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from :	Presidency
to :	Multidisciplinary Working Group on organised crime (MDG)
Subject :	Conclusions and recommendations of the European Union Presidency Seminar on Best Practices in Drug Prevention by the Law Enforcement Authorities (co-financed by the OISIN programme), held in Helsinki on 11-13 July 1999

Delegations will find in annex the conclusions and recommendations of the Presidency Seminar held in Helsinki on 11-13 July 1999.

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ANNEX

Conclusions and recommendations of the European Union Presidency Seminar on Best Practices in Drug Prevention by the Law Enforcement Authorities (co-financed by the OISIN programme), held in Helsinki, 11-13 July 1999

1. The need for an effective drug prevention strategy. Developing an effective drug prevention strategy is of fundamental importance for our societies. There is no simple recipe for such a strategy in the area of law enforcement. The individual components must always be designed to respond to the special features of the drug situation locally, nationally and internationally.

2. The role of law enforcement authorities in drug prevention. All drug prevention strategies at the local, national and international level should recognize the importance of the law enforcement role in the prevention of drug trafficking and misuse. In this respect, the role of law enforcement is undergoing constant change. It is adapting to the requirements of society and recognising the long-term benefits of working in partnership with others. Whilst acknowledging its increasing role in drug prevention, law enforcement should consider adopting, if this has not yet been done, a more balanced approach, with appropriate emphasis on preventive as well as repressive measures; only such a balance can lead to maximum effectiveness. In developing this balanced approach, Member States should give full consideration to the provision of sustainable funding in this area, in particular where law enforcement initiatives bring significant added value.

3. Supply reduction and demand reduction. In identifying the role of law enforcement in drug prevention, a distinction should be made between supply reduction and demand reduction. The role of law enforcement can differ in each of these fields.

4. The core law enforcement function in drug prevention: supply reduction. Supply reduction is one of the main areas of the work of law enforcement (in the wide sense, encompassing also judicial authorities), and should not be neglected. All law enforcement agencies should give appropriate attention to the prevention of drug-related crime, in particular drug-related organised crime. The prevention and control of trafficking in drugs should be undertaken on an international and national scale, but also on the local level, within cities and communities. In this field, law enforcement can and should have a leading role. Other parties, nonetheless, remain relevant. If the criminal justice approach does not lead to the desired change, other approaches should be tried.

5. The role of law enforcement in demand reduction. The focus of the work of law enforcement in demand reduction should be on reduction of the use of drugs and reduction of drug-related crime. Law enforcement can also serve as the starting point for resocialization of the drug user. The involvement of municipalities is vital in this. The municipalities should ensure the availability of services such as housing and employment, elements that are essential for rehabilitation.

6. Dealing with addicted offenders. The police, prosecutors and the courts have to deal with addicted offenders, who can continue their criminal careers for years. For such a group, a prison sentence is not effective in halting drug use. Contact with the law enforcement system can be used as a route to treatment for addicted offenders. In this field law enforcement has the leading role, but it in fact works as a "broker". The law enforcement system, however, has to take the essential decision on whether or not to transfer a drug user to the health care system. In this field, in turn, the drug treatment authorities have the leading role.

7. Developing arrest referral programmes. A number of steps are involved in developing arrest referral programmes. An "intake protocol" should be established by the police, the district attorneys and the drug treatment authorities working together. Criteria for placement in diversion projects should be worked out. The drug treatment authorities should examine suspects in the police office and formulate their recommendations for the prosecutors and the court. Police officers, prosecutors and court officials should be trained in the possibilities for and potential of drug abuse programmes. Treatment programmes that are adapted to the specific needs of criminal drug misusers should be established by the drug treatment authorities. Follow-up provisions should be created by the municipal housing, educational and employment authorities in order to ensure the essential element of rehabilitation.

8. Designing an action plan. Once a general strategy on the role of law enforcement in drug prevention has been defined (by the Horizontal Drug Group, Europol, the EMCDDA and Member States), a process-oriented action plan should be developed, including identification of priorities, resources and initiatives for related working programmes and activities. For this purpose, the current Situation Reports and Threat Assessments, as a part of product differentiation in a multi-disciplinary environment, should also focus on prevention-related aspects in order to target the most appropriate audiences. Parallel to the future development of general prevention strategies, specific projects should be further implemented, based on a joint prioritisation mechanism. Among issues to be considered in the establishment of such a joint prioritisation mechanism are border control projects, the exclusion of individuals or legal persons with connections to drug-related organised crime, and specific prevention-oriented analysis techniques such as risk analysis.

9. Designing drug prevention projects. Drug prevention projects require a considerable investment of time, expertise and resources. Such projects should be designed within the context of existing national and international strategies for the prevention of crime, in particular organised crime. Use of the "Guidelines for the evaluation of drug prevention" prepared by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (Luxembourg 1998) in the design and evaluation of such projects is recommended.

10. The importance of needs assessments. The planning of drug prevention projects should be based on a needs assessment that examines the nature, extent and location of the phenomenon to be addressed, an identification of the intermediate and the ultimate target, an identification of the objective of the intervention and specification of the proposed intervention, a review of related interventions, and a charting of the resources needed.

11. The tailoring of drug prevention projects to local and national circumstances. Differences in national legislation have their impact on the way in which projects should be designed and implemented in the different Member States. Similarly, projects should always be tailored to the individual local and national circumstances.

12. Ensuring wide involvement in drug prevention projects. The planning of drug prevention projects should be prepared on a cross-disciplinary basis, with the involvement of representatives of all appropriate authorities and civil society. Participation in such projects should respect the need to maintain professional standards. Such an approach should seek not only to identify the practically oriented goals of the intervention, but also to identify the priorities and the resources, and to mobilize the necessary political, institutional and public support required for sustained projects. The roles of the different parties should be clearly identified, including the responsibility for over-all coordination and management.

13. Professional standards. Professional standard committees at the national and European level should be established to create a solid basis for effective local, national and international cooperation.

14. The strengthening of drug prevention networks. Projects should seek to establish "drug prevention networks" that respond to problems on the local, national and international level and strengthen cooperation among all the parties involved. Particular attention should be given to the potential of local, neighbourhood networks where the parties can respond to specific problems. All projects should ensure access to relevant information, which is an element that is vital to the success of projects, especially at the local, neighbourhood level.

15. Evaluation. All drug prevention projects should wherever possible include a separate allocation for the evaluation of programme planning, evaluation of the process and evaluation of the outcome. Careful consideration should be given to whether the evaluation should be conducted by persons involved in the planning and implementation of the project, or whether the evaluation should be conducted by an external evaluator. The performance indicators that are used should be identified in cooperation among the parties involved in the project. These indicators can be either quantitative or qualitative, but they should nonetheless be as simple, objective, reliable and valid as possible.

16. International cooperation. One of the goals of international cooperation in the development of drug prevention strategies should be assistance in the development of performance indicators and in the evaluation of drug prevention projects. A mechanism to ensure continuity and regular evaluation (in relation to the role of existing cooperation platforms) should be created and monitored by the Horizontal Drugs Group, in close cooperation with other groups active within the framework of the European Union. Where appropriate, international cooperation should be expanded to the candidate countries and other third countries.

17. Training. The issue of a framework for a European Union –wide law enforcement training programme that covers all aspects of drug prevention based on best practice and supported by a broad scientific approach, including evaluation, should be jointly addressed by EUROPOL and the EMCDDA within the next twelve months. In addition to adequate training for law enforcement, additional training programmes should be arranged for external partners. For this purpose, the creation of joint training initiatives should be encouraged.

18. Establishment of a centre of excellence on drug prevention related to organised crime. A study should identify the conceptual model and the best mechanism for collecting, storing, analysing and disseminating the best knowledge in drug prevention related to organised crime. For this purpose, the possible use of the centre of excellence (Europol database) with interfaces at the national and European level should be evaluated.

19. An international database on best practices. The use of the EDDRA system together with interfaces at national, European and global level, should be evaluated in relation to law enforcement initiatives. Such a centrally located database could provide an information system containing examples of existing practice and lessons to be learnt which Member States could use as a basis for pooling and exchanging ideas. Such a database should include an evaluation of the various initiatives and, where appropriate, an indication of the added value of the partnership approach.

20. Provision of information to the database. Member States are encouraged to submit details of their law enforcement drug prevention initiatives to the central database referred to above, in a common format, utilizing the established mechanism of the EDDRA system. The Horizontal Drugs Group should consider a suitable forum for taking this work forward in order to include the involvement, where appropriate, of the existing working groups within the Council framework.

21. Follow-up by the Commission and Europol. The Commission and Europol are invited to take full account of the results of this Presidency Seminar when producing, in 2000, the study requested by the Council on organised crime prevention (Council decision 1998, 13172/98 CRIMORG 180).

22. Follow-up by the Council. The Council (the Horizontal Drugs Group) should be invited to consider these recommendations when elaborating, together with the European Commission, an European Union drugs strategy for 2000-2004.