

trans-shipping area for chemicals scheduled under the 1988 Convention, the Government of that country is also encouraged to use the PEN Online system without further delay and to introduce controls over pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine.

683. The Board also notes that there are no comprehensive activities aimed at identifying the drug abuse situation in the United Arab Emirates. The Board recommends that the Government take specific measures to collect data on the extent and nature of the drug problem in the country.

684. The Board appreciates the will of the Government of the United Arab Emirates to fight drug abuse and trafficking, and it notes in particular the progress achieved by the Government in the implementation of some of the recommendations made by the Board after its 1995 mission to that country. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts to strengthen drug control.

## **D. Europe**

### **1. Major developments**

685. Cannabis is the most widely abused drug in Europe. According to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, about 71 million people aged 15-64 years have tried cannabis in their lifetime and about 7 per cent have used it in the past year.

686. Europe remains the second largest market for cocaine in the world. Large consignments of the drug from South America are smuggled into Europe by sea, often through West African countries (see paragraphs 242-246 and 321-326 above). The smuggling of cocaine through Eastern European countries has significantly increased in the past few years. The total amount of cocaine seized in Eastern Europe increased dramatically in 2007, primarily as a result of one major seizure of 480 kg made by customs officers in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The increasing number of shipments of cocaine from South America to countries in Eastern Europe is part of a new development in cocaine trafficking: more and more cocaine arriving in Western Europe is transported to Eastern Europe and then transported back to illicit markets in Western Europe

via the Balkan route, the route traditionally used for trafficking in opiates.

687. The heroin available on illicit markets in Europe originates in Afghanistan and has been smuggled into Europe along one of two major routes: the Balkan route; or the so-called "silk route", via Central Asia into the Russian Federation and from there to countries in Europe. The Balkan route continues to be the main route used for smuggling heroin into Eastern Europe and onwards to Western Europe. The so-called northern Balkan route, passing through Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and then Austria, was used more frequently in 2007, as evidenced by the more than 2.5 tons of heroin seized on that route. The so-called southern Balkan route, leading through Greece, Albania and then the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to Italy, appears to have been used less often for drug trafficking in 2007 than in previous years.

688. Europe remains the region with the second largest illicit market for opiates. In Eastern Europe, the illicit market for opiates has continued to expand. According to UNODC estimates, there are about 2 million abusers of opiates in Eastern Europe. The abuse of opiates remained stable or declined in Central Europe and Western Europe but was reportedly increasing in the Russian Federation and other countries in Eastern Europe, as well as in countries in South-Eastern Europe along the Balkan route. It appears that the abuse of heroin has become more widespread among younger drug abusers in Western Europe.

689. Treatment for heroin abuse in residential facilities, formerly the predominant treatment for such abuse in many European countries, is less common today. Most treatment for drug abusers takes place on an outpatient basis. The enlargement of outpatient treatment networks has continued in recent years in Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Lithuania and Romania. About 53 per cent of the outpatient treatment clients are treated for the abuse of opiates and the rest are treated for the abuse of other drugs, in particular cannabis (22 per cent) and cocaine (16 per cent). The number of people seeking treatment for the abuse of drugs, in particular opiates, is higher in Eastern Europe than in Western Europe.

690. The illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs in Central Europe and Eastern Europe continued to rise. According to UNODC, in 2006 the largest number of

dismantled laboratories illicitly manufacturing amphetamine was reported by the Russian Federation, accounting for 57 per cent of all the illicit drug laboratories dismantled in Europe. The majority of the laboratories illicitly manufacturing methamphetamines in the region were uncovered in the Czech Republic. Several other Eastern European countries, including Bulgaria, Lithuania, the Republic of Moldova,<sup>84</sup> Slovakia and Ukraine, also reported having dismantled laboratories that had been illicitly manufacturing synthetic drugs.

691. The subregions of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe continued to be used as transit areas for consignments of acetic anhydride destined for Afghanistan, where it is used in the illicit manufacture of heroin. It is estimated that almost 80 per cent of the acetic anhydride required for illicit laboratories in Afghanistan is smuggled through countries in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe (see paragraphs 157-158 and 230-231 above). The Board encourages Governments to fully implement Security Council resolution 1817 (2008) in which the Council called on all Member States to increase cooperation in order to counter illicit drug production and trafficking in Afghanistan, including by strengthening the monitoring of the international trade in precursor chemicals, notably acetic anhydride.

## 2. Regional cooperation

692. The Paris Pact expert round table for the Black Sea area was held in Bucharest from 9 to 11 July 2008. Participants in the round table discussed ways and means of actively supporting and utilizing existing communication and information networks (such as INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, Europol, MAR-Info (the maritime traffic information system), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, GUAM and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative Center) to achieve maximum law enforcement coverage of the routes used for trafficking in opiates originating in Afghanistan. The round table requested UNODC and other international entities to continue providing to law enforcement operations technical assistance utilizing the expertise and instruments already available.

<sup>84</sup> Since 9 September 2008, "Republic of Moldova" has replaced "Moldova" as the short name used in the United Nations.

693. In September 2008, the European Commission proposed a new European Union Drugs Action Plan for 2009-2012, in which the following priorities are identified: (a) reducing the demand for drugs and raising public awareness; (b) mobilizing European citizens to play an active part; (c) reducing the supply of drugs; (d) improving international cooperation; and (e) improving the understanding of the problem. Following discussion with European Union member States, the European Council is expected to endorse the Action Plan by December 2008.

694. Building on the success of the series of operations known as "Operation Channel" conducted since 2004, CSTO and the Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation carried out the second stage of operation Channel 2007 in November and December 2007, with the participation of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The goal of the operation was to build a system of enhanced collective security to prevent trafficking in drugs from Afghanistan. During the operation, new drug trafficking routes leading from Central Asia to CSTO member States and to Europe were detected. Representatives of law enforcement agencies of Azerbaijan, China, Estonia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Latvia, Lithuania, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the United States and Uzbekistan participated in the operation as observers. The operation resulted in the seizure of 27,815 kg of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals, including 1,157 kg of heroin, 8,573 kg of opium, 6,196 kg of cannabis resin, 5,567 kg of cannabis herb, 709 kg of poppy straw, 15 kg of cocaine and 35 kg of synthetic drugs, as well as over 2 tons of precursor chemicals.

695. In Bulgaria, a new regional office of the European Cities against Drugs (ECAD) was opened in late 2007 in the city of Burgas. The aim of the office is to assist the member cities in the Balkan area in exchanging information and best practices regarding drug abuse prevention.

696. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the fifth Regional Conference of the ECAD Balkan network entitled "Local community in fight against drug abuse" was held in Sarajevo on 15 and 16 November 2007. Participating in the conference were officials from eight countries in the Balkan area, as well as national and international experts in scientific areas and in the

areas of social policy and law enforcement. The conference adopted a declaration in which it called for improved coordination between local authorities in drug abuse prevention, the treatment of addiction and the civil sector.

697. The Board welcomes the holding of the Synthetic Drug Enforcement Conference in Nunspeet, the Netherlands, from 28 to 30 November 2007. The conference was hosted by the Government of the Netherlands. Represented at the conference were Australia, Belgium, China, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Romania, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. Europol and the European Commission were also represented at the conference.

698. The Board welcomes the activities of Experience and Mutual Assistance (EXASS Net), a European network of partnerships between stakeholders at the frontline level responding to drug problems, providing experience and assistance for intersectoral cooperation. EXASS Net is part of activities of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe. The third meeting of EXASS Net, held in Frankfurt, Germany, in May 2008, included visits to various institutions in the Frankfurt system for providing assistance to drug abusers, such as a heroin distribution clinic, a methadone clinic and a crisis centre.

### **3. National legislation, policy and action**

699. The Board is concerned that the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina has still not established a body at the national level to coordinate the fight against illicit drugs, pursuant to the Law on Prevention and Suppression of the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs, which entered into force in 2006. The law calls for the creation of a national inter-ministerial committee and a national agency to develop, oversee and coordinate the national drug control strategy. The Board urges the Government to take the necessary measures without further delay to ensure that the inter-ministerial committee and the national agency are established and functioning properly and that the national drug control strategy is developed and implemented.

700. In the Netherlands a ban on tobacco smoking in the catering industry went into effect in July 2008. The ban also affects the so-called “coffee shops”, where the sale and abuse of cannabis is tolerated, but not the smoking of tobacco. The Government of the

Netherlands has informed the Board that the “coffee shops” are being provided with information for visitors about the risks of cannabis use and about ways to obtain help when cannabis use becomes a problem.

701. The Board notes that the Home Secretary of the United Kingdom has recommended that cannabis should be reclassified, which would mean that cases involving cannabis would be subject to stricter law enforcement and harsher penalties. The decision reflects the fact that highly potent forms of cannabis (such as “skunk”) have become dominant in the illicit drug market of the United Kingdom. If approved by Parliament, reclassification would take effect from early 2009. In addition, the first edition of the new drug strategy of the United Kingdom was released in February 2008. While maintaining a single focus on illicit drugs, the new strategy places more emphasis than the previous 10-year strategy on families and communities. Priority will be given to providing effective treatment for those who are causing the most harm to community and family members, such as parents whose drug use may be putting their children at risk.

702. In Ukraine, a new law on drug trafficking and abuse entered into force in January 2008. The new law defines the structure of legislation, principles of Government policies, general regulations on the control and distribution of licit drugs. In addition, the new legislation regulates a wide range of items, such as licensing requirements, lists of substances used in veterinary practice, the maximum allowed substance content in doses of medication, the quality of drugs crossing borders, manufacturing methods, the use of equipment, transport and the required documentation. The new law is expected to strengthen further control of the movement of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors within the country.

703. In November 2007, the Government of Finland adopted a resolution on cooperation regarding national drug policy for the period 2008-2011, which outlines measures the Government intends to undertake to address drug abuse. The measures are related to preventive work and early intervention; combating drug-related crime; the treatment of drug addiction and the “reduction of harm” from drug abuse; and intensifying the treatment of drug abuse in connection with criminal sanctions.

704. In France, a new Government plan for fighting illicit drugs and addiction was adopted in July 2008. The plan includes an outline of the priorities of the Government for the period 2008-2011. The current plan is based on the evaluation of the previous plan (covering the period 2004-2008) and is comprised of 193 measures: 38 measures on prevention and communication, 41 on law enforcement, 69 on treatment and reduction of risks associated with drug abuse, 30 on training and research and 15 at the international level. A total of 87.5 million euros will be required to implement the plan over the four-year period 2008-2011.

705. In January 2008, the Government of Italy adopted a new action plan on drugs that covers five areas: coordination; demand reduction; supply reduction; international cooperation and information; and training, research and evaluation. The plan includes 66 measures to be implemented in 2008 and will be followed by a plan for the four-year period 2009-2012.

706. In the Republic of Moldova, the national plan of action to prevent drug abuse and drug smuggling in the period 2007-2009 was adopted. The plan covers activities under the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Health. In addition, the Penal Code, the Penal Procedural Code and the Code on Administrative (Minor) Offences have been amended by the Parliament to include judicial measures against drug trafficking and abuse, in conformity with the provisions of the 1988 Convention.

707. The Board welcomes the publication of the European Commission Eurobarometer survey on attitudes and perceptions about drug issues, involving more than 12,000 persons aged 15-24 in the European Union member States. The survey, published in May 2008, shows, inter alia, that while more than 80 per cent of young people recognize the health risks associated with the use of heroin, cocaine and "ecstasy", only 40 per cent of young people recognized the health risks associated with cannabis use. In the Czech Republic, young people believe that tobacco and alcohol use pose a slightly higher risk than cannabis use.

708. The Board welcomes the publication of the *Home Office Cannabis Potency Study 2008*<sup>85</sup> in the United Kingdom in May 2008, which provides important information about the market share of different types of cannabis available and their potencies. The study shows that the share of all drug seizures accounted for by cannabis herb seizures has increased markedly in recent years. Most of the cannabis seized on the street by law enforcement authorities is cannabis herb. There appears to have been a decline in the prevalence of cannabis resin.

709. The Board notes that in the evaluation of a project to establish a "drug injection room" in Norway it is stated that there is no evidence that the scheme has resulted in a reduction in drug overdose rates or fatalities. Also mentioned in the evaluation are important issues such as the fact that the drug injection room may contribute to the perpetuation of drug abuse and that health authorities might be perceived as condoning drug use. The Government has decided that the temporary act relating to a trial scheme for drug consumption rooms will remain in force until December 2009. The Board urges all Governments to refrain from establishing "drug consumption rooms" and to pursue alternative ways to increase access to health and social services, including services for the treatment of drug abusers.

710. The Board notes the results of a new survey on the prevalence of drug abuse in Ireland and in Northern Ireland (in the United Kingdom), published in 2008. The survey shows that the proportion of adults (persons aged 15-64 years) who reported having used an illicit drug in their lifetime increased from 19 per cent in the period 2002-2003 to 24 per cent in the period 2006-2007. The proportion of young adults (persons aged 15-34 years) who reported having used an illicit drug in their lifetime also increased by 5 per cent, from 26 per cent in the period 2002-2003 to 31 per cent in the period 2006-2007. More men than women reported having used an illicit drug in their lifetime. The prevalence of use at least once in a lifetime, as well as use in the past month, increased for both cannabis and cocaine.

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<sup>85</sup> Sheila Hardwick and Leslie King, *Home Office Cannabis Potency Study 2008* (Sandridge, St. Albans, Home Office, 2008).

711. In the Netherlands, a new policy document entitled “Follow-up strategy on synthetic drugs from 2007” has been adopted by the Government. The policy document calls for, among other things, the continuation of a drug abuse prevention project entitled “Nightlife and drugs”, coordinated at the national level by the Netherlands Institute of Mental Health and Addiction (Trimbos Instituut). The project targets clubbers and nightlife districts: a group of people and a type of district both known for the large-scale use of synthetic drugs. The project aims to limit the risks of drug use among clubbers by working with local authorities and “nightspots”.

712. In July 2008, a task force aimed at reducing the large-scale cultivation of cannabis was launched in the Netherlands. The objective of the task force is to set up a programme that will achieve by 2011 a measurable reduction in the large-scale cultivation of cannabis in the Netherlands. In addition, the task force is to provide more information about the criminal organizations behind the illicit cultivation of cannabis, their operating procedures and their profits. The establishment of the task force was announced in the policy programme on strengthening the approach to organized crime that was submitted to the parliament in December 2007.

713. The Government of Belarus and UNODC signed a memorandum of understanding on drug control and crime prevention in January 2008. The agreement sets out strategic areas of cooperation in fighting international crime and trafficking in illicit drugs and establishes a basis for the expansion of UNODC activities in Belarus.

#### **4. Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse**

##### *Narcotic drugs*

714. The illicit cultivation of cannabis continues to be reported in many countries in Western Europe, such as Germany, where large-scale cannabis cultivation areas have been seized. In Eastern and Central Europe, most of the cannabis herb originates in Albania, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine. Reports from Albania indicate that cannabis plants are being cultivated on public land. Europe is the region with the largest illicit market for cannabis resin. The amount of cannabis resin seized in Europe increased in

2007 after having declined in 2006. In 2007, as in the previous year, more cannabis resin was seized in Spain than in any other country in the world. A large amount of cannabis resin was also seized in Belgium, France and Portugal.

715. Cannabis continues to be the most widely abused drug in Europe. In European countries, lifetime prevalence of cannabis abuse ranges from 2 to 37 per cent, the lowest rates being in Bulgaria, Malta and Romania and the highest rates being in Denmark, France, Italy and the United Kingdom. The prevalence of cannabis abuse in the past year is about 7 per cent among European adults (persons aged 15-64). National estimates of the prevalence of cannabis abuse in the past year range from 1 to 11 per cent, the lowest rates being in (listed in ascending order) Bulgaria, Greece and Malta and the highest rates being in (listed in ascending order) the Czech Republic, Spain and Italy. The prevalence of cannabis abuse is disproportionately high among young people. Lifetime prevalence of cannabis abuse among schoolchildren aged 15-16 is highest in (listed in ascending order) Belgium, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Spain, France and the United Kingdom, where the rate ranges from 30 to 44 per cent and is lowest in (listed in ascending order) Norway, Sweden, Romania, Cyprus and Greece, where the rate is less than 10 per cent.

716. There are indications that the abuse of cannabis is stabilizing or declining at a fairly high level. In the United Kingdom, the prevalence of cannabis abuse among pupils in England decreased significantly between 2001 (13.4 per cent) and 2007 (9.4 per cent). Between 2004 and 2007, lifetime prevalence of cannabis abuse fell in Germany as well; however, the number of cannabis abusers was estimated at 600,000 in 2007, a significant increase compared with the 1997 figure. In France, about 1.2 million persons abuse cannabis on a regular basis (at least 10 times a month).

717. In Europe, the total amount of cocaine seized continues to be high. Europe’s share of global cocaine seizures rose from less than 3 per cent in 1980 to 17 per cent in 2006. It is likely that less cocaine will be reported to have been seized in 2007, as Portugal, one of the main gateways for cocaine entering Europe, has reported a significant decrease in cocaine seizures. Similarly, effective action taken to prevent the use of couriers in cocaine trafficking at the international airport at Amsterdam, once a major gateway for

cocaine entering the region, has resulted in fewer seizures of that substance. According to the Government of the Netherlands, 9,084 kg of cocaine were seized by customs authorities in 2006. In 2007, a single seizure of 480 kg of cocaine originating in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was made in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Another large seizure of 118 kg of cocaine from Colombia was made by Polish customs authorities. The increased number of shipments of cocaine from South America to countries in Eastern Europe in recent years is part of a new development: cocaine arriving in Western Europe is increasingly being smuggled into Eastern Europe and then back into Western Europe via the Balkan route.

718. Cocaine abuse has become more prevalent in some parts of Western Europe. Lifetime prevalence of cocaine in France is 2.6 per cent among the adult population (persons aged 15-64) and has more than doubled over the past 10 years. Lifetime prevalence of cocaine abuse is highest (4.1 per cent) among young adults (persons aged 25-34). Annual prevalence of cocaine abuse tripled between 2000 and 2005 among the general population: the number of people who abuse cocaine is currently estimated at 250,000. In Spain, however, results of a national survey of drug abuse among students show that the lifetime, annual and monthly prevalence of cocaine abuse among students in secondary schools has decreased significantly.

719. Almost all the heroin available on the illicit drug markets in Europe originates in Afghanistan. The traditional (northern) Balkan route, passing through Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and then Austria, was used more frequently in 2007, as evidenced by the fact that more than 2.5 tons of heroin were seized on that route. The alternative (southern) Balkan route, leading through Greece, Albania, and then the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to Italy, appears to have been used less often for drug trafficking in 2007 than in previous years. With opium production shifting towards the southern provinces of Afghanistan, it has become less convenient for traffickers to ship opiates via the so-called "silk route"; therefore, drug trafficking along that route has declined. In 2007, less than 1 ton of heroin was identified as having been smuggled into Europe on the "silk route"; that represents a decrease compared with the amounts seized in previous years. Train connections between the Russian Federation and its western neighbouring

countries Belarus, Poland and Ukraine are increasingly being used for smuggling heroin into Western Europe. Reports indicate that heroin is increasingly being trafficked by air from countries in Eastern and Central Europe to countries in Western Europe.

720. In Europe, major seizures of heroin were reported in Bulgaria (more than 1 ton), the Russian Federation (934 kg) and Serbia (225 kg). An increase in heroin seizures was reported in some countries in Western Europe such as Germany and Spain.

721. Most of the laboratories illicitly producing opiates continue to be located in Eastern Europe. According to the Government of the Russian Federation, of the 3,717 laboratories illicitly producing and processing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances dismantled in that country in 2006, 186 were used for the illicit production of acetylated opium from limited quantities of locally produced poppy straw. In Moldova,<sup>86</sup> 112 laboratories illicitly producing opiates were dismantled in 2006.

722. For several years, the abuse of heroin and other opiates has been stagnant or declining in Western Europe. In Italy, for example, heroin abuse has continually declined since 2001. However, it now appears that heroin abuse could become more widespread. In the Netherlands, the lifetime prevalence of heroin abuse increased between 1997 and 2005, indicating greater interest in experimenting with the drug. In France, the abuse of heroin has begun to emerge among younger and more socially integrated segments of the population. The methods used for heroin abuse tend to vary: sniffing is more common and polydrug abuse is very frequent. Increasing trivialization of the consequences of heroin abuse appears to play a part in the abuse as the real dangers of the drug are poorly understood. Rising levels of abuse of opiates have been reported in countries in Eastern Europe, particularly in CIS member States and in countries in South-Eastern Europe along the Balkan route. According to UNODC, the number of people in Eastern Europe who abuse opiates is estimated to be about 2 million, or about 1.4 per cent of the population aged 15-64.

<sup>86</sup> Since 9 September 2008, "Republic of Moldova" has replaced "Moldova" as the short name used in the United Nations.

723. According to the Government of the Russian Federation, in 2007 the number of persons newly registered for drug abuse treatment was 37,560; 87.7 per cent of the total number of patients were registered for treatment for the abuse of opiates. In 2007, of the total number of patients in treatment for drug abuse, 11.9 per cent were infected with HIV, a slight increase compared with the figure for 2006 (11.8 per cent). Drug abuse by injection continues to be the main route of transmission of HIV infection in the Russian Federation.

724. The Russian Federation is the largest illicit market for opiates in Europe. According to the UNODC *World Drug Report 2008*, as many as 1.65 million people in the Russian Federation abuse opiates.<sup>87</sup> The second largest illicit market for opiates in Eastern Europe is in Ukraine, where more than 300,000 people abuse opiates.

725. The increased drug trafficking and abuse in Eastern Europe in recent years have led to an increase in the spread of HIV/AIDS. According to UNAIDS, nearly three out of four (73.8 per cent) of the registered drug addicts in the Russian Federation abuse drugs by injection, which is also the main mode of HIV transmission in the country. In the Russian Federation, the proportion of persons who abuse drugs by injection among the general population (persons aged 15-44) is estimated at 2 per cent. According to UNAIDS, in 2007 about two thirds (66 per cent) of newly registered HIV cases were attributable to drug abuse by injection.

726. The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ukraine is now more severe than in any other country in Europe: the prevalence of HIV/AIDS infection among the adult population is estimated to be 1.63 per cent. The number of reported cases of HIV infection among persons who abuse drugs by injection has continued to increase in Ukraine in the past few years. The most serious drug abuse problem in Ukraine is the abuse by injection of concentrate of poppy straw (called "shyrka"): it is used by 98 per cent of all persons who abuse drugs by injection. Needle-sharing, a common practice among drug abusers, has contributed to the spread of HIV/AIDS infection. According to estimates of the Government of Ukraine, there are more than 500,000 registered drug abusers in the country,

including about 300,000 persons who abuse opiates by injection.

727. Estonia has the second highest prevalence of HIV infection in Europe: it is estimated that 1.4 per cent of the adult population is infected with HIV. The HIV epidemic in that country is mainly driven by drug abuse by injection, a behaviour that is widespread among the prison population. In 2007, more than 12 per cent of all prison inmates in Estonia were HIV positive.

#### *Psychotropic substances*

728. Western Europe continues to be a major source of amphetamine-type stimulants, particularly MDMA. According to UNODC, Belgium and the Netherlands are the main countries exporting amphetamine and substances in the MDMA group. However, as MDMA is increasingly being illicitly manufactured in other parts of the world, seizures of MDMA in Western Europe have declined. In Western Europe, most seizures of MDMA are reported in France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The main source of methamphetamine illicitly manufactured in Western Europe is the Czech Republic, which also reported the largest number of dismantled laboratories illicitly manufacturing that substance. The United Kingdom has the largest illicit market for amphetamine. However, annual prevalence of amphetamine abuse among the general population (persons aged 16-59) decreased significantly, from 3.2 per cent in 1996 to 1.3 per cent in 2006. Similarly, Sweden has witnessed a significant decrease in amphetamine abuse over the past 20-30 years with the annual prevalence rate at 0.2 per cent, less than half the European average. Past-year prevalence of abuse of MDMA among young adults has remained largely stable over the past five years in the European Union.

#### *Precursors*

729. Countries in Eastern Europe continued to be used as transit areas for consignments of acetic anhydride destined for Afghanistan, where the substance is used in the illicit manufacture of heroin. It is estimated that almost 80 per cent of the precursor chemicals required for illicit drug laboratories in Afghanistan is smuggled through countries in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe.

<sup>87</sup> *World Drug Report 2008 ...*

730. Seizures of precursors of amphetamine in Eastern European countries have increased in the past few years. According to UNODC, in 2006, major seizures of the precursor P-2-P were reported in Poland (1,085 litres), the Russian Federation (402 litres), Estonia (51 litres) and Bulgaria (32 litres).

## 5. Missions

731. A mission of the Board visited Romania in October 2008. The Board notes that there has been some improvement and greater commitment by the Government in its efforts to fulfil the objectives of the international drug control treaties. Progress has been made in the Government's efforts to address the drug problem in the country, and the Government's cooperation with the Board has improved since the 2002 mission of the Board to that country. The Board notes that Romania has taken some steps in recent years to strengthen its drug control efforts, but a number of problems continue to exist in that area.

732. In particular, the Board notes that in Romania the existing mechanism for the monitoring and control of internationally controlled substances is neither sufficient nor functioning adequately. The Board requests the Government to take steps to put in place legislation, as well as to provide resources and trained personnel, to enable all drug regulatory authorities, especially the Ministry of Health, to perform their control functions. Moreover, with regard to efforts by the Government to address the challenge of the smuggling of drugs through its territory, the Board encourages the Government to further strengthen customs and border control activities to prevent such trafficking, for example, through capacity-building and increasing the allocation of resources to such activities.

733. The Board notes that the availability of opioids for the treatment of pain does not appear to meet the requirements of the population in Romania. The Board urges the Government to accurately determine the national medical and/or scientific requirements for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and to take all steps necessary, including the provision of education and training to staff, to ensure that those substances are available for medical purposes.

734. A mission of the Board visited Ukraine in May 2008. The Board notes the commitment of the Government to the objectives of the international drug control conventions. Progress has been made in the

Government's efforts to address the drug problem. Administrative steps have been taken to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the conventions. Ukraine has adopted comprehensive drug control legislation and developed a national drug control strategy. Although a mechanism has been established to coordinate efforts to fight drug trafficking, problems continue to exist, largely because of lack of cooperation among authorities involved in drug control.

735. The transit traffic in heroin and cocaine poses serious drug control problems for Ukraine, particularly with regard to the increasing influence of organized transnational crime on drug trafficking both in and through Ukraine. The Board is of the opinion that that development requires effective inter-ministerial coordination at the policy level, as well as at the operational level. The Board recommends that the Government should clearly define the lines of responsibility between the various law enforcement agencies and improve the coordination of their activities.

736. The intravenous abuse of acetylated opium made of locally produced poppy straw is the most serious drug abuse problem in Ukraine. As needle-sharing is practised among drug abusers, it has contributed to the increase in HIV/AIDS infection in Ukraine. The Board urges the Government to prevent the diversion of poppy straw from farms licensed for cultivating opium poppy. The Board encourages the authorities of Ukraine to develop, if necessary with the help of WHO and UNODC, a consolidated approach towards drug abuse prevention and treatment programmes. Long waiting lists and the increasing rate of HIV/AIDS infection indicate that the treatment programmes presently offered are not sufficient and that the treatment facilities urgently need to be expanded to respond to those problems.

## E. Oceania

### 1. Major developments

737. A recent increase in drug smuggling from Canada to Australia has been noted. Australian law enforcement officials reported having seized cocaine, MDMA and methamphetamine from a sea cargo consignment originating in Canada. Law enforcement