

GUIDELINES ON IMPROVING EWS AND ESTABLISHING DRUG CHECKING SERVICES

USE OF NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES IN WB/SEE *THE CHALLENGES, NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES*

06 November 2020



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SPECIAL THANKS GOES TO



#DAZNAMŠTARADIM project is implemented by the NGO Re Generation with the strategic support of the Office for Combating Drugs of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. The project is being implemented under a grant provided by the Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRA) as part of an International Harm Reduction Consortium, funded by the Robert Carr Foundation for Civil Society Networks.



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OUR OBJECTIVE

Give experiential advice **to improve communication within the current Early Warning System**, in order to better exchange information on current trends and risks as well as the desire **to strengthen multidisciplinary approach in response to public health threats** caused by production, trafficking and use of new psychoactive substances.

Special focus was placed on the consideration of **improving the implementation of communication strategies** within the Early Warning System, as well as the **contribution to scientific research approach**.



ABOUT THE EU EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

Operated by the EMCDDA (The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction), in close cooperation with Europol > the European Union Early Warning System on New Psychoactive Substances (EWS) is the first step in a three-step legal framework designed to allow the European Union (EU) **to rapidly detect, assess, and respond to health and social threats caused by new psychoactive substances (NPS)**. The work of the EWS aims to build, maintain, and strengthen situational awareness, preparedness, and response activities at national- and EU-level to NPS.

The EWS is composed of a multiagency and multidisciplinary network, which includes the EMCDDA, 30 national early warning systems (28 EU Member States, Turkey, and Norway), Europol and its law enforcement networks, the European Medicines Agency (EMA), the European Commission, and other partners.

The EMCDDA, in cooperation with Europol, is responsible for collecting, collating, analyzing, assessing, and communicating the information reported by the network in order to provide them with any information required for the purposes of early warning and to allow the EMCDDA **to draw up an initial report on an NPS that may pose health or social risks at EU level** or a combined initial reports on several similar NPS.



(1) OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM IN CASE OF THE APPEARANCE OF NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES IN REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

The main objectives of the Early Warning System are:

1. **Collection of qualitative information** on NPS appearing on the European drug market and **rapid response**;
2. Assessments of possible **risks** that NPS may pose **to the health of users and society**;
3. **Dissemination of warnings** and general strengthening of harm reduction measures;
4. Legal control and reduction of the supply of new dangerous psychoactive substances;
5. **Reducing the negative health and social impact** of NPS on the **user population**;
6. Preventing the spread of a new phenomenon at European level.



(1) OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM IN CASE OF THE APPEARANCE OF NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES IN REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

The main principle of the Early Warning System in Serbia is **active cooperation between all relevant partners on a permanent and *ad hoc* basis, using a multidisciplinary approach and a certain structure in the identification of new substances and risk processes.** All national activities in this area must be the fruit of a common people in order to further develop the Early Warning System in the Republic of Serbia.

A rapid system of information exchange on the production, trade, use and risks of new psychoactive substances is needed to prevent their negative effects and to take a timely response in the event of the emergence of new psychoactive substances that pose a threat to health.

The Early Warning System in case of the appearance of new psychoactive substances pointed out that NGOs have an important role in monitoring the emergence of new drugs, based on which the NGO Re Generation Organization decided to develop Guidelines for Improving the Early Warning System for New Psychoactive Substances and establishing a Service System. drug testing.



(1) OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM IN CASE OF THE APPEARANCE OF NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES IN REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

We found solid ground in two articles of the Law on Psychoactive and Controlled Substances:

- Possession of a psychoactive controlled substance without a license for production, respectively trade in a psychoactive controlled substance - Article 35
- Possession of a psychoactive controlled substance for scientific research activity - Article 36

The Law on Psychoactive Controlled Substances regulates the conditions for production and trade of psychoactive controlled substances, conditions and procedure for issuing permits for production, trade, export, import and transit of psychoactive controlled substances, conditions for cultivation, processing and trade of plants from which psychoactive substances can be obtained. controlled substances, use of psychoactive controlled substances, supervision over the implementation of this law, as well as other **issues in this field important for the protection of human life and health.**



RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Harmonize terminology/wording** related to psychoactive substances.
- Define and adjust the legal framework so that **harm reduction programs can provide more comprehensive support** to target population in order to reduce health risks.
- Improve and urge **scientific research** activities on NPS.
- **Make data** on the profiles of NPS accessible and **transparent to all**.
- **Improve communication** regarding the detection of NPS within the Early Warning System among all system partners, **in order to avoid media misuse** of NPS information.
- **Improve the harm reduction program** for all NPS beneficiaries, especially for the population of MSM.
- **Increase the level of knowledge** among health professionals and police forces on NPS.



ACTION 1

Establish a single national information system for fast communication on the territory of the Republic of Serbia with the aim of improving supervision over the production, trade and use of NPS. Provide participants in the implementation of the Early Warning System with a single information system for rapid exchange of information, which includes registration of information relevant to monitoring current trends in NPS and issuing recommendations for organizing individual or joint actions.



ACTION 2

The establishment and implementation of multidisciplinary scientific research studies will contribute to greater participation of the Republic of Serbia in creating new activities in Europe's response to the production, trade and use of NPS. Scientific research studies aim to contribute to the improvement of the national response to risks caused by the production, trade and use of NPS and to reduce the impact of risks on the social, health and economic aspects of society.



ACTION 3

Development of cost-benefit analysis for the establishment of drug testing programs by the competent state institutions, the scientific community and non-governmental organizations. Putting the NPS in the context of the Republic of Serbia would mean, among other things, making a detailed analysis to determine the benefits of introducing integrated drug checking services and in that way to confirm the justification for the implementation of activities and budgeting.

