



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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CORDROGUE 45**

NOTE

from: General Secretariat of the Council
to: Council

Subject: **Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs** Council meeting on
20 and 21 June 2013

EU Action Plan on Drugs 2013-2016
- Information from the Presidency
(Any Other Business item)

Delegations will find in the Annex an information note on the abovementioned subject.

Introduction

1. The Council adopted the EU Action Plan on Drugs 2013-2016 at its meeting of 6/7 June 2013. The Action Plan sets out the detailed implementation of the first four years of the EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020.

Background

2. In December 2012, the Council adopted the EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020. The Strategy aims to contribute to a reduction in drug demand and drug supply within the EU. It also aims to reduce the health and social risks and harms caused by drugs through a strategic approach that supports and complements national policies, that provides a framework for coordinated and joint actions and that forms the basis for EU external cooperation in the field. In line with the Strategy stipulation that its implementation should be set out in two consecutive four year Action Plans, the Irish Presidency has led the negotiation of the first of these Action Plans to cover the period 2013-2016.
3. Heretofore it had been the case that the Commission would prepare first drafts of Action Plans for consideration by the Member States. However, under the EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020, this role is now assigned to the Presidency in line with the principle of subsidiarity.

Overview

4. The Irish Presidency circulated a first draft of the EU Action Plan on Drugs to delegations of the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs (HDG) in December 2012 in advance of its meeting on 9 January 2013. The Presidency led negotiations on the Action Plan at each of the HDG meetings of 9 January, 6 February, 25 February, 18 April and 23 May, when the text of the draft Action Plan was finalised.

5. The Irish Presidency has consistently supported the engagement of the EU Civil Society Forum on Drugs in the process of developing the EU Action Plan on Drugs, including by arranging for their attendance at, and input to, the HDG meeting of 25 February. In addition the Commission, supported by the Presidency has organised a shared session/event involving the EU Civil Society Forum on Drugs and the HDG delegations and this will take place on 25 June.
6. The EU Action Plan on Drugs focuses on the two policy areas of Drug Demand Reduction and Drug Supply Reduction, and three cross cutting themes - Coordination, International Cooperation and Information, Research, Monitoring & Evaluation
7. The European Drug Report, published by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drugs Addiction (EMCDDA) in May, stated that the major features of the European drug landscape have remained relatively stable in recent years. However, Europe's drug problem has become much more fluid and dynamic, with new threats emerging that challenge current models of policy and practice (for example, 73 new psychoactive substances were officially notified in 2012 through the EU early warning system). Globalisation and information technology are important factors contributing to these changes, with the internet creating new connections in drug use and supply.
8. The Action Plan aims to address such challenges including by:
 - Improving the availability and effectiveness of measures to prevent drug use and, secondly, to delay the onset of drug use;
 - Developing and enhancing the effectiveness, diversity and accessibility of drug treatment and rehabilitation services;
 - Enhancing effective law enforcement co-ordination and cooperation, and judicial cooperation, within the EU to counter illicit drug activity;

- Strengthening EU legislative measures to address the emergence and use of new psychoactive substances and to prevent the diversion of drug precursors;
- Identifying strategic responses to address the role of new communication technologies in the production, marketing, purchasing and distribution of illicit drugs;
- Ensuring effective co-ordination in the drugs field across the EU and Member States;
- Enhancing international cooperation by strengthening dialogue and cooperation between the EU and third countries and international organisations on drugs issues in a comprehensive and balanced manner; and
- Focusing on research, data collection and evaluation to ensure an evidence base for policies and actions in the drugs field.
