



news release

from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

No. 5/2001 – 26 June 2001

International Drugs Day

NEW DRUG LAW DATABASE: FACTS NOT RUMOURS

Instant access to reliable sources

The **EU drugs agency, the EMCDDA**, today launched a key initiative to 'replace rhetoric and rumours about EU countries' drug laws with hard facts'. Called the European Legal Database on Drugs (ELDD), it is available on the Internet at <http://eldd.emcdda.org>

Commenting on the ELDD, **UK Chairman of the EMCDDA Mike Trace** said: 'The law in relation to drugs is an area of great sensitivity as well as a key element in pan-European efforts to tackle the enormous challenges of illegal use, supply and associated criminal activities. It is essential that debate and decision-making in this field are conducted against the background of a complete and unvarnished knowledge of the legal situation in all Member States, shorn of the rhetoric and rumour that can so often attach themselves to drug issues.

'This is especially the case as Member States are grappling with the issue of how best to structure their drug control legislation to support the achievement of drug strategy targets. For all these reasons, the ELDD is to be welcomed as a major step forward.'

Georges Estievenart, who heads the **Lisbon-based drugs agency**, said: 'Information for the public on drug policies around Europe is often based on unreliable sources or misinformation'. He chose today (Tuesday 26 June) – International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking – to launch the agency's solution online.

Estievenart added: 'The ELDD will allow those who use it to know instantly if a substance is prohibited or not, and in which countries; the real measures that are being taken against drug trafficking; whether and where drug use is formally decriminalised; and the alternatives to legal proceedings offered to drug addicts.'

He explained: 'The ELDD will be a key guide in identifying the various positions of European legislation in this field and their convergence or otherwise. As such, it can make a major contribution to the process of European integration, as foreseen in the EU strategy on drugs, increasing the knowledge of EU decision-makers of the way various countries respond to the drugs phenomenon.'

The ELDD contains up-to-date legal texts of EU Member States in their original language and also, progressively, in English. These will cover drug demand, supply, money laundering and precursors. The site, still in progress, also contains national legal profiles on the drugs issue and analyses on key issues.

Estievenart sees it as a major development and a key tool in aiding the political decision-making process in the drugs field within the **EU**.

Notes:

The EMCDDA is participating today (26 June) at the *Aldeia de Prevenção* (Prevention Village), a day-long programme of sporting and theatrical events, debates and exhibitions in Lisbon, organised by the *Instituto Português da Droga e da Toxicoddependência* (IPDT).

For further information on the Aldeia de Prevenção and IPDT see <http://www.ipdt.pt>

For a news release on the ELDD see http://www.emcdda.org/infopoint/news_media.shtml

For further details, see special feature article at:

http://www.emcdda.org/infopoint/news_media.shtml or visit the database itself at <http://eldd.emcdda.org>

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