emcdda

Minutes

Meeting	**55th meeting of the Scientific Committee**
Date	**20–21 April 2022**
Venue	**EMCDDA (meeting room 107) and VC**
Present	**See participants list (Annex 1)**

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Chair, Catherine Comiskey, opened the 55th Scientific Committee meeting and welcomed the Committee members, the spokesperson of the Reitox network (Mateja Jandl) and the EMCDDA staff present. Henri Bergeron, Fabrizio Faggiano, Margarida Gaspar de Matos, Marieke Liem, Tomi Lintonen, as well as the Chair of the Management Board (Franz Pietsch), and the Director of the EMCDDA (Alexis Goosdeel) attended the meeting online.

The agenda (Annex 2) ([1]) was unanimously adopted with an adjusted order of items, as the meeting started with the address by the Chair of the Management Board (previously item 3 of the draft agenda).

2. Address by the Chair of the Management Board

The newly elected Chair of the Management Board, Franz Pietsch, thanked the Scientific Committee for the invitation to attend its 55th meeting and acknowledged the active role and support given by the Committee regarding the EMCDDA's core business and tasks, including its significant contribution to the Lisbon Addictions conferences.

The Chair highlighted the relevance of the Scientific Committee's work and its role as guardian of the Agency's scientific integrity and excellence while assisting the Management Board and the Director. He mentioned his willingness to continue with the annual meeting to exchange with the Chair of the Scientific Committee, the spokesperson of the Reitox network and the Director of the EMCDDA.

Mr Pietsch also shared his thoughts on the current challenges for the Scientific Committee, in the framework of the procedure launched by the European Commission (EC) to discuss a *Proposal for a Regulation on the European Union Drugs Agency* (Annex 5). He mentioned in particular the insight contained in the Committee's position paper on the topic of *Extending the EMCDDA´s monitoring and reporting framework to cover the substance misuse topic and its consequences for European policies and responses in a more holistic manner* (see item 5 and Annex 6).

The Chair thanked Mr Pietsch for his address and emphasised that she and the entire Committee are looking forward to continuing the close collaboration with the Management Board.

([1]) All meeting documents and presentations referred to in these minutes are available on the Scientific Committee extranet

3. Feedback from the Chair on relevant meetings

The Chair provided feedback on the 64th Management Board meeting she attended in December 2021 (see Annex 3).

4. Welcome by the Director and relevant updates

The EMCDDA Director, Alexis Goosdeel, joined the meeting online and welcomed all the attendees. He provided information on ongoing activities following the last Management Board meeting, including the implementation of the 2022-24 Single Programming document; the adoption of the New Business Model (Annex 4), and; support for the procedure launched by the EC to discuss a *Proposal for a Regulation on the European Union Drugs Agency* (Annex 5).

The Director then presented his views on the EMCDDA's future needs, highlighting the main strategic areas concerned and, in this framework, thanked the Scientific Committee for its position paper on the topic of *Extending the EMCDDA´s monitoring and reporting framework to cover the substance misuse topic and its consequences for European policies and responses in a more holistic manner* (see item 5 and Annex 6).

5. EMCDDA current work on polydrug use

The Scientific Director, Paul Griffiths, updated the Scientific Committee on the EMCDDA's current work on polydrug use (Annex 7). He emphasised the importance of this topic in the framework of the EMCDDA's current regulation but also in relation to the procedure launched by the EC to discuss a *Proposal for a Regulation on the European Union Drugs Agency* (Annex 5). He highlighted challenges faced while working on the topic, and the steps needed to better monitor, understand and report the implications of polydrug use for public health policies and responses.

Mr Griffiths also thanked the Scientific Committee members for their position paper on *Extending the EMCDDA´s monitoring and reporting framework to cover the substance misuse topic and its consequences for European policies and responses in a more holistic manner* (Annex 6) and emphasised its usefulness towards providing a more holistic definition of the area.

An exchange of views then took place around possible approaches to study and monitor polydrug use.

6. Single Programming Document (SPD) 2023-25

The Scientific Director, Paul Griffiths, outlined the main aspects of the SPD 2023-25 (Annex 8). In his presentation (Annex 12) he emphasised the role played by the Scientific Committee in providing its formal opinion on the document, and the importance of balanced, focused and strategic contributions. He also mentioned that the procedure launched by the EC to discuss a *Proposal for a Regulation on the European Union Drugs Agency* (Annex 6) also has to be considered during this transition period.

The members of the Scientific Committee expressed their full support to the EMCDDA, highlighted the benefits of adopting a foresight approach for this document and offered to provide guidance, where relevant and whenever needed.

The Committee members then split into two groups (Annex 11) covering the two main areas in the draft SPD 2023-25: 'Health' and 'Security and Safety' (including the Early Warning System on new psychoactive substances) for more in-depth discussions.

The 'Health' breakout session was facilitated by the Head of the Support to Policy sector, Liesbeth Vandam, representing the Public Health unit. Marica Ferri, Head of the Support to Practice sector, and André Noor, Head of the Trends and Analysis sector, also joined the session. The rapporteurs for this session were Marie Jauffret-Roustide and Marta Torrens.

The group discussed the following points:

- Preparedness and foresight to increase flexibility and cope with uncertainty
- Prevention, e-learning, e-health, m-health and evidence-based data for health promotion, prevention, treatment, and harm reduction.
- Different cannabis policy models and cannabis regulation in Europe, including low THC products.
- Inclusion of people with lived experience, their families and peer networks in developing guidelines and training curricula.
- Underlying lack of resources and methodological issues for data collection and analysis, including in the Reitox network.
- Addressing Sustainable Development Goals in a wider way by looking at drug use consequences and looking at variables such as gender, ageing, domestic violence, mental health (comorbidity), among others.
- New trends on medical use of psychoactive substances to treat mental health problems that need to be monitored.

The Security and Safety breakout session was facilitated by the head of the Drug Markets and Crime sector, Andrew Cunningham, representing the Risks to Public Safety and Security unit. The rapporteur for this session was Kim Moeller.

The group discussed the following points:

- Improvement of core monitoring of the security and safety area: monitoring of market issues, homicides, cannabis manufacturing sites and geolocation data.
- The EMCDDA's role regarding precursors and their relevance to drug markets.
- Identification of new threats: risk and resilience, scenario building for international crises, production and trafficking routes changes due to disruptive events such as the COVID19 epidemic and the war in Ukraine, fentanyl and crack cocaine use in Europe.

After the breakout sessions, members returned to the plenary, where the rapporteurs from each breakout session shared their respective feedback.

On the basis of the inputs provided, a draft formal opinion on the EMCDDA SPD 2023-25 will be prepared and circulated for discussion and adoption by written procedure. The Scientific Committee's formal opinion on the EMCDDA SPD 2023-25 will be forwarded to the Management Board in November 2022.

7. Lisbon Addictions 2022

Maria Moreira gave feedback on the preparations for the Lisbon Addictions 2022 conference. She informed the Scientific Committee that a high number of submissions had been received, reflecting the success of the call. She introduced the co-producers that are leading the different tracks alongside the EMCDDA, and shared information on the organisation process. She presented a draft programme showing the plenary and major co-produced sessions (Annex 13). She ended her intervention by thanking the Scientific Committee members for their efforts during the review process. The first draft programme should be available around September 2022.

8. Contribution of the Scientific Committee to the Annual Dialogue on Research

Maria Moreira highlighted the importance of the Scientific Committee's contribution to the Annual Dialogue on Research (ADR) of the Horizontal Drugs Group and presented a proposal for the Committee to pilot an approach to identify drug-related future research priorities based on the EMCDDA's Future's exercise 2030 (Annex 14). This may bring added value to the Scientific

Committee's input to the ADR and prepare the EMCDDA to deal with future challenges highlighted by the Chair of the Management Board and the Director (see agenda items 2 and 4).

The Scientific Committee approved their participation in this pilot project.

9. Short update on 2022 activities from Scientific units and the Communication unit

Marica Ferri, Head of the Support to Practice Sector, updated the Scientific Committee members on the 2022 activities of the Public Health unit (Annex 15).

Andrew Cunningham, Head of the Drug Markets and Crime sector, updated the Scientific Committee members on the activities of the Security and Safety unit. He highlighted the proposal for control measures made by the European Commission on 3-Methylmethcathinone (3-MMC) and -Chloromethcathinone (3-CMC), the last substances for which the Scientific Committee assessed the risks in 2021; as well as the Early Warning System's last reports on new benzodiazepines and synthetic cannabinoids. He then proceeded to update on the markets and crime area, focusing on the reconceptualisation of the EU Drug Markets Report, the development of darknet drug dashboards, and precursors data collection and analysis.

Rosemary Martin de Sousa, Head of the Communication unit, updated the Scientific Committee members on the recent and upcoming EMCDDA publications and outputs (Annex 16), including the main launch dates and a list of upcoming products, with a focus on the launches of two EMCDDA flagship products: the modules of the European Drug Markets Report (Cocaine and Methamphetamine) and the European Drug Report.

10. Follow-up points

10.1. End of current Scientific Committee mandate

Maria Moreira reminded the Scientific Committee that its current mandate will end on 31 December 2022. Members are kindly requested to go back to Maria Moreira by 25 April 2022, indicating if they are available for their mandate to be renewed for an additional three years. The Management Board will decide on this at its next meeting in June 2022.

10.2. Scientific Committee extranet

Maria Moreira informed the members of the Scientific Committee that two-factor authentication will soon be mandatory to access EMCDDA platforms. She encouraged Scientific Committee members to access their new extranet by following the guidance already provided to them and to reach out for technical support, if needed.

11. Any other business (AOB)

The date for the 56th meeting of the Scientific Committee remains as it was previously agreed (12-14 October 2022).

12. Closing of the meeting

The Chair thanked the members of the Scientific Committee and the EMCDDA staff and closed the meeting.

Annexes

Annex 1 – List of participants (SciCom/01.4/55)

Annex 2 – Agenda (SciCom/01.1/55)

Annex 3 – Adopted minutes of the sixty-fourth meeting of the Management Board (16–17 December 2021) (SciCom/02.1/55)

Annex 4 – Presentation on the New Business Model of the EMCDDA (Alexis Goosdeel) (SciCom/04.1/55)

Annex 5 – EC proposal for a regulation on the European Union Drugs Agency (SciCom/04.2/55)

Annex 6 – Extending the EMCDDA´s monitoring and reporting framework to cover the substance misuse topic and its consequences for European policies and responses in a more holistic manner (SciCom/05.1/55)

Annex 7 – Presentation on the EMCDDA's current work on polydrug use (Paul Griffiths) (SciCom/05.2/55)

Annex 8 – Consultation version of the EMCDDA Single Programming Document 2023-25 (SciCom/06.1/55)

Annex 9 – Early input sent by members of the Scientific Committee (SciCom/06.2/55)

Annex 10 – Formal opinion on the 2022-24 Single Programming Document (for information) (SciCom/06.3/55)

Annex 11 – Composition of groups for the break-out sessions (SciCom/06.4/55)

Annex 12 – Presentation on the Single Programming Document 2023-25 (Paul Griffiths) (SciCom/06.5/55)

Annex 13 – Presentation on Lisbon Addictions (Maria Moreira) (SciCom/07.1/55)

Annex 14 – Presentation on pilot project: 'Identification of drug-related research priorities' (Maria Moreira) (SciCom/08.1/55)

Annex 15 – Presentation on updates of the Public Health Unit (Marica Ferri) (SciCom/09.1/55)

Annex 16 – Presentation on updates of the Communication Unit (Rosemary Martin de Sousa) (SciCom/09.2/55)