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# EMCDDA contribution to the evaluation of the EU action plan on drugs (2000–2004)

## Evolution of EU budget lines on drugs

The EU strategy<sup>1</sup> and action plan<sup>2</sup> on drugs foresee a series of activities and actions to be developed during the period of 2000–2004. In spite of the fact that no specific budget is allocated to the EU action plan, the plan relies on funds allocated to initiatives and programmes covering various aspects of the phenomenon. The financial aspect is highlighted in the strategy as a priority issue.

In 1999, the European Parliament, in its capacity of EU budgetary authority, was consulted on the communication from the Commission on a European Union action plan to combat drugs (2000–2004). One remark in its opinion report<sup>3</sup> was, among others, that *'the resources earmarked in the Community budget for the fight against drugs (...) are woefully inadequate in comparison with the challenges faced'*. It was thus interesting to see when possible, at the end of this period, what budget has

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<sup>1</sup> European Union Drugs Strategy (2000–2004). CORDROGUE 64. 12555/3/99, 1 December 1999.

<sup>2</sup> European Union Action Plan on Drugs 2000–2004. CORDROGUE 32. 9283/00, 7 June 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Report on the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on a European Union Action plan to combat drugs (2000–2004) (COM(1999)239). 16 November 1999, A5-0063/1999.

been effectively allocated to the drug phenomenon over the four-year period of implementing the plan.

In line with the European Parliament opinion, it was worth studying EU public expenditure on drugs, as it helps assess the level of the commitment to the drug phenomenon and its different facets at a specific level. Consequently, this thematic paper aimed to describe the EU drug budget adopted during the period of 2000–2004, according to the available information.

This study, despite a deep work of research and analysis cannot submit exhaustive data. That is the reason why, the European Commission and the EMCDDA decided from a common agreement not to publish the entirety of the study. But the EMCDDA has made lots of research that should not be lost and it has been decided to publish some significant conclusions of this study.

- The total amount allocated to the drug phenomenon cannot be known in this paper due to the lack of data available according to the methodology used to collect them (Official Journal and contact with European Commission services).
- The allocations taken into account in this document are those published in the OJ or provided by some European Commission services.
- Some budget-lines have disappeared in the sense that from a certain date they have no longer received any appropriations.
- Some budget-lines previously expressly allocated to the drug phenomenon have been integrated<sup>4</sup> into other more general budget-lines.
- This constant redistribution does complicate the global understanding of the drug budget. The merging of all these lines under a single chapter may increase the visibility and analysis of the EU budget on drugs and could contribute to a more streamlined and coordinated way of spending it.
- No appropriation has been particularly allocated to the implementation of the EU Action Plan, which as such is considering a coordinated approach to respond to the drug problem.
- It seems that the allocation of the appropriations is not carried out in a coordinated fashion. As we have seen, the drug and drug addiction related spending is dispersed over several lines or chapters of the EU budget.
- The disappearance of the North–South budget-line and the existence only of geographical lines to finance EU action on drugs at international level shows a contradiction with the idea that the drug phenomenon should be considered as requiring a global and coordinated approach and not only geographic one,

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<sup>4</sup> This is the case concerning health aspects of drug abuse included in the public health budget-line from 2001.

and according to the strategy of the EC to fight against the trafficking routes... that takes precedence over the simple country approach.

- In line with statements made above, it would be interesting in the next EU action plan on drugs – in order to have more visibility and transparency concerning the drug budget – to foresee an annual list of all allocations of the EU in the field of drugs. This lack of data does not facilitate a precise analysis of the budget and can lead to a false impression of EU action in the field of drugs.
- A list of the projects developed, thanks to these appropriations, should also be made available in good time. The European Commission may produce or request to national bodies in charge of regional policies to provide figures on indirect expenditure (as opposed to drug-labelled lines) in order to obtain a more exhaustive overview of the EU budget on drugs.