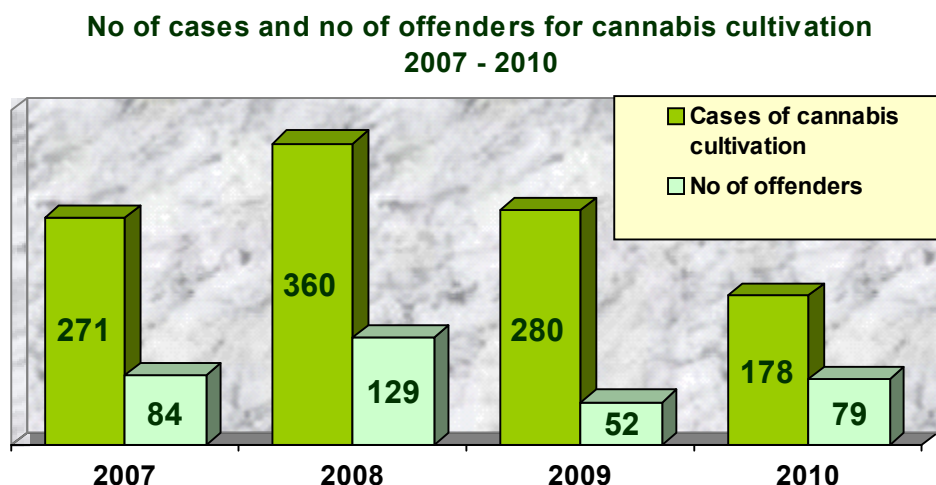
On 25 March 2010 the regional conference for the prevention of cultivation of narcotics took place in Gjirokastra with the participation of the Minister of Interior Lulzim Basha, Ministers Genc Ruli and Spiro Ksera, General Director of State Police Hysni Burgaj and the Head of OSCE Presence in Albania.

Representatives from PAMECA mission and several liaison officers from different countries have participated in several activities in the village of Lazarat in Gjirokaster.

On 01 June 2010 the operational phase started where police forces basing on the information collected and on the monitoring of the territory and using the helicopters, annihilated the discovered areas with narcotics plants. 30 monitoring operation were conducted during the operation phase. 178 cases were noticed and 37216 cannabis plants were destroyed during 2010. Also 79 persons were preceded and arrested for cultivation of cannabis.

As a result of the combination of prevention and oppression measures, the size of areas cultivated and the production of cannabis have decreased during the recent years. Comparison of data of the last years through the “hot-spot” analysing method confirms this conclusion.

During 2010, there was a decrease of 36.5 % in the cases of cannabis cultivation and the number of cultivated plants was reduced by 70.3 % compared to 2009 (280 cases and 125292 plants destroyed). During 2009, the number of cultivated plants was reduced by 14 % compared to 2008 and by 29 % compared to 2007.



1.5. Tirana Mini Dublin Group's recommendations for 2011

- Further efforts should be made in the field of prevention by conducting antidrug campaigns by the Police and respective Albanian authorities.
- According to various sources corruption still remains a major concern in Albania, therefore special attention should be given to this problem also during 2011.
- Cultivation of alternative legal crops should be promoted among people living in rural areas.
- The newly introduced strategy to let local police authorities control and prevent narcotic plant sites inside Albania should be under specific observation and analysis in order to prevent possible corruption and mismanagement.
- The provisions of various documents and their implementation in practice still differ - Albanian State Police therefore is asked to maintain its declared commitments in a most transparent way.
- What concerns Border police activity, even the "green border" towards Greece should be monitored further on as a key indicator of the overall security situation. Further training courses should be organized for matching better border management capacities.

In order to strengthen the dialogue between the international community and the Government of Albania, the recommendations contained in this report will be made available also to the relevant authorities.

2. REPORT ON THE DRUG SITUATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Place and date of meeting: the first meeting of the Mini Dublin Group in 2010 took place on 27 April 2010 in the premises of the EU Delegation. The meeting was chaired by the Embassy of the Republic of Hungary and the addition of relevant pieces of information referring to the developments of the recent months was collected and executed by the Embassy of the Republic of Hungary with the kind contribution of EUPM and French Embassy.

2.1. General situation in the country

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is an area of particular interest regarding illegal activities related mainly to the trafficking of drugs due to its geographic position at the crossroads of South-Eastern and Western Europe. Illegal activities related to drugs are one of the most widespread forms of organized crime in the country. BiH is not, however, a hot spot in terms of production of drugs or demand related issues. The number of drug users appears to be increasing, especially among the younger population, but still remains low in comparison to other European countries. Local authorities believe that the market for designer drugs, especially ecstasy, in urban areas is rising. BiH is not a significant narcotics cultivator. It is generally assumed that domestic cultivation is limited to small-scale marijuana crops grown in southern and western BiH (mainly around Trebinje and Bihac). BiH is also not a major synthetics narcotics producer and refinement and production are negligible. When authorities locate small marijuana crops, these are destroyed.

BiH is considered to be one of the regional hubs for narcotics shipment. As its neighbours, Bosnia and Herzegovina is affected by trafficking on the Balkan route, linking production sites in Afghanistan via Turkey with the main European markets. One of the subroutes goes through Bulgaria, Romania and FYROM to Kosovo, then through the Serbian and Montenegrin “Sandzak” to BiH, and further on to Croatia and Slovenia. Marijuana is usually transported from western FYROM, Albania and Kosovo over to Montenegro to southern BiH.

There are indications that drugs are stored in locations in BiH, mainly marijuana and heroin, until they can be shipped out to destinations further along the Balkan route.

In terms of the management of these illegal activities, the country is also considered to be one of the regional hubs. Leaders of the Balkan area’s relevant narcotics trafficking criminal structures reside mainly in BiH because the lack of cooperation among the country’s different police sections/sectors due to divided state structure helps them to avoid arrest. Drug trafficking in the country seems to be mainly controlled by groups originating from Sandzak (Montenegro and Serbia) and Kosovo. Traffickers have capitalized in particular on an ineffective justice system, public sector corruption, and the lack of specialized equipment and training.

Law enforcement authorities postulate that persons from all ethnic groups and constituent peoples are involved in the narcotics trade, often collaborating across ethnic lines. Violent incidents and the killing of some notorious persons linked to organized crime provide evidence of conflict and tensions among BiH criminal groups and possibly with groups from abroad. However, these incidents have also provided useful leads, resulting in arrests of key figures in the drug trade. Narcotics control capabilities in BiH have developed and are catching up with the developments in other areas of law enforcement as exemplified by increase seizure and arrest activities since autumn 2009. As we notice during several months and more specially all along the year, BiH law enforcement agencies increased significantly number and quality of drugs seizures on the ground as well as the arrest and detention warrants against traffickers.

In the area of fight against drug trafficking information collection and exchange, narcotics control capabilities and international cooperation have improved. Further efforts are needed regarding the lack of inter- and intra-agency cooperation within law enforcement and effective judicial follow-up.

Individual law enforcement agencies are showing improved capability to identify and disrupt organized drug trafficking operations. There have been a number of successful operations during 2010 some of which show an improved ability for joint working both between the levels of law enforcement within BiH and also regionally on an international level. There is still scope for improvement for joint investigation and coordination and cooperation. The establishment of the Directorate for Police Coordination was a landmark in such progress in 2010 and continued political and administrative support for the establishment of its full operational capacity during 2011 is vital to improving such capability in the future. Further support to enhance the Local Risk Analysis Centers (LRACs) within contributing agencies for the improvement of work and effectiveness of the Joint Risk Analysis Centre (JRAC) under the Integrated Border Management Strategy will also potentially improve targeted joint enforcement activity.

A new project in 2010 to establish a Police and Customs Cooperation Centre in BiH (initially just for the Police) linked to the EU network of such joint centers is still in the planning stages but support to progress it is also important. Although these last examples are international projects they are also important for internal BiH cooperation and coordination mechanisms because this will be necessary for their effective working.

The implementation of the Data Exchange Agreement (DEA), which was signed in 2010, will progress in 2011 and will be instrumental in improving the exchange of information vital to law enforcement between all levels of the policing structure in BiH. Unfortunately, a similar system (or the inclusion of it in the DEA) for the systematic and regular exchange of crime intelligence does not exist and is a significant gap in the capability for identifying and disrupting organized criminal networks. The recent examples of the prosecutors being willing to take a proactive lead in planning and running organized crime joint agency operations is also a welcomed sign of good practice for better cooperation and coordination between the various parts of the fractured structure of BiH policing.

Border management has visibly improved (however, only 87% of vacancies within Border Police authorities are filled; as a consequence, the surveillance of the Green Line has partially been deferred in favour of staffing Border Control Points), but deficiencies in the regulatory structure and justice system have been addressed, coordination among police agencies has improved, however an insufficient awareness of the need for strategic leadership by the political authorities mean that measures against narcotics trafficking and related crimes can be further improved and systematized. A national drug information system focal point is in formation, and the collection, processing and dissemination of drug-related data is neither regulated nor vetted by a state-level regulatory body.

Also, there are still deficits in implementing the reform of police authorities: The establishment of the Bosnian Police Coordination Agency, however, contributes to improve the formerly insufficient systematic cooperation between different police authorities. The Police Coordination Agency is responsible for national as well as for international cooperation. Legislation to restructure and implement a systematic data exchange has not yet been fully implemented. With regard to the Border Police, major efforts are needed to implement an integrated border management. The establishment of police structures and agencies for an integrated management has been commenced but is not yet fully effective. The lack of legislation on data acquisition and data processing as well as the non-existence of an electronic network for effective border control play an important role in this context.

The implementation of the action plan for drug control, suppression and prevention is of crucial importance. An issue of importance for tackling the drug problem is the need to implement the adopted comprehensive national strategy. Some progress has been made regarding the introduction of standards for information collection by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). A situation analysis was conducted, a single registration drug user form was introduced and software for collecting, analyzing and reporting standardized information was developed and shall become operational during 2010.

2.2. Legal framework-administrative capacity

The decentralization of the police and judiciary, poses particular challenges to the central institutions of BiH to implement a coherent security policy. In face of these challenges, however, there has been steady progress in reforming and stabilizing the crime fighting system by consolidating state institutions such as the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Security, Border Police (BP), State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA), Intelligence Security Agency (OSA), the Service for Foreigners' Affairs, the Office of the BiH Prosecutor, and the State Court. A Directorate for the Coordination of Police bodies has been established. They contribute to stability and security throughout BiH. The entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska as well as the cantonal and Brcko District levels are an integral part of the law enforcement and judicial structure.

2.2.1. Legislation

- The criminal code and the criminal procedure code of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been amended in spring 2010 to better respond to current law enforcement challenges. The 2005 law on prevention and suppression of the abuse of narcotic drugs is being amended and a rulebook on destruction of confiscated drugs is being prepared and shall be adopted before the 2010 parliamentary summer recess. Further legislation in place is the following: Law for Control of Production and Trafficking of Drugs and Psychotropic-Substances;
- Law for Control of Legal Drugs;
- Law for File Records in Health ;

- Law on Prevention and Suppression of Drugs (BiH Official Gazette no. 8/06), which came into effect on February 15, 2006;
- National Strategy on Supervision over Narcotic Drugs, Prevention and Suppression of the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2009 – 2013

BiH has signed and ratified the UN Conventions on Narcotic Drugs (1961), Psychotropic Substances (1971) and Against Illicit Trafficking (1988). The legal framework for the fight against money-laundering is in force.

The Law on Amendments and Addenda to the Law on Prevention and Suppression of Narcotic Drugs was included in the agenda of 131st session of BiH Council of Ministers on 26 August 2010. However, the draft Law was not discussed that day due to the absence of the Minister of Security who was a proposer of the Law.

2.2.2. Institutions – organization and cooperation

Many BiH institutions are engaged in the fight against drugs, namely the police authorities (entity Ministries of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Security of BiH and the Brcko District Police Service) the Judiciary (Ministries of Justice at all levels – state, entity and cantonal and in Brcko District), the Indirect Tax Authority of BiH (BiH Council of Ministers), the Ministry of Health (on entity and local level) and the entity Ministries of Culture and Education. Non-governmental organizations are engaged as well, both directly and indirectly.

The fight against the organized criminal networks involved in drugs trafficking has to rely upon good information sharing and cooperation. New systems and processes required for the effective sharing and collation of intelligence between agencies that is required to identify such networks have been agreed, in particular with regard to police data exchange. The cooperation between agencies needed to disrupt such networks beginning to be better structured but would require further regulation.

The national focal point for the European information network on drugs and drug addiction should be set up in 2009. Up to now, there exists only a national contact point within the Ministry for Civil Affairs.

The Department for Prevention of Abuse of Narcotics at the Ministry of Security is in charge of the systematic gathering of data and monitoring of the phenomena, of collecting and processing data required for preventing and combating illicit drug trafficking and other criminal offences related to the abuse of narcotics, and coordination of activities conducted by the police, customs and other bodies in the fight against the abuse of narcotics. It also works on international cooperation with other countries in the region and with representatives of the European Union in the domain of security, and monitors the implementation of the Law on the Prevention and Combat of the Abuse of Narcotics. The department performs tasks assigned by the Commission for Drugs. It also maintains a database on the import and export of narcotic substances, narcotics and plants from which narcotic drugs and precursors may be obtained, and cooperates with operational police forces in this area.

BiH is attempting to build state-level law enforcement institutions to combat narcotics trafficking and organized crime in order to achieve compliance with relevant UN conventions. The full deployment of the Border Police (BP) and the establishment of the State Investigative and Protection Agency (SIPA) have improved counter-narcotics efforts. Telephone hotlines, local press coverage, and public relations efforts have focused public attention on smuggling and black-marketing. The Ministry of Security established a database on perpetrators of drug-related offences which is accessible at most border crossing points.

Cooperation among law enforcement agencies and prosecutors remains difficult but is steadily improving. The High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council has initiated a number of projects to improve police-prosecution coordination and standardization of procedures.

Successful joint anti-drug operations of the various police services have become a regular feature over the last year. Entity and cantonal police in cooperation with the Border Police and SIPA have intercepted and seized significant amounts of substance, leading to the arrest of several hundreds of suspects. Of particular interest has been the north and north-east of the country as almost all trafficking crosses the Republika Srpska coming from the east and the north. International cooperation has improved as Bosnia and Herzegovina relies on the effectiveness of law enforcement and information sharing with authorities in Serbia and Montenegro.

As land-based trafficking crosses a several regional states, including EU member states, the level of regional and European cooperation remains a key to successful law enforcement. Bosnia and Herzegovina has signed a number of bi-lateral agreements in this respect during the reporting period.

The effects of the implementation of the South Eastern European Police Cooperation Convention are clearly being felt. However, effective judicial follow-up is lacking.

[NB: Generally, almost all drug coming from the east on land has crossed an EU Member State and then Serbia, Montenegro, FYROM, Albania and from the north most precursors are produced in the Netherlands and other EU states crossing through Slovenia and Croatia before they reach BiH.]

2.3. Short update on the country's anti-drugs strategy

In the 2007 European Partnership between the EU and BiH, the fight against drugs was included in the priorities. More specifically, the following points were considered as short-term-priorities:

- Develop a State-level drugs policy in conformity with European standards,
- Ensure full functioning of a State level office for narcotics.

The State Strategy for control and combating abuse of Drugs was adopted by the BiH parliament on 26 March 2009. This includes provision for the establishment of the State level Office for Narcotics. The accompanying action plan for its implementation has been adopted by the Council of Ministers.

Amendments to the Law on prevention and suppression of abuse of narcotic drugs were adopted. They establish the State-level office for drugs envisaged in the strategy and action plan and improve control over precursors. A rulebook for destruction of confiscated drugs has been adopted. Bosnia and Herzegovina has improved its cooperation with the International Narcotics Control Board. Implementation of the action plan for the prevention and suppression of drug abuse is not very advanced. The overall institutional situation of the country does not facilitate the establishment of the coordination mechanism and the implementation of the measures announced in the national action plan on drugs. Specific budgetary allocation for data collection would facilitate the implementation of the strategy.

Some progress was achieved on inter-agency exchanges of information.

In BiH there are two methadone therapy centers with a combined capacity to handle about 160 patients. The limited capacity of the country's psychiatric clinics, also charged with treating drug addicts, is problematic, as the number of addicts and drug-related deaths in the country is rising steadily.

2.4. List of major bilateral and multilateral CN programs

The fight against drugs is a main component of the overall fight against organized crime and was addressed by the European Commission at the negotiating rounds with the BiH authorities for the Stabilization and Association Agreement and were also included in the EU-BiH visa dialogue.

Cooperation with other countries is established and materialized through INTERPOL, SECI Centre, and an agreement among BiH, Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro.

The BiH law enforcement agencies have contributed to the continued improvement of bilateral and regional efforts to combat illegal drug trafficking in 2009 and 2010. Some notable successes of interagency cooperation include during 2010:

- 19 January — 50 kg of heroin seized in Ilidza;
- 16 February — 1,5 kg of heroin seized in Bosanska Gradiska;
- 10 March — 10 kg of cannabis seized in Stolac;
- 25 March — heroin and cannabis production equipment seized in Una-Sana Canton;
- 25 March — cannabis farm discovered in Banja Luka;
- 31 March — 3 kg of cocaine seized in Sarajevo. 31 March — largest ever cannabis farm in BiH destroyed in Gata;
- 7 April — 155 kg of cannabis seized near Trebinje;
- 13 April — 8 kg of cannabis seized in Pale;
- 15 April — 15 kg of cannabis seized in Bileca;
- 28 August - a laboratory of production of skunk - Brcko - annual profit of more than 100.000 KM (50.000 €);
- 27 August - dismantling of a traffic of marijuana towards Croatia - 10 kg;
- 20 September - 460 grams of heroine to Banja Luka;
- 25 September - two plantations of 250 stalks of Indian hemp - Mostar;

- 13 October - 5 kg of heroine in the border crossing Kula (Kosovo) - citizen called Bosnian;
- 22 October - 4.3 kg of marijuana - Zagreb - Bosnian citizen;
- 22/October - 6 kg of skunk - Vitez;
- 06 November - 3 kg of heroine - 1 kilo of skunk - 160 tablets of ecstasy - Banja Luka - Sarajevo and Luka;
- 14 November - 5 kg of skunk - border crossing of Scepan Polje (border Montenegro) - Bosnian citizen of Brcko;
- 19 November - 4.3 kg of skunk - police of Foca;
- 17 November - 5 kg of marijuana - Croatian border and BiH;
- In December “SKUTER” operation in Brcko to dismantle heroin and marijuana traffic.

In the same way, we have to mention the main operation (GRADINA3 – HIT – RESEAU 2010). Outside these large-scale operations, the seizures result from passages borders of Montenegro towards BIH or BIH towards Croatia, these operations end in judgments with prison sentences. Beyond these excellent results and beyond the will shown to fight the drug trafficking, it seems necessary to strengthen the cooperation police and judicial interstate between the countries of the Balkans and to create an agency of effective anti-narcotic state.

Hungary has concluded a twinning project to support the BiH Border Police. The purpose of the project was to strengthen the capacity of the BiH Border Police to combat organized cross-border crime efficiently, through an exchange of knowledge, experience, and best practices, with a focus on improving information management.

The UK government is working closely with the Ministry of Security and other stakeholders on implementation of the BiH Strategy and Action Plan for drug control, suppression and prevention.

BiH is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention and to the UN Convention against trans-national Crime and its protocols against migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons.

In autumn 2007, BiH signed a strategic agreement with EUROPOL. EUROPOL has signed a memorandum on the establishment of a secure communication link between EUROPOL and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The so called Neus network will enable transfer of confidential data between the Hague where EUROPOL is located and Sarajevo. BiH authorities are concluding a “gap analysis” with a view to signing an operational agreement with Europol. An agreement has been signed with FRONTEX.

The US Government's bilateral law enforcement assistance program continues to emphasize task force training, improved cooperation between law enforcement agencies and prosecutors, and other measures against organized crime, including narcotics trafficking. The U.S. Department of Justice's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) program, funded by the U.S. State Department, provided specific counternarcotics training to entity Interior Ministries, SIPA and BP. The USG Export Control and Border Security (EXBS) program provides equipment and training to law enforcement agencies including the BP and the Indirect Taxation Administration (ITA), which has increased their ability to detect and interdict contraband, including narcotics. The U.S. Department of Justice's Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance Training (OPDAT) program provides training to judges and prosecutors on organized crime-related matters. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) office in Rome maintains liaison with its counterparts in Bosnian state- and entity-level law enforcement organizations. The DEA has also sponsored specific narcotic interdiction training courses in Bosnia. The U.S. Department of Defense also assisted by providing counternarcotics equipment for border police through the U.S. European Command. In addition, law enforcement officials from Bosnia attended regional training courses held in Serbia and Montenegro by the U.S. Coast Guard on small boat operations and maintenance.

2.5. Prioritized identification of needs for external assistance

The solidification and strengthening of the multi-level law enforcement system, with an emphasis on the state-level law enforcement and judicial institutions remains the key objective. The ongoing development of joint institutional and operational capacity and capability is being supported by targeted assistance through the instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA). The newly established Directorate for Police Coordination plays an important role in this. Bi-lateral assistance shall remain focused on increasing the functionality of existing agencies and on deepening operational partnership including by cooperation agreements.

Beyond these excellent results and beyond the will shown to fight the drug trafficking, it seems necessary to strengthen the cooperation police and judicial interstate between the countries of the Balkans and to create an agency of effective anti-narcotic state.

2.6. Mini Dublin Group assessment of needs

The globalization of crime and its multidimensional forms create a complex and challenging security environment that demands a professional response by the relevant authorities in order to address the growing drug-related threats more efficiently. International cooperation is an essential factor in tackling these challenges.

The urgent need for BiH at this point is prompt implementation of the BiH Strategy and Action Plan for drug control, suppression and prevention, including the establishment and operation of State office for Narcotics.

Another decisive factor is the further strengthening of the state level institutions such as the Ministry of Security, the Directorate for Police Coordination, SIPA, and the Border Police which, in order to increase functionality and efficiency need to be properly staffed and equipped to contribute to joint capacity and capability of law enforcement and judiciary as a whole. With regard to the Border Police, major efforts are needed to implement an integrated border management. Though some progress has been made on operational cooperation between law enforcement agencies in the fight against organized crime, including sharing of intelligence and joint action, formal coordination and exchange of information, particularly of intelligence remains weak. SIPA's cooperation with other police bodies was poor. A coordination mechanism has been set up between police directors, the chief prosecutor and the Ministry of Security. Results of police operations have not been adequately converted into successful prosecutions and convictions. The State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) has reached a staffing level of 70%. Not enough qualified candidates could be found to fill all the vacancies. The laws on the SIPA and border police were brought into line with the new police reform laws.

The 2010 budget allocations for the State-level Ministry of Security and a number of law enforcement agencies increased. The budget of the Directorate for coordination of police bodies was approved and its rulebook adopted. The independent board that supervises the police has been established and is operational. The Directorate received the responsibility and staff for international police cooperation (including Europol and Interpol) and VIP protection.

However, the Directorate for coordination of police bodies is not staffed with police officers.

3. REPORT ON THE DRUG SITUATION IN CROATIA

During the past year the work of the Office for Combating Drugs Abuse of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (Office) was directed towards regular monitoring of the implementation of strategic documents and further development of legislative and institutional framework of the national policy for combating drugs abuse in the Republic of Croatia.

If we take a brief look at the present drugs situation in Croatia, available data indicate that during the last couple of years number of drug addicts that received treatment in the health care institutions is relatively stable (around 7 500 persons per year). Cannabis products remain the most widely abused illicit psychoactive substance in Croatia. However, the major part of registered drug users demanded treatment because of their opiate addiction. Although injecting drug use is still not declining in Croatia as it is the case many EU countries, the HIV infection is still very low (< 0,5%) whilst hepatitis C and B is steadily being reduced. In addition, number of fatal overdoses also significantly dropped compared to the previous years. These developments to a large extent result from significant investment in drug treatment, notably substitution treatment, and in needle and syringe exchange programs.

Supply reduction activities are another important element of our drugs policy. Taking into consideration its geostrategic position, Croatia can be characterized as a transit area through which illicit drugs are trafficked between the so called producer countries and consumer countries.

Although illicit drug seizures in Croatia indicate that heroin is still main illicit drug smuggled via so-called Balkan Route, this traditional trafficking corridor is changing inevitably. Today, it includes a wider variety of drugs (e.g. during the recent years there were observed cocaine shipments via Black Sea or via Adriatic Sea through one of the branches of the Balkan Route) to supply Europe's increasing poly-drug consumption but also precursor chemicals, and functions as a two-way road to include the exportation of EU-produced drugs.

3.1. Legislative and strategic development

The Act on the Amendments to the Drug Abuse Prevention Act, published in the Official Gazette (149/09; December 2009), modified the control over trade in substances that can be used in order to produce drugs (precursors) in a way that the current authority of the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship related to the control over trade in precursors, will be taken over by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. The said Amendment enabled the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to establish central control over trade in all precursors. The Act also shortened time limits for the destruction of seized drugs in order that drugs can be destroyed even after performing the necessary evidence procedures, and the term "narcotic" was deleted.

In January 2010, upon the risk assessment done in the frame of the national early warning system on new psychoactive substances, Minister of Health and Social Welfare decided to put mephedrone under legal control (NN 02/10). In the course of 2010, the risk assessment was done also for 20 additional substances (out of which 13 refer to synthetic cannabinoids) which will become legally controlled in 2011.

At its 5th meeting held on 20 April 2010, the Commission on Combating Drugs Abuse of the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Implementation Programme of the Action Plan on Combating Drugs Abuse in the Republic of Croatia for 2010, in order to ensure the implementation of activities of the current Action Plan on Combating Drugs Abuse in the Republic of Croatia (2009-2012) anticipated in that year. Enforcement measures and activities will be coordinated and monitored by the Office for Combating Drugs Abuse of the Government of the Republic of Croatia through cooperation and coordination with government bodies, local and regional governments and non-governmental organizations.

3.2. Cooperation with the EMCDDA

Regarding cooperation with the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the Agreement between the Republic of Croatia and the European Community on the participation of the Republic of Croatia in the work of the EMCDDA (Agreement) was initialled in Brussels on 6 July 2009.

However, on 16 December 2009 the Mission of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union received a letter from the Director-General of the Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom and Security of the European Commission (DG JLS) requiring that in the text of the Agreement the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, should be taken into account. Therefore, on 22 December 2009 revised text of the Agreement was initialled, in which the term *European Community* was replaced with the term *European Union*. There were no other changes in the text of the Agreement. The Agreement was finally signed in Brussels on 6 December 2010 and is expected to be ratified by the Croatian Parliament in the course of 2011.

In order to further develop the National Drugs Information System and comply with EMCDDA standards, the second National Action Plan on Drug Information System in the Republic of Croatia (2010-2011) was drawn up and adopted by the Croatian Government at its 54th session held on 29 April 2010. Since the Agreement between the Republic of Croatia and the European Union on the participation of the Republic of Croatia in the work of the EMCDDA was expected to be signed in 2010, the implementation of measures and activities foreseen in this Action Plan has enabled final preparations to take over all obligations arising from formal participation in the work of the EMCDDA, to which the Republic of Croatia has so far submitted three standardized National Reports on the Drugs Situation and Drug Addiction.

Furthermore, in accordance with the Protocol on National Drugs Information System in the Republic of Croatia, in April 2010 the Head of the Office issued the Decision on appointment of members of the Working groups responsible for advising the Office on the implementation of the overall strategy of the National Drugs Information System, methods of data collection and analysis, communication strategy and further development, current issues and trends that occur in the area, proposing activities and measures, participation in the drafting of working documents and literature.

The Deputy Prime Minister of the Croatian Government received Mr. Alexis Goosdeel, Head of Reitox and International Cooperation Unit of the EMCDDA, on a return visit on 28 April 2010. The meeting also highlighted all aspects of a good bilateral cooperation which began informally in late 2004.

As a continuation of previous cooperation in the horizontal projects of the EMCDDA, Croatia, along with other South East European countries, was invited to participate in the new IPA project of the EMCDDA that aims to provide scientific and expert support to the development of national drugs information systems. It should be noted that of all countries in the region, only Croatia and Turkey have operating National Drugs Information Units, which are also Focal Points of the EMCDDA, and will therefore under the IPA project have a separate, progressive agenda. Expert IPA project kick-off meeting was held in Zagreb on 29-30 April 2010.

3.3. Establishment of regional police dog training center

Following the consultation meeting between representatives of the General Police Directorate of the Ministry of Interior and the Office, the joint working group has prepared a preliminary project proposal, and with the approval of the Ministry of Interior as the project beneficiary, the Office has developed sector analysis as a basis for "Establishment of Police Dog Training Centre" Project Proposal under the IPA 2011 programme.

3.4. Other issues

Intensive co-operation with county commissions for the suppression of narcotic drugs abuse as the authorities in charge of coordination in the implementation of measures and activities on the suppression of drugs abuse at the level of the local community continued. Co-operation with NGOs still has an important role and in early 2010 a number of programmes being implemented by civil society were financed.

Among other activities in 2010, it is especially important to emphasize the development of the National Drug Addiction Prevention Program for Children and Youth in order to intensify the implementation of prevention activities in the education system.

Other important national project enabling social reintegration of (former) drug addicts continued in 2010 as well. The project targets drug addicts who completed a rehabilitation and detoxification programme in a therapy community or prison, and addicts undergoing treatment outside the hospital, which are successfully abstaining from drugs for a longer period of time and complying with the prescribed therapy.

Croatia recognizes the importance for international cooperation and was therefore during the last decade actively involved in different international activities, with the specific focus on fostering cooperation between countries in our Region.

4. REPORT ON THE DRUG SITUATION IN FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Place and date of meetings: the last meeting of the Mini Dublin Group took place on April 22, 2010, at the EU Mission presented by the Embassy of the Republic of Hungary. Representatives of the IMCD (Interministerial Commission for narcotics and drugs) Skopje presented the latest activities to the Mini-Dublin Group members.

Guest speaker: Mr. Ilco Zahariev, Director of the Bureau of Drugs, Ministry of Health and Ms. Tatjana Petrusavska, Head of Sector for Controlled Substances, Ministry of Health

4.1. General situation in the country

4.1.1. Production of illegal drugs

With regard to the former reports the situation regarding production of illegal drugs which was described as “just small amounts of Marijuana for personal use”, has changed: Confiscations of approx 700 kg (!) of self-cultivated Marijuana in 2009 and 2010 (7 month) show that the production is increasing. Licit poppy straw and poppy straw concentrate are produced in the central and eastern part of the country for medical purposes only on approximately 1000 hectares, which means an increase of 100% compared to the former cultivated 500 hectares. 24 companies/institutions which are dealing with import, export or transit of drugs and/or precursors have been registered in the meantime.

The agricultural inspectorate reports regularly to the Ministry of Health on the registered poppy cultivation, based on which reports on the quantities of extracted alkaloids are established. Under UN Convention 1961 article 12 the Ministry of Health is obliged to report regularly to the INCB (International, Narcotic Control Board) in Vienna, on a quarterly and annual basis. During random controls with the objective of monitoring the poppy fields in the so-called “risky period” the inspection team and ICMPD representatives did not find any signs of possible illicit production of opium.

4.1.2. Trafficking

The territory of the country lies along major drug trafficking routes, which head from Afghanistan, Turkey via the Balkans towards Western Europe. A major concern is the transit of large quantities of heroin from Turkey (originating from Afghanistan) towards Western Europe. Therefore, the capacity and active engagement of the government in the combat against trafficking continue to have crucial importance for containing any expansion of trans-shipments of narcotics.

In the meantime domestic drug use is on the increase. Trafficking is often related to or part of smuggling and other trans-border activities of minorities, who are actual majorities in border areas and/or larger cities. There is also often a link to organised crime, whether on local, regional or on international level, with relations to migrant populations living in Western Europe. The re-establishment and existence of criminal structures beyond the borders of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, e.g. in Kosovo, is alarming and could create additional possibilities for trafficking and organised crime. There is also west-east trafficking of cocaine from the Albanian harbours through the country towards Greece.

4.1.3. Drug abuse / domestic programmes / demand reduction

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is not considered a major market for illicit drugs. The register of drug users (drug offenders) is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior. According to the official statistics there are more than 8.500 problematic drug users. This number differs strongly from other data published by newspapers which report a number of 40.000 drug addicted persons.

The Mini-Dublin group members were informed by the Interministerial Commission that the term “problematic drug users” is defined by the EMCDDA (European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction) as “injecting drugs use or long duration or regular use of opiates, cocaine and/or amphetamines”. Rare or irregular users or users of cannabis are not included, which explains the difference in numbers between the official statistics and newspaper reports. 41,3 % or estimated 3.500 persons are using heroin. .

Statistics 2008 – 2010 (first 7 month):

Year:	2008	2009	2010 (7 month)
Official number of problematic drug abusers	8.345	8.641	5.629

The most frequently used drug is marijuana, followed by heroin, cocaine and ecstasy. Growth of trafficking and the availability of cheap synthetic drugs could further enhance local consumption in the future.

Data concerning drug-related deaths are collected from the Institute for Forensic Medicine and Crime of the medical faculty in Skopje, and from other departments for forensic medicine in general hospitals in several cities. It is important to mention that the figures may be biased due to the fact that in many cases, and for a variety of reasons (religious, financial, etc) no autopsy/toxicological analysis is carried out.

From 2005 to 2009, the total number of drug-related deaths appears to have continuously increased among males, while the number among the female population stagnated.

Drug treatment services and harm reduction programmes are available in the main cities in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Overview of treatment centers:

- 1 Hospital facility for in-patient treatment for detoxification;
- 1 Therapeutic Community;
- 3 Social Care Centers;
- 12 Centers for treatment of drug abusers (8 on regional level, 2 in Skopje and 2 in prisons);
- 15 needle exchange stations with NGO support.

Among first-time treatment clients, 94% reported opioids as their main problem substance followed by cannabis (5%) and benzodiazepines (1%). 70% of them were in the age group of 18-35 years.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia receives expert support for new treatment opportunities other than Methadone. The use of the drug-substitute Buprenorphine, which has been employed for 10 years in the USA, has recently been approved for use in treatment and is produced by the Alkaloid Company in Skopje. The Interministerial Commission reported, that the results achieved by this new drug-substitute are very promising and exceeding the expectations.

4.1.4. Drug supply reduction

The overall performance of the Ministry of Interior in fighting drug trafficking can be assessed as positive both from quantitative and qualitative points of view. The legal system and administrative capacity in the area of drug trafficking have been largely aligned with the *acquis communautaire*. Use of special investigative procedures in the fight against organised crime as well as in the cooperation between the special unit for the fight against organized crime and corruption of the Public Prosecutors office and the Department for Organised Crime within the Ministry of Interior, has become a standard. Consequently, the regional and international cooperation has improved. This is evidenced by successful bi- and multilateral anti-drug operations, e.g. with Turkey, which led to confiscations of 198 kg heroin in the last months in Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Statistics: Ministry of Interior and Customs Administration:

Confiscated Drugs	Statistics 2008	Statistics 2009	Statistics 2010 Jan - August
Marijuana	1233,5 kg	669 kg	545 kg
Heroin	60,6 kg	144,8 kg	132,1 kg
Cocaine	2,29 kg	4,57 kg	2,27 kg
Ecstasy	448 pills	2.534 pills	1.340 pills

4.2. Institutional set-up and the country's anti-drugs strategy

The Interministerial Commission for narcotics and drugs (IMCND) was established in November 2006 and is an institutional part of the Ministry of Health. It consists of members of the Ministry of Interior, of Foreign Affairs, of Education, of Local Self government, of Labour and Social Policy, of Agriculture, as well as of the Agency for Youth and Sport.

Roles and responsibilities of the IMCND are in particular:

- Coordinating, planning and monitoring the implementation of programs in the area of prevention, treatment and suppression of drugs abuse at the local level
- Elaborating the implementation of the National Drugs Strategy and Action Plan
- International collaboration

In December 2006 the National Drugs Control Strategy, which is composed of two Action Plans, was adopted by the government. The plans foresee a pre-implementation period 2007-2008 and an implementation period from 2009-2012. and allocate a budget. The Action Plan emphasizes the necessity of cooperation between state institutions, non-governmental organizations, media and responsible institutions at the local level. The Action Plan is based on the principle of decentralization.

4.3. Ongoing activities/ developments during 2009-2010

The national drug strategy was adopted in December 2006. On 18 July 2007, the Government adopted the pre-implementation plan for 2007–08 and the implementation plan for 2009–12, as well as 10 rulebooks specifying best practices.

The national drugs strategy is in accordance with European Union drugs strategy 2005–12. The principles, goals and priorities established by the national drug strategy have been realized through the drugs action plan 2009–12. The action plan works towards an efficient, coordinated and multidisciplinary approach to the fight against drug abuse, undertaking measures for increasing the awareness and knowledge of the general public about the controlled psychoactive substances that cause addiction; the prevention of use of psychoactive substances especially among young people; measures for encouraging healthy lifestyles; promotion of measures for the protection of the family; reducing health and social drug-related consequences; including all sectors of society in the activities related to the fight against the drug abuse.

One of the principles of the action plan is the availability of prevention programmes at a decentralised level in accordance with the needs of the local community.

In order to meet these requirements, the action plan has a balanced and multidisciplinary approach based on the five key elements:

1. Coordination at the national and international level.
2. Demand reduction.
3. Supply reduction and tackling the illicit trade.
4. Assessment, supervision, information and training.
5. International cooperation.

In addition to the central state institutions, municipal and regional units, the civil society and non-governmental organisations are involved in the implementation of the action plan.

The delegation from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia participated in the Regional High Level Conference Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Security in South Eastern Europe in Belgrade, Serbia from 30th -31st March 2009.

A network on information exchange on drugs between the European Agencies, namely EUROPOL and EUROJUST and the local agencies involved in the fight against drugs trafficking has been created; the National Focal Point for cooperation with EUROPOL has been established within the Ministry of Interior.

Main activities / developments in Drug Supply Reduction in the first 7 month in 2010.:

- January 2010: disruption of Organized criminal structures from Veles, active in Germany. More than 20 persons were arrested. The group managed to sell around 20 kg of heroin with a value of 1 million €;
- March 2010: Confiscation of 240 kg of Marihuana in Tetovo;
- April 2010: Confiscation of 60 kg of Heroin at the border to Bulgaria;
- Till November 2009 the operation “Bosfor”, carried out together with the Turkish anti-drug department and under coordination of the SECI Center Bukarest.

4.4. Major bilateral and multilateral counter-narcotic programs

- EU CARDS Twinning project “Combating drugs related criminal activity” with Hungary as a Twinning partner and the Netherlands as a Junior Partner lasted from 28th April 2006 until 28th August 2007. Objectives: enhancement and practical implementation of the developed National Drugs Strategy; preparation and implementation of a National Action Plan to the same end; consolidation and strengthening of the national drugs co-ordination mechanism;
- Technical Assistance of EAR to equip MoI Central Laboratory;
- Various bilateral contributions in the framework of the police reform program, like capacity building and police trainings; e.g. Police Training Academy in Skopje in 2009-2010 within bilateral police training assistance by German BKA
- Project “Establishment of program for prevention of drugs in the schools”; supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Netherlands started in the municipalities of Skopje, Tetovo and Strumica. Materials for prevention like guidelines for the teachers, informative materials for different types of drugs are prepared within this project.

4.5. Prioritized identification of needs for external assistance

- Technical support for establishment of Software for collection and evaluation of data for monitoring of drug indicators,
- Technical support to convey Survey of the general population for use of illicit drugs to have EMCDDA indicator
- Continuation of the cooperation with EUROPOL and EMCDDA and SECI Centre in Bucharest and other partner organizations
- Support for implementation of the recently adopted Law for Control of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances -preparation of preventive programmes for different target groups
- Exchange of information and training for new therapies – transfer of good practices

4.6. Mini Dublin group assessment of needs

4.6.1. *Emerging threats/trends*

- Increase of trafficking could further enhance the position of the country as an attractive route for the transit and “warehousing base” for trans-shipments towards Western Europe and within the Balkan region. Intensified repression through special operations to disrupt these well established criminal structures and to confiscate the bunkered drugs (first of all heroin) is strongly recommended.
- Illicit trans-border activities especially in the western part of the country (border to Kosovo) continue, including the smuggling of drugs
- Increased trafficking will also increase the availability of drugs in the country itself, in particular less expensive drugs.

4.6.2. *Political recommendations*

- The National Action Plan for combating drug trafficking and abuse should be further implemented. The members of the Dublin group commend Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for further progress that has been made over the last year and encourages the FYROM side to adopt the law on controlled substances and set up the Interministerial Commission against Drug Trafficking and Abuse as soon as possible.
- Training for fighting against cocaine smuggling should be enhanced.
- Considering that cocaine is becoming a drug increasingly smuggled along the Balkan route, training and awareness raising, should be done for front-line officers, who often have not enough experience with detecting cocaine.
- Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia’s authorities should intensify public awareness campaigns against drugs and organized crime, in cooperation with reliable local partners, in particular in schools. The Dublin group encourages the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia’s authorities to expand the programme “Drug is zero – Life is one” throughout the country.
- International cooperation in the fight against illicit trafficking and organized crime activities in all forms is essential to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

- The ongoing dialogue with the host country should be used to remind that a successful counter narcotics policy is of major importance to the European Union and its member states, and that continuity of institutions and operational staff is a precondition for effective, professional and sustainable work and results.
- The fruitful cooperation within the IMCND and with the International Community should be continued.

5. REPORT ON THE DRUG SITUATION IN KOSOVO

5.1. General situation in the country

Statistics of the last few months show a slight improvement as regards the effectiveness of the Kosovo Police in the field of fighting drug-related illegal activities.

According to local authorities, the main routes for smuggling that involve Kosovo are:

1. ASIA – MACEDONIA – KOSOVO (Gjilan, Peja) – MONTENEGRO
2. ALBANIA – KOSOVO (Prizren, Peja) – MONTENEGRO or MNE – KOS - AL
3. SERBIA – KOSOVO or KOSOVO – SERBIA

Methods according to the experience of authorities are:

1. Sending of drug packages without declared ownership by busses (examples: confiscation at Serbian – Hungarian Border);
2. Using of inexperienced persons for transport (examples: arrests in Serbia);
3. Using Kosovarians leaving abroad (“Diaspora”) for smuggling of drugs (examples: arrests in Serbia, Croatia);
4. Using in car repair shops special prepared hiding places

5.2. Short update on the country’s anti-drugs strategy

A significant development since the last meeting is that the National Anti-drug Strategy and Action Plan till 2012 has been prepared and adopted.

5.3. Enumeration of major bilateral and multilateral CN programs

Since the last meeting, with the co-operation of the EULEX and the USA structures have been established within the Kosovo Police that are responsible for co-ordinating anti-drug investigation.

5.4. Prioritized identification of needs for external assistance

- Still no significant improvement regarding cross-border police co-operation except with Albania.
- While a more practical and efficient co-operation with Macedonia and Montenegro is mostly hindered by technical conditions, co-operation with Serbia is reported to be hampered by the well-known political reasons. Data exchange through EULEX is reported to be too slow and quantitatively insufficient for efficient co-operation.

6. REPORT ON THE DRUG SITUATION IN MONTENEGRO

6.1. General situation in the country

Montenegro serves mainly as a transit country of natural drugs like heroin, cannabis (or marijuana, in its latest version called 'skunk') and cocaine. The fact, that in the last two years the Montenegrin Police has found only a few minor cannabis producing plants, and has detected not a single laboratory for the production of synthetic drugs proves that Montenegro can not be regarded as a drug producer country. There are, however, indications, that some distribution networks have strong organisational structures on Montenegrin territory.

6.1.1. Types of drugs smuggled into and distributed in Montenegro

Heroin is smuggled from Afghanistan via Turkey, Bulgaria, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo and Albania to Montenegro, from where it goes to Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia and to EU countries as final destination. Only a branch of the ‘Balkan heroin smuggling route’ goes through Montenegro, which is secondary in both scope and importance for international contraband, while the main route goes through Bulgaria, FYROM, Kosovo and Serbia,.

As for **cannabis**, Montenegro is an important transit point in the chain of its smuggling, and as a recent development, its modified version, called ‘skunk’, is being smuggled in large quantities from Albania to the republics of the former Yugoslavia and to Central Europe.

In the recent years, due to its two maritime ports, Montenegro has gained importance for those criminal groups dealing with **cocaine** smuggling. Cocaine originates from Latin-America and is produced mostly for EU and US markets. These groups are in constant search for European ports in order to reach European soil with their products. In this respect Spanish, Dutch and Belgian ports are targeted most, but ports of the Adriatic Sea are also targeted. There are two main forms of smuggling techniques: one using containers where the cocaine is hidden among legal goods, while the other way is, when the cocaine is smuggled hidden inside the vessels

6.1.2. Statistical data concerning the criminal procedures in the second half of 2010

Between the period of 1st September 2010 – 1st December 2010 Montenegrin authorities initiated criminal procedures in 83 drug-related cases, charges were brought in 54 cases against 83 people. Illegal drugs were seized in 75 cases in a net weight of 205,55 kg, consisting of:

- 177,83 kg cannabis/hashis,
- 1,86 kg heroin,
- 25,86 kg cocaine.

In the course of 2010 four major anti-drug a group of 14 people we operations were carried out against drug traffickers.

As a result of the „CIVAS” operation 14 people were arrested who smuggled cannabis from Albania to the countries of the region. A total sum of 104 kg of cannabioids were seized.

In May 2010 in the framework of operation „ORAH” police have seized 4,5 kg of cocaine and arrested six people who dealt with drug smuggling from South America to the EU through Montenegro for several years.

As a result of several months of investigation in August 2010 another operation was successfully completed aiming to disclose a gang dealing with drug smuggling on the route of Turkey-Kosovo-Montenegro-Serbia. As a result of the operation 2 kg of heroin was seized, 6 people arrested.

In November 2010 a comprehensive anti-drug operation was carried out in the Northern part of the country. A total number of 17 were arrested, who are suspected of drug smuggling from Albania and Kosovo to Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina via Montenegro. In the operation 1,5 kg of heroin, 15 kg of cannabioids, 50 gr of cocaine was seized.

6.2. Short update on the country’s anti-drug strategy and relevant legal framework

Montenegro has a “National Drug Strategy” and an ”Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy”. The Government of Montenegro on 29th of May, 2008 adopted a third document, the ”National Strategic Response to Drugs 2008-2012”. The ”Action Plan for 2008/2009”, is the integral part of this document with specified details concerning the goals, actors and methods.

As basic concept for the general strategic framework the so called “Policy of Four Pillars” was chosen which provides for equal distribution of both resources and development plans in four broad areas: drug abuse prevention; treatment and rehabilitation of drug users; reduction of damages resulting from the use of drugs; and, finally, adequate police and customs response. In addition to the four areas, the ”National Strategic response to drugs in 2008-2012” has been designed to include the two most general principles, which are also among the general goals: ”reduction in drug demand” as well as ”reduction in drug supply”. The implementation of the strategy is regulated by periodically adopted action plans.

7. REPORT ON THE DRUG SITUATION IN SERBIA

The second meeting of the Belgrade Mini Dublin group for the year 2010 took place, due to administrative reasons, on January 12th, 2011 with representatives of 15 Dublin Group countries and representatives of the EU Delegation and UNODC.

Guest Speaker: Mr Ivan Brandić, Head of Department for Drugs Smuggling Suppression, Service for Combating Organized Crime, Serbian Ministry of the Interior.

This report focuses on new developments and data since the last meeting on April 22nd 2010.

7.1. General developments

With the adoption of the Law on Controlled Psychoactive Substances (so-called Law on Precursors), Serbia has made another important step in the implementation of the National Strategy on Combating Narcotics, thus fulfilling one of the recommendations of the last report of the Mini-Dublin group. Among the outstanding by-laws to this law, the most important one will deal with the destruction of seized drugs, which are currently held in the court and police storages. The by-law will regulate the destruction of narcotics in an environmentally-friendly manner in the ‘Tesla’ power plant in Obrenovac.

As for the National Commission for the fight against Drugs (foreseen for 2010), it has still not been established. However, the representative of the Ministry of the Interior expects the establishment of two separate Commissions in 2011:

1. Commission of experts to deal with the list of controlled drugs,
2. A cross-cutting, inter-ministerial body made up of representatives from the Ministries of Health, Interior, Justice, Finance and four other ministries, to be in charge of the implementation of the Government’s policy on narcotics combating.

Under a project funded by OSCE, last year 7 police officers participated in Train-the-Trainers courses in recognition of drugs and drug users. In 2011, these officers will train other police officers and some officials of the Ministries of Health and Justice. It is expected that this OSCE-funded project will conclude in 2011, and the trained officers – as trainers – will continue with the trainings.

One of the main activities for the Ministry of Interior related to the EU's IPA projects in 2011 will be to draft a national report on the drugs situation in Serbia for EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction).

The narcotics combating capacity of the Ministry of Interior, at both the levels of HQ and local police is expected to be enhanced in 2011. Both the number of specialized staff and designated field directorates will be increased in 2011.

7.2. Situation in Serbia

7.2.1. General trends

According to the information given by the guest speaker from the Serbian Ministry of the Interior (MoI), the following trends can be observed:

- Less smuggling of heroin through Serbia
- Continued activity of Serbian criminal groups in cocaine smuggling from Latin America
- Strong cooperation of criminal groups from the whole region, regardless of ethnic background and tensions on a political level

7.2.2. Overview

4,000 drug-related criminal offences were perpetrated and around 3,000 persons were arrested in Serbia in the first ten months of 2010. A great deal of intelligence was exchanged with police forces in other countries, based on which seizures were made possible in those countries.

Confiscated drugs	2008	2009	2010 (January-October)
Heroin	208 kg	169 kg	232 kg
Cocaine	15,1 kg	19,2 kg	7 kg
Marihuana	1,478 kg	1,083 kg	900 kg
Hashish	1,2 kg	16 kg	N/A
Ecstasy	0,2 kg	5,4 kg	24 kg *
Amphetamines	17 kg	7,1 kg	
Total amount seized	1,744 kg	1,322 kg	1,163 kg

* Total amount of synthetic drugs

Heroin: according to Mr Brandic from the Serbian MoI, the trend of a reduction of seizures of heroin has continued (even though the statistics by the Serbian Ministry of the Interior show an increase in amount seized, see below). The number of organized-crime groups in Serbia involved in heroin trafficking apparently went down in 2010. According to Brandic, this was due to the fact that the smuggling route for heroin from Turkey had shifted from Serbia to Bulgaria and Romania since the accession of the latter to the EU. Furthermore, some smuggling groups are increasingly turning to Kosovo, where they get the drugs from Bulgaria via Macedonia. Serbian criminal groups deliver heroin mainly to the Scandinavian countries, UK, Germany and Austria.

Cocaine: another trend which continued is the strong involvement of Serbian criminal groups, including groups from other ex-Yugoslav republics, in Cocaine smuggling from Latin America. Serbian criminal groups are smuggling cocaine directly to EU countries, which means that the substance in most cases doesn't reach Serbian territory. As a consequence of these activities, the Serbian Minister of the Interior Dacic visited Brasil, Argentine and Uruguay in June 2010, where he signed memoranda of understanding with his counterparts in order to reinforce police cooperation between Serbian police and these Latin American countries.

Another visit to Colombia has been made by Serbian Foreign Minister Jeremic, who announced that police cooperation with this country will be intensified, too, and that MoI Dacic probably will visit Colombia soon.

As a consequence of intensified cooperation with Latin America, a number of cocaine seizures in those countries have been made on the basis of intelligence provided by the Serbian police. As for seizures in Serbia, the most typical ways of smuggling are by carriers who swallow the packages, by express mail/post and also increasingly by sending children's clothes dipped in cocaine. According to the Serbian Ministry of the Interior, cooperation between Serbian and Croatian criminal groups is close, so that in case of reinforced controls at the Belgrade airport, smuggling shifts to Zagreb airport, and vice versa.

Synthetic drugs: trafficking and manufacturing synthetic drugs – mainly amphetamine and its precursor benzyl methyl ketone (i.e. 1-Phenyl-2-propanone or P2P) – continued in 2010 in Serbia. Several kitchen labs were uncovered in the border region with Bulgaria. The police continue working on uncovering the clandestine laboratories that manufacture amphetamine. An increase in trafficking of BMK (benzyl methyl ketone) was recorded in 2010. There were no major seizures of ecstasy pills in 2010. Synthetic drugs continue to be popular in Serbia due to the price.

“Skunk” or modified **marihuana** is still extremely popular in Serbia. There were several seizures of skunk manufactured in clandestine laboratories in Vojvodina, Northern Serbia, in 2010. The labs were very well equipped for the manufacture of skunk – marihuana plants were grown in the basement and there were watering equipments, as well as a whole ventilation system with air ducts built in the walls, which means that the manufacturers also worked hand in hand with the construction business. These labs will be subject to asset seizure. Criminal groups from Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina have good cooperation as regards marihuana trafficking. In Serbia, 1 kilo of marihuana costs between one and two thousand euros, whereas in Western Europe, 1 kilo of marihuana of this kind (skunk) costs three thousand euros. There were several cases of seizure of skunk, involving citizens from EU countries, at the Serbian borders to Croatia and Hungary, as well as at the administrative border line with Kosovo, in 2010.

Acetic anhydride: 8.5 tons of AA was seized in Bulgaria based on information that the Serbian police forwarded to the Bulgarian police. The cooperation between the police of the two countries played an important role in the successful carrying out of this police measure.

7.3. Situation regarding Kosovo

The meeting also dealt with aspects related to Kosovo. According to the Mr Brandic from the Serbian Ministry of the Interior, a big part of the north-south route of heroin smuggling had shifted to Kosovo and presence of organized criminality in drugs-trafficking had increased as a whole. The guest speaker from the Serbian MoI openly stated that in 2010, several Serbian criminal groups worked together with Kosovo Albanian criminal groups active in heroin trafficking. Criminal groups would prefer Kosovo because they consider it a black hole as regards investigations/prosecutions (Mr Brandic probably referred especially – without mentioning it - to the area north of the Ibar river). The Serbian Ministry of Interior gets the information on this from Interpol in the framework of BESA project.

Ethnic Albanian carriers take the heroin from Bulgaria via FYROM into Kosovo, from where most of the heroin is further shipped via Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina to Western Europe, while a smaller part goes through Serbia. According to information of Serbian police, some of the allegedly political attacks (e.g. before the recent elections in Kosovo) had in reality a background related to organized crime and drug smuggling.

Upon request from the Chair, the guest speaker from the Serbian MoI also spoke about the question of cooperation with authorities in Kosovo (i.e. Kosovar authorities and Eulex). Mr Brandic admitted that there was no co-operation with Kosovar authorities. Regarding Eulex, Mr Brandic criticised that the Serbian police would be in need of information regarding drug smuggling activities in Kosovo, but Eulex would not provide even the most basic data. Since Eulex was not invited to the meeting, the representative of the EU delegation forwarded this question to Eulex after the meeting. The representative of Eulex rejected the criticism completely, claiming that there had been contacts with the Serbian police on that matter, but never any formal request for information from the Serbian side. He also stated that Eulex was willing to provide this information, as far as it is available.

7.4. Policy Recommendations

The members of the Dublin group commend Serbia for progress which has been made, especially regarding the implementation of the National Action Plan and regarding cooperation with police authorities in other countries of the region and Latin America. However, further steps seem necessary, especially regarding the cooperation with Kosovo.

Serbian (and Kosovo) police authorities must find ways to establish effective cooperation

Despite the signing of the co-operation protocol with Eulex, there still is a clear lack of concrete cooperation with the Kosovar authorities. The members of the Dublin group therefore encourage the Serbian police authorities to actively seek information and cooperation through Eulex.

The National Action Plan for combating drug trafficking and abuse should be further implemented

The members of the Dublin group encourage the Serbian side to adopt the by-laws to the Law on Drugs and establish the Commissions against Drug Trafficking and Abuse as soon as possible.
