



## FACT SHEET from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

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### NEW SERIES OF PUBLICATIONS LAUNCHED TODAY

#### **EMCDDA and Europol release joint report on methamphetamine**

(13.7.2009, LISBON) The **EU drugs agency (EMCDDA)** and the **European Police Office (Europol)** released today the first edition in a new series of joint publications covering key aspects of European drug markets. The launch of the series is one of several collaborative activities agreed by the two bodies for the period 2009–12 <sup>(1)</sup>.

Issue No 1, ***Methamphetamine — a European Union perspective in the global context***, reviews key issues relevant to understanding how Europe stands vis-à-vis the global methamphetamine problem. Among others, it presents information on the history, production, trafficking and use of the substance, which is probably the most widely consumed synthetic stimulant in the world today.

Globally, methamphetamine is associated with significant public health, social and security problems, which are especially visible in North America and Asia. The use of the drug is also reportedly spreading to new areas, notably in the southern hemisphere and to some developing and transitional countries. In many countries across the globe, it is reportedly the second most prevalent illicit drug after cannabis.

In Europe as a whole, the market for stimulant drugs has historically been centred on cocaine and amphetamine, with methamphetamine posing significant problems mainly in the Czech Republic — and to a lesser extent Slovakia. For over 30 years, 'pervitin', as methamphetamine is known locally, has been the second most prevalent drug after cannabis in the Czech Republic.

According to the report, some limited diffusion may also be occurring in other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, large seizures in recent years in the Nordic and neighbouring countries suggest that methamphetamine is increasingly available in these countries and may, to some extent, be replacing amphetamine in the stimulant market. Combined with the relative ease with which the drug can be produced, this raises concerns that future supply-driven diffusion cannot be ruled out and underlines the need for careful monitoring.

The report can be downloaded in English from [www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index82068EN.html](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index82068EN.html)

For more on the joint publication series, see [www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/illicit-drugs](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/illicit-drugs)

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#### **Notes:**

<sup>(1)</sup> The two organisations stepped up their cooperation on drugs and crime in March, by approving a series of collaborative activities for the period 2009–12. The action was taken in the framework of a 'Cooperation Agreement' signed by the organisations in Brussels in 2001 (see Fact sheet No 3/2009 at [www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/press/fact-sheets/2009](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/press/fact-sheets/2009)). While the first titles in this new publications series will be dedicated to individual illicit substances — e.g. amphetamine-type stimulants, cocaine, heroin and cannabis — future editions will be conceived in line with information needs. Bringing together EMCDDA information and statistics on prevalence, health and drug research, with Europol data and knowledge on production, trafficking, markets and drug-related crime, the publications will offer an integrated analysis of the topics.

The series is designed to inform policymakers, drug experts and the general public on specific aspects of the drug situation.

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