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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



**Institute of Psychology
Addiction Research Unit**

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A003 **Trends on Cannabis Use and Markets in Europe: the Case of Switzerland**

2nd October, morning

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Recent population based surveys among adolescents and young adults showed a decrease in the use of cannabis in a number of European countries over the last years. Several studies indicated also a slight decrease in the proportion of actual cannabis users in Switzerland. At the same time, the “end of liberal Swiss cannabis policy” happened.

In the first part of the presentation the development of cannabis use and cannabis policy will be discussed in the light of the so called “normalization hypothesis”. Has a process of “normalization” of cannabis use in Switzerland been stopped by returning to a more repressive cannabis policy and police enforcement of a former “tolerated” cannabis market in the country?

In the second part of the presentation, changes in the provision of cannabis by actual users will be presented. According to a recent longitudinal Swiss cannabis study, the proportion of actual cannabis users that grew their own weed or bought it in hemp-shops markedly decreased between the years 2004 and 2007. At the same time, the proportion of users that purchased cannabis from friends or on the street has clearly increased.

Is this change of market behavior a result of the changing cannabis policy in the country? Implications of these results for the European Drug Policy debate will be discussed.

A013 **Not in My Back Yard**

2nd October, afternoon

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IVO, Rotterdam, Netherlands

Facility planners throughout in many EU countries are confronted with public resistance against facilities for drug users, homeless people and other stigmatized groups. In general opposing citizens are not against these facilities as such, but they are against that kind of facilities in their immediate environment. The phenomenon is often referred to as Nimby (not in my back yard). The objective of this presentation to share theory and thoughts on the Nimby phenomenon and to discuss possible implications for research.

From a sociological point of view is it better to avoid the term Nimby and speak of locational conflict (Lake 2001). However from a policy science point of view, Nimby does not only entail public opposition against the facility but also assumptions on the motives of the opposing public (Wolsink 1994). If politicians consider the opposition as an expression of intolerance and reactionary attitude, they may trigger even more opposition. The opposition against facilities for socially excluded individuals is rooted in the stigma (Goffmann 1963) they bear. Takahashi (1997) distinguishes four dimensions of stigma: functionality, danger and predictability, culpability and curability. The stigma that (future) clients of the facility bear becomes embodied in the facility itself. From a control point of view the threats that might stem from a facility are not realistic but it is realistic in its consequences (Thomas 1928).

Some examples will be presented of what could be the role of applied social science in case of Nimby situations. Are service planners in for any help from social scientists? Is the reaction of politicians and their civil staff is relevant for social scientists?

A026 **Ethnic differences in attitudes towards and experience with substance use among secondary school students**

3rd October, afternoon

Benschop, Annemieke

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Amsterdam, like many other European cities, is becoming more and more ethnically diverse. So much so, that among the younger generations ethnic ‘minorities’ are a majority. In the 2006 Amsterdam Antenna school survey more respondents were of Surinamese, Antillean, Turkish or Moroccan decent, than there were respondents of Dutch origin. Immigrants may pass on a cultural and religious heritage to their children, which includes the way alcohol and drugs are regarded. At the same time, the role of peers is increasingly important during adolescence. Both will effect whether or not adolescents start experimenting with substance use.

A total of 1214 secondary school students (mainly 12-16 years) participated in the Antenna school survey. This annual monitor of alcohol and drug use was conducted among school youth in Amsterdam for the sixth times since 1993. Initial analyses suggested some interesting links between ethnicity, religion, parental rules, friends and substance use. Further exploration will follow in the coming months. The focus will lie with cannabis use. Ethnic and gender specific patterns will be studied. Because of the growing numbers of Moroccan and Turkish students – often from a Muslim background – special attention for alcohol use is also evident. Final results will be presented.

A039 **Comparison of attitudes towards quality of life between drug users from six European countries**

2nd October, afternoon

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⁵ *University of Wales, Bangor, UK*

At the ESSD Conference 2007 we presented data on the implementation and evaluation of the Dutch Self-control Information Programme in various European countries. This year we would like to present data from the same EU-SCIP research project, but from a different angle. In this study the drug users were asked to assess the present quality of their life and to compare it with the life that they are striving for. Drug users from Belgium (N=48), Germany (N=39), Greece (N=25), the Netherlands (N=168), Norway (N=60) and Wales(N=136) filled out three different questionnaires on quality of life: the Lehman Quality of Life Scale, the EuroQol and the Self-Anchoring Striving Scale (Kilpatrick & Cantril, 1960; Cantril, 1965).

In its present – purely quantitative –the Lehman Scale assesses six different domains, i.e. Living situation, Daily activities, Family and Social relations, Finances, Legal and Safety, and Health. Five domains contain subjective as well as objective items. The subjective aspects are scored on a 7-point scale ranging from “terrible”, “unhappy”, “mostly dissatisfied”, “mixed” to “mostly satisfied”, “pleased” and “delighted”. The EuroQol is a generic utility measure used to characterize current health states. It consists of 5-domains (mobility, self-care, usual activities, pain/discomfort, anxiety/depression) and two visual analogue scales on physical and emotional health states. It was added to ascertain participants’ health related quality of life. The SASS is an instrument that asks people to rate their present, past, and anticipated future satisfaction with life on a scale anchored by their own identified values. These values are identified by means of two –qualitative – open-ended questions.

In our presentation we first will focus on similarities and differences in attitudes towards quality of life that we found between the drug users across the various countries. In the second part we will present their main concerns and the way in which they rank their personal well-being in the present, as well as a year ago and a year ahead.

A043 **Polydrug users' motivation and strategies for reducing, changing and quitting drug use in prison**

3rd October, morning

Dahl, Helle Vibeke¹ – Kolind, Torsten¹ – Asmussen, Vibeke¹

¹*Center for Alcohol and Drug Research, University of Aarhus*

A large proportion of the European prison population has prior to incarceration used illicit drugs (studies report lifetime prevalence over 50%), and many prisoners continue their drug use (European studies report use ranges from 8-73%). Increasingly, we see a dual policy employed by European member states responding to this situation by intensifying both control and treatment. As a result, disciplinary and penal sanctions are tightened in many prisons alongside the introduction of treatment and rehabilitative services. However, significant differences have also been found among EU countries. This development has claimed attention in the research field. However, only few studies have addressed these issues from the point of view of incarcerated drug users.

Objective: The paper addresses poly-drug using inmates' use of drugs prior to and during imprisonment; it explores their motivation for attending prison based treatment; and finally it looks at the prisoners' individual strategies for entering and terminating treatment. The paper's theoretical base is the everyday-based strategies of resistance used by inmates. Traditionally, sociological resistance studies have tended to focus on the articulate and intentional struggle of suppressed populations. In this study we also include the not-so-conscious, small-scale defense strategies of the weak, and we analytically relate these to institutional goals and discourses.

Methodology: Data stems from an ongoing qualitative study of drug in Danish prisons. Material consists of: policy documents, action plans and legal bills; evaluations and project plans; 10 qualitative semi-structured interviews with treatment staff and prison employed health personnel; and finally, 25 semi-structured interviews with male prisoners who have participated in drug treatment.

Significant results/conclusions: In accordance with other European research on drug users' experiences with drug treatment we find that clients' motivations are rather multifaceted and differentiated depending on the individual in question. Motivation differs markedly from official treatment goals and include e.g.: self prescribed harm reduction, 'time out', testing out of treatment programs, seeking here-and-now advantages in a disciplinary environment, etc. Our preliminary data also suggest that poly-drug using inmates change their drug pattern in accordance with disciplinary sanctions as well as the efficacy of testing orders (e.g. cannabis can be traced in the urine for up to eight weeks whereas as heroin can only be detected for two to five days). Finally, the dual policy of control and treatment appears to advantage primarily the least affected drug users.

A016 **Risk perceptions concerning illegal drugs among Danish youth**

3rd October, afternoon

Demant, Jakob – Ravn, Signe

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Dealing with the assumed risks is a central part of many people's use of both legal and illegal drugs. However, factual knowledge on risk in relation to illegal drug use seems to be very little or almost lacking in discussions about drugs among Danish adolescents. This poses the question of how, then, Danish youth construct risk in relation to illegal drugs. Previous studies have shown how active drug users, i.e. within the dance music culture, construct their perceptions of risk through local experiences and internet-based media. However, the adolescents in this study are not active drug users and their knowledge is thus not based on their own, specific experiences.

Since only 13 per cent of Danish boys and 7 per cent of Danish girls (Rheinländer & Nielsen 2007) have experiences with "hard" illegal drugs, it is particularly interesting how youth *not* belonging to the group of active users construct and perceive risk.

In answering this, the paper will draw upon empirical material from a series of focus group interviews with Danish adolescents aged 17-19. The focus groups stem from a large study on youth, drugs and alcohol, and centre on knowledge on and attitudes towards drug use as well as own experiences with illegal drugs. In the focus group interviews, the social construction of risk in relation to drug use can be observed. By analysing how the adolescents bring in knowledge and arguments from a wide range of spheres, it is shown how the constructions of risk are rather incidental. The paper finds that perceptions of risk are strongly related to the focus group participants' understanding of which drugs are widely used. This made them position i.e. cocaine as a "mild" drug. As shown in previous studies, the way of doing the drug (injection, sniffing, popping pills) is also a central aspect of the adolescents' perception of risk.

A031 **Application of the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) to measure the response on methadone maintenance therapy**

4th October, morning

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The present study was a part of a broader research on the psychological responses to methadone maintenance therapy. The quantitative panel of this study indicated that anxiety and depression decreased, and life satisfaction increased within a 6-month therapy, as measured by various questionnaires in a total of 200 subjects maintained on methadone (STAI, Spielberger, 1972; CES-D, Radloff, 1977; and SWLS - Diener et al., 1985, respectively).

Nevertheless, these quantitative measures could not answer the question of how to predict the adherence of subjects to methadone maintenance therapy. This issue was addressed by a qualitative method where TAT cards were presented to the subjects at their admittance to treatment, and also recalls of their drug past and future plans were asked. A novelty in data collection was that the TAT cards were exposed not in sequential order, but as a choice in four series, of which the subjects were asked to create a composite story.

TAT stories of two criterion groups were compared by computer-aided content analysis. Two files were compiled: /1/ Dropout Group (< 1 month in therapy, (n = 20 Ss; 3530 words; 21.572 characters); /2/ Treated Group (> 6 months in therapy, (n =20 Ss; 2889 words; 17.532 characters). These two text corpora were processed first by the Atlas.ti software and then by SPSS.

Four qualitative textual variables were designed, each of which had four values. /1/ Achievement /Successful, Failed, Ambivalent and None); /2/ Social Embeddement (Successful, Failed, Ambivalent and None); /3/ Direction of Social Movement (Approaching, Alienating, Ambivalent and None); and Marcia's Identity States (Achieved Identity, Foreclosure, Moratorium and Identity Diffusion). Descriptive of the TAT character's global behavior, these values were assigned to the individual TAT stories on one per story basis. Thus, each story was given four codes as a total.

The overall descriptive statistics suggested that subjects on methadone therapy, irrespective of their staying in treatment or leaving it prematurely, were mostly characterized by the lack or achievement orientation, by avoiding attachment patterns, by social alienation, and by identity moratorium (crisis was mentioned, but solution was postponed or not mentioned at all).

The comparative statistics (chi square) showed that the Dropout Group mentioned significantly more Social Alienation (65% vs. 20%, P =0.004) and Identity Diffusion /no crisis, no solution in the stories/ (35% vs. 5%, P =0.018), while the Treated Group mentioned significantly more Achieved Identity /both crisis and solution in the stories/ (45% vs. 5%, P =0.003).

Our results suggest that, as opposed to quantitative psychological tests or thematic interviews about drug past and future plans, TAT cards may be predictive of adherence to methadone maintenance therapy.

A019 **Use of substitutes. Is it an other habit?**

3rd October, afternoon

Elekes, Zsuzsanna

Institute of Sociology and Social Policy, Corvinus University of Budapest, Budapest, Hungary

At the end of 60's and in the 70's the typical form of drug use of Hungarian adolescents was the use of medicines for non-medical purposes, alcohol with pills and inhalants. At that time Hungarian experts were convinced that young people had this type of drug using habit because illicit drugs were not available in Hungary. After the political transition, when marijuana and other illicit drugs appeared, the previously used licit drugs kept their leading roles in the adolescent's drug use. The first results of the Hungarian ESPAD'2007 survey show that while the prevalence of illicit drugs stabilized or decreased between 2003-2007, the prevalence of sniffing and patron/ballon use has increased among secondary school population in Hungary. Similar tendencies have been observed in some other countries. In 2007 pharmaceuticals, sniffing and the newly appeared use of patron/ballon are still the most frequently used substances after marijuana among Hungarian school population. The aim of this paper is to present the changes in prevalence of non-medical use of psycho pharmaceuticals, inhalants and other substitutional drugs in comparison with changes in illicit drug use among Hungarian secondary school population. We also compare Hungarian results with available European data. We analyze the socio-demographical differences between users of illicit drugs and users of substitutes. We examine whether the new increase of sniffing and patron/ballon use has some replacing role in the decrease of illicit drugs, or the substitute drug use and drug users have a completely different character from illicit drug use and drug users. We use the data of the 2007 Hungarian ESPAED survey conducted on the national sample of students studying at the 8th-10th grades of school (N=8778).

A004 **Barriers to drug service access: how they affect different minority ethnic populations**

2nd October, afternoon

Fountain, Jane

Centre for Ethnicity and Health, University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK

Objectives and methods:

The Department of Health's Black and minority ethnic drug misuse needs assessment project that was conducted throughout England in three phases during 2000-2001, 2004-2005, and 2006. This project employed the Centre for Ethnicity and Health's Community Engagement Model¹ to train and support 179 community organisations to conduct the drug service needs assessments. Each community organisation was also supported by an advisory committee (steering group) whose membership included local drug service planners, commissioners and providers.

The Department of Health and the National Treatment Agency for Drug Misuse are about to begin to publish the results of this project in a series of publications on issues surrounding drug use and drug services amongst different ethnic groups in England. The major aim of this series is to inform drug service planning and provision.

Results and conclusions:

At the time of writing, the following reports from community organisations have been collated:

- South Asian communities: 65 reports, sample 10,485.
- Black African communities: 42 reports, sample 4,657 (originating from 30 different countries in Africa).
- Black Caribbean communities: 34 reports, sample 1,863.
- Kurdish, Turkish Cypriot and Turkish communities: 9 reports, sample 1,395.

This presentation will detail some of the main findings from these collations. It will cover the differences and similarities between patterns of drug use and problematic use and how the communities respond to drug use amongst their members, but the main focus is on the barriers to drug information, advice and treatment service access and how they affect each minority ethnic population. For example:

- Which population has the least knowledge about drugs and drug services?
- Does 'stigma' mean the same thing to a Pakistani, a Jamaican and a Zimbabwean?
- Which populations need drug services in their native language?
- Why are minority ethnic populations so concerned about the confidentiality of drug services?
- Which populations want drug workers from their own ethnic group, and which do not?

¹Fountain, J. Patel, K. Buffin, J. Community engagement: The Centre for Ethnicity and Health model. in Domenig, D. Fountain, J. Schatz, E. Bröring, G. (eds.) (2007) *Overcoming barriers: migration, marginalisation and access to health and social services*. Amsterdam: Foundation Regenboog AMOC, pp. 50-63.

Winters, M. Patel, K. (2003): *The Department of Health's Black and minority ethnic drug misuse needs assessment project. Report 1: the process*. Preston, Centre for Ethnicity and Health, University of Central Lancashire.

A035 **Civil Asset Forfeiture: The Case of Ireland**

2nd October, afternoon

Jensen, Eric L.¹ - Johnsson, Eva²

¹ *University of Idaho, USA*

² *School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland*

This paper will trace the development of civil asset forfeiture policies in the United States and Ireland and place them within the context of the general wars on drugs in the two countries. Since civil asset forfeiture originated in the U.S.A., the history of American federal policy will be briefly reviewed. We will then review the relevant section of the 1988 Vienna Convention, which encourages other nations to institute civil asset forfeiture policies in drug-related cases. The background for the introduction of civil asset forfeiture in Ireland in 1996 will then be described, with special focus on the establishment of the Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB). Ireland has been chosen as a case study as the country was the first in the world to set up a bureau able to pursue drug-related proceeds of crime in the civil arena. The Bureau has since influenced other countries to follow suit and set up agencies that rest on similar principles as CAB; however, the Irish treatment of drug-related proceeds of crime is still unique in its kind. Public opinion surrounding the creation of CAB was strongly influenced by media claims makers. This development will be analysed with social constructionist theory. Viewed as a drug control measure, it will be argued that the establishment of CAB was a continuation of the Irish war on drugs.

This paper will build upon the civil asset forfeiture paper Professor Jensen presented at the 1999 annual meetings of the ESSD in Vienna and Ms. Johnsson's doctoral thesis.

A018 **Maptask as a new method in qualitative drug research**

4th October, morning

Kaló, Zsuzsa – Rácz, József

Institute for Psychology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary

We used a modified linguistic tool, the maptask to explore the ways of intravenous drugtakers reaching low-threshold services. Maptask is traditionally used as a method of discourse analysis or analyzing dialogues linguistically. The modified maptask consisted real plots (home, needle-exchange service, hospital, earning money, dealer etc.) and monologues of the daily routine were expected while drawing lines between the plots. A pilot study was done between January and April 2008. 30 maptasks were completed by intravenous drug-takers reaching needle-exchange services. The narratives of the daily routine (from home, to the needle-exchange service) were transcribed and coded. The codes were made on two levels: on the level of performance (the exact routes) and on competence (how they express it linguistically). We concluded the narrative scripts and evolved the exact circumstances for using maptask. This new method is more efficient for answering focused questions than a survey and less complicated and needs less money and time than an interview.

A033 **Cultural orientation and teenage drug use: Cross-national differences between the UK, Sweden and Greece**

3rd October, morning

Kalogeraki, Stefania

Social Medicine Unit, University of Crete, Crete, Greece.

Recent research findings emphasize the detrimental effects of specific cultural trends (such as individualism) on problem behaviours including drug use.

Objectives:

To examine the types of drugs used among teenagers in cultures characterised as more individualistic (such as the UK) and/or collectivist ones (such as Greece or Sweden).

Methodology:

Cross-sectional school population survey (1999 ESPAD-European School Project on Alcohol and Drugs) based on standardized methodological procedures.

Participants:

Representative samples of a total sample of 8,486 high school students (15-16 years old) from the UK, Sweden and Greece.

Measurements:

Anonymous self-administered questionnaire. The drug types (life-time use of marijuana, LSD, crack, cocaine, ecstasy, heroin and magic mushrooms) are measured with the indicator of drug severity derived from descriptive and Categorical Principal Components Analysis (CATPCA). The indicator reflects the effects of the drugs used, from less to more severe ones (i.e., non-addictive or addictive) including four categories; no drug use, soft, hallucinants and opiates.

Results:

Multinomial regressions report that British teenagers are more likely to take soft, hallucinant and opiate drugs than their Swedish and Greek peers. Non-significant differences are found for the Greek and Swedish teenagers.

Conclusions:

Research suggests that the UK is the most individualistic culture in Europe and shows higher levels of behavioural problems including drug use. Future research should examine thoroughly the association of cultural trends (such as individualism) and drug use. Public policies targeted at eliminating the negative impact of individualistic trends may contribute to a decline in drug use in countries, such as the UK, where the drug problem is more acute.

A025 **The relationship between early onset of cannabis use and negative consequences: an international comparative study**

3rd October, morning

Kraus, Ludwig – Baumeister, Sebastian – Pabst, Alexander

IFT Institute for Therapy Research, Munich, Germany

Aims:

The prevalence of cannabis use in Europe has been increased over the last decades ¹. There is evidence that the age of first cannabis experience has shifted towards younger ages ^{2, 3}. The reasons for this shift and the consequences in terms of the relationship between early onset and cannabis related problems are less well known. In order to investigate the impact of early onset on negative consequences different cultural backgrounds and different developments of cannabis use need to be taken into account. This will be done by analysing data on cannabis onset and drug-related problems across a number of European states.

Methods:

Data will come from the European School Survey on Alcohol and other Dugs (ESPAD). The ESPAD study is an European survey among more than 35 states using the same target population, sampling technique and questionnaire in order to make data as comparable as possible. In 2003 adolescents born in 1987, i.e. aged 15 to 16 years old, and attending regular schools have been interrogated about their drug and alcohol behaviour.

Analysis:

Data on age of onset and the relationship between early onset and negative consequences will be analysed and compared across a number of EU countries. Using regression analysis and multi-level modeling correlates such as availability, level of cannabis use, peer group involvement, drug use patterns, and sociodemographic characteristics will be investigated.

¹ European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (2006). Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in the European Union 2005. Lisbon: European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction.

² Monshouwer, K., Smit, F., de Graaf, R., van Os, J., & Vollebergh, W. (2005), "First cannabis use: does onset shift to younger ages? Findings from 1988 to 2003 from the Dutch National School Survey on Substance Use", *Addiction* (7), 963-970.

³ Kraus L. & Augustin, R. (submitted). Cannabis use in Germany: Has age of first experience shifted to younger ages?

A027 **Harm reduction at the party scene in Hungary**

Kun, Bernadette^{1,2} – **Demetrovics, Zsolt**^{1,2}

2nd October, afternoon

¹ *Eötvös Lorand University, Addiction Research Unit, Budapest, Hungary*

² *National Institute for Drug Prevention, Budapest, Hungary*

Background:

From the second half of the 90s, drug use became an increasing problem in the Hungarian recreational setting. However, beside one NGO program providing help to drug users in the party scene not much has been done during this period. The first relevant initiative is dated back to 2000, when as a response to this problem a co-operation was realized among different representatives of the field. This initiative resulted in regular meetings of club-owners, representatives of police and municipality, experts on law and addiction problems, social workers and finally the “Safe Entertainment Venues” Program has been established.

Objectives:

The goal of our study was to explore the attitude of those having different roles on this scene about this program and about harm reduction services in general in the recreational setting.

Method:

A national qualitative study (Demetrovics and Racz, 2008) was carried out in Budapest and 9 other cities. Structured interviews were made on the experiences, opinions and attitudes on the above issue. Participants were social/outreach workers (who provide help on scene), emergency services and owners and employees of discos and clubs (e.g. program organizers, disc jockeys, security personnel, etc.).

Results:

The study pointed out that denial of the drug problem and negative attitudes of the owners and managers of clubs are often important barriers to realize interventions in order to minimize drug related harm. Owners and managers often emphasize that the problem depends on external factors such as family background, bad legislation policy etc., and they would also rather welcome solutions independent of the party scene. Expectations expressed toward club owners and runners in order to reduce drug related harm often considered as unnecessary or even harmful. Conflict of pro-profit and non-profit of approach is also identified. On the other side steps has to be taken in order to reduce the possible stigmatization of places which do introduce drug prevention or harm reduction programs.

A012 **The point of view of the adolescent in front of cocaine. Discourses and attitudes about cocaine consumption**

3rd October, afternoon

Martínez Oró, David Pere^{1,2}

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²*Open University of Catalonia (UOC), Barcelona, Spain*

Objective: To understand social and personal factors affect by adolescents when confronted to drug issues, especially cocaine. Also understand the social mechanisms which lead to acceptance or reject drug consumption.

Specific Objectives.

- Analyze risk perception about drug consumption.
- Determine which contexts and social situations are propitious to cocaine initiation and consumption.
- Understand how group norms influence drug consumption guidelines and patterns for adolescents.
- Understand the adolescent discourses that explain why cocaine is Spain's second most consumed illegal drug
- Elucidate which factors determine the choice of starting drug-consumption or not.

Methodology: This research has been subsidize by the National Programme about Drugs (PNSD) of Spanish' Health Ministry. We used a qualitative methodology. The principal method used was linguistic. We used a discussion-group technique. We realized eight discussion groups in eight Spanish cities. The results were obtained through a discourse analysis. The discussion group participants were chosen in a way to reflect different social characteristics of adolescents.

Results

- **The importance of free-time and partying**, caused by the rare expectancies of the future
- A young person's **group of friends is determinant** in the initiation of drug consumption.
- The extreme **normalization** of drug consumption in the context of youth parties.
- Spanish adolescents' high accessibility to buy cocaine.
- The **psychosocial differences** between girls and boys towards cocaine consumption.
- The **low perception of risk**, generated by the illusion that "bad things only happen to others".
- The **contradiction of effects caused by drugs**, generated by the educative discourses that don't conform to reality.
- Young people express what we could call a "**liberalism of the body**" produced by the normalization of drug consumption.

Conclusions: To conclude, we can say that nowadays adolescents are a product of the consumers' society. Their identity is created by free-time and consumption products. Illegal drugs are an ingredient for parties because they are easily accessible and their consumption doesn't raise alarms or preoccupation. We can say that they are normalized. The perception of risk is low and there tends to be an illusionary opinion about drugs. Girls are getting closer everyday to drug consumption.

A037 **The Onset of Heroin Use among ‘High Risk’ Youth in Ireland: An Ethno-epidemiological Approach**

4th October, morning

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Despite a leveling-off in heroin uptake rates since the peak of Ireland’s 1980s opiate epidemic, Irish drug surveillance data point to a sustained incidence of heroin use amongst marginalized youth. Although available epidemiological data have played an important role in monitoring trends in heroin use and the prevalence and range of medical consequences (HIV, HBV and HCV) associated with injecting drug use, little is known about the social course of initiation into heroin use or about the risk environments, economic exchanges and social groups in which youth initiate injection. This study aimed to address gaps in previous research on heroin use in Ireland through the adoption of an ethno-epidemiological framework. Conceptually, the research is informed by Anthropological ethnography, drawing theoretically from systems ecology and incorporating social, behavioral and environmental variables in understanding both community and individual health outcomes. The study set out to recruit 40 young people between the age of 18 and 25 years who initiated heroin use within the last four years. Efforts were made to recruit youth from across a spectrum of relative housing statuses, including youth who are homeless (living on the streets), in temporary shelter care or have stable housing. Building in this kind of theoretical variability into the sample provided the basis for understanding the role of housing status in the initiation and maintenance of heroin use and injection risk. Sampling and recruitment followed a targeted sampling approach, using information from preliminary ethnographic mapping for the purpose of locating natural settings in which the target population could be found and contacted, including a variety of street venues where drug users congregate. Data collection proceeded using many of the approaches routinely employed in Anthropological fieldwork, including ethnographic observation and life history interviewing. The paper discusses the methodological merits and potential contribution of an ethno-epidemiological approach to furthering current understanding of heroin initiation (and other complex drug transitions). Particular attention is given to the development of social and epidemiological descriptions of the types of physical environments and social groups in which youth initiate use, the administration practices they employ, their rationale for employing these strategies (particularly injection) and their experience in drug-related help-seeking. Some lessons for the conduct of such research in a wider European context are discussed.

A017 **Researching Adolescent Drug Use In Post Conflict Belfast: Challenges for Qualitative Researchers**

4th October, morning

McCarroll, Lianne

Institute of Child Care Research, Queens University Belfast, Belfast, Northern Ireland

The literature suggests that risk and protective factors of adolescent substance use exist in multiple domains including family, school, peer groups, and neighbourhoods. It could therefore be assumed that effective prevention should involve a comprehensive approach to identifying factors within the neighbourhood or community in which adolescent drug users live. To date much of the research on the influence of neighbourhood factors has focused primarily on the effects of social deprivation but less attention has been paid to the effects of perceived local neighbourhood influences on individual-level use of illicit drugs during adolescence. This presentation will discuss ethical and methodological challenges that arose when undertaking an ethnographic study of substance use with young people in two areas of Belfast, Northern Ireland. The strategies developed for overcoming these challenges will be discussed. Methods of data collection will also be presented along with some preliminary findings to highlight these issues. This includes issues that arose around consent, rapport with participants and trust along with confidentiality and child protection issues. These stages of the research highlighted a number of issues that demonstrate challenges for qualitative research in a post conflict society that continues to exhibit social and political divisions. This was reflected in the access strategies and preliminary analysis which will be discussed in the presentation.

Two areas identified as high in social deprivation and adolescent drug use were targeted for inclusion in the research. The ethical and methodological challenges of accessing the research sample including a hierarchy of formal and informal gatekeepers will be discussed. Once these challenges were overcome data collection was undertaken through a triangulation of mixed methods involving face to face interviews, focus groups and photographs taken by the young people that reflected their perception of their neighbourhood and how they spent their free time. Finally, the geographical context of the research, based in two areas that were now in post conflict from the political 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland were situated on either side of the historical divide of the Northern Ireland conflict. This situation caused some stress not only for the research but personally for the researcher. Some of these issues may be unique when compared with other cities throughout Europe. These propositions will be discussed in the presentation.

A009 **Arriving at the ‘party’ early? An exploration of the early onset use of ecstasy and cocaine.**

3rd October, morning

McCrystal, Patrick

*Institute of Child Care Research, School of Sociology Social Policy and Social Work,
Queens University Belfast, Belfast, UK*

Historically the patterns of ecstasy and cocaine use have been linked to social events and affluent or high public profile users which has led some to describe them as ‘party’ drugs. However in recent years research has begun to suggest that the patterns of use of these drugs may be changing with increased levels of their use amongst teenagers. This presentation explores the use of ecstasy and cocaine amongst school aged teenagers through an examination of prevalence estimates of these drugs obtained from the Belfast Youth Development Study (BYDS), a longitudinal study of the onset and development of adolescent drug use between the age of 11-18 years, within a European context. The results from this study show that the levels of use of ecstasy and cocaine between the age of 14-16 years were higher than the prevalence estimates reported in existing studies across Europe. The presentation will discuss findings from the fifth year of the BYDS when the young people were aged 15/16 years and explore these within the context of contemporary findings across Europe including recent ESPAD surveys. At this stage 13% of those participating in the BYDS reported that they had used ecstasy at least once, with 7 per cent of the sample reporting cocaine use at least once by this age. When compared with findings from across Europe through reference to the ESPAD surveys (1995-2007) the levels of use of these drugs reported in the BYDS were comparatively higher than the levels of their use for same aged young people living across Europe.

These findings may raise questions about the extent to which we may be witnessing a change in the patterns of use of ‘party’ drugs. The presentation will undertake a critical reflection of these trends and explore some possible explanations for these findings, for example the possibility that we may be seeing a regional (i.e. Northern Ireland based) effect for ecstasy and cocaine use, or the extent to which these drugs are now becoming part of the contemporary adolescent drug scene.

A044 **From domestic handcraft to global market economy. Evolution of drug supply in Poland**

2nd October, afternoon

Moskalewicz, Jacek

Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology

The paper's aim is to trace evolution of drug supply in Poland in last 30 years. In the late 1970's, a drug called Polish heroin or *kompot* became a drug of choice among Polish drug addicts. *Kompot* was a home-made product made of domestic poppy straw and composed of variety opiates, including opium, codeine, morphine and heroin. Injection was its major route of administration. Both availability and affordability of raw material were high as poppy cultivation was not under any control and virtually every second farm had its small poppy field. As home-technology was easy and cheap, practically every addict could make *kompot* at home for himself or for a group of his close friends. The drug was usually offered to others in anticipation of reciprocation, sometimes in exchange of other goods and services. Selling and buying were seldom indeed. Drug market was in a toddling stage. Polish drug legislation adopted in 1985 happened to be very liberal as drug possession was not penalized no matter its amount. In result, extent of criminalization of drug culture was very low.

Sudden turn to market economy in the beginning of the 1990's strongly affected drug supply. Wider opening of national borders and first of all convertibility of Polish currency stimulated international exchange. Imported drugs, mainly cannabis and brown heroin appeared on the Polish market. In younger generations of addicts brown heroin replaced *kompot*, which nevertheless survived among older consumers. Drug dealing became increasingly profitable and drug market consolidated with increasing control from criminal organizations. Former, friendly exchange was replaced by commercial, market relationships. New drug legislation adopted in 1997 penalising drug possession reinforced further criminalization of drug abuse. Drug addicts become criminals while criminals increasingly consume drugs. Both sub-cultures overlap. Number of drug-related crimes, not including acquisition crimes, increased fifteen times: from several thousand in the mid-1990's to more than 80 thousand in 2007.

A lesson learnt is that drug abuse and its economics are deeply interwoven into economic, political and cultural fabrics of the society. Apparently inevitable repressive measures seem to be counter-productive.

A024 **The comeback of an ‘old’ drug: the availability of opium in Belgium**

2nd October, afternoon

Muys, Marjolein

Institute for Social Drug Research, University of Gent, Gent, Belgium

The objective of this paper is to provide information on the availability and access to opium in Belgium. It addresses its availability through informal networks set up by Iranian migrants. This information was gathered in the framework of a study on Iranian migrants' substance use patterns.

Data collection occurred through ethnographic fieldwork methods. Starting snowball chains (24) through different channels (low threshold drug treatment, refugee reception, refugee organisations and social services), contact has been established with 129 Iranians, most of whom were in Belgium as a refugee or as a student.

Empirical results on opium availability are outlined, addressing both the demand and the supply side of the opium market in Belgium. Exclusion mechanisms, peer pressure and pre-migration opium use give rise to a high demand for opium among Iranians. At the supply side, it is important to consider that Iran is located on the opium transport routes between Afghanistan and Western Europe. Opium is brought to Belgium by airplane, by ship and by truck drivers. Both criminal networks (also involved in human smuggling and weapon traffic) and small retailers (looking for 'easy' money) are involved in distribution. Opium is reported to be relatively expensive in Europe, so financially deprived opium consumers are vulnerable to start selling opium so they can afford their own use. Most Iranians involved in opium distribution are reported not to be afraid from formal drug control 'as long as opium use remains among the Iranians'. Opium is easily accessible for Iranians in Belgium. However, Iranian respondents mentioned it is also consumed among other (Middle Eastern) migrant groups and Belgians. Opium is told to be easily available in other Western European countries as well. This study among Iranian migrants has exhibited the re-entering of an 'old' drug on the European market.

To conclude, the distribution and consumption of opium among Iranians in Belgium are framed within the concepts of 'drug culture' and 'social exclusion'. A dynamic concept of culture leaves room for changes in people's 'culturally sustained' patterns of use. However, due to exclusion mechanisms in the host country, a large proportion of recently arrived migrants is not given the opportunity to form a culturally hybrid identity. This also counts for drug use: there is little cultural exchange, so the formal availability of 'Western' substances is less important. Driven to the margins of society, opium use becomes a cultural marker and an alternative lifestyle.

A022 **The attempt to dissolve the open drug scene in Oslo: adaptive and non-adaptive responses**

2nd October, afternoon

Olsen, Hilgunn

Norwegian Institute for Alcohol and Drug Research, Oslo, Norway

The capital of Norway, Oslo, has like other European cities for many years had a problem with an open drug scene, but the summer of 2004 it was dissolved. It is the aim of this paper to discuss the aspects of the process leading up to the dissolution of the drug scene, mainly focusing on the approach taken by the police and local politicians. How did the politicians manage to sway the public their way, and in what matter was important decisions made regarding the dissolution of the drug scene? It will be argued that the process that took place in Oslo shows similarities with that of 'authoritarian populism', recognized as responses carried out by democratic states in situations of social crisis, legitimizing increasingly repressive punitive laws and sanctions. In other European cities, public nuisance has been a vital element in the decision to split up the open drug scene. This aspect received little attention in Norway, and was rejected by central politicians. Nevertheless it was present in media and discussions on a lower level. A pull factor argument was used as a replacement for the public nuisance argument, to prevent a debate on humanity in relation to public nuisance features. As history shows, the pull factor argument was easily swallowed by the public, and impossible to disagree with. Measures taken to dissolve Oslo's drug scene is discussed in accordance to the concept of "dual track drug policy" in Finland (Hakkarainen et al. 2007), based on what Garland has termed adaptive and non-adaptive responses to crime (Garland 2001).

A008 **GHB and its precursor GBL: An emerging trend case study**

3rd October, afternoon

Olszewski, Deborah¹ – **Hillebrand, Jennifer**² – **Sedefov, Roumen**³

¹ *Epidemiology Unit, European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Lisbon, Portugal*

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This paper on GHB and its precursor GBL contributes to a series of case studies that provide practical experience for the development of a European system to provide a better understanding of emerging drug trends and contribute to the development of optimal responses to them. Recently, direct consumption of GBL has been reported in some EU Member States and the ease with which this substance can be acquired allows potentially much easier and cheaper access than that usually found in illicit drug markets in the EU. EU country reports have indicated an increase in the use of GHB/GBL among some sub-populations, settings and geographical areas. This case study approach involves the triangulation of information from wide variety of sources/ 'leading-edge indicators'. A leading-edge indicator is defined as an indicator that can be considered particularly sensitive to change i.e. those indicators that respond first to changes - or harmful consequences - in drug consumption patterns. Such sensitivity means that leading-edge indicators are, by definition, not very robust and may be unreliable in the medium term if they are viewed in isolation from other data sources.

Media reports of the covert use of GHB in recreational settings to facilitate sexual assault brought the drug into the spotlight around the year 2000. However forensic evidence shows the more common presence of alcohol and benzodiazepines in cases of reported sexual assault. Evidence for this type of crime is notoriously difficult to obtain and true incidence may be higher due to non or delayed reporting and forensic evidence is only possible if samples are collected and processed in a standardised and timely manner. Issues about how to define and measure DFSA are inextricably linked with wider issues relating to sexual assault and marked by confusion about an individual's capacity to consent.

A032 **A meeting between two ideologies in Swedish compulsory treatment practice – total rehabilitation versus ”drägligt liv”?**

2nd October, afternoon

Palm, Jessica

SoRAD, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden

The Swedish handling of drug users includes compulsory treatment for 6 months, which has a long and unique history. The discourse includes the idea that when someone is not capable of taking care of him-/herself society has to intervene. Decisions about compulsory treatment are made by a local board of lay people, but in practice they act according to recommendations from the social services. It has been shown, however, that social workers/municipalities interpret and use the compulsory treatment law differently. Thus, the ways social workers reason about drug use and its handling is of great importance, not least for justice reasons when it comes to violations of integrity. It was the object of this study to understand local differences through the attitudes among social service staff to when, how and for whom compulsory treatment should be used. In the pre-study to this analysis it became clear that the perspective on harm reduction measures seemed to have a negative correlation to the perspective on compulsory treatment. Harm reduction measures have gained territory in Sweden but are still controversial. This analysis aims at contrasting these two perspectives against each other. The study also analyses the perspective on the individual and society that lay behind these two perspectives and what happens when the two meet. The data used in this analysis comes from interviews with social workers and observations of meetings with clients as well as other professionals in five municipalities in Sweden. The theory used is poststructuralist, meaning that there is not one truth to be found, rather an infinite amount of possible interpretations. The truths constructed by the social workers are deconstructed. But also theories on how social workers attitudes function are applied. Here a comparison with a Danish study of social workers has proved useful, since Denmark has an advanced harm reduction system in relation to Sweden. The analysis shows that the two perspectives stand against each other and that the old paternalistic compulsory treatment perspective is still rather strong in Sweden. However, the harm reduction approach placing responsibility for change on the autonomous individual in the foreground is gaining acceptance. Social workers tend to try and combine these perspectives although they seem contradictory. Finally, the financial situation of the municipalities seems to play an important role in how social workers reason and act in relation to drug users.

A038 **Cannabis cultivation in Finland**

2nd October, morning

Perälä, Jussi – Hakkarainen, Pekka

*STAKES National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health,
Helsinki, Finland*

Objectives. Objectives of this study are to give an overview about Finnish cannabis cultivation and its marketing.

Methodology. The study has started in the summer 2008. The study will be based on interviews with police representatives (3-5) and cannabis cultivators (minimum of 10) as well as preliminary investigation papers (concerning cannabis cultivation in whole Finland 2005-2006) and media coverage on the subject. Preliminary results are based on the data gathered for the Jussi Perälä's PhD study on drug markets in Helsinki, Finland.

Results. As in many other European countries cannabis cultivation in Finland has increased during the last ten years. According to the police authorities the Finnish cannabis cultivation is becoming more professionalized. Like in Western Europe, the organized crime offers money for people to grow crops. According to cultivators homegrown marijuana has higher status than hash. It is also more expensive than hash. International contacts are important to these homegrowers. Through Internet they are able to share the knowhow with the international growing communities. Finnish cannabis growers get their seeds not only by buying them from the Internet or from other cultivators but they also arrange trips to Amsterdam to get seeds and other cultivation stuff. In some ideological groups every member of the team makes this trip in turn. On the other hand the Finnish cannabis growers are very keen to develop their own products. Finnish cannabis cultivation can be seen as a segment of a line. On the other end there are the ideological growers and on the other end there are the business oriented growers. Other growers find themselves somewhere along this line.

Findings of this study will be discussed in relation to the results of European studies concerning cannabis cultivation (e.g. DeCorte, Potter).

A040 **Short scales to assess problematic cannabis use. A review of psychometric properties**

2nd October, afternoon

Piontek, Daniela¹ - **Kraus, Ludwig**¹ – **Klempova, Danica**²

¹ *IFT Institut für Therapieforchung, Munich, Germany*

² *European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, Lisbon, Portugal*

Objectives:

The purpose of this paper is to summarize the psychometric properties of four short screening scales to assess problematic forms of cannabis use: Severity of Dependence Scale (SDS), Cannabis Use Disorders Identification Test (CUDIT), Cannabis Abuse Screening Test (CAST) and Problematic Use of Marijuana (PUM).

Methodology:

A systematic computer-based literature search was conducted within the databases of PubMed, PsychINFO and Addiction Abstracts. A total of 12 publications reporting measures of reliability or validity were identified: 8 concerning SDS, 2 concerning CUDIT and one concerning CAST and PUM. Studies spanned adult and adolescent samples from different countries. General population as well as clinical samples were included.

Significant results:

All screening scales tended to have moderate to high internal consistency within general population and clinical samples (Cronbach's α ranging from .72 to .92). Test-retest reliability and item total correlation have been reported for SDS with acceptable results. Results of validation studies varied depending on study population and standards used for validity assessment, but generally sensitivity, specificity and predictive power are satisfactory. Standard diagnostic cut-off points that can be generalized to different populations do not exist for any scale.

Conclusions:

Short screening scales to assess problematic cannabis use seem to be a time and cost saving opportunity to identify at-risk persons prior to using more extensive diagnostic instruments. Nevertheless, further research is needed to assess the performance of the tests in different populations and in comparison to broader criteria of problematic cannabis use.

A015 **Socio-cultural and psychological aspects of LSD and “magic mushrooms” use in Germany**

3rd October, afternoon

Prepeliczay, Susanna

ARCHIDO, University Bremen, Bremen, Germany

Since the late 1990s, survey findings in “party drugs scene” settings indicate a comeback and rise of LSD and hallucinogenic mushrooms use among young people in Germany and other European countries, e.g. France, the UK or Netherlands. However, empirical knowledge about this contemporary trend remains limited, which is mostly perceived as a side effect of drug use within the dance clubbing environment.

The *objective* of this qualitative study is to explore the social contexts, users, functions, and patterns of LSD and psilocybin use within a constructivist perspective, considering the highly complex interrelationship of drug effects, individual and environmental factors. In order to understand related processes, to provide insights for harm reduction, and to identify issues for further research, it is necessary to obtain information about motivational and (sub)cultural aspects involved in the initiation, continuation and consequences of psychedelic drugs use.

Using qualitative *methodology*, 32 narrative interviews (equal gender distribution, mainly aged 20-35 years) with psychedelic drug users were conducted in four German states. The collected data were subjected to content analysis in several topic areas, including the subjective phenomenology of drug-induced mental states.

Results suggest the use of psychedelic drugs is largely independent of the “party drug scene”, although half of the sample is affiliated to alternative lifestyles and subcultures, given a large diversity of social backgrounds and a high proportion of 2/3 university students and graduates.

Consumption often ranges over many years and remains experimental or moderate for most interviewees, while 25% describe intensive, excessive or problematic use. Among the variety of reasons, two major motivational dimensions include hedonistic pleasure / entertainment, opposed to self exploration and the search for consciousness expansion. While hedonism or personal development serves as primary purpose for respectively one third of the sample, the remaining respondents combine both motivational aspects. Individual backgrounds and reactions as well as situational factors are found to strongly influence the character of subjective drug effects. Besides the predominantly positive experience accounts, one third of the sample reports a repeated incidence of “horror trips”. Various methods to actively modify the dynamics and phenomena of psychedelic states are described and applied by most persons while another third are unable to navigate likewise.

Many questions remain to be examined by future social research, preferably in a comparative perspective within European scope, and involving colleagues in other countries for a joint research project on the impact of psychedelic drugs use.

A007 **Attitudes and opinions of women drug users who are injected by other people**

3rd October, morning

Sheard, Laura

Leeds Institute of Health Sciences, Leeds, UK

Objectives

I outline significant themes which arose from women injecting drug users' narratives. These themes arose from a research study conducted with women who – for the most part - did not self administer their own injections and were injected by other people. Appropriate verbatim quotations will be used to demonstrate pertinent elements of women's accounts of being injected in relation to the specific themes of risk, sharing and cleanliness.

Methodology

Forty five women drug users were interviewed in depth about their experiences of receiving heroin and amphetamine drug injections from other people. The research took place in a Northern city and a central rural area. A grounded theory analysis was used. Rapport, trust, confidentiality and empathy all emerged as significant elements within the interview situation. Women were recruited from needles exchanges and drugs services and were purposively sampled. More detail will be given on how these hard to reach women were accessed, recruited and interviewed.

Results

Key findings are discussed surrounding the ideas of risk, 'sharing' and cleanliness. All women knew about the risk of blood borne virus transmission (such as HCV and HIV) via used needles but less women articulated the risk from used injecting equipment. Use of other injectors' pre-used needles was frowned upon and nearly all women were adamant they had never 'shared.' There was less stringency in relation to sharing of injecting equipment such as water, spoons and filters. A 'line of decency' appears to have been drawn between the sharing of needles and of equipment. This was further complicated depending on who the women injected with as they were more likely to 'share' with partners or close friends and less likely with associates or strangers. Consequently, notions of risk and BBV transmission are inherently contextual dependent on factors specific to individual relationship such as levels of trust and intimacy.

Women questioned the morals of others who used "dirty" needles and these people were considered repugnant. Furthermore, "dirty" people were marked out as carriers of disease. Cleanliness during the injection process was important for many women who provided accounts of themselves as 'clean' in contrast with "dirty" drug users. Women took care in deciding who should inject them and injectors with dirty or bloodstained hands were avoided as a very practical way of preventing infection. The works of Rosenbaum and Ettorre will be used to aid reflection on theoretical perspectives relating to the everyday lives of these women drug users. The wider context of this British research as applicable to European settings will be discussed.

Conclusions

It is evident that women injecting drug users' ideas concerning 'sharing' and cleanliness are complicated and rely on the precise context and situation in which women are injected. The risk of BBV transmission via used equipment should be highlighted and reinforced by drugs services.

A014 **Victims and entrepreneurs: agency constructions in narratives on heroin smuggling and dealing**

4th October, morning

Snertingdal, Mette Irmgard

Norwegian Institute for Alcohol and Drug Research, Oslo, Norway

Objectives and method: The purpose of this study was to assess how heroin smugglers and dealers present themselves and their illegal activity. Based on twenty-six qualitative face-to-face interviews with imprisoned heroin dealers and smugglers, and using narrative analysis, I explore the ways in which identity construction work can be observed as occurring within these narratives; how the offenders construct their moral agency, both as protagonists in their storytelling and narrators in the here-and-now of the interview.

Key findings and argumentation: The basic logic of different narratives was first defined. Additionally the narratives were categorized according to what the offenders presented as their key motivation for smuggling and dealing heroin. The “vocabulary of motives” comprised four different narratives that varied with respect to moral, ethical and causal *meaning*. These four narratives were: victim of unsuccessful integration, victim of heroin addiction, victim of difficult childhood and the entrepreneur narrative.

In analysing these narratives as different expressions of agency, the following arguments were made: The stories of the offenders do not simply reflect their prior action, or their “genuine” experience of these actions, rather the stories are told in hindsight where the *meaning* of different events is created and different presentations of self are made. Generally, narratives of crimes are linked to diverse moral discourses and notions of “good and bad” and may provide insight into the construction of self-identity and moral agency within deviant groups. In this study I argue that the narratives are constructed in two distinct ways; first, the framing of the interview, the contact, rapport and dialog between me and the offenders inform the stories being told, secondly, the offenders use culturally available schemas /repertoire in their self- presentation. These schemas are learnt through interaction and can operate at different levels from points of etiquette to deep values or unconscious binary systems. For the sake of clarity, it is not the first time the offenders tell their stories. The offenders have previously tried out their narratives on inmates, prosecutor, defence attorneys, social workers, etc. and integrated or rejected the prior responses into their storytelling. Furthermore, parts of their stories have been tested in court. Neither of these social constructive arguments (the situatedness of knowledge and the cultural schemas) pertains only to studying heroin smuggling and dealing, but they are rather general assumptions found within a constructivist paradigm. What might be specific for studying drug crime is the “potency” of the juridical discourse in constituting crime narratives. Although I went into the prisons with strategies to avoid the logic of the court room, the offenders` stories are structured around core binary oppositions in the legal rhetoric: truth or lie, guilty or not guilty, responsible or irresponsible, dependent or independent.

A020 **Online Drug Research – New Ways To Explore Recreational Drug Users**

3rd October, afternoon

Stetina, Birgit Ursula – Jagsch, Reinhold – Kryspin-Exner, Ilse
Research and Training Practice, Vienna University, Vienna, Austria

Objectives:

Recreational drug use and party drug use are some of the most discussed phenomena in the media and scientific research. Different substances (partially yet unknown) become prevalent every year; exploration and scientific research are getting more complex. Information on substances, risks and benefits of their use are easily available just one click away on the internet. Information on effects of various substances can be found online on popular websites that focus on recreational use of drugs. Even official regulators and organisations use the Internet to get aware of new drug trends.

The aim of the present study was to determine the appropriateness of the internet to examine the hidden population of recreational drug users and the potential of online drug research.

Methodology:

An international cross-sectional online-study was carried out surveying recreational drug users from German- and English-speaking countries. 9268 unpaid volunteers (72% male) participated in the study and filled out an online questionnaire. The online obtained data was evaluated by means of statistical inference and descriptive procedures.

Significant Results:

Over 99% of the sample had used ecstasy at least once in their lives and over 94% of the participants reported a polyvalent consumption of ecstasy with other substances (e.g. nicotine 79% cannabis 91%, amphetamine/methamphetamine 70%, ...).

The study population collected online seems to differ in many variables from the “usual” clinical study population (e.g. age). In the present study nearly 2000 users (about 11%) were 30+ years old. This consumer group is usually even more inconspicuous in society and those people are not the usual clubbers (and not the one explored in clinical studies). Results also indicate that there appears to be a great degree of trust in online information and a strong use of the data highway (more than 72%) for getting information on substances were a common ground.

Conclusions:

It could be that the present sample of recreational drug users online is “more representative” for the group of recreational drug users. Because of the lack of knowledge regarding the concurrent general population this question will remain unclear. The specific benefits of online drug research regarding recreational drug use include the opportunity to explore hidden populations which seems to be very useful for research and furthermore prevention. Epidemiological studies on the population of recreational drug users can be administered easier, cost- and time-effective, country- and even continent-overlapping.

A010 **Cannabis Reclassification from the User Perspective in Northern Ireland**

2nd October, morning

Stevenson, Caral

School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, Queens University Belfast, Belfast, UK

Objectives

The study focused on the reclassification (cannabis was reclassified from a Class B to a Class C substance, which means lower penalties for possession) of cannabis in the United Kingdom and users experiences of reclassification in Northern Ireland. The extent to which formal social control affected use before and after reclassification and to what extent reclassification has added to normalisation debates.

Methodology

Data were collected through in-depth and semi-structured interviews with 38 current and former cannabis users between 18 and 59 years of age. Respondents were collected through a snowball sample from an initial base of core contacts throughout Northern Ireland. Interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed. The sample included 22 males and 16 females of varying class status and economic background. The sample criteria for recruitment were 1) 18 years of age or older, and 2) used cannabis for at least a six month period at some stage since initiation. Current users were defined as people who met these criteria and had used cannabis in the six months prior to interview. Former users were defined as people who met these two criteria and who had stopped using cannabis between one and two years prior to the interview.

Results

The data revealed that there were three types of response to reclassification: 1) Positivity, where cannabis users welcomed the move to reclassify cannabis and were aware of the penalties involved with reclassification, 2) No knowledge, where cannabis users were not aware that cannabis had been reclassified and they felt that regardless of this the law had no impact on their use, 3) Confusion over penalties, where cannabis users knew about reclassification but were unaware or confused about the penalties associated with the change in legal status. Drug use behaviours appeared to be affected by social control and the majority of respondents relied on techniques of neutralization to explain or justify their behaviour.

Conclusions

Daily users and working class respondents were more likely to express the view that the law had little or no impact on them. Non-daily users, the professionally employed, parents and middle class respondents felt pleased about reclassification. Respondents had considerably less knowledge about the implications of reclassification than those in England and Wales¹. The reclassification of cannabis tended to serve as a reason to employ techniques of neutralization. Respondents redefined illegality and used techniques of neutralization to further facilitate cannabis use. The reclassification of cannabis has appeared to have contributed to drug normalisation debates where the use of cannabis has been suggested to have become increasingly normalized within society.

¹ May, T., Duffy, M., Warburton, H. & Hough, M. 2007, Policing Cannabis as a Class C Drug: An Arresting Change. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation: Institute of Criminal Policy Research, Kings College London, York.

A005 **Effect of Imprisonment on Injecting Drug Use**

3rd October, morning

Tompkins, Charlotte¹ – Waterman, Mitch²

¹*Leeds Institute of Health Sciences, Leeds, UK*

²*Institute of Psychological Sciences, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK*

Objectives

This presentation will discuss detailed research which explored what being sent to prison meant for men who had been injecting illicit drugs before their last sentence. The presentation seeks to highlight the suitability of qualitative research to contribute and reveal the thoughts and feelings of a marginalised and difficult to access group. Specific objectives will be to:

- Identify the drug using practices of men before and during imprisonment
- Examine the differing thoughts, feelings and opinions of different men regarding their drug use and being sent to prison
- Identify how the men's different thoughts and feelings influenced subsequent drug using behaviours
- Distinguish between those who continued with their illicit drug use whilst in prison and those who did not and propose reasons for these differences.

Methodology

In depth interviews were conducted with 30 men who were recruited from a range of community services. All men had injecting drug use histories and had all been in prison. Interviews were transcribed and analysed using grounded theory.

Significant Results

As would be expected, imprisonment meant different things for different men in terms of their thoughts and feelings towards drugs. Whilst imprisonment was a time to contemplate drug use for all men, there were differences in subsequent drug using practices based on numerous factors. Whilst some men chose to use prison as a time to abstain from illicit drug use, others continued with their use. Whilst at the time of abstract submission only an interim analysis has been performed, the presentation will be able to take a fuller analysis into account and will identify particular themes and how they link together to influence attitudes and behaviour. Such themes are expected to include those such as the relationships with other prisoners, the availability of drugs and the anticipation of future drug and criminal activity. These themes will be supported with quotations from interview participants. The quotations will also provide a flavour of the language used and the way the men constructed both their prison and drug using experiences.

Conclusions

Detailed interview work is revealing in this complex area. The control of addiction, the propensity to re-offend, the culture of injecting drug users in prison, the nature of criminal activity frequently presented as 'work', the changing nature of drug users' attitudes to their drug use, criminal activity, and 'chaotic' lifestyles emerged as areas worthy of further work.

A030 **Are children and youth more vulnerable to substance use?**

3rd October, morning

Uhl, Alfred

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Commonly in history psychoactive substances were not perceived as major problems and consumed rather uncritically by adults and children. At the turn to the 20th century heroin, morphine and cocaine were used as everyday medicine, Austrian farmers used suckers containing opium to keep their babies quiet and beer and wine to increase their children's health. In early 20th century alcohol experiments were performed on young school children to study the impact on behaviour and memory. In the first decades of the 20th century the perspectives of societies towards substance started to change dramatically. Today's illicit drugs were declared illegal, That alcohol and nicotine should be kept away from children and adolescents turned into a truism not needing any justification.

When early substance abuse prevention in the 1960s, focusing on deterrent information, controls and sanctions had failed, and after the WHO in Ottawa had proposed a shift in health promotion from paternalistic control-strategies to democratic-emancipatory approaches, a new generation of preventionists evolved, in need for convincing arguments to justify their positions, since uncritically repeating truisms was not compatible with an honest dialogue and with increasingly informed and emancipated youngsters. There was always rather good evidence available that excessive substance use causes various physical, social and psychological problems, but there was no good evidence supporting that moderate consumption could cause serious problems and that youths were highly more vulnerable to substance effects than older persons.

In the context of an increasing war against tobacco use, neo prohibitionist tendencies towards alcohol control in Europe and an increasing movement to redefine cannabis as very dangerous substance, this issue became even more important. Advocacy against substance use is much easier when it targets children and youths rather than self-dependent adults, and here it helps to be able to produce sound evidence going beyond equivocal epidemiological correlations.

Recently more and more experts claim that good evidence for the harmful effects of drugs has been produced with animal experiments (comparing effects in adolescent vs. adult animals) and with some brain imaging studies. My presentation deals with some of the new results and points out that the findings are far less conclusive than the authors suggest and many readers believe. Imaging techniques and animal studies are very expensive – and to prove effects with just a few subjects requires doses and procedures that have little in common with the situation they intend to investigate.

A029 **Influence of gender on party drugs**

3rd October, afternoon

Van Havere, Tina

Association for Alcohol and other Drug problems (VAD), Brussels, Belgium

A random sample of visitors of dance events, clubs, and rock festivals in Belgium (Flanders) was selected to complete an anonymous survey regarding their use of “party” drugs (alcohol, cannabis, xtc, cocaine, amphetamines) and patterns of going out. This paper investigates gender differences concerning the use of substances and explanations for observed discrepancies.

Various studies in the club scene have shown that men are more likely than women to use illicit drugs (cf. Measham et al., 2001; Parsons et al., 2006), although these gender differences may vary across countries and regions. For example, southern European countries tend to report higher male-to-female ratios than countries in the north of Europe (EMCDDA, 2006a).

Epidemiological studies show a different type of use between men and women: fewer women use drugs, and they generally do so less frequently than men (Calafat et al., 1999; Measham et al., 2001). Moreover, patterns and contexts of party drug use between males and females may differ, regardless of the prevalence rates between gender (Parsons et al., 2006).

On the other hand, recent publications seem to question the extent of gender differences (Isralowitz & Rawson, 2006; EMCDDA, 2006a). Some studies indicate that men’s and women’s drug use patterns are converging (Parker et al., 1998; Holmila & Raitasalo, 2005; Zilberman et al., 2003), while Akram & Galt (1999) didn’t find any gender differences in their research in clubs.

In the presentation I will give the results of the gender differences in my study group and some discussion points from the literature.

A028 **Multiple Drug Use of Consumers of the Open Drug Scene in Germany**

2nd October, afternoon

Verthein, Uwe – Thane, Katja

Centre for Interdisciplinary Addiction Research of Hamburg University, University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf, Department of Psychiatry, Hamburg, Germany

In order to describe the patterns of use in open drug scenes in Germany, a study will be carried out among drug users in the scenes and in the vicinity of low-threshold institutions close to the drug scenes in Summer 2008. The focus will be on the prevalence of poly drug use, routes of administration and risk behaviour as well as on the utilisation of help services for drug users. The results will be compared to previous studies with a special focus on heroin, cocaine and crack use. Like it was done in previous studies (Verthein et al. 2001) cluster analysis will be carried out in order to identify consumption pattern groups. These groups will be analysed with respect to health and social situation.

Verthein U., Haasen C., Prinzleve M., Degkwitz P. & Krausz M. (2001) Cocaine use and the utilisation of drug help services by consumers of the open drug scene in Hamburg. *European Addiction Research* 7: 176-183

A001 **Retail markets for cannabis – users, sharers, go-betweenes, stash dealers**

2nd October, morning

Werse, Bernd

Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität (University of Frankfurt), Frankfurt, Germany

The aim of this presentation is to shed some light on the ways of purchasing cannabis among recreational users: How can the distribution structures in the small-scale business be described? Which informal rules can be observed and how are they linked to the conditions of drug prohibition?

Two surveys have been analysed for this paper – biographical interviews with socially integrated users, conducted for a study on recreational drug use (n=169), and quantitative data taken from the school survey, which is part of the Local Drug Monitoring System in Frankfurt (n≈1500 in each year; 2002-2006). These quantitative data show that the vast majority of cannabis-experienced respondents report getting cannabis products from friends or acquaintances. However, most of the occasional users don't actually *buy* the drug at all, but use it only through sharing joints of other users. The higher the level of use, the higher the percentage of users with regular private dealers.

The results from biographical interviews with adult cannabis users confirm the important role of sharing cannabis products as well as the high level of drug distribution that takes place within networks of fellow users. Heavy users often sell drugs – for the most part only cannabis – to some of their friends without considering themselves as “drug dealers”. Since their clientele is limited to a few trustworthy persons, they only bear a minimum risk of being exposed to criminal prosecution.

Considering the structure of illicit drug markets in general, a closer look at the lowest level of distribution might be fruitful: the go-betweenes, i.e. drug distributors within peer groups of users; a group that is rarely mentioned in the relevant scientific literature. Hence, beyond the professional illicit drug trade, there seems to be an enormous network of smallest-scale distributors with special informal rules. Sale and purchase can only partially be regarded in terms of economic rationality. The observations presented lead to the conclusion that the conditions of drug prohibition promote heavy use, because moderate users mostly rely on intensively using friends who satisfy their own demand by selling small portions of cannabis to others. Although the data come from surveys in Germany, there is evidence that there are similar informal rules and market structures in other European countries, at least those with a comparable drug policy and population structure. Analogies as well as some differences regarding the situation in other regions are pointed out.

A034 **Coffeeshops and local politics**

2nd October, morning

Wouters, Marije

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Within Europe, the Netherlands have a unique position in that retail sale of cannabis is officially tolerated in so called coffee shops. However, most Dutch municipalities have no coffee shops at all: in 2005 the Netherlands had 729 coffee shops, which were located in only 22% of the municipalities (Bieleman et al., 2005). The municipalities without coffee shops are mostly small. This raises the question whether coffee shops are a matter of demand: do more inhabitants inadvertently lead to the presence of (one or more) coffee shops? Or could other factors play a role? The regulation of cannabis sales through coffee shops is a national drug policy; however, the local councils may determine whether or not they allow them. In the Netherlands, as in several other European countries – for instance Denmark (Amussen & Moesby-Johansen, 2004) – there has been a shift towards a more repressive drug policy. The number of coffee shops has diminished by about 50% over the ten last years. However, there are marked differences between the different political parties. In our study, the national political parties were divided into three groups: those who support repressive drug policies, those who oppose them and neutral parties. Subsequently, we analysed the political constellation of local councils, and studied the relationship with the presence and the number of coffee shops. We will present the findings of our study and discuss them within the framework of possible other factors.

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