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

Drug provisions in the EC external agreements

The EU Strategy and Plan on drugs envisage a series of activities and actions to develop during the period of 2000-2004. These activities do not take place only at internal level, within the European Union, but also at external level through international cooperation. It is also worth noting that the external aspect of the EU action on drugs constitutes a specific objective of the Strategy and the Action Plan.

Several different studies could be envisaged in this field. For example, to see which projects on drugs had been implemented in the third countries during the period of the EU Action Plan 2000-2004. But data on this subject were not readily available for the time being. Timely availability of data was a selection criteria in the context of the evaluation exercise, this is why we decided to focus on the insertion of provision on drugs in its external agreements. The drug provisions in the EC external agreements constitute one of the tools used by the European Community to combat drugs at external level. In almost all the EC external agreements it now exists a special provision on drugs. The objective of this paper was then to see if during the period 2000-2004 the European Community continued to insert drug provisions in its external agreements, with which content, and with which budget lines.

This study, despite a deep work of research and analysis cannot submit exhaustive data and give a too limited vision of the reality of the EC action at external level in the field of drugs. 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.

- There is no standard provision on drugs in the EC external agreements.
- Drug provisions are all different: both in title and content. Nevertheless, they all develop both aspect of supply reduction and demand reduction, encourage the exchange of information, the coordination and the technical and administrative assistance.
- The drafting, the negotiations, and the implementation of these articles are under competencies of many services in the European Commission: DG RELEX, DG JAI and Europaid.
- Drug provisions in the external agreements of the EC are a sign of a political agreement and do not automatically result in concrete projects. The result depends on the priorities agreed in the Country Strategy Papers. This country by country approach is not always consistent with the global and coordinated approach or the aim of targeting the drug routes."
- Different budget lines could be used to develop projects in third countries during the implementation of the EU Action Plan, but since 2004, one of them disappeared (North/South budget line), and this does not appear to be consistent with the action to provide adequate resources for implementation of programmes/projects.