



## ReDNet Project at the Academy of Art in Macerata

Macerata, Italy



Over the summer, the ReDNet working group in Macerata, Italy, launched two drug prevention videos at 'I-Mode Visions', a festival dedicated to multi-medial arts, which took place in the Marche Region. The videos were produced in cooperation with young artists and students of the Academy of Art of Macerata. Pre-recorded interviews with Dr Ornella Corazza, Prof Fabrizio Schifano and Prof Pasquale Policastro were shown at the event, on the challenges and the risks associated with the rapid diffusion of designer drugs. The launch of the videos at the festival was warmly welcomed by the public and was later presented by the local media. The event represented an occasion to inform the general public about the aims and activities of the ReDNet Project. More videos will be released in the next few months. These will be used for awareness and prevention campaigns within the projects "Stammibene" and "Sicuramente", which develop

Recreational Drugs European Network  
Research Group Newsletter

### NEW PUBLICATION

The ReDNet Research Group has recently published the following paper:  
Demetrovics Zs., Mervó B., Corazza O., Davey Z., Deluca P., Drummond C., Enea A., Moskalewicz J., Di Melchiorre G., Di Furia L., Farre M., Flesland L., Floridi L., Iszák F., Scherbaum N., Siemann H., Skutle A., Torrens M., Pasinetti M., Pezolesi C., Pisarska A., Shapiro H., Sferazza E., van der Kreeft P., Schifano F. (2010). **Az elektronikus prevenció lehetőségei az új (szintetikus) drogok használatának megelőzésében: a Rekreatív Drogok Európai Hálózatának (Recreational Drugs European Network) bemutatása.** [Possibilities of E-prevention in the field of novel compounds: Role of Recreational Drugs European Network] *Addictologia Hungarica*, 9(4), 289-297.

related to drugs, alcohol and HIV prevention. It will be soon possible to watch the films on the group website. So look out for the announcement!

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*Laura Germani is a Head Psychologist and Paolo Nanni is a communicator at the STDP of Macerata, Italy*

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## The Online Market of 'Legal Highs' in Poland

### Poland among the highest consumers of designer drugs in Europe

According to a report released by the European Commission on July 11, 2011 nine per cent of young Polish people use 'legal highs'. Of all the European nationalities taking part in the research survey, a higher rate was observed only among Irish (16%) respondents (EMCDDA, July 2011). This is a surprising result given the fact that Poland introduced new restrictive laws preventing the use of 'legal highs' in October 2010. The new rules resulted in the closure of all head shops in Poland. However, drug sales over the Internet remain an unresolved challenge for the Polish regulators.

### Dopalacze.com created the trend for legal highs in Poland

As a matter of fact, designer drugs' sales in Poland have their origins in the Internet. The first shop in Poland to sell 'legal highs' was *dopalacze.com*, an online business established in 2008. The domain turned out to be an exceptionally effective marketing platform, which contributed to the success of the online market for designer drugs and the popularity of such substances. The media maintained the name 'dopalacze', which became a commonly used term for all 'legal highs' in Poland (Zakrzewski, 2011). Strong demand for these type of substances resulted in the opening of numerous online shops and likewise the head shops just a short time later. Around 2,000 head shops existed in Poland in 2010 (Safjański,

Gołębiewski, 2011). Owners of head shops label their products as *collectors' items*, not intended for consumption. 170 Polish online shops selling psychoactive substances were identified in 2010, of which 30 offered both legal highs and hallucinogenic mushrooms, 34 offered only hallucinogenic mushrooms, and 106 only legal highs (Pelczar, 2011).

### New legislation restricts the sale and production of designer drugs

Frequent cases of drug poisoning, including several deaths, put pressure on Polish state authorities to introduce legislation restricting the availability of 'legal highs'. Consequently, the government took the decision (October 2, 2010) to ban all shops (around 1,300) selling legal highs and to record these substances on the list of illegal drugs. This was not an easy task since each substance prohibition required a separate law amendment. The Act of October 8, 2010, amended the Anti-drugs Act and the Act of State Sanitary Inspection thus simplifying and accelerating the procedure of adding new drugs to the list of illegal substances (Safjański, Gołębiewski, 2011). The new legislation sets out the definition of designer drugs as any type of *substitute* products that could be used as a narcotic or are determined to be used for the purpose of "getting high" and specifically bans such substances from being manufactured and marketed. Breaking the bans is subject to a penalty of between twenty thousand and one million Polish zloty (4,400 £ – 220,000 £). The severity of the fine mainly depends on the quantity of products produced or brought into the market. This amendment does not prohibit

the possession of designer drugs; only their sales and distribution. The purchase of designer drugs also remains legal. The Act of State Sanitary Inspection gives the Sanitary Inspection the power to discontinue the production or marketing of drugs

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### Two new research assistants join our team

Marta Kolasinska has a Master of Law degree from the University of Szczecin, Poland, specializing in Public International Law. During her Master's degree, she spent a semester studying at the University of Montpellier in France. She is a Senior Member of the European Students' Law Association.



I am Sébastien Serve and I come from Avignon. I studied Law at the University of Montpellier during 3 years and 1 at University of Szczecin (Poland). I'm gonna integrate European Master degree codirected by Professor Pasquale Policastro who is a member of ReDNet. I integrate ReDNet project for summertime to contribute with my legal point of view and also it is a great opportunity for me, because I focused my studies on European and French health laws.



that are reasonably suspected to pose a threat to human life or health. The new regulations also prohibit the advertising and promotion of foods or products that would suggest that they have effects similar to those of psychotropic or narcotic drugs. Violation of this ban can result in punishment in the form of a fine, liberty restriction, or imprisonment of up to one year.

**Regulatory Challenges**

The new laws prohibit the production and sales of previously 'legal highs' by Polish entities. However, businesses registered abroad continue their operations through mail deliveries to Polish customers.

The regulation of this grey zone distribution channel remains a regulatory challenge for the Polish government.

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*Marta Kolasinska is a Visiting Research Assistant at the University of Hertfordshire*  
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**OUR PARTNERS**  
**DrugScope**  
 London, UK



DrugScope is the national membership organisation for the drug sector and a leading independent centre of expertise on drugs. We have over 400 members working in many areas connected to substance misuse – drug and alcohol treatment, education and prevention, health and social care, criminal justice and academia. Our aims are to inform policy development, reduce drug-related harms to individuals, families and communities - and promote health, well-being, recovery, inclusion and integration.

DrugScope undertakes a number of activities to help us achieve our aims. Drawing on the expertise of our membership through consultation events and regular meetings, we promote effective responses to drug taking and advise on policy-making. The organisation encourages informed debate on drug issues and speaks out on behalf of our member organisations working on the ground.

DrugScope also provides good quality drug information to the general public, professionals and the me-

**ReDNet Research Group**

ReDNet has a network operative in 8 European countries. The project partners are:

- School of Pharmacy, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, UK
- National Addiction Centre, Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London, London, UK
- Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology, Warsaw, Poland
- Bergen Clinics Foundation, Bergen, Norway
- De Sleutel, Gent, Belgium
- Servizio Salute Regione Marche, Ancona, Italy
- Consorci Mar Parc de Salut de Barcelona, Spain
- Rhine State Hospital, University of Duisberg-Essen, Essen, Germany
- National Institute for Drug Prevention, Institute for Social Policy and Labour, Budapest, Hungary
- DrugScope, London, UK

dia, through our website and our range of publications. We run a free daily e bulletin for anyone with a professional interest in drug misuse, called DS Daily (sign up here: [www.dsdaily.org.uk](http://www.dsdaily.org.uk)). We are also regular commentators in print, online and broadcast media at a local, national and international level and provide background research for documentary makers, film producers and drama series.

DrugScope is a registered charity. To find out more about DrugScope's work, become a member or donate to support us in our work, please visit [www.drugscope.org.uk](http://www.drugscope.org.uk). You can also follow us on Twitter (@DrugScope).



**SECOND LIFE - 5th Seminar**

**"PREVENTION OF DRUG ABUSE: LESSONS LEARNED FROM NEUROSCIENCE AND SOCIO-CULTURAL RESEARCH"** - Wed, 21 September 2011 at 15:30

Special guest: **Dr Gilberto Gerra** (Chief of Drug Prevention and Health Branch, Division for Operations, UNODC, Vienna)

See on Secon Life: <http://maps.seconlife.com/seconlife/Uni%20of%20Herts/121/183/22>