

Final Agenda
ISSDP Third Annual Conference
UNODC, Vienna International Centre

Monday March 2, 2009

08.00 **Collect entry pass/badge at Vienna International Centre main gate 1**

09.00 **Conference Opening** [*Conference Room III*]

Sandeep Chawla, UNODC
Michael Dressel, MA, Drug Coordinator of the City of Vienna
Peter Reuter, President, ISSDP

09:30 **Plenary** [*Conference Room III*]

Robin Room (University of Melbourne, Australia)
“Drugs, alcohol and tobacco policy research or psychoactive substance policy research? From separate worlds to a common frame “

10.15 **Parallel sessions**

- 1a) **Politics, values and science in drug policy formation** [*Conference Room III*]
- 1b) **Cannabis cultivation in Europe** [*Conference Room VII*]
- 1c) **Cross-national comparisons** [*Room C0713/15*]

11.45 **Coffee**

12:00 **Parallel sessions**

- 2a) **Assessing national policy (I)** [*Conference Room III*]
- 2b) **Alternative policy analytic frameworks** [*Conference Room VII*]

1:30 **Lunch**

2.30 **Plenary** [*Conference Room III*]

Azaraksh Mokri (*National Addiction Center, Iran*)
”Perspectives and obstacles for implementing treatment in an Islamic country: The experience of Iran”

3. 15 **Coffee**

3.30 **Parallel sessions**

- 3a) **Cannabis policy (I)** [*Conference Room III*]
- 3b) **Statistical modelling** [*Conference Room VII*]

5.00 **Annual meeting of the ISSDP** [*Conference Room III*]

5.45 **End of the Day**

6.30 **Conference Reception** – Hosted by the Ludwig-Boltzmann-Institute for Addiction Research

[Main Library of Vienna- buses will pick participants up from in front of the UNODC building at 5.45 p.m. to take them to the reception]

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

09.00 **Plenary** [*Conference Room III*]

Tom McLellan (Treatment Research Institute, Philadelphia, USA)
"Let's Not Let a Good Recession Go to Waste: Value-Added Addiction Treatments"

09.45 **Parallel sessions**

- 4a) **Public expenditures and the cost of drug abuse** [*Conference Room III*]
- 4b) **Harm Reduction as an analytic framework** [*Conference Room VII*]
- 4c) **Assessing national policy (II)** [*Room C0713/15*]

11.15 **Coffee**

11.30 **Parallel sessions**

- 5a) **Policy as process** [*Conference Room III*]
- 5b) **Cannabis markets** [*Conference Room VII*]

1.30 **Lunch**

2.30 **Plenary** [*Conference Room III*]

David Nutt (University of Bristol, United Kingdom)
"Using Drug Harm Indices to inform Drug Policy"

3.15 **Coffee break**

3.30 **Parallel sessions**

- 6a) **Cannabis policy (II)** [*Conference Room III*]
- 6b) **Microsimulation** [*Conference Room VII*]

5.00 **Close**

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[including abstracts]
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9:30 **Plenary** [*Conference Room III*]

Robin Room (University of Melbourne, Australia)
“Drugs, alcohol and tobacco policy research or psychoactive substance policy research? From separate worlds to a common frame “

10.15 **Parallel sessions**

1a) **Politics, Values and Science in Drug Policy Formation** [*Conference Room III*]

One flew over the is-ought gap: Why many academics underestimate the influence of science on U.S. drug policy

Keith Humphreys (Veterans Affairs and Stanford University Medical Centers, Palo Alto, U.S.A)

Abstract:

Social psychology research has shown that individuals who live in a bubble of like-minded opinion are prone to overestimate the evidence supporting their own views, overestimate the extent to which their views are widely shared, confuse their subjective value positions with objective facts, and discount alternative views as having no foundation. Many academics in the U.S. have correctly pointed out that policymakers often work in such environments and hence are prone to all of these cognitive distortions. What is less appreciated is that most academics also work within a bubble of like-minded opinion, with precisely the same distorting effects. Research will be presented showing that academics in the social science and public health fields formulate their ideas and research projects in an intellectual environment that lacks significant political diversity and is markedly different than that experienced by most Americans. The presentation will then draw on the work of Ross, Kendler, and Tversky to explain why many academics incorrectly believe that their subjective views are rationally-based, scientifically-driven and broadly representative of mainstream U.S. political opinion. The presentation will then give various examples from the author’s experience of working in federal policy in which some academics believed that the science was ignored, when it is more likely that the academics’ subjective values (albeit clothed as scientific facts) lost out to competing values as part of the usual give-and-take upon which democracy relies. The presentation will then offer a detailed example of where science appropriately had a significant impact on drug policy (e.g., the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars affecting hundreds of thousands of people) in a matter that was truly scientific in nature, rather than a value judgment. Finally, following Strang, a model of policy influence will be put forward in which the role of scientists is to establish empirical relationships between policies and outcomes, but to leave the valuation of those outcomes (and hence of the policy) to society.

Is 'down under' really on top of policy evidence? The use of research evidence in Australian drug policy.

Alison Ritter (University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia)

Abstract:

Australia has a strong rhetoric of evidence-informed policy. Our Prime Minister announced his commitment to evidence-based policy on the public broadcaster not long after his election in November 2007. In addition, Australia produces a significant amount of drug-related research evidence. In the two top addictions journals Drug and Alcohol Dependence and Addiction Australia ranks second and third most published country respectively. So given high verbal commitment to evidence, and the production of same, to what extent does this actually result in evidence-informed policy? On the whole, the outlook is positive. Australian drug policy is largely driven by research evidence. However, there are two substantial caveats:

- much research evidence is only marginal to policy decisions; and
- Australian decision-makers do not frequently access the available research.

In relation to the latter, research has demonstrated that the most frequent sources of research evidence by Australian decision makers were seeking advice from an expert, consulting technical reports available on hand and using Google. The least frequently used sources were academic literature and employing a consultant. One can bemoan the poor access to research by policy makers, or argue for better knowledge brokerage by the research community but there is a fundamental underlying assumption to this stance. That is, that policy should be driven predominantly by research evidence. This is contested. Democratic decision making would take into account the views of constituents as much as the research evidence. Carol Weiss has argued that policy is determined by a combination and competition between information (which includes research as one type of information), ideology (values) and interests (often political interests). Examination of recent Australian policy decision making demonstrates the role of ideology, interests and information as an interactive process. Two examples are highlighted: the establishment of the Medically Supervised Injecting Centre and the policy reform allowing diversion of drug users away from the Criminal Justice System and into rehabilitative options. Both these cases demonstrate that research evidence is but one potentially bit-player in the overall decision making process.

Panics! Moral, rational, and otherwise in American drug policy

Harold Pollack (University of Chicago, U.S.A)

Abstract:

Panics have played a large role in both drug policy and the analysis of these policies. Gusfield and others have described moral panic as a key dimension of American responses to alcohol misuse. Others have applied this concept to marijuana, cocaine, and other illicit substances. At the same time, the term "moral panic" can be deployed as a rhetorical trope to dismiss justified concerns about rising incidence or rising social costs of particular forms of substance use.

This paper explores these questions in the context of one particularly important concern: Substance use by pregnant women. I will contrast American policy responses to prenatal alcohol, cocaine, and methamphetamine use, noting the emerging reaction to prenatal alcohol use, the extreme reaction to the "crack epidemic" of the 1980s, and finally the surprisingly muted reaction to methamphetamine use by pregnant women in American drug policy. Public and policy responses to each case reflect diverse political and social factors independent of the epidemiological consequences of these behaviors, in some cases producing overreaction and demonization of substance users, and in some cases producing undue neglect and complacency. In each case, administrative and service delivery system responses markedly differed from the overt responses by politicians and citizens, suggesting that political and ideological issue-framing are not determinative in shaping clinical and policy responses to prenatal substance use.

Discussant: *John Strang* (King's College London, Great Britain)

1b) Cannabis Cultivation in Europe [10.15 am, Conference Room VII]

Domestic cannabis cultivation in Denmark , a matter of identity and sociality?

Vibeke Asmussen Frank (Center for Alcohol and Drug Research, University of Aarhus, Denmark)

Abstract:

Recently, the phenomenon of domestic cannabis cultivation (marihuana as well as skunk cultivation) has gained increased attention both in the EU and USA (Decorte 2007, Gettman 2006, Potter 2006). Drug policy on cannabis cultivation is almost identical in most EU countries: it is illegal. Studies define different types of growers ranging from those who cultivate for personal use only to those who cultivate for profit only (Decorte 2007, Potter 2006, Weitheit 1990, 1991). The present paper focuses on a particular type of grower, that is the ones who grow to supply their own and their network of friend' and acquaintances' use. These growers are in majority in both the above mentioned studies as well as in the present one, and thus cannabis users themselves. The aim is to analyse cannabis growing as a social phenomenon and relate these findings to drug policy issues. Cannabis is used in social settings and cannabis users participate in relationships of exchange that creates sociality, social identities, social status, etc. (Asmussen & Moesby-Johansen 2004, Zimmerman & Wieder 1978, Coomber 2008). This type of cannabis grower is not in the business to earn money, and cannabis, therefore, becomes much more than a commodity of demand and supply. The analysis will be linked to important discussions within drug policy research: How can we understand the dynamics of illegal drug markets? How can we understand the non-profit cultivation of cannabis in relation to repressive prohibition? To what extent does small-scale illegal cultivation support cannabis use in general? The paper is based on an internet survey covering 400 respondents and 30 qualitative interviews with cannabis growers.

Cannabis cultivation in the Low Lands (Belgium and the Netherlands)

Tom Decorte (Ghent University, Institute for Social Drug Research, Belgium)

Abstract:

With the advent of new cultivation techniques and the cross-breeding of cannabis varieties that thrive in our regions, local cannabis cultivation has boomed, at the expense of bulk-imported foreign cannabis. This shift to (inter)regional production, trade and domestic cultivation has become an irreversible international trend. The media allow policy makers and drug warriors to associate the emergence of domestic or regional cannabis cultivation with professional and organized criminals, but this may also be due to the limited scientific knowledge about this phenomenon. Empirical studies usually relate to large-scale, commercially oriented growers and are often based on police data and from the perspective of law enforcement agencies. In 2006 and 2007 the Institute (for) Social Drug Research (ISD) at Ghent University conducted a large-scale study of a (hitherto underinvestigated) segment of the sector, i.e. small-scale personal and social home cultivation. The study consisted of three parts: 1) a content analysis of media reports in seven Flemish newspapers between 1990 and 2005; 2) face-to-face interviews with 89 cannabis cultivators recruited through snowball sampling and with the help of privileged access interviewers, and 3) an anonymous web survey among 659 cannabis cultivators in Belgium. In my contribution I want to present some significant findings from the latter, and discuss some implications. I will address the challenges the findings seem to present to the generally assumed factors and trends that shape local cannabis markets. I will also address a number of important questions remain unanswered until now: the market shares served by small-scale and/or amateur producers, and through large(r) organized/criminal networks, the differences in motives, cultivation strategies, and in final products between these types of cultivator, and the (unintentional) effects of policy strategies efforts.

Cannabis cultivation in Finland

Pekka Hakkarainen (National Research and Development Center for Health and Welfare, Finland),

Abstract:

Objectives of this study are to give an overview about Finnish cannabis cultivation and cultivators and its marketing structures. The research started in the summer 2008. The data consists of 8 interviews with the police representatives (drug police, customs and NBI) and of nearly 50 recorded interviews with cannabis cultivators. These interviews covered almost the whole Finland. The data also consists of preliminary investigation papers on serious drug crimes concerning cannabis cultivation. Internet based survey among cannabis growers will be conducted during November-December and some preliminary results will be ready to be presented at the conference. Internet and growing shops have made cultivation very easy. Through Internet cultivators are able to share information, get seeds and growing equipment. Lately the quality of imported hash hasn't been very good. Home-grown marihuana has also been valued more than this hash, as it is green, it comes from the nature and by growing and using it you don't support organized crime. According to some police authorities the Finnish cannabis cultivation is becoming more professionalized. The number of cannabis seizures has been rising as well as the the potency of confiscated plants. When sold, the home-grown marijuana is more expensive than hash. Prices for one gram of home-grown marihuana vary as much as from €10-25. The demand for home-grown weed in the market exceeds the supply clearly in Finland. On the other hand the data shows clearly that the cannabis cultivation and cultivators are not business oriented. Seeds are shared for free, cultivation is a project with friends and the extra crop is given away free or sold very cheaply. The motivations for growing, and the operations is clearly different when compared to other illicit drug markets. The Finnish cannabis cultivators are very keen to develop their own products, they are cross-breeding different species and trying for example to develop a multi-year plant which can survive in the northern climate. The typologies of growers vary from commercial growers to ideological growers. Even it is illegal, increased cannabis cultivation may have important implications for the Finnish drug policy and control in the future.

Domestic Marijuana production and cannabis policy in the UK

Gary Potter (London South Bank University, Great Britain)

Abstract:

Illegal drugs in the UK are placed in different legal categories (class A, B and C). Classification is supposed to reflect the relative harms associated with different drugs, with class A drugs being those with most associated problems and class C drugs being those seen as the least dangerous and/or least harmful. This is reflected in the sentencing structure relating to possession and supply offences: class A drugs carry the most severe penalties and class C drugs the least. Under the original classification system (dating back to 1971) cannabis was a class B drug. Following the 2002 report from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs cannabis was downgraded from class B to class C drug in January 2004. This was supposed to reflect the relative dangers of cannabis compared to other illegal drugs. Since cannabis was downgraded to a class C drug there have been continuous calls for this decision to be reversed. Arguments for the re-upgrading of cannabis draw on many factors. It is argued variously that: downgrading cannabis has led to confusion and that many people (particularly the young) now think cannabis is legal; recent advances in the understanding of the link between cannabis and mental health suggest that cannabis use is not as benign as previously thought; downgrading cannabis encourages use and encourages domestic cultivation; increased cultivation is increasingly related to organised crime. Increased domestic cultivation is also related to the increased strength in cannabis (which itself relates back to the mental health issue). Earlier this year the Home Secretary and Prime Minister announced their intention to re-upgrade cannabis back to a class B drug although this is yet to become law. This paper explores some of the relationships between cannabis policy, the arguments surrounding the re-upgrade issue, and the increase in domestic cannabis production that has been observed in the UK. It draws on ethnographic data relating to cannabis cultivation (observation, interviews etc) and analysis of recent policy changes and the media and political discourses related to this.

Discussant: Martin Bouchard [Simon Fraser University, Canada]

1c) Cross-national comparisons [10.15 am, Room C0713/15]

How reliable are policy models based on international statistics?

Alfred Uhl (Ludwig-Boltzmann-Institute for Addiction Research, Vienna, Austria)

Abstract:

Researchers directly involved with designing research plans, collecting data, analysing them and interpreting the result have a good chance to grasp sources for unreliability and biases in their data – if they want. That many researchers do not utilise this opportunity and are highly reluctant to scrutinise their own data is a different story. For researchers using secondary data from other research or national databases it is much harder to identify limitations of their data, but if they are dedicated to invest much energy to find out how these data were collected, how the persons providing the data were motivated and what quality assurance measures happened to be installed, they still have a chance to arrive at a realistic picture. For researchers drawing from international databases composed of secondary data in national databases or from national experts providing national research findings, systematic validity checks are virtually impossible. Under normal circumstances it is not feasible to check an enormous number of sources in detail and even to test a few isolated sources is hard not having good direct contacts to the involved national researchers and not understanding many of the relevant publication languages. The latter have to rely on good data quality and that various problems and limitations are presented detailed and unequivocally. If such databases are run by respectable bodies like EMCDDA, WHO, UNODC, Eurostat the World Bank etc. most individuals see hardly any necessity to distrust these sources, but a more sceptical perspective is indicated in many cases. The presentation will provide some illustrations why blindly trusting even such highly respectable sources is inappropriate and suggest some fundamental changes in the way these data are collected and presented.

Challenges in making global estimates of drug use and dependence

Louisa Degenhardt (University of New South Wales, Australia)

Impact of UNGASS 1998 on drug use, HIV and human rights in four former Soviet countries

David Otiashvili (Eurasian Harm Reduction Network, Georgia)

Abstract:

Aim: To assess the affect of UN Conventions on drugs and decisions of UNGASS 1998 on narcotic substance use, spread of the HIV infection and situation of human rights in the countries of the former USSR (Lithuania, Russia, Ukraine and Georgia).

Methodology: Both, quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed by four country teams:

(a) Qualitative data were collected through interviews of key stakeholders in public health, law enforcement, policy makers and human rights, as well as drug users.

(b) We also analyzed the basic quantitative information related to levels of drug use, HIV/AIDS statistics, drug related mortality, availability of treatments, numbers of drug related offences, arrests and punishments related to drugs.

(c) Short analysis of the main laws, by-laws and regulations which have effect on shaping social-medical and law enforcement approaches and practices towards drugs

(d) Secondary sources of major previous research regarding human rights and services for drug users.

Findings and conclusions: Data is being analyzed at the current stage. Final research findings will be available in November 2008. Preliminary findings: adherence to UN Conventions and decisions of UNGASS 1998 on Drugs resulted in a failure to prioritize effective and balanced policies in all four focus countries.

Discussant: *Peter Reuter* (University of Maryland, USA)

11.46 Coffee

2a) **Assessing national policy I** [*Conference Room III*]

The evaluation of national drug strategies and action plans in Europe: an overview

Frank Zobel (EMCDDA, Portugal)

Abstract:

During the last fifteen years, in parallel with the development of drug strategies and action plans at the level of the European Union, a rapidly growing number of EU Member States have drafted, implemented and regularly renewed their own drug policy documents. This process has been accompanied by an increase in the level of detail (e.g. objectives, actions, responsibilities, deadlines, budgets) of the drug strategies and action plans. Additionally, new core actions and objectives have been introduced in these documents and in particular the overall evaluation and the ongoing monitoring of the actions foreseen in the national drug strategies and action plans. The presentation will explore both the stated intentions and the actual practices as regards the evaluation of national drug strategies and action plans in Europe. Current and recent evaluation approaches and methods will be described, categorized and discussed. Suggestions for future activities in this field, including the development of European evaluation guidelines, will complement the overview which will cover the 27 EU Member States, Croatia, Turkey and Norway. The presentation will rely on data collected through the Reitox network of national focal points which provides, among others, annual reports on the drug situation and the drug-related responses in each of the above mentioned countries.

A critical review of the UNODC report *Sweden's successful drug policy*

Borje Olsson (Stockholm University, Sweden)

Abstract:

The Swedish drug policy case is often put forward as a successful model, which should be a source of inspiration for other countries. The recent UNODC report is an example of this. In the paper this report is critically scrutinized, both by looking at the empirical data presented and the conclusions drawn. The paper will also include a discussion of the role of drug policy versus other factors shaping the drug problems in the country.

Final Evaluation of Hungary's National Drug Strategy program

Ákos Topolánszky (National Institute for Drug Prevention, Hungary)

Discussant: *Michael Farrell* (National Addiction Center, Great Britain)

2b) **Alternative policy analytic frameworks** [*12.00, Conference Room VII*]

Towards a new approach to global drug problems: regulatory and nodal governance perspectives

Toby Seddon (University of Manchester, Great Britain)

Abstract: The 'drug problem' - the constellation of issues and difficulties associated with the production, distribution and consumption of illegal drugs - is complex, globalized and cross-cutting. From a policy perspective, even conceptualising it is difficult, let alone developing a coherent and effective response. One way forward may be to view it as a governance problem in the broadest sense. This opens up the possibility of drawing on a number of different social science perspectives on governance to develop new approaches. In this paper, three specific bodies of scholarship will be utilised. First, the work of Kingsbury and colleagues at the New York University School of Law on global governance and global administrative law; second, the work on regulation pioneered by Braithwaite and others at the Australian National University; third, the nodal governance approach developed by Shearing and colleagues. It will be argued that by viewing the 'drug problem' from the broad perspectives of regulation and governance, a radical and new policy approach can start to be developed.

Comparing policies for the minimisation of drug-related harm: A rationalist, rights-based approach

Alex Stevens (University of Kent, Great Britain)

Abstract:

This paper seeks to prompt discussion of the rational basis for drug policy debates. It uses Gewirth's (1978) rationalist argument for a hierarchy of rights in order to develop a prototype rights-based framework for policy comparison. Gewirth argues, from the mutual respect that people owe to each other due to their shared status as purposive agents, that basic rights (e.g. to life) are more fundamental than non-subtractive rights (e.g. the right not to be victimised or disenfranchised), which in turn are more fundamental than additive rights (e.g. the right to increased consumption – including consumption of drugs). This means that, in order to justify constraining rights to consumption of drugs, causal links from drug consumption to harms to more fundamental rights must be demonstrated. The rights and duties of drug users and drug addicts are discussed, before moving on to applying this rights-based framework to current controversies in drug policy around prohibition and harm reduction.

Is it possible to quantify human suffering? Results from a Nordic survey

Hans Olav Melberg (University of Oslo, Norway)

Abstract:

There are at least two important and ignored topics in the literature on the social cost of illegal drugs. First of all it often ignores human suffering associated with drugs. Second, it does not focus on friends and family of the drug users. This paper explores how population surveys could be used to fill this gap and presents the results from a new and large survey in the Nordic capitals. The topic is important because ignoring large cost components has significant implications for policy decisions. The immediate consequence is an underestimation of the overall size of the cost of drug use since a large share of the burden of drug use is left out. Often studies of the social cost of drugs quantify costs born by society at large - health and crime costs, lost income - but not the intangible consequences felt by those who are close to the user. This under-estimation may in turn lead to under-prioritization of the area as a whole. Moreover, if the success of a policy is measured by its ability to reduce the costs associated with drugs, then leaving out important cost categories will lead to skewed policies. We will get policies aimed at indicators that happen to be easily available, instead of policies that focus on indicators of the overall problem. For both these reasons, to avoid underprioritization and misleading policy aims - it is important to get a better understanding of the human suffering associated with drug use. In order to quantify the human suffering of friends and relatives of drug users, it is necessary, first, to determine how many are affected. Second, we need to know in what way they are harmed. The third, and most difficult challenge, is to convert the various harms into one unit so it can be aggregated and give us an indication of total harm. All three aspects are covered in the survey.

Discussant: *Alison Ritter* (University of New South Wales, Australia)

1:30 **Lunch**

2.30 **Plenary** [*Conference Room III*]

Azaraksh Mokri (National Addiction Center, Iran)

”Perspectives and obstacles for implementing treatment in an Islamic country: The experience of Iran”

3.15 **Coffee**

3a) Cannabis policy (I) [Conference Room III]

Away from cannabis leniency - experiences from Denmark

Kim Moeller (University of Aarhus, Denmark)

Abstract:

Background and objectives:

In the past seven years, Denmark has moved further away from thirty years of lenient cannabis policy. In the context of the current international discussions on cannabis control policy, this makes for an interesting case study, inasmuch as Denmark is unique in moving away from leniency, towards stricter control.

The paper presents a preliminary impact study on the effects of changing policy focus towards public security and prevalence reduction based on the analysis of five unintended consequences in CND's report *Making drug control 'fit for purpose'* (2008):

Black market: A demand-side estimate puts the annual quantity of cannabis consumed in Denmark in 2005 at 19.8 tons, using UNODC (2006) normal distribution, about twice the average international per capita level. Police crackdowns on established retail markets have severely reduced their throughput capacity, leaving market shares for new suppliers.

Policy displacement: With no increased funding to implement the policy shift intensified drug market enforcement has displaced police resources towards drug misdemeanours. Drug crime charges increased by 22% between 2001 and 2007, mainly due to misdemeanours, up 39%, primarily an increase in cannabis possession charges. Less serious drug crimes constituted 25% of all misdemeanours in 2007 compared to 19% in 2001.

Geographical displacement: Accounts from police, social workers, dealers, and journalists substantiate a cannabis market 'balloon effect'. The disruption of the spatial equilibrium has sparked a series of violent altercations between dealers.

Substance displacement/Perception of drug users:

The importance of criminal records in job applications has increased. The price of alcohol has decreased and cocaine use is on the rise. The deterrence directed at cannabis users illustrates the public security priority over harm from drug use.

The relationship between dollar expenditure on methamphetamine and cannabis for personal use and acquisitive crime among police detainees in New Zealand

Chris Wilkins (Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand)

Abstract:

Aims: To examine the association between high spending on methamphetamine and cannabis for personal use and acquisitive offending among police detainees in New Zealand. **Design:** A sample of 2,164 police detainees were interviewed as part of the NZ-ADAM programme. Multiple logistic regression models were developed to predict involvement in acquisitive crime using the purchase of methamphetamine and cannabis for personal use and demographic variables. The same models were used to predict the purchasing of methamphetamine and cannabis for personal use using acquisitive crime and demographic variables. Factorial ANOVA models were developed to predict the level of dollar earnings from acquisitive crime from spending on methamphetamine and cannabis for personal use and demographic variables. The same models were used to predict level of spending on methamphetamine and cannabis for personal use from the earnings from acquisitive crime and demographic variables. **Findings:** Spending on cannabis and methamphetamine for personal use were predictors of involvement in acquisitive offending, but only high spending on methamphetamine could predict high earnings from property crime and drug dealing. Involvement in property crime and drug dealing could predict spending on cannabis and methamphetamine for personal use. High earnings from property crime could predict high spending on cannabis for personal use. High earnings from drug dealing could predict high spending on methamphetamine for personal use. **Conclusion:** High spending on methamphetamine, but not on cannabis, for personal use is associated with higher levels of acquisitive offending. The addictive attributes of methamphetamine appear to create additional financial pressure to commit acquisitive crime.

Discussant: *Tomas Zabransky* (Charles University, the Czech Republic)

3b) Statistical Modelling [3.30 pm, Conference Room VII]

Monitoring the Drug Situation using Epidemiological Data: Prospects and Limitations

Martin Busch (Austrian Reitox Focal Point at Health Austria Vienna, Austria)

Abstract:

The EMCDDA defined five key indicators to monitor the drug situation in Europe. These are “General Population Surveys on Drug Use”, “Prevalence Estimates of Problem Drug Use (PE)”, “Treatment Demand Indicator”, “Drug Related Infectious Diseases” and “Drug Related Deaths”. Each indicator is seen as one “piece of the puzzle” of the drug situation and putting them together should allow a precise picture to be used as base for drug policy decisions.

Mathematical modelling is often used for PE (e. g. the Capture-Re-Capture Method) but there are lots of limitations due to problems in data quality. These problems are illustrated based on results of the long tradition of CRC estimations and related research in Austria since 1995. Violations of basic assumptions of CRC and their consequences impact strongly on such estimations and this puts a question mark on any results. In spite of these limitations it may still be worthwhile to interpret the results in combination with other key indicators as well as other sources of data to identify in order to identify and interpret relevant trends in drug use and drug problems. The presentation discusses specifically how sensible it is to interpret the increasing trend of problem-opiate use until 2004 followed by a decrease in recent years based on CRC-estimates in Austria.

Capture-recapture methods to estimate prevalence indicators for evaluating drug policies

Carla Rossi (University of Rome "Tor Vergata", Italy)

Abstract:

Prevalence indicators are a fundamental tool to measure the size and the dynamics of drug markets.

The ascertainment data on drug are usually based on several incomplete lists of individuals. For hidden human populations, that are difficult to count by conventional means, capture-recapture methods are increasingly being applied. These techniques rely on several assumptions. The main assumptions are

1. a closed population
2. independence of the sources
3. homogeneous inclusion probability
4. matching

Most capture-recapture studies, in this context, violate assumptions 2 and 3, to some degree, but can still provide useful results because it is usually possible to identify the violation and predict its likely effect on the estimate which, in general, will be biased downward.

To reduce heterogeneity, which is the main cause of violation, improvements can be obtained by introducing observable covariates.

In this presentation, we will compare different estimation methods which will then be applied to various administrative data bases easily available. To evaluate the reliability of the resulting estimates, confidence intervals will be calculated. Some sensitivity analyses will be also considered.

Particular attention will be devoted to prevalence estimates for lower age classes (under 20 years) in order to evaluate the impact of policies.

As it is known, incidence rates, which should be preferred to evaluate policies, are difficult to estimate for recent years. But, for lower age classes, prevalence can be considered as a good proxy of incidence. The analysis of data from various sources, will show how drug policies are actually implemented in Italy (as a case study), and, in particular, the different enforcement practices with respect to gender and age classes [1].

[1] *Potenzialita informativa della Base Dati delle segnalazioni e dei segnalati ex art. 75 del DPR 309/90, working paper, Centro Interdipartimentale di Biostatistica e Bioinformatica, Universita di Roma Tor Vergata.*

Modelling and estimating illicit drug market as a tool to evaluate drug policy: the case of Italy.

Roberto Ricci (University of Rome, Italy)

Abstract:

Illegal drug trade raised at least 4 billion Euros in Italy. The social costs are further 6.4 billion Euros. The Italian Government describes increased drug consumption; the UNODC statistics show that heroin and cocaine production have increased; moreover new synthetic drugs have been included in the illicit drug list. The war against drugs is going to be lost without a new strategy.

The study presents a model that evaluates different actions based on the legalization of drug market. The most courageous of them is the deliver of drugs, under certain conditions, to the most problematic addicts. The results of the simulation are compared with the actual policy mainly based on law enforcement.

Illicit drug demand, drug prices and profits of criminals are reduced. Anyway the most important effect is the reduction of dealers and of potential dealers; the drug industry has less manpower and less strength in the market.

In other words, now we are in a vicious cycle where drug consumption, connected crimes and social costs are increasing more and more; in the new scenario the vicious cycle turns in a virtuoso cycle with consumption and crimes decreasing. The virtuoso cycle generates savings in the health expenditures and in the justice expenditures; the legal economy can get new funds for the development and for a better information about harm reduction.

Discussant: *Angela Me* (UNODC)

5.00 **Annual meeting of the ISSDP** [*Conference Room III*]

5.45 **End of the Day**

6.30 **Conference Reception** – Hosted by the Ludwig-Boltzmann-Institute for Addiction Research

[Main library of Vienna – buses will pick participants up from in front of the UNODC building at 5.45 p.m. to take them to the reception]

Welcomes by

Mag^a. Sonja Wehsely, Executive City Councillor for Public Health and Social Affairs
Alfred Springer, Director of the Ludwig-Boltzmann-Institute for Addiction Research

9.00 **Plenary** [*Conference Room III*]

Tom McLellan (Treatment Research Institute, Philadelphia, USA)

"Let's Not Let a Good Recession Go to Waste: Value-Added Addiction Treatments"

9.45 **Parallel sessions**

4a) **Public expenditures and the cost of drug abuse** [*Conference Room III*]

The study of public expenditure on drugs, a useful evaluation tool for drug policy, the Belgian example

Freya Vander Laenen (Ghent University, Belgium)

Abstract:

At European level, research into public expenditure is gaining momentum, in view of the growing realization of the importance of policy evaluation with regard to drugs. Studies have been conducted a.o. in the Netherlands, Sweden, France and Spain. After all, public expenditure is an important indicator of the governmental efforts in tackling the drug problem.

A drug budget provides insight into the actual level of public expenditures in drug policy and into how these expenditures are composed or what the public authorities so-called 'policy mix' is. Consequently, the prevailing balance between the various sectors of drug policy (prevention, treatment and law enforcement) also becomes visible. This insight proves or disproves the government's priorities for that policy.

In Belgium, two studies on public expenditures were carried out. The methodology used is complex because different policy areas (prevention, treatment and law enforcement) and governmental levels (local, regional and federal) are involved. Two methods of analysis are combined: a top-down approach, analysing the funding sources of the private and public organisations and a bottom-up approach, analysing the activities in the work field. A review study of research into public expenditures showed that the Belgian studies are the sole to combine both approaches. This double method enables verification of the data gathered on the basis of the top-down approach.

The results of the Belgian studies show that over 50% of governmental money for drugs is spent on law enforcement. The treatment sector receives approximately 40%. Less than 4% is spent on prevention. Public expenditure on drugs is not in accordance with governmental priorities and more investments in prevention, coordination and research are needed. In 2004, public expenditure on drug policy amounted to 28.57 per inhabitant in Belgium. This is substantially lower than the expenditure in the Netherlands (134.4) and Sweden (101).

The classification of drug-related expenditures: COFOG and the Reuter, programme division

Jiri Vopravil (Czech Statistical Office)

Abstract:

In response to the EU Drugs Action Plan (2005-2008), the EMCDDA has recently initiated the standardization of a methodology for the quantification of the public expenditure in the field. Reitox Academy made for the drug-related public expenditure one-day workshop in Luxembourg (spring 2007). The compilation of countries expenditures in the field was published by the EMCDDA in Selected Issue 2008: Towards a better understanding of drug-related public expenditure in Europe. Several tasks in the area were discussed on NFP (core group) meeting on the standard tables on public expenditure in EMCDDA (Lisbon September 2008).

To allow for systematic comparability of drug-related funds across countries, a categorization scheme based in the International Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG) has been proposed. Detailed 3-levels structure of COFOG includes financial flows of the public finance, which are going from state and local (regional and municipal) budgets to non-profit organisations (NPOs) with drug-policy programmes.

The extensive structure of COFOG contrasts with the four-category division introduced by Reuter (2006) on

the basis of the likely effects of services provided by drug policy programmes (i.e. prevention, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction). The Reuter's programme division is classification of the recipients (NPOs) with drug-policy programmes.

As part of the national reporting exercise for 2007, drug-related expenditure per country was identified by the EMCDD's network of 30 national focal points (NFPs). The NFPs were asked to list any budgeted drug-related funds in previous years. In order to ensure consistency in comparing expenditure over time and across countries, labelled expenditure was classified by means of COFOG and Reuter's programme division. By reviewing the COFOG and Reuter's classification of expenditures in Ireland, France, Luxembourg, Hungary, Portugal, Slovakia, Finland, and the United Kingdom, the study presents the comparative linkage of the two classification schemes. In the last year, the Czech National Focal Point made also some experiences with links between the two classifications.

The Economic Cost of Methamphetamine Use in the United States

Nancy Nicosia (RAND, USA)

Abstract:

Although lifetime and annual prevalence rates for methamphetamine use in the household population are currently below 5% (SAMHSA, 2006), methamphetamine use and abuse have increased substantially in the United States during the past 15 years with rates of use in some states exceeding those for cocaine and heroin. From 1992 to 2002, methamphetamine-related treatment admissions increased by more than 500% nationally. Use among high school seniors increased 20% between 1991 and 2003 (Johnston et al. 2003). In this report we provide the first estimate of the economic cost of methamphetamine use in the United States, considering the costs associated with treatment, excess health care utilization, productivity losses, crime, child endangerment, and environmental contamination. Several steps are taken to improve methodology, including the consideration of uncertainty in point estimates, the monetization of intangible health costs, and the role of causality. We find that the economic cost of methamphetamine use in the United States in 2005 is approximately \$9 billion, but the range of uncertainty suggests the estimate may be anywhere between \$6.5 billion and \$15 billion.

Discussant: *Thomas Pietschmann (UNODC)*

4b) Harm Reduction as an analytic framework [9.45 am, Conference Room VII]

Measuring the benefits of drug law enforcement: the AFP Drug Harm Index

Robyn Attewell (Coordinator Business Analysis, Australian Federal Police)

Abstract:

This paper outlines the historical development of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) Drug Harm Index and its application in the evaluation of the AFP's strategic approach to combating the importation of illicit drugs into Australia. The AFP Drug Harm Index was developed to provide a single measure that encapsulates the potential value to the Australian community of AFP drug seizures. The index represents the dollar value of harm that would have ensued had the seized drugs reached the community. The AFP Drug Harm Index is a key component of economic evaluation techniques used to estimate the benefit to the Australian community of three specific policing strategies:

(1) the development of domestic and international partnerships with other law enforcement agencies, (2) a concentration on serious and complex crime and (3) an emphasis on intelligence led policing.

Drug investigations (n= 2,716) were retrieved from the Federal law enforcement systems for a five year period. Details included resources employed in the investigation and their outcome in terms of arrests and drug seizures. Each investigation was classified as to whether it adopted one of the three specific strategies described above. Overall, the Australian community receives \$5.80 of benefit for every dollar invested in federal drug law enforcement. The three strategies adopted by the AFP were all found to result in higher rates of economic return than the average: cases involving domestic and international partners (\$6.00 and \$9.20 respectively), an emphasis on serious and complex crime (\$9.20), and intelligence led policing (\$7.90). Details of the current and future developments to the AFP Drug Harm Index are discussed.

Developing a framework for conceptualising drug-related enforcement as harm-reduction using a consultative approach, a case study

Nicola Singleton (UK Drug Policy Commission)

Abstract:

Despite the well-documented difficulties of enforcement activity having a significant impact on drug supply, drug-related law enforcement activity still tends to be viewed in these terms and outcomes mainly measured in terms of numbers of arrests and drug seizures. More generally, drug policy in many countries has shifted focus towards reducing the harms associated with illicit drugs. This is true of the recent UK drug strategy which also contains an explicit goal of “preventing harm to communities by reducing the supply of drugs”. This reflects an increasing recognition that enforcement agencies have a role to play in reducing drug harms. For instance, the UK Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) specifically aims to reduce the harm from the illegal drugs trade within the UK. However, there has been little discussion of what a ‘harm reduction’ approach might mean for enforcement.

Traditionally ‘harm reduction’ is associated with schemes undertaken by health agencies, such as needle exchange, and for enforcement agencies ‘harm reduction’ has tended to be conceptualised as participation in partnerships with such agencies. However, the concept of ‘harm reduction’ could be extended to all enforcement activity, including drug law enforcement. In 2008/09 the UK Drug Policy Commission commenced a project, in collaboration with several UK enforcement agencies, to identify and promote the contribution that drug-related (including drug law) enforcement activity can make to drug harm reduction in its broadest sense. Drawing on international examples, the project has involved enforcement agencies and other stakeholders in the development of a framework for comparing the impact of different enforcement activities on harms as a basis for analysing and developing policy and practice, performance measurement, cost-benefit analysis and evaluation at both local and national levels.

This paper will describe the project and the framework developed, and discuss the challenges and opportunities for its use.

Developing Local Indices of Drug Harm: Implications from Complexity Theory

Barbara Lynn Kail (Fordham University, U.S.A.)

Abstract:

Drug use and its consequences can be understood as complex sets of interconnected systems which often relate in unanticipated ways. For example, the surge in crack cocaine use by mothers in New York City during the 1980’s had a cascading effect on multiple interrelated systems including health care, schools, child protective services and drug treatment providers. Complexity theory provides a conceptual lens for understanding the relationship between interconnected systems and sub-systems. This paper discusses some of the implications of a complexity theory informed approach to the development of local drug harm indicators. Examples are drawn from our developing work on indicators of drug consequences and recent international Rule of Law indicator projects. We highlight the need for indicators that assess both the individual consequences of use and the impact of drug use on related systems. We also discuss the importance of measuring connections among consequences, to identify patterns. We also emphasize that in order to capture the dynamic nature of these patterns and potential tipping points, indicator should be monitored frequently and at the local level. Finally, we explore some issues that may arise. The design of complex sets of indicators and the need to repeat data collection at regular intervals may be beyond the reach of many communities. Because of the specific nature of connections, indices may not be transferable from one locality to another and national or international comparisons may be difficult or impossible.

Discussant: *Benedikt Fischer* (Simon Fraser University, Canada)

Drug Demand Reduction as Formal Social Control: Teenagers' Rational Choice and Reverse Effects of Anti-Drug Media Campaigns Due to Hidden Curriculum

Tevfik Çampinari (General Directorate of Family and Social Research, Turkey)

Abstract:

In developing countries, drug policy is focused on use reduction as a demand reduction strategy by anti-drug media campaigns aiming drug free life, and a considerable target of the mentioned policy is high school students. (TADOC-TUBIM 2004 surveys show that the statistical mode of first drug usage age is 15-19 age group in Turkey) However, these anti-drug media campaigns sometimes disregard youth subcultures; underestimate hidden curriculum and rational choice of young individuals. Drug usage of young individuals embodies a motivation that is more complex than identification of cultural idols using drugs. Drug usage and exaltation of the consciousness level attributed to drug usage symbolize a subculture and life style in which the conventional life styles and collective consciousness is disowned. Moreover, reactions to all hegemonic discourses and intended curriculum are common attributes for these youth cultures. On the other hand, anti-drug campaigns aiming 'awareness' and 'consciousness' either criminalize the youth subcultures or reduce individuals that are using drugs to a simpler victimized state. Furthermore, these anti-drug campaigns develop the hegemonic discourse opposed by youth culture, increase social polarization, increase the gap between hidden and intended curriculums and create a superior exclusion effect for ideas, cultures and life styles of high school youth. Youth subcultures are also disregarded by economic analysis accepting other activities which are different from addiction as one commodity. This paper questions the effects of anti-drug media campaigns with a behavioural economics approach demonstrating the drug addiction choice of youth as well as possible effects of anti-drug media campaigns in light of addiction theories. It also mentions the basic differences of current first drug usage in industrialized and developing countries, evaluates anti-drug activities targeting youth in Turkey in light of TADOC-TUBIM's empirical findings and possible alternative policies. In particular, a wide interpretation is put on the phrase "demand reduction policies shall be sensitive to culture" in the 8th article of UNGASS 1998 Declaration and a critical approach is brought (in terms of youth subculture and youth life styles) to demand reduction by conventional anti-drug media campaigns aiming to prevent the decrease in the average age of first usage.

The model of diversified medication assisted treatment and its application in Austria

Alfred Springer (Ludwig-Boltzmann-Institute for Addiction Research, Vienna, Austria)

Abstract:

Since its introduction in the late seventies medication assisted treatment has become the most common treatment option for opioid dependent individuals. It has been evaluated many times in many different countries and has proven to be effective and safe. One important aspect of that treatment approach is that it can be offered as a low threshold intervention. Though it has also been proven to be well accepted by a large segment of patients there remains nevertheless a certain group of addicts that out of different reasons refuses even that treatment option. Like in other realms of medical practice individualisation and diversification of the treatment can be useful to attract those who are refusing to accept a one-dimensional treatment approach. The concept of multidimensional diversification includes diversification of substances and of administration route. In many countries diversification of substances takes place while diversification of administration route is limited to small and heavily controlled programmes which in most cases take place in the form of experimental resp. quasi-experimental treatment trials, offering medically prescribed heroin. In Great Britain, however, injectable methadone and injectable heroin traditionally are available. Austria can be identified as a special case in respect of diversified substitution prescribing of oral opioids. In my contribution I will present some data from recent research on physicians procuring medication assisted treatment and their clients to set my conclusions and recommendation on a clinical epidemiological basis. Austria's experience can serve as a model for the introduction of a diversified oral substitution program avoiding the extraordinary costs and the exorbitant control structures of experimental treatment trials. Nevertheless the diversion of slow-release-morphine for injecting use is considered as the major problem of the Austrian system. We had to learn, that diversified oral substitution is not able to eradicate risk behaviours and to attract those morphine users who are not able or not willing to stop injecting. For these objectives programs offering injectable preparations of substances for substitution seem to constitute the more adequate option. Multidimensional diversification including preparations for different use patterns may therefore become a necessity for the implementation of the treatment related objectives defined by the European Action Plan on Drugs.

Two Decades of HIV/AIDS in Tajikistan: Reversing The Tide or The Coming of Age Paradigm?

Alisher Latypov (University College London, Great Britain)

Abstract:

Context: Central Asian region has witnessed a dramatic rise of the HIV tide over the last decade. This article provides a historical overview, describes the process of domestication, and examines legal, social and political dimensions of the IDU-driven HIV epidemic in Tajikistan in order to highlight existing contradictions and barriers in HIV/AIDS and drug policy-making and program implementation in that country.

Methods: A review of published English and Russian literature was conducted and supplemented with information from numerous unpublished, locally available reports and presentations and in-depth interviews with drug users and HIV/AIDS and drug prevention program implementers.

Findings: When cross-examined, oral histories, virological and drug control data may offer new explanations of the HIV/AIDS epidemic development in Tajikistan and other Central Asian republics, particularly with regard to CRF02_AG strain. The response to HIV/AIDS in Tajikistan has been seriously influenced by pre-existing Soviet policies, crackdown on illegal substance use, and stigmatization of at risk groups and people living with HIV/AIDS. Contradictions between law enforcement and public health approaches in dealing with vulnerable populations are among the most significant factors impeding effective HIV prevention programs in Tajikistan. Lack of methodologically sound estimates is one of the many problems associated with coverage goals.

Conclusions: HIV/AIDS 'has come of age' in Tajikistan. Without resolving fundamental problems, such as prevention of punitive actions of police against drug users and commercial sex workers, abolishment of control-oriented registration policies, prioritization of public health-based approaches on the Government's political agenda and introduction of substitution therapies HIV programs in Tajikistan are more likely to miss their aims.

Discussant: *Keith Humphreys* (Stanford University, USA)

11.15 **Coffee**

11.30 **Parallel sessions**

5a) **Policy as process** [*Conference Room III*]

Experts and Advocates: mobilising evidence to influence the development of policy internationally.

Susanne MacGregor (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)

Abstract:

The paper explores the ways in which key players have utilised and mobilised evidence in support of their aim to influence international policies on illicit drugs. It aims to show who have been involved and how and why they became involved; what resources were available and how these were organised; what barriers to influence presented themselves and what windows of opportunity opened up. In doing so, the paper sets out for the ten year period 1998-2008 how international policies on illicit drugs have developed and evaluates the part played by evidence in this process.

The paper begins with a brief social history of the period to contextualise developments in policy, reviewing social, cultural, political and economic trends. It defines the period as the ten years following the UNGASS. It identifies key changes in illicit drugs policy development, and discusses the battle of ideas and the forces supporting competing perspectives. In particular, it considers how arguments and evidence have been mobilised, where and by whom, looking at some of the major institutions, social movements and individuals involved. It asks what motivates these players and how have they been organised and funded. It pays attention to the role of communication, information dissemination, and mediation in these processes. In particular, it

considers the role of professionals and scientists as researchers and experts and the ways in which they have become involved in these processes and to what effect. The paper assesses the value of the concepts of issue communities, policy networks and resource mobilisation to explain developments. The paper draws on a reading of secondary literature, documentary analysis and interviews with key players.

The Danish Local Drug Policy Modelling Project *Esben Houborg* (University of Aarhus, Denmark)

Abstract:

In Denmark drug policy is to a large extent organised and carried out locally. The municipalities are responsible for drug treatment and prevention as well as harm reduction measures, often in collaboration with local NGOs. The regional and local police districts are responsible for drug control. While much research has been done on specific services and programmes, particularly in the treatment sector, little is known about how drug policy is organised and carried out across all four 'pillars' of drug policy locally. This means that we have very little basis for comparing local drug policies, their costs and effects. It also means that we have very little basis for saying much about Danish drug policy in general, if we are not satisfied with what policy statements from the government tell us. What is lacking is a more general mapping of how drug policies are framed, developed, implemented, their effects and what their economic and social costs are.

The Local Drug Policy Project at Centre for Drug and Alcohol Research at the University of Aarhus is the first Danish attempt to remedy this situation and answer questions like: Which local policies are developed locally? How are the four pillars of drug policy prioritized locally? How are drug policies organized? Which networks of actors and institutions are engaged in carrying out drug policy? What do services cost? Which economic, social and ideological factors are at play in the local processes of developing drug policy? The project is carried out by developing methods and models, which enable us to compare local policies and make a coherent presentation of the multifaceted aspects of Danish drug policy.

Inspiration is drawn from similar projects in other countries like the Australian *Drug Policy Modelling Programme* and the Nordic *ECONARK-project*. At the conference the two main researchers will present methods and models, which are to be used in the project.

Social effectiveness of illicit drug policies. The case of Italian drug policy actions plan. *Antonio Parisi* (University of Rome, Italy)

Abstract:

The paper aims to test the effectiveness of drug policy on the dynamic of offences (criminal or administrative). Moreover assuming rational choices (or also bounded rationality) we expect to find an inverse relationship between number of arrested and incidence rate of drug consumption. Therefore we model our study in two stages. In the first we try to assess whether restrictive policy can affect the offences rates. In the second stage we regress by semi-parametric estimation the expected rate of offences on consumption dynamic. We specify an utility random function in which we model the expected probability to be arrested. If the bounded rationality goes than we expect to find a reduction of the consumption rates at least among younger people.

Europe, cocaine, and the Caribbean: shifting the locus of governmental responsibility? *Martin Elvins* (Department of Dundee, Great Britain)

Abstract:

This paper examines the current status of European efforts intended to assist Caribbean countries with the problems arising from drug transshipment to Europe via the region. The paper draws upon partially completed fieldwork examining counter-drugs assistance provided to some Caribbean countries by two European Union (EU) member states: the United Kingdom (UK) and the Netherlands. The paper asks whether rising levels of European demand for cocaine place a greater responsibility on European governments to find policy solutions that minimise the impact on countries that neither produce cocaine nor are primary sources of demand for the drug. The material presented will outline current UK and Dutch practice to provide an empirical basis to evaluate this question. With international attention seemingly drawn to the growth in drug trafficking to Europe via West Africa the question of whether the Caribbean is becoming less important from a European perspective will also be explored. Are Caribbean countries equipped to cope with the problems they face and what consequences will arise if European intervention continues in its present form? The paper will thus

examine the critical connection between national governmental responsibility and international action on drugs. The paper will outline some emergent themes identified in the course of fieldwork undertaken in 2008, pending a final round of fieldwork in 2009.

Discussant: TBA

5b) Cannabis markets [11.30 am, Conference Room VII]

The cannabis market and globalization

Claudia Costa Storti (EMCDDA, Portugal)

Abstract:

Retail prices of cannabis have dropped significantly since 2001 in Europe. This price decline follows the same pattern observed in the retail markets of cocaine and heroin. There is evidence that this price decline has been going on for a longer period especially in the US.

What are the reasons for these declines in the retail prices of cannabis? We first analyze the influence of globalization, and we contrast these effects found in the cannabis market with those found in the cocaine and the heroin market. As is well known, the market structures of the cannabis market and of the cocaine and heroin markets are very different. We analyze how the forces of globalization have worked in these two types of markets and have produced a significant decline in the retail prices. We will stress the different transmission channels in these markets.

We study these issues using a model of the cannabis market and we contrast its structure to a model of the cocaine and heroin markets.

The determinants of the cannabis pricing: between credence, brand name and individual characteristics of users

Christian Ben Lakhdar (French Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction,)

Abstract:

A moral hazard problem between seller and purchaser of illicit drugs can emerge from retail transactions, mainly concerning the quality of the good. Indeed, among other things, the illicit drug transactions being the time of the higher exposure to risks of being arrested, the purchaser has not the time to test the substance he's buying. It was also advanced that the seller has only partial information about the substance he's selling. Using individual data on daily users and home-growers gathered from a survey, we study the determinants of cannabis pricing aiming to explore deeper the matter of the quality. Before, the knowledge about the quality (purity, potency) that the producers and the purchasers can have about their cannabis is investigated.

First, an amazing result is that both, producers and purchasers of cannabis have a bad knowledge of the potency of their product. A large majority of both overestimate the potency of the cannabis they smoke. Second, thanks to econometric estimates, we find out that cannabis is credence good: the cannabis potency (THC) is not a significant variable of the cannabis pricing although the expected potency of purchasers is. This result tackles the previous assertion saying that illicit drug could be considered as experience goods. The pricing model gives as complementary results that a brand name effect exists in the pricing of cannabis and that female pay more expensive for cannabis.

So, it seems, taking into account our results, that the moral hazard problem is solved: as the quality of product exchanged is in one hand unknown for the seller and for the purchaser and in another hand and consequently, is not a significant variable in the pricing of cannabis, there is no problem of information asymmetry and then no moral hazard problem surrounding the quality of drugs in a retail sales perspective.

A helping hand? The effects of criminal networks on avoiding arrest for cannabis cultivation

Holly Nguyen (Simon Fraser University, Canada)

Abstract:

Despite sometimes intense eradication efforts by various law enforcement agencies, domestic cannabis cultivation has remained an elusive industry. The aim of the current study is to assess whether criminal networks can help young cannabis growers avoid contacts with the criminal justice system. We examine the association between criminal networks and cost avoidance for the crime of cannabis cultivation in a rural region in Quebec, Canada. The area is well-known for its large-scale cannabis cultivation industry, the widespread involvement of adolescents, and focused police attention. A self-report delinquency survey, administered to the region's quasi-population of high school students (N = 1262), revealed that a total of 175 adolescents had participated in the cannabis cultivation industry (a 15% lifetime prevalence rate). Forty-seven respondents (27%), including 29 who were arrested (16.6%), reported having participated in a cultivation site that was detected by the police. Bivariate and multivariate results (using logistic regression and Chi-Squared Automatic Interaction Detector [CHAID] analyses) indicate that 'who you know' matters in the cultivation industry, and is an important independent predictor of arrest: very few young growers who were embedded in adult networks were apprehended. Conversely, embeddedness in a youth network emerged as an independent risk factor, especially in larger networks. CHAID analyses also revealed interaction effects and profiles of adolescents, specifying the circumstances for whom cultivation is the riskiest. The implications of these results for social capital theory and drug policy are discussed.

Discussant: *Jonathan Caulkins*, Carnegie Mellon University, USA

1.30 **Lunch**

2.30 **Plenary** [*Conference Room III*]

David Nutt (University of Bristol, United Kingdom)
"Using Drug Harm Indices to inform Drug Policy"

3.15 **Coffee break**

3.30 **Parallel sessions**

6a) **Cannabis Policy (II)** [*Conference Room III*]

Options for moving beyond the drug conventions on cannabis

Robin Room (University of Melbourne, Australia)

Abstract:

The current drug conventions require that only scientific or medical use of cannabis be legal. Alternatives are laid out and considered for moving away from this position, both for an individual country and for a likeminded group of countries. The most likely options, it is concluded, are denouncing and reacceding with a reservation, for countries acting alone, and adopting a new cannabis convention, for a group of countries.

Session 6a (continued) [3.30 pm, Conference Room III]

Conclusions & recommendations from The Global Cannabis Commission Report

Peter Reuter (University of Maryland, USA)

Abstract:

This presentation is submitted as part of a suite of papers from Room, Lenton, Fischer, Reuter as part of the Beckley Foundation Report *Cannabis Policies: Moving Beyond the stalemate*. Conclusions are drawn regarding cannabis use and harms, the effects of current policies and options for ameliorating the adverse effects of prohibition as well as options for moving beyond the international treaties. It concludes there is no justification for incarceration or criminal conviction for simple cannabis possession or use offenses. It recommends the international drug control regime should be changed to allow a state to adopt, implement and evaluate its own cannabis regime within its borders. This would require changes in the existing conventions, or the adoption of a new pre-emptive convention. If this is not done there are recommendations for states about how to go about reducing the adverse impacts of prohibition. If states do decide to make cannabis legally available it is recommend that a system of strict government controlled regulation are employed with controls on price, quality, potency, and availability along with good public education about harms of cannabis use and bans or restrictions on advertising and promotion. The effects of any changes need to be closely monitored and inform prompt revision of the changes if indicated.

Typologies of Cannabis Use Control Reform

Dr. Benedikt Fischer (Simon Fraser University, Canada)

Abstract:

The international drug control treaties require signatory states to criminally prohibit and punish the non-medical use of illicit drugs included in their schedule, including cannabis. Despite these requirements, a number of Western jurisdictions have facilitated reforms to the strict criminal prohibition of cannabis use. These reforms have varied considerable in their conceptual and practical parameters. This paper will aim to typologize and illustrate with key examples the various cannabis use control reform models currently in existence, specifically referring to organizing reform categories of: depenalization; decriminalization; de facto or de jure legalization. Key issues in the implementation of these reform models and implications for cannabis control policy will be discussed.

Discussant: TBA

6b) Microsimulation [3.30 pm, Conference Room VII]

Explaining heterogeneity in patterns of lifetime illicit drug use: Comparing the results from a microsimulation model to traditional approaches

Rosalie Ricardo Pacula (RAND and NBER, USA)

Abstract:

This paper uses Monte Carlo simulation to estimate distributions of lifetime marijuana use measures and compares these results to those from a population-based cohort model. Each model uses a starting population with baseline gender, race/ethnicity, education, and drug use characteristics of U.S. 12 year-olds. At quarterly cycles, individuals face probabilities of transitioning between four physical locations (community; outpatient or inpatient drug treatment; or death) and four levels of proclivity to use drugs (non; occasional; regular; or heavy). Transition probabilities are based on current population data, and in the microsimulation model are functions of drug use history, location states, and demographics. This analysis finds that microsimulation is better able to capture heterogeneity in trajectories of lifetime marijuana use than the cohort model. For example, where microsimulation yields a coefficient of variation on lifetime marijuana use (measured in grams) of 1.33, the cohort model yields a coefficient of variation of only 0.81. Microsimulation modeling of lifetime marijuana use and outcomes is shown to be a useful complement to traditional methods for estimating lifetime consumption, as it does a better job representing heterogeneity in drug use across individuals and over time.

Beyond the cost-of-illness approach: Estimating the costs of marijuana treatment using a microsimulation model

Nancy Nicosia (RAND, USA)

Abstract:

While cost-of-illness (COI) studies have a long history in the health literature, there are serious limitations to using the results for policy analysis. This paper uses a microsimulation model of drug use to generate more policy-relevant cost estimates of marijuana treatment, which is the most common type of illegal drug treatment in the United States. The first section of the paper uses the model to generate both an incidence-based estimate of the cost of marijuana treatment and a prevalence based estimate in 2005. It shows that these estimates are not in fact similar and explains the source of their differences. In the second part of the paper, the model demonstrates the additional power of using a microsimulated incidence-based approach for estimating the cost of marijuana treatment by demonstrating its utility to consider alternative policy scenarios on the cost of drug treatment.

Isolating the consumption effect of residential drug treatment for hard drugs on criminal activity and criminal justice events: Insights from a microsimulation

Beau Kilmer (RAND, USA)

Abstract:

Participation in community-based residential drug treatment may reduce the probability of committing crime via four pathways: 1) It incapacitates the individual so they cannot participate in criminal activity, 2) It may disrupt relationships that are strongly associated with criminal activity (e.g., gangs), 3) It may increase access to and possibly demand for non drug-related services that can improve human capital and reduce the need to commit crime, and 4) It may reduce heavy drug use which reduces psychopharmacological and economic-compulsive crime (and possibly systemic crime if they were a user-dealer). This paper sheds light on the latter pathway (i.e., the consumption effect) with a microsimulation model that tracks hard drug use, drug treatment, crime, and criminal justice events over the life course for a cohort of 12 year-olds. Operationally, we will consider multiple scenarios with different probabilities of the effect of residential treatment on drug consumption, including zero. For each scenario we will compute the number of property and violent crimes committed by age 25 and the associated criminal justice events. This will allow us to learn more about the effect of improving the effectiveness of residential treatment on crime outcomes.

Discussant: *Harold Pollack* (University of Chicago, USA)

5.00 **Close**
