

pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled substances continue to be available without prescription in the country, in pharmacies, other retail outlets and roadside stalls.

Missions

554. In January 2006, a mission of the Board visited Yemen. Yemen has been taking important steps to strengthen its efforts to combat drug trafficking, including by the establishment of the Anti-Narcotics General Directorate, which coordinates all drug control activities in the country. The Board notes with concern, however, that the lack of a proper legal framework and adequate financial resources is hampering drug control activities. The Board therefore urges the Government of Yemen to ensure that the Anti-Narcotics General Directorate is able to carry out its mandate effectively.

555. The smuggling of illicit drugs in and out of Yemen through various ports of entry and the coastline is occurring, but the extent of drug abuse in the country is not known. The Board recommends the authorities to carry out, with the support of WHO, an assessment of the situation in order to be able to plan adequate control and preventive measures.

556. The Board remains concerned about the elevated cultivation of khat and its widespread abuse in Yemen. The Board calls upon the authorities to consider taking appropriate measures to control its cultivation, trade and use and recommends that campaigns be initiated to raise community awareness regarding the addictive nature of khat and its negative impact on society.

D. Europe

Major developments

557. Cannabis continues to be the most commonly abused drug in Europe. The European countries with the highest prevalence for cannabis abuse include the Czech Republic, Denmark, France and the United Kingdom. According to estimates of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), about 20 million people (or 6 per cent of the adult population) in the member States of the European Union and in Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland have tried cannabis once in their lifetime. Among young adults (persons 15-34 years of

age) in Europe the prevalence rate for cannabis abuse has been consistently high.

558. National policies in Europe vary, reflecting the drug abuse situation and political context in individual countries. Many European countries have recently adopted preventive measures to counter widespread abuse of cannabis among youth. Such measures include the provision of information on cannabis abuse through media campaigns, brochures or websites targeting potential drug abusers.

559. Europe has become the second largest illicit market for cocaine in the world. Statistics show that the total amount of cocaine seized in Europe and the number of persons who abuse that drug have increased compared with the previous year. According to the *World Drug Report 2006*⁴⁴ of UNODC, Western and Central Europe account for about one quarter of all cocaine abused worldwide. After opiates and cannabis, cocaine is the drug of abuse most commonly reported by those entering programmes for the treatment of drug abuse in member States of the European Union, as well as in Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. Cocaine abusers account for about 10 per cent of drug abusers admitted for treatment in the European Union. In most European countries, the percentage of drug abusers entering public treatment programmes for cocaine abuse is quite low, the exceptions being the Netherlands and Spain (38 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively, in 2005). The countries in Europe with the highest prevalence rate for cocaine abuse are Spain and the United Kingdom.

560. Europe continues to be one of the main illicit markets in the world for stimulants. Only cannabis is more commonly abused than MDMA ("ecstasy"). The main source of illicitly manufactured ATS in Europe continues to be the Netherlands, followed by Poland, Belgium, Lithuania and Estonia. The illicit manufacture of amphetamines continues to expand throughout Europe. According to EMCDDA, however, the use of ATS in the United Kingdom has continued to fall.

561. The abuse of methamphetamine continues to be reported by the authorities in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine appears to be taking place on a small scale but is growing, the main source countries

⁴⁴ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.06.XI.10.

being the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Moldova and Slovakia.

562. Heroin abuse has remained largely stable or even declined in Western and Central Europe, while the level of abuse of opiates has increased in Eastern Europe, particularly in members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and countries in South-Eastern Europe situated along the Balkan route. According to UNODC, of the 4 million abusers of opiates in Europe, an estimated 3.3 million are heroin abusers. Of the 2.46 million abusers of opiates in Eastern Europe, an estimated 1.7 million, or 1.2 per cent of the population aged 15-64, are heroin abusers.

Regional cooperation

563. In June 2005, the Council of the European Union endorsed the European Union Drugs Action Plan (2005-2008).⁴⁵ The Action Plan covers four priority areas (demand reduction, supply reduction, international cooperation and research and information and evaluation) and lists specific measures to be implemented by the European Union and its member States by the end of 2008. Assessment tools and indicators, as well as responsibility for implementation and deadlines, are clearly indicated for each action. According to the Action Plan, the European Union is to contribute fully to the evaluation of the implementation of the commitments set out by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session, held in 1998.

564. In July 2005, the second German-French working conference hosted by the French and German drug commissioners was held in Strasbourg, France, to discuss the treatment of cannabis abusers and cross-border cooperation to prevent the abuse of cannabis.

565. Germany and Switzerland are currently conducting a bilateral assistance project called "Realize it" to help juvenile cannabis abusers stop using the drug. Germany, together with four other European countries, is also participating in a research project on the treatment of young cannabis abusers.

566. In anticipation of the parliamentary ratification of the bilateral law enforcement cooperation treaties between Belgium and Germany, practical measures, including more stringent cross-border surveillance,

have recently been taken to reduce drug trafficking in border areas.

567. The Second Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking Routes from Afghanistan ("Paris 2 – Moscow 1") was hosted by the Russian Federation, with the support of UNODC, in Moscow from 26 to 28 June 2006. Ministers and heads of delegations attending the conference adopted the Moscow Declaration, which was then circulated in the General Assembly and in the Security Council. The Declaration calls for, inter alia, further support to be provided to the Government of Afghanistan in implementing its National Drug Control Strategy, for improvement of regional measures against trafficking in precursor chemicals, for a more systematic exchange of information and for an extension of the Paris Pact Initiative.

568. Building on the success of the operation Channel 2004, the federal drug control service of the Russian Federation, in cooperation with the competent drug control authorities of member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation and Tajikistan), carried out in October and December 2005 a two-phase operation, Channel 2005, with the participation of the law enforcement authorities of CSTO observer States (Azerbaijan, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ukraine and Uzbekistan). The first phase of the operation Channel 2006 was carried out from 22 to 29 May 2006 with the participation of the law enforcement authorities of observer States, as well as Mongolia and the United States. The second phase, carried out in October 2006, was aimed at the detection and suppression of national and international trafficking in synthetic drugs along routes leading from Europe, the dismantling of clandestine laboratories manufacturing synthetic drugs and the disruption of drug trafficking routes leading from Afghanistan through the territories of the participating countries. Besides the competent drug control authorities of CSTO member States, law enforcement authorities from Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the United States participated in the second phase as observers. The two-phase operation resulted in the seizure of more than 23 tons of narcotic drugs, including approximately 250,000 tablets of synthetic drugs, and more than 165 tons of precursor chemicals. During the operation, several new drug trafficking routes were detected.

⁴⁵ *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 168, 8 July 2005.

569. In December 2005, the NATO-Russia Council agreed on a pilot project for the training of personnel from the drug control agencies of Afghanistan and countries in Central Asia. The project is aimed at improving the capacity of the anti-narcotics agencies of those countries to fight the drug trafficking threat from Afghanistan.

570. GUAM member States Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine participated in the fortieth session of the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East, held in Baku from 12 to 16 September 2005. The resulting Baku Accord on Regional Cooperation against Illicit Drugs and Related Matters: a Vision for the Twenty-first Century (Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/30, annex) will further strengthen cooperation in the region to combat drug trafficking and other forms of crime. The GUAM action plan for 2006 contains a number of actions to be taken by the GUAM member States, in cooperation with the South-East European Cooperative Initiative, to counter terrorism, trafficking in human beings, illegal migration, corruption and drug trafficking. In line with the protocol on cooperation between UNODC and the CIS Executive Committee, signed on 1 July 2005, an international law enforcement cooperation seminar was jointly organized in Minsk from 28 to 30 June 2006.

571. The ninth European Conference on Drugs and Infections Prevention in Prison, held in Ljubljana from 5 to 7 October 2006, was organized by the European Network on Drugs and Infections Prevention in Prison. The theme of the Conference was "From the principle of equivalence to the practice of care: bridging the gap". The Conference provided an opportunity for dialogue on the development and implementation of effective drug prevention and health promotion policies and services aimed at preventing drug abuse and promoting health among persons who come in contact with the criminal justice system.

National legislation, policy and action

572. In November 2005, the parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted a law on the prevention and suppression of the abuse of narcotic drugs. The law, which entered into force in February 2006, establishes a national inter-ministerial committee and a national agency to oversee and coordinate drug control efforts at the national level. The Board regrets that the new

legislation did not take into account several aspects of the control of psychotropic substances.

573. The Government of Denmark has recently taken initiatives aimed at reducing the demand for drugs, especially cannabis, among young people. Under the project "Drugs out of town", the Government has initiated the development of new measures to encourage partners in the community to join forces and reduce the illicit distribution of drugs at the local level. The Government also supports projects aimed at establishing services for treatment for young people who are drug abusers. The Government has decided to impose a minimum fine for possession of small quantities of drugs (including cannabis) for personal use.

574. In France, a national information campaign to boost medical treatment for cannabis and heroin abusers was launched in 2005 within the framework of the action plan "Programme drogue et toxicomanie" (drug and addiction programme). The action plan provides funding for European Union and United Nations agencies dealing with drug control programmes in four priority regions: Africa; Central Asia; Central and Eastern Europe; and Latin America and the Caribbean. Additional initiatives taken by the Government of France in 2005 included measures to counter drug trafficking through increased cooperation with neighbouring countries and Morocco and measures to facilitate the confiscation of drug traffickers' assets.

575. Germany has continued to implement its Action Plan on Drugs and Addiction, launched in 2003. The Action Plan established a comprehensive multi-year strategy to combat narcotic drugs. The key pillars include: prevention; therapy and counselling; survival aid as an immediate remedy for drug addicts; and interdiction and supply reduction. "Addiction therapy" programmes focus on drug-free treatment, psychological counselling and substitution therapy. The findings of a pilot project on heroin-based treatment for long-term opiate addicts are expected to be made available before the end of 2006.

576. The number of drug injection rooms in Germany continued to increase during 2006. There are currently 25 drug injection rooms in Germany. The Board has repeatedly expressed its concern that such rooms (called "drug consumption rooms" in Germany) are in violation of the international drug control treaties. The

Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts to ensure that adequate services are made available to those in need of treatment, rehabilitation and social integration in conformity with the international drug control treaties, rather than continue operating drug injection rooms (see paras. 175-179 above).

577. The Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) of Germany established a telephone hotline in March 2005 for anonymous tips regarding the smuggling of goods, including narcotic drugs. According to BKA, since the establishment of the hotline, callers have provided tips that have proved useful in a number of investigations.

578. In Italy, new legislation adopted in March 2006 has eliminated the legal distinction between the abuse of “hard” and “soft” drugs and has decreased the threshold for possession of a “moderate quantity” of drugs, making possession of drugs for personal use virtually illegal. In November 2006, the Government reversed the existing policy on cannabis by increasing, through an administrative act, the current maximum quantity of cannabis permitted for personal use from 500 mg to 1,000 mg without incurring penal sanctions. In 2005, the Dipartimento nazionale per le politiche antidroga (national department of anti-drug policies) signed several programme agreements with the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, University and Research. It should be noted that, among those programmes, one is designed to tackle the country’s “cocaine emergency” and another is aimed at family-based prevention of drug abuse.

579. In Latvia, in August 2005 the Government approved the State programme for the control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for the period 2005-2008. The national strategy is aimed at reducing the spread of drug abuse, especially among young people, and promoting the rehabilitation of drug abusers.

580. In November 2005, the Government of the Netherlands made an assessment of its policy on cannabis and concluded that the policy allowing the sale of medicinal cannabis in pharmacies had largely failed and could only be effective if cannabis-based medicine were registered. The Minister of Health indicated that he intended to end the experiment if the pharmaceutical industry failed to develop such a

medicine within one year. The Minister of Justice proposed amending the Opium Act to make it easier for local governments to close down establishments where drugs were sold illegally. A regulation introduced in July 2005 facilitated the prosecution of cocaine couriers arrested at Schiphol airport, near Amsterdam; as a result, seizures of cocaine at Schiphol airport have increased. In June 2005, the Government decided to expand projects providing free heroin to hard-core drug abusers to include an additional 15 municipalities.

581. In July 2005, the Government of Norway published a progress report on its Action Plan to combat drug- and alcohol-related problems. In January 2005, the Ministry of Social Affairs opened the first drug injection room for addicts in Oslo. The Board encourages the Government of Norway to continue its efforts to ensure that adequate services are made available to those in need of treatment, rehabilitation and social integration in conformity with the international drug control treaties, rather than continue operating drug injection rooms (see paras. 175-179 above).

582. In November 2005, the Government of Romania adopted the National Anti-Drug Strategy for the period 2005-2012. In addition, a new law on the judicial regime of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and plants and pharmaceutical products containing such substances, which had been adopted by the parliament in 2005, entered into effect in July 2006. The new legislation provides for enhanced security in the dispensing of prescriptions for controlled pharmaceuticals. The new legislation is the result of three years of collaboration between the Government and WHO aimed at identifying and removing regulatory barriers to pain relief. The Board welcomes such collaborative activities aimed at improving the medical use of morphine and other opioids for pain relief.

583. In September 2006, UNODC released the study *Sweden’s Successful Drug Policy: a Review of the Evidence*, which includes an analysis of Sweden’s drug policies since the 1960s. After having experienced problems in the 1960s (linked to experiments with liberal drug control policies), Sweden, in the 1970s and 1980s, successfully reduced the level of drug abuse, tightened drug control laws and sent a clear political message that illicit drugs would not be tolerated in Swedish society. Sweden’s success was linked to

decisive measures on both the supply side and the demand side, including extensive programmes for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers, based on strong political consensus. Improved coordination and funding following the implementation of the national action plan and the introduction of the National Drug Policy Coordinator also helped to lower the levels of drug abuse.

584. The Government of Switzerland has proposed the revision of the Swiss drug control law, which, if adopted, would have in effect created a legal market for cannabis. In February 2006, the Government indicated that a revision of the drug control law was being debated in the parliament and that the bill did not include any of the provisions regarding the decriminalization of cannabis. The Board welcomes that development and urges the Government to ensure that any modifications to the legislation should be in line with the international drug control treaties.

585. The Swiss authorities have extended to 2009 the heroin maintenance prescription programmes that were originally intended to end in December 2004. Switzerland is one of the countries in Europe where drug injection rooms are part of the national drug control policy. According to the Government, in November 2005, there were 12 drug injection rooms in the country. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts to ensure that adequate services are made available to those in need of treatment, rehabilitation and social integration in conformity with the international drug control treaties, rather than continue operating drug injection rooms (see paras. 175-179 above).

586. The Board calls on the Government of the United Kingdom not to open drug injection rooms, which would be a violation of the international drug control treaties. In early 2005, the Home Secretary of the United Kingdom requested a review of the cannabis reclassification decision, in the light of recent studies that had established a correlation between the regular abuse of cannabis and mental illness. The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs issued its report in December 2005 but did not make recommendations with regard to cannabis.

Drug trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

587. Spain and Portugal continue to be used as the main trans-shipment points for cannabis consignments from Morocco destined for Europe. According to Spanish police officials, drug traffickers transport cannabis and other narcotic drugs along the Mediterranean coast (see para. 244 above).

588. Albania continues to be a major exporter of cannabis herb. Albanian cannabis is smuggled by land through the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria into Turkey, as well as into Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia and then into Western Europe. Illicit cannabis plant cultivation has also been reported in Bulgaria. About half of the cannabis illicitly cultivated in Bulgaria is destined for the illicit market in that country. Polish authorities have reported the illicit cultivation of cannabis plants in central, south-eastern and western Poland, hidden in grain fields, in gardens and in greenhouses; about 45 per cent of the cannabis produced locally is exported, mainly to Western Europe. While in Europe cannabis abuse is usually associated with cannabis resin, the market for cannabis herb is also significant. For example, in the Czech Republic and Estonia, the market for cannabis herb is larger than the market for cannabis resin.

589. Cocaine trafficking increased sharply in Europe in 2005. Traffickers have been increasingly using routes leading through Portugal and Spain to smuggle cocaine into other countries in Europe. The authorities in Spain have identified three main routes used by traffickers to smuggle cocaine into Europe: the north route, leading from the Caribbean to the Azores, Galicia (in Spain), Portugal and the coast of the Cantábrico (in Spain); the central route, leading from South America to the European coast, from Cape Verde or Madeira and the Canary Islands, the most frequently used route by sea; and the African route, leading from South America mainly to the countries in Western Africa and the Gulf of Guinea then to Galicia or northern Portugal, either by air or by sea. Cocaine seizures in Portugal increased by 125 per cent in 2005 compared with 2004. According to the Government of Portugal, 19 tons of cocaine were seized in that country in 2005, 20 per cent of the total amount of cocaine seized in all the member States of the European Union. Authorities in Portugal are particularly concerned

about the growing importance of Western Africa in international drug trafficking (see paras. 245-247 above).

590. During the Sixth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Europe, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 February 2005, concerns were expressed about the potential development of new trafficking routes through Eastern Europe and the potential risk that cocaine could be smuggled by traditional heroin trafficking groups operating along the Balkan route.

591. In 2005 and 2006, the Italian police led several operations involving law enforcement agencies from other countries that resulted in major seizures of cocaine. One of the operations, carried out in late 2005, involved five countries (Argentina, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain) and resulted in the seizure of approximately 1.5 tons of cocaine and over 120,000 tablets of MDMA and the arrest of more than 60 people. In October 2005, Italian Carabinieri dismantled an international drug trafficking network based in southern Italy; over 40 individuals were arrested and about 100 others were investigated.

592. In August 2005, police in the Netherlands seized 4.5 tons of cocaine in Rotterdam, the largest cocaine seizure ever made in that country. The investigation involved close cooperation with the drug enforcement agencies of Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and the United States. In October 2005, Spanish police seized 3.5 tons of cocaine on a fishing boat bound for Spain. In September 2006, French and Spanish police, in a joint operation, seized 3.3 tons of cocaine hidden on a boat off the coast of Spain. Cooperation among the police in Germany, the Netherlands and Spain led to the seizure of 1.6 tons of cocaine at the port of Rotterdam in November 2005. The Government of Greece has confirmed that the amount of cocaine seized in 2004 increased by 474 per cent compared with 2003.

593. Most of the heroin found in Europe comes from Afghanistan. According to the *World Drug Report 2006*, in Europe seizures of opiates rose by 49 per cent⁴⁶ in 2004 to 29 tons, the highest figure ever recorded. The increase in seizures of opiates in Europe was mainly attributable to the fact that such seizures doubled in South-Eastern Europe, especially in

Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. Record seizures of opiates were also made in the Russian Federation. Most of the heroin continues to be smuggled in trucks. The heroin on the illicit market in Europe is mainly smuggled from Turkey along the Balkan route, via Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary. In addition, a southern branch of the Balkan route has developed: heroin and other opiates from Turkey are smuggled via Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia into Albania, Italy, Austria and Germany. There have been reports of shipments of opiates from Afghanistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran being smuggled through the Caucasus into Ukraine and then into Romania before reaching their final destinations in Western Europe. The northern route through Central Asia is increasingly being used to transport heroin to other major illicit markets for heroin, such as the Russian Federation and countries in Eastern Europe. A new route for smuggling heroin from East Asia into the United Kingdom was recently uncovered, resulting in the interception of heroin consignments at ports in the United Kingdom.

594. Large heroin seizures have been recorded in the following European countries (listed in decreasing order): United Kingdom, Italy, Netherlands, Germany, France and Russian Federation. Increased seizures of opiates were also reported in Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Spain and Sweden. Clandestine heroin laboratories were detected and destroyed in Moldova and the Russian Federation.

595. According to government reports, in 2006 the market for illicit drugs in Belarus experienced a major shift, from heroin to synthetic drugs. The availability of methadone and ATS on the local markets has gradually increased. Methadone has gradually replaced heroin as the most commonly abused substance. During the past two years, it was discovered that methadone was being illicitly manufactured on the premises of research institutes in Minsk, the capital.

596. In Georgia, the Government has launched a prevention campaign called "Anything but Subutex[®]" to raise awareness of the negative health effects of the abuse of buprenorphine. Since 2003, the number of registered drug abusers in Georgia has increased by 80 per cent, to 275,000.

⁴⁶ *World Drug Report 2006* ..., pp. 14 and 65.

597. In the United Kingdom, according to the sixteenth surveillance report on drug-related deaths, published in January 2006 by the National Programme on Substance Abuse Deaths, based at the International Centre for Drug Policy, St. George's, University of London, there was an increase in drug-related deaths involving the abuse of heroin/morphine and cocaine in the first half of 2005, compared with the same period in 2004. In particular, deaths due to polydrug use, particularly involving combinations of heroin/morphine and cocaine, have increased in the United Kingdom.

598. Estonia has one of the highest growth rates for HIV infection in Europe: an estimated 10,000 persons infected with HIV. Of the estimated 30,000 persons in Estonia who abuse drugs by injection, about 13 per cent are infected with HIV. In Latvia, there are an estimated 10,000 persons infected with HIV and 17 per cent of the estimated 12,000 persons who abuse drugs by injection are HIV-positive. In Lithuania, there are an estimated 3,300 persons infected with HIV. Of the estimated 11,000 persons who abuse drugs by injection in Lithuania, 3 per cent are infected with HIV.

599. According to government statistics, in the Russian Federation the number of HIV/AIDS cases among hospitalized drug abusers stabilized at about 6.8 per cent in the period 2003-2005. In 2005, persons who abused drugs by injection accounted for approximately 74 per cent of the total number of registered drug abusers, 9 per cent of whom were infected with HIV. HIV outbreaks have been observed in over 30 cities and in 82 out of 89 oblasts (regions) of the Russian Federation.

600. In Sweden, lifetime prevalence of drug abuse among youth declined by 35 per cent between 2001 and 2006. The drug abuse level in Sweden is currently about one third of the level in Europe as a whole, and HIV related drug abuse by injection is about one tenth of the European average.

601. According to estimates of the Ministry of Health of Albania, in January 2006 there were 30,000 drug abusers in the country, compared with 5,000 in 1995 and 20,000 in 1998, and 4,000 of the drug abusers currently in the country are in need of special treatment that cannot be sufficiently provided in the country.

Psychotropic substances

602. On 29 November 2005, as a result of a joint investigation of the national crime squad of Belgium and the tax investigation service of the Netherlands, a clandestine MDMA laboratory in Nederweert (southern Limburg Province), the largest ever found in the Netherlands, was dismantled. It is estimated that the laboratory had a manufacturing capacity of 20 million MDMA tablets. Six people were arrested, all of them from the Limburg Province. The investigation, which had begun in May 2005, was carried out in close cooperation with Belgian and German authorities. It was the first MDMA laboratory discovered in 2005; until then, only clandestine amphetamine laboratories had been dismantled during 2005.

603. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in Europe takes place mainly in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Moldova and Slovakia.

604. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria, as well as Montenegro and Serbia, have been identified as countries used as sources for the illicit manufacture of amphetamine. There have been reports of the illicit manufacture of P-2-P, a chemical used for the manufacture of amphetamine, in the Russian Federation and Ukraine; there are also indications that amphetamine is being illicitly manufactured in Estonia and Lithuania.

605. Population surveys carried out by EMCDDA show an increase in the abuse of amphetamine and MDMA among young adults in most countries in Europe. The exceptions are Germany and Greece, where the level of MDMA abuse has not increased, and the United Kingdom, where the abuse of that drug has recently stabilized at a high level.

Substances not under international control

606. EMCDDA has published *Hallucinogenic Mushrooms: an Emerging Trend Case Study*. According to the study, many young Europeans are currently experimenting with hallucinogenic ("magic") mushrooms. Since 2001, six member States of the European Union have tightened controls on hallucinogenic mushrooms in response to recent increases in their use: Denmark in 2001; the Netherlands in 2002; Estonia, Germany and the United Kingdom in 2005; and Ireland in 2006. In some countries, the stricter legislation is helping to prevent

diffusion of the trend. Reports in the United Kingdom, for example, suggest stricter legislation has had an impact on the availability of hallucinogenic mushrooms and the volume of such mushrooms sold through the Internet. The publication on hallucinogenic mushrooms is the first in a series of reports to be published under a new EMCDDA pilot project to help detect, track and understand emerging drug trends in Europe.

Missions

607. The Board sent a mission to Belarus in May 2006 to review the drug control situation and the progress made by the Government following its mission to that country in 1994. The Board notes with satisfaction that the Government continues to be committed to fighting drug trafficking and abuse and gives high priority to improving in a timely manner the legislative bases and updating its drug control policy, as reflected in the adoption of a new national drug control programme in 2006, and the initiatives of Belarus to improve regional cooperation.

608. The Board notes with appreciation that Belarus has built up a strong law enforcement system and attaches great importance to efforts to resolve the problem of increasing trafficking in synthetic drugs and precursors. A number of well-coordinated law enforcement activities have taken place in Belarus, resulting in the detection of some illicit laboratories with substantial capacity for manufacturing methadone and ATS. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts in that area, with a view to addressing the increasing activities of organized criminal groups, especially those activities related to drug trafficking. The Government should further strengthen customs and border guard services in order to increase their capabilities to prevent the smuggling of illicit drugs into Belarus, in particular through the Russian Federation, with which Belarus shares an unguarded border, and through other neighbouring countries.

609. The Board shares the concern of the Government of Belarus over the worsening drug abuse situation in the country, particularly with regard to the significant increase in drug abuse by injection and heroin addiction. Noting that access to treatment is often difficult for drug abusers in Belarus, the Board strongly encourages the Government to accord higher

priority to the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers and to increase the resources, as well as the efficiency, of such treatment services.

610. In May 2006, a mission of the Board visited Estonia. The National Strategy on the Prevention of Drug Dependence 2004-2012 and its action plans covering long-term and mid-term objectives are ambitious programmes calling for numerous activities at different levels and within different time frames. However, the implementation and monitoring of those programmes require additional efforts, including more frequent meetings of the coordinating committee.

611. Estonia is currently experiencing a shift among drug abusers, from the abuse of natural products (such as cannabis) to synthetic drugs (such as amphetamines and MDMA). Fentanyl and 3-methylfentanyl have, to a large extent, replaced heroin on the illicit drug market in Estonia; the higher potency of those substances has led to a rise in the number of drug-related deaths. One matter of particular concern is the increasing prevalence of the abuse by injection of heroin, amphetamines and illicitly manufactured fentanyl and 3-methylfentanyl, which has contributed to an increase in HIV infections. Estonia, like the other Baltic countries, is confronted with a specific phenomenon involving drug tourism: Finnish drug addicts travel to Estonia to purchase pharmaceutical preparations containing buprenorphine and oxycodone. In response, Estonia has strengthened drug control requirements and the conditions under which such preparations can be prescribed.

612. In May 2006, a mission of the Board visited Latvia. The Board notes that the Government of Latvia has shown the political commitment and the will to deal with drug abuse, drug trafficking and organized crime. Drug control policies, national drug control legislation and the institutional framework to carry out those policies and implement that legislation are well developed. Under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister of Latvia, a council for the coordination of drug control and the prevention of drug addiction has been established to ensure the effective implementation of the national programme for combating drug abuse. However, the implementation of the ambitious programmes of the Coordinating Council has been delayed because of insufficient funds. Additional funds are also required to enhance training programmes for

all law enforcement units and to improve technical equipment.

613. In Latvia, there has been an increase in the abuse of amphetamine and methamphetamine. Other major concerns of the Latvian authorities are the increasing polydrug abuse and the high drug abuse rates among adolescents. Former diversions and misuse of pharmaceuticals used in substitution therapy, particularly by tourists from Finland, have been countered by additional control measures. With regard to availability of narcotic drugs for treatment of pain, the Latvian authorities have considerably improved the situation by including morphine medications in the list of pharmaceuticals of their national health insurance system.

614. The Board sent a mission to Luxembourg in October 2006 to review the implementation of the international drug control treaties and maintain its ongoing dialogue with the Government on issues related to drug control. The Board notes with grave concern that a drug injection room has been in operation in Luxembourg since 2005, in violation of the provisions of the international drug control treaties. The Board urges the Government to close the facility immediately and to implement measures against the abuse of drugs that are in compliance with its international treaty obligations.

615. The Board recommends to the Government of Luxembourg that it improve coordination among the various ministries and agencies involved in drug control matters. Such coordination has not always been adequate; as a result, various reports required under the international drug control treaties have not always been submitted to the Board. The Board also recommends to the Government that it strengthen its efforts in collecting information on the drug abuse situation within the country, in view of the fact that there is no national survey on the subject. Finally, the Board notes the measures being taken by the Government to deal with the problem of diversion of methadone from substitution treatment and encourages the Government to continue strengthening its efforts in that area.

E. Oceania

Major developments

616. The majority of the cannabis abused in Australia continues to have been produced in that country.

617. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine continues to be a problem in Australia. Most of the pseudoephedrine used in illicit methamphetamine manufacture has been extracted from commercially available pharmaceutical preparations. The abuse (including by smoking) of methamphetamine among young drug abusers is increasing in Australia. There are indications that Oceania may be developing into a significant transit area and a potential consumption area for methamphetamine.

618. There was evidence of large-scale illicit manufacture of MDMA in Australia, particularly during the last quarter of 2005.

619. Oceania continues to be used as a major trans-shipment area for illicit drugs.

Regional cooperation

620. HIV/AIDS, organized crime, border management and money-laundering were among the important issues discussed at the annual meeting of the Regional Security Committee of the Pacific Islands Forum, held in Nadi, Fiji, in June 2006.

621. In March 2006, the eighth annual conference of customs heads of the Oceania Customs Organisation was held in Sigakota, Fiji. Strengthening trade security, combating transnational crime and strengthening regional cooperation were the key themes of the conference. The participants agreed on a workplan for the period 2006-2007, including activities related to law enforcement and security.

622. The seventeenth administrative meeting of contact points of the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific was held in Christchurch, New Zealand, in November 2005. The Minister of Customs of New Zealand highlighted the pre-eminent role of the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office in countering the smuggling of precursor chemicals.

623. Australia and New Zealand continued to provide capacity-building assistance to other countries in