
EU: launching the EU Drugs Agency. EU Commission, “a problem that affects millions of people”

(Brussels) “The Commission welcomes today's political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on a stronger mandate which establishes a new EU Drugs Agency. The new Agency builds on the achievements of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction”, which is based in Lisbon. “Illicit drugs pose a complex security and health problem that affect millions of people in the EU and globally”, as stated in a release issued in Brussels today. The [European Drug Report 2022](#) estimates that over 83 million adults in the EU (i.e. 29% of the adult population) have used illicit drugs at least once during their lives. In 2020, an estimated 5 800 overdose deaths in the EU involved illicit drugs, most of which due to combinations of illicit opioids, other illicit drugs, medicines and alcohol (poly-drug toxicity). “At the same time, there is still a high availability of substances, in particular cocaine, as well as an increasing number of different substances, often of high potency or purity. These developments call for effective action at EU level”. With this enhanced mandate, the EU Drugs Agency “will play a new role”, including: issue alerts in case particularly dangerous substances become available on the market; develop threat assessments on illicit drugs that negatively impact public health, safety and security; monitor and address the simultaneous consumption of different drugs; set-up a network of forensic and toxicological laboratories, bringing together national laboratories, to enhance information exchange on new developments and support training of forensic drug experts; develop and promote evidence-based interventions, best practice and awareness-raising activities and assistance to Member States.

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