



## **Scenarios for a Belgian population survey on illicit drug use**

EXPERT SEMINAR

**Wednesday 29th April**

Conference room 'Nelis', Scientific Institute for Public Health (WIV), Brussels

It is our pleasure to invite you to attend the Expert Seminar organised by the Belgian Science Policy, the Institute for Social Drug research (ISD, Ghent University) and the Research centre for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies (CELLO, University of Antwerp). This Expert Seminar will focus on "Scenarios for a Belgian population survey on illicit drug use", and will take place in Brussels on April 29, 2009.

Policy makers need reliable and accurate data about the nature and the extent of the drug phenomenon. Although the authorities have been putting in a great effort to gain insight into the epidemiological aspects of drug use (e.g. among school going youth), Belgium is one of the few European countries that have not yet developed a continuous or periodic survey of illegal drug use among the general population. The incidental questions on drug use in the Health Interview Surveys are barely adequate to examine the prevalence and the real nature of the problem. Although prevalence rates are a common way of looking at drug use, underlying use patterns must be examined too. Moreover, the questions on illicit drug use in the Health Interview Surveys do not meet international standards (such as put forward by the EMCDDA or the WHO).

A feasibility study of a recurring survey on drug use in the general population has been commissioned and financed by the Belgian Science Policy Office and carried out by the Institute for Social Drug research and the Research Centre for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies. To enable Belgian policy makers to decide whether and how to implement a national prevalence study on illegal drug use, we developed three scenarios that consist of a questionnaire (in Dutch, French and English), a realistic estimate of the budget (overhead, fieldwork, equipment, operational costs, etc.) and the time required to conduct a Belgian

population survey, a detailed description of (the strengths and limitations of) the research design and a thorough explanation of how national policy makers can make data easy available and accessible to interested people.

The aim of the Expert Seminar is first and foremost to discuss and raise awareness of the importance of a Belgian general population survey on drug use but also to create a forum for discussion among policymakers. By bringing together several national and international experts, the conference will open-up a dialogue on the three scenarios for a survey on drug use among the Belgian population and the particular role of policymakers in overcoming the present challenges and shortcomings facing international guidelines.

The Expert Seminar is free of charge. The conference language is English. Please find enclosed the programme of the Seminar. To register for the Expert Seminar, please send an email to Ms. Julie Tieberghien before April 15th, 2009.

For any further information, please contact Ms. Julie Tieberghien ([Julie.Tieberghien@UGent.be](mailto:Julie.Tieberghien@UGent.be) or phone: +32.(0)9.264.84.63)

#### **VENUE**

Scientific Institute of Public Health  
Juliette Wytsmanstreet 14  
1050 Brussels

#### **ROUTE DESCRIPTION**

By car or by public transport

see website: <http://www.iph.fgov.be/route.asp?Lang=EN>



## PROGRAMME EXPERT SEMINAR

### Scenarios for a Belgian population survey on illicit drug use

- 09H00** Registration and coffee
- 09H30** **Welcome: Mrs. Lieve VAN DAELE**  
Federal Science Policy Office, Research Programmes Department
- 09H45** **Presentation of the results: Prof.Dr.Tom DECORTE, Prof. Dr. Dimitri MORTELMANS, Ms. Julie TIEBERGHIEN, Ms. Sabine DE MOOR**  
*“Scenario’s for a Belgian population survey on illicit drug use”*
- 10H30** Coffee/tea break
- 10H50** **Ms. Sandrine SLEIMAN**  
European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Lisbon  
*“Measuring drug use among the general population; a key information for policy formulation and evaluation”*
- 11u20** **Dr. Marc ROELANDS**  
Head of Focal Point Belgium, Scientific Institute for Public Health (WIV)  
*“What can we learn from a national population survey on drug use?”*
- 11H40** **Mr. Ruud BLESS**  
Quinx Research, the Netherlands  
*“How to select a scenario for a general population survey?”*
- 12H00** Lunch break
- 13H30** **Mr. Stefaan DEMAREST**  
Scientific Institute for Public Health (WIV)  
*“Estimating drug use by means of a Health Interview Survey: seeking needles in a haystack?”*

**13H50**

**Mr. STEPHANE LEGLEYE**

Observatoire Français des Drogues et des Toxicomanies (OFDT), France

*“The monitoring of drug use in the general population; the French case”*

**14H10**

**Prof. Dr. LUDWIG KRAUS**

Institut für Therapieforschung (IFT), Germany

*“What do we gain from population surveys on substance use? A public health perspective”*

**14H30**

**Mr. Patrick LAMBRECHT**

Faculty of Psychology & Educational Science, Clinical & Lifespan Psychology, Vrije Universiteit

Brussels

*“National population survey on drug use in Belgium: views from national and international school surveys”*

**14H50**

**Panel discussion with**

**Dr. Marc ROELANDS**, Head of Focal Point Belgium, Scientific Institute for Public Health (WIV), **Ms. Sandrine SLEIMAN**, European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), **Prof.dr. Ludwig KRAUS**, Institut für Therapieforschung (IFT), **Mr. Stéphane LEGLEYE**, Observatoire Français des Drogues et des Toxicomanies (OFDT), **Prof. dr. Tom DECORTE**, Institute for Social Drug research (ISD, Ghent University) and **Prof. dr. Dimitri MORTELMANS**, Research Centre for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies (CELLO, University of Antwerp)

and debate with the **audience**

*Moderator: Mrs. Lieve Van Daele*, Federal Science Policy Office, Research Programmes Department

**16H00**

**Concluding remarks: Dr. Marc ROELANDS**

Head of Focal Point Belgium, Scientific Institute for Public Health (WIV)