



News release

from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION TO CONTROL MDMB-CHMICA

MDMB-CHMICA to be placed under control across the EU

(27.2.2017, LISBON) Today, the EU reacted to serious concerns over the use of the synthetic cannabinoid **MDMB-CHMICA** by deciding to subject it to 'control measures' throughout the Union ⁽¹⁾. The implementing decision of the Council of the EU ⁽²⁾ was adopted in the final stage of the three-step legal procedure designed to respond to potentially threatening new psychoactive substances (NPS) available on the market ⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾. The substance in question has been raising health concerns in Europe after harmful effects related to its use were reported by the Member States through the **EU Early Warning System** (EWS).

The decision is based on the findings of a formal risk assessment of the drug, conducted by the extended **EMCDDA** Scientific Committee in July 2016, with participation of additional experts from the **EU Member States, European Commission, Europol** and the **European Medicines Agency**. The risk assessment report assessed the health and social risks of the drug, as well as international trafficking and the involvement of organised crime ⁽⁵⁾. It concluded that the potency of **MDMB-CHMICA** and the highly variable amounts of the compound encountered in herbal products constitute a serious risk of acute toxicity.

MDMB-CHMICA is the first synthetic cannabinoid receptor agonist to be risk-assessed by the **EMCDDA**. It was first reported to the EU Early Warning System in 2014. It is sold as a 'legal' replacement for cannabis by chemical companies and online retail shops in a variety of forms (e.g. as a powder or as commercially branded 'legal high' products).

As of July 2016, the drug had been detected in **23 EU Member States, Turkey** and **Norway** and had been analytically identified in samples taken from 25 intoxicated patients and 28 deceased. In 12 of the deaths, **MDMB-CHMICA** was reported as, either the cause of, or likely to have contributed to, the death. Recognising the threats posed by this substance, 16 EU Member States plus Turkey have already taken steps to control it under national legislation.

Today's decision on subjecting this substance to control measures will enter into force the day after its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*. Member States will then have one year to introduce the controls into national legislation.

Notes

⁽¹⁾ Methyl 2-[[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-1*H*-indole-3-carbonyl]amino]-3,3-dimethylbutanoate.

⁽²⁾ Council implementing decision <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12356-2016-INIT/en/pdf> (Final version to be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* in the coming weeks).

This follows a proposal from the European Commission on 31 August 2016

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2016:0548:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁽³⁾ Council Decision 2005/387/JHA: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32005D0387:EN:HTML>

⁽⁴⁾ www.emcdda.europa.eu/activities/action-on-new-drugs

⁽⁵⁾ To be published in March (in English) at: www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/risk-assessments