EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL MIGRATION and HOME AFFAIRS

Directorate D: Security
Unit D.4 : Anti-Drugs Policy

Meeting report from the Internet and Drugs expert meeting

Brussels

7 and 8 June 2016

One of the more recent challenges in the field of drugs is the emergence of the internet (web and Dark net) as an online marketplace for drugs. In 2013 and 2014 more than half of the EU Member States specifically targeted drug-related crime over the internet, with a number of them targeting websites used to sell synthetic drugs. Eurojust and Europol also reported carrying out several actions in this area.

On 7 and 8 June 2016, in the framework of the EU Internet Forum, the Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission organised an expert meeting on internet and drugs. The main topics addressed were: analysis of the problem we are confronted with and finding a common definition for it; looking closer at the responses provided so far by the EU Member States and other international actors; and explore possible ways for future common action.

Experts from the Member States attended the meeting together with experts from third countries (Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Turkey and the US,), representatives of relevant EU agencies (the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Europol, Eurojust) and international organisations (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Pompidou Group/Council of Europe); civil society and internet companies' representatives.

1. Opening

The meeting was opened by Luigi Soreca, Director for Security in the Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission.

He pointed to the policy context in which the meeting was taking place. The European Agenda on Security adopted in 2015 draws attention to all the links between different types of crimes and to the fact that security threats require an effective and coordinated response at European level. In this context, the European Commission set up the EU Internet Forum in 2015, bringing together major internet companies. The EU Internet Forum has focused mainly on the challenges terrorist propaganda poses for EU citizens, developing joined up approaches to identify and develop actions together with the industry and Member States. A similar approach could be taken in respect to drugs.

Luigi Soreca also pointed out the recently adopted Communication on online platforms, which highlights the Commission's plans to further encourage coordinated EU-wide self-regulatory efforts by online platforms. He explained that if there are no operational results to taking down illegal content and if self-regulation does not work, the Commission will have to consider a different approach.

He also highlighted that the meeting took place in a timely international context, given that the outcome document adopted at the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGASS) on the World Drug Problem in April this year acknowledges that the use of Internet for drug-related activities needs particular attention both regarding the sale of illegal drugs and the awareness raising and prevention activities.

He concluded by pointing out that the drug problem is as present as ever, with 24 billion euros spent each year on illicit drugs as reported by EMCDDA and Europol in the 2016 EU Drug Markets Report. In addition, the costs for our society are even bigger in terms of the damages drug trafficking causes to communities: violent crime, corruption of officials, and even the destruction of the environment. And since the online sale of illegal substances is growing, there is a need for better understanding the problem we deal with, its dimension and complexity.

2. Problem analysis and common definition

The first session of the meeting focused on the problem analysis and finding a common definition. It included four presentations, followed by an open discussion.

The first presentation was given by Judith Aldridge from the University of Manchester and focused on the research perspective on drug cryptomarkets, their impact on harms, benefits, and global and local drug markets.

The definition of the cryptomarket was addressed in this first presentation. It was introduced as a platform similar to other online marketplaces like eBay or Amazon, but with anonymity features; it hosts multiple sellers or 'vendors'; it provides participants with a degree of anonymity via its location on the hidden web and use of cryptocurrencies for payment; and it aggregates and displays customer feedback ratings and comments. Feedback is important because vendors know they will be assessed by customers, and new customers prioritise vendors with excellent reputations. Discussion fora are an important location for vendors and customers to air and resolve disputes: these fora also host discussions on drug harm reduction.

It is believed that the purity and quality of products sold online may be more likely to be closer to that advertised compared to drugs purchased offline. According to results from a number of studies using self-reports of cryptomarkets customers, the choice to buy drugs on cryptomarkets appears to be driven by a perception that the quality of drugs is better and that the price is lower. One study of tests of user-submitted products bought online showed that over 90% of the products contained the advertised drugs. The purity level of cocaine was of 70% much higher than purity levels found in offline markets. However, the study covered only 200 samples and the sampling itself was not random, and so representativeness could not be determined.

There is also indication that a lot more substances are available for sale on cryptomarkets than on the traditional markets. The analysis of eight cryptomarkets in January 2016 showed the availability of 713 different substances.

The presentation also approached the issue of price of drugs online. It was explained that economists would predict that illegal products are more expensive than their legal counterparts because the illegal market is not competitive and the increased risk associated with illegal drug supply is factored into the price. This suggests that price of drugs may be lower on cryptomarkets compared to offline markets may be lower. However, making comparisons on price between offline and online purchased drugs is a complex undertaking, not least because price must be adjusted for purity, which seems likely to

differ substantially between online and offline markets. Australia was given as an example where drugs sold online appear to be substantially cheaper.

The non-financial costs of cryptomarkets are also relevant. Drug users can be ripped off and face violence and arrest on any illegal markets. However, in offline markets, trust between buyers and sellers is facilitated through face-to-face interactions. On cryptomarkets, trust between anonymous transactors is created through marketplace regulatory mechanisms like escrow and customer feedback. There is as yet no evidence as to whether rip offs are greater or lesser on online markets. One study shows that drug users reported fewer threats online than offline. However, currently there is no study that makes appropriate comparisons of transactional risk between online and offline drug markets.

We have little available research that characterises vendors, beyond their country of operation, so know little about their demographics. Research does suggest that vendors elect to sell domestically, if they are able to do so profitably, because of the increased risk that comes with selling and shipping internationally. Vendors sell across international borders when there are significant 'push' factors to do so.

However it is quite clear that the majority of vendors do not sell across borders if they have enough customers at home because of the increased risk that comes with selling and shipping internationally.

Should cryptomarkets continue to thrive the availability of a wider range of high quality drugs online this would lead to increases in both harms and benefits. One benefit may be reduced transactional violence, and the fact that the drugs that dominate cryptomarket sales (cannabis and MDMA) are relatively low harm profiles in comparison to other drugs.

The second presentation of this session was given by Klaidas Kuchalskis from Europol and focused on a law enforcement perspective on the drug trade.

This presentation set the context of the drug markets in the EU. It underlined that this is the biggest and most dynamic criminal market. Two thirds of all organised crime groups in the EU are involved in illicit drugs trafficking. The pursuit to minimise production costs entails serious risks for users, including violence, health issues, and deaths cases.

It was explained that cannabis is the largest drug market in the EU, estimated at more than 9 billion euros per year. The market is dominated by domestic indoor cultivation (especially by Dutch, Albanian and Vietnamese Organised Crime Groups).

The heroin market is large but with a long-term decline. It is estimated at 6.8 billion euros per year. Recently large seizures of heroin were reported. The most involved organised crime groups are Turkish, Albanian and Pakistani.

Cocaine is the most commonly used stimulant. The estimated retail value is of 5.7 billion euros per year. A wide range of organised crime groups are involved in cocaine trafficking (Colombian, Italian, Dutch, British, Spanish, Nigerian).

The market of synthetic drugs is very dynamic and complex, estimated at 2.5 billion euros per year. The Netherlands and Belgium are the most important production regions. There is no sign of slowdown in the number, type or availability of new psychoactive substances. The EU Early Warning System monitors 560 substances. Online sale is the most common distribution method.

The Europol representative also explained that there are a number of factors relevant for shaping the nature and impact of organised crime, such as: the economic situation; the geo-political situation; transport routes and infrastructure; diaspora communities; corruption; legal business structures; social tolerance; legislative gaps and the Internet.

The traditional (offline) drugs market remains a significant threat, with large scale production cartels, Organised Crime Groups transporting and distributing globally and major production centres of synthetic drugs in the Member States of the EU. However, the internet is a major facilitator for organised crime impacting on the drug market. The online distribution of drugs is an internet-facilitated crime, not to be confused with cybercrime.

The Europol representative also explained that the distribution of drugs via the surface web reduces risks because there is no need for physical interaction in different stages of the trafficking process. It also facilitates access to a global audience, to a large availability and diversity of products, to easy payment options; to bulk orders and wholesale prices. In addition ‘mirror sites’ redirect customers to Dark web marketplaces. Marketplaces are available in several languages (English, Russian, German, Spanish, French etc.) There is a diversity of products and poly-criminality on the Darknet marketplaces.

The deep web provides opportunities to underground networks, providing new ways for money laundering. Recently there has been an increase in the number of drug retailers on the Darknet. According to Europol, drugs are the most frequently advertised and featured product on the Darknet but they are not the most frequently purchased product.

The majority of online sales relate to new psychoactive substances and pharmaceuticals. These are marketed as ‘research chemicals’ and sold on the surface web. Mainly small-scale amounts are sold online. The sale of heroin and cocaine appear limited. The sale on the Darknet continues despite several law enforcement takedowns.

Europol explained that from the buyers' perspective, there are a number of advantages to the online sale of drugs: absence of physical violence; perceived anonymity of the marketplaces; high quality and wide diversity of products; more reliability because the vendors and products are being reviewed; cheaper products. The disadvantages are linked to: the likelihood of being scammed; more accessibility for regular internet users; bitcoin transactions are prohibitive; shipment across borders poses more risks.

The challenges of the online drugs trade for law enforcement include: the high adaptability of the marketplaces to takedowns; crimes are committed remotely making detection and prosecution more challenging and complex; the interception of communication is made complicated by the use of proxy servers, anonymising networks, virtual currencies, alternative banking platforms, cloud technologies. There are often wrong perceptions of the production/trafficking scale. It was shown that what were assumed to be 'major producers’ offering new psychoactive substances from China are often ‘simple guys behind their computers’. Online monitoring is a new approach and law enforcement has limited experience with it. There are also intelligence and technical gaps.

Online sale of drugs also offers opportunities to law enforcement in terms of: development of better risk profiling measures for parcels and express couriers, which also requires better cooperation with the private sector; monitoring of transactions on the surface web (PayPal and bank transfers); infiltration of online sales networks to identify vendors; increasing the risk of doing business (de-

anonymising users, takedowns, showing law enforcement presence online); covert operations online are easier than those in the offline world.

At this time the online trade in drugs has not displaced traditional supply methods but it is increasing in scale. Takedowns of online marketplaces do not significantly reduce drug sales. The surface web enables the sale of drugs to a wider market of consumers. The online sales mostly involve individual dealers selling to individual people as opposed to Organised Crime Groups trafficking bulk amounts. Traditional traffickers are increasingly using parcels and express mail to avoid interceptions of body packers and concealments in luggage. There is a reduced risk for Organised Crime Groups through identification or detection.

Europol also works with Interpol and the US Drug Enforcement Administration via operational agreements. Joint operations are conducted and best practices are shared.

The third presentation of this session was given by Liesbeth Vandam from European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and focused on open source information and drug markets.

It was explained that the surface/visible web is only 4% of the Internet, while the deep web is the rest of 96%. The latter's content is not visible through search engines and it includes a variety of different types of content, including dynamic web pages, private sites, blocked sites and limited access networks. The Dark net is part of the deep web. Its content is intentionally hidden and it is accessible only using special web browsers such as the Onion Router (ToR).

While more evidence is needed on the topic of social media and internet drug markets, there are ways in which social media can interact with the drug markets. Social media impact on demand and availability of supply. There are discussions on social media among drug users about bad trips experienced; there is drug themed video-sharing and "do it yourself consumer videos", celebratory videos that are mainly about cannabis or MDMA. Looking at Instagram during one day, researchers found 50 drug dealing profiles. There is also open communication about drug dealing and posts of substances and young people do not shy away from talking about it.

Many of the drug-related videos on You Tube come from official sources and are mainly about prevention. However, in many on the drug prevention videos there is only a one-way-communication between producers and viewers of the videos.

There is also direct advertisement on social media, as well as advice on where and how to buy drugs. The Internet is a key driver for drug market developments because it facilitates drug trafficking in many ways. It allows the establishment of internet marketplaces comparable to Amazon and e Bay. The use of services such as Skype instead of mobile phone devices decreases the risk of detection. But the Internet is also a potential tool for reducing harm. Many people who buy substances online say this is safer than buying offline.

Online social networks are a mirror for offline social networks. Often young people buy drugs from friends. Therefore, since social networks move from offline to online drug trafficking might also move.

Social media can be very useful in terms of identifying and monitoring drug-related trends and understand drug users' behaviour. Research on the interaction between social media and drug markets

is still in its infancy. There is a need for improved methods and incorporation of digital monitoring in drug monitoring. The EMCDDA is running a new project in this direction.

The speaker from the EMCDDA explained that there are also apps designed for drug and alcohol users in recovery. Some mainstream apps (such as Instagram, Tinder) are used for drug dealing and some are dedicated to assessing the quality of drugs.

In the ensuing discussion there were questions on whether there was an increase in people trying to cook their own drugs and whether there was an increase in the sale of drugs precursors.

Europol confirmed that recipes for cooking drugs are available online and most likely they are being used but there is no evidence of increased own production of drugs. Other participants pointed to research that looked at precursors' sale on cryptomarkets and which shows that there is an increase in the sale of such products. Lab notes are also available for sale and some vendors offer their services to help with cooking. Precursors sales cannot be expected to be very big but their effect can be big enough.

Some participants pointed out that it is necessary to raise awareness of parents regarding what youngsters are doing online.

The last presentation of this session was given by Jesus Audelo Gonzalez from the Mexican Federal Police and focused on an international perspective of the problem.

The speaker gave a short definition of new psychoactive substances (NPS), which are sold online with parcel delivery services included. It has been identified that NPS are more popular among teenagers, not only because of its effects, but because they are easy to carry and hide, and leave no trace of their consumption. In Latin America there has been an increase of cases of deceased young people, allegedly because of NPS overdoses. Costa Rica, Peru, Chile, Colombia, US are the main places where NPS are consumed.

In Mexico the Federal Police takes Cyber Investigation and Cyber Intelligence actions for the identification and localisation of networks likely responsible for trading NPS through the Internet. It was reported that there has been an increase in the number of publications related to the alleged sale of drugs on Internet sites, social networks and the deep web.

The speaker also emphasised that purchasing something illegal online is not necessarily cybercrime and it was important to make this difference.

He also explained that some substances that are sold online are not illegal but their effects are the same as illegal drugs (e.g. salvia divinorum is not illegal but its effect is the same as cocaine). In Mexico it has been determined that many of the vendors cook up their own product and distribute it. Therefore it is difficult to know the exact quantities which are sold. In Mexico the following features are tracked on national territory: the available substances, prices, the form in which drugs are commercialised, the way they are paid for and the delivery manner (mainly via parcels). Products are dispatched very discreetly; they are well wrapped up so that they cannot be detected. Vendors can pack a product in a way in which the customer asks for. Paypal is used for payments often in Mexico but there are also entities where money which is meant to be payment for an online transaction can be deposited,

In Mexico social media is used for the sale of drugs, with users providing feedback about their vendors. The dealer profile is young (between 17 and 32 years old); from medium-high economic setting; educated. It looks like distribution happens mainly in border areas with US.

Some NPS are not regulated in Mexico. However, some of the substances are being studied and worked on by authorities who have a mandate for monitoring. For example, the effects of salvia divinorum are known and therefore the authorities are able to track the sale online and have been able to collect enough information to put forward a proposal for regulation. Sometimes substances are sold via other countries where they are not illegal.

In Mexico there are also cultural processes where some substances are used and these need to be respected.

The speaker also explained that entrapment is not legally possible in Mexico. Therefore the police work on basis of information from social media and when the information about a possible suspect is corroborated they try to track down the individual to catch them either during the sale or later on, on charges of possession.

The speaker also mentioned that organised criminal groups have diversified their activities and they use their established structure to sell other substances, mainly precursors. The way to obtain precursors is illegal and then they are also put to an illegal use.

Facebook informed that its Community standards forbid the sale of drugs on the site and forbid the presence on the site of groups like organised crime groups and cartels. Any praise of such groups is also not allowed. Facebook also informed that there is a specific reporting flow around drug selling. The reports are reviewed by Facebook employees and if the content is confirmed as illegal, it is taken down. However, Facebook was not able to provide any statistical data on the number of occasions when this reporting for drugs issues has been used in the last years or their outcome.

In the open discussion that followed the presentation, several ideas and suggestions for future action have been put forward.

Throughout the presentations, the different speakers used the terms *dark net, deep web* and *cryptomarkets.* A question was asked to clarify the differences. One of the researchers present explained that the dark net is the part of the internet that is not indexed and can only be accessed via an Onion Router (ToR). The deep net is the part of the Internet which is not easily accessible. Both the Dark net and the deep net have connotations seeming to imply that all activity that happens here is illegal but it is not always the case. Therefore, the term cryptomarket is preferred as it describes with accuracy the kind of platform in question.

One participant suggested that a glossary of terms related to drugs sales online could be put together as it was done, via Council Conclusions, for firearms.

There was a discussion on whether the sale of illicit substances is dominating the cryptomarkets or not. Some participants claimed that empirical data shows that drugs are the main product sold on cryptomarkets. They claimed that this has been the case in the past three or four years and the volume rose exponentially. There are also other goods sold but by far all information and intelligence shows that drugs are mostly sold.

Some participants questioned whether the take down of illegal markets should be the focus of action of law enforcement against cryptomarkets, since take down does not seem to reduce the sale of drugs. Many of the law enforcement representative present responded that take down does work but, just like in the offline world, when taking down a group/site, they would continue their business in the side streets/other websites. At the same time, it takes too long to intervene on the new sites that are created.

Some others pointed out that takedown may not be 100% efficient but it helps to get information about the marketplaces, vendors, buyers, substances available, etc.

The question about the amount of information about cryptomarkets that should be given to the media was also discussed. Some participants feared that too much information might actually act as an incentive for trying to use cryptomarkets for those who had never done it before. One participant pointed out that Silkroad only became popular after an article was published in the media. Other participants felt that information about cryptomarkets in the media could also work as a prevention measure.

The link between the sale of drugs online and transactional violence was also discussed. Some participants felt that if it was correct that people are more likely to get the drugs they are looking for on the cryptomarkets, if the transactional violence and conflict were reduced by buying online, then this would be a benefit. However, some participants pointed out that the link between buying drugs online and violence may not be visible but it is still present. Buying drugs online could still give birth to potential violence in the streets (caused by a person having bought drugs online) or drugged driving. In addition, it was pointed out that there is no good quality of drugs. Getting drugs with high purity online, does not mean the drugs are safer. In addition, if more than 700 types of drugs can be bought online, buyers cannot be expected to know what each one of them is/should be.

The session concluded with the following main takeaways:

- The Internet and social media are both an opportunity and a driver for the trade of illicit drugs
- The online trade of illegal drugs is on the rise, more evidence is emerging and more research is needed
- From available research we know that the online trade of drugs has consequences on drugs availability and variety, purity, transactional violence and conflict
- The transactions take place both on cryptomarkets and on the surface net, including via social media
- The Internet can be very useful for awareness measures, harm reduction, prevention but for these campaigns to be successful they must be interactive
- We should further explore the impact of the fact that some substances are legal in one country and illegal in other on the online sale of drugs
- The use of the terms *dark net, deep web and cryptomarkets* should be considered in the light of the different definitions
- The possibility of setting up a glossary of terms should be explored

3. Current responses, including the use of internet for awareness raising and prevention

The second session of the meeting focused on current responses provided to the problem of online trade of illegal drugs by the different stakeholders. It also addressed the use of the Internet for awareness raising and prevention. It included six presentations, followed by an open discussion.

The first presentation of Session 2 was given by Bas Doorn from the Dutch Prosecutor Office and it presented the main outcomes of the Illegal trade on online marketplaces (ITOM) EU-funded project.

The project ITOM started in 2013 and it was fuelled by several reasons: the plethora of illegal goods available online; the easy transnational trade and the anonymity facilitated by the Internet; the easy

access to the Internet for everyone. The speaker pointed out that to tackle the online trade of drugs systematic large scale effects are needed, together with a long term international effort.

The main goal of the project was to establish an effective way of combating illegal online marketplaces through: multidisciplinary interventions, EU cooperation and coordination, increased insight in the problem and establishing a European (cybercrime) network at Eurojust.

The speaker explained that interventions in the online trade of illegal drugs can be made in different phases of the transaction. During the digital phase when the goods are sold online and contact between vendors and buyers takes place; during the second phase which is the delivery/shipment; and during the third phase which is payment and financial interventions.

The strategy designed by the project to combat ITOM includes four steps: undermining the marketplaces by de-anonymizing users, by incapacitating the marketplaces through takedown and technical interventions and by showing presence of law enforcement to enlarge the effect (communication strategy); straining logistics of shipments; straining payment and conversion method; and by monitoring results and determining effectiveness.

It was explained that the intervention at the shipment stage is difficult because there are many postal packages. A lot of the trade seems to happen within EU and customs does not normally check postal packages within the EU. Joint customs operations are foreseen by the Customs Cooperation Working Party of the Council of the EU.

Payment and conversion are a bottleneck for vendors because there are not many opportunities to exchange bit coins to currency and in order to get more supply the vendors need to use cash.

The speaker also pointed out that monitoring effectiveness is very difficult. Results of actions against online marketplaces are not always immediately visible. Straining effects of increased customs detection has limited effect; straining payment and conversion seems to have some effect, but there are many alternatives to payment and conversion. It is important to look closer at what has effect and what does not and this could be done together with academia.

Regarding the nature and size of the online trade of illegal drugs, the insight in the phenomenon has increased greatly (e.g. qualitative insights regarding modus operandi, popular venues on Dark net; and quantitative data regarding seized marketplaces, bitcoin transactions and open source data collection).

Data have shown that a lot of Dutch vendors ship to Germany, France, the UK, the Netherlands, Australia and US.

In conclusion, it is difficult to measure success, but the network of the ITOM project was greatly improved and can continue to be used even if the project is now finished. There was some success in executing the strategy but the effectiveness was difficult to measure. It is worth exploring more possibilities of cooperation with the academia.

The second presentation in this session was given by Christian Mader from the Federal Ministry of the Interior of Austria and it presented the "Joint investigations to combat drug trafficking via the virtual market (darknet) within and also into the EU" (Darknet) EU-funded project.

This project is led by Austria and its partner Germany. It has a duration of 24 months and participants from all 28 EU Member States, candidate and third countries, Europol, Interpol, Eurojust, European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the

Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Drug Control Service and the European Commission. The end of this project is foreseen on 31st January 2017.

The project takes into account the EU Drug Strategy 2013-2020, the EU Drugs Action Plan 2013-2016 and the EMPACT[1]Operational Action Plan 2014.

Its objectives are: the reduction of offers for drugs submitted on virtual platforms; building an investigation network on internet forums; the enhancement of the mutual understanding between real investigators and cybercrime experts; dismantling internationally acting offender groups; arrests of criminals and seizure of illegal drugs.

The project involves real life and virtual investigators, cybercrime and IT experts. So far the project has managed: to build networks of contacts with third countries; operational network building; cross-border joint investigations; information exchange and investigations; creation of best practice methods for legal strategies; identify and/or arrest important sellers.

The project also found that drug trafficking on the internet and particular in the Darknet takes on large dimensions as there are 14.000 orders and 6000 customers per year, generating an income of € 4, 4 million within 16 months.

Two conferences were organised within the project that led to some of the following conclusions:

- Within the existing Darknets, drug trafficking is not a traditional cybercrime, it is traditional drug trafficking which is using new methods.
- One of the keys for success for combating online drug trade is a combined investigation team of traditional drug investigators, undercover agents and IT experts in drug trafficking via virtual markets.
- Networking and international cooperation are part of the main goals to combat the phenomenon.
- Investigations showed that the operational approach for investigative measures led to arrests, seizures and bulk information from criminal networks all over the world.
- BitCoin remains the main used virtual currency within the Darknet markets
- The take down of hidden web services is not a universal remedy for the threat occurring for society. Darknet vendors are moving to decentralized platforms, which makes it even harder to investigate.

The presentation concluded with the idea that drug trafficking on the internet and the Darknet is a type of crime which has to be taken seriously. To combat this type of crime successfully political and financial support, as well as human resources are necessary.

The third intervention in this session came from Bryon Bruce from the Drug Enforcement Administration and focused on the US approach of the online drugs trafficking.

The speaker explained that the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has two sections for investigations: crime investigation that deals with drugs; and diversion control that deals controlled pharmaceuticals and listed chemicals.

[1] European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats

Pharmaceuticals are openly traded online and the DEA's approach is to track the money and assets in order to find the people responsible for the production of drugs and sale. It is very hard to identify online vendors in real time.

The speaker explained that users like going after the products that they recognise and think are safe, such as pharmaceuticals. Normally these are produced in a lab, according to certain standards. But users are often not aware of the addiction factor. Nowadays in the US pharmaceuticals are highly misused. Therefore the DEA also investigates doctors and pharmaceutical companies as the source of the supply. According to the speaker, when reducing the supply, the demand also goes down because of the lack of supply to satisfy everyone.

One of the big problems in the US now is fentanyl which is substituted for heroin. It comes from China and goes via Mexico where it is being packaged.

The speaker also pointed out that the population needs to be educated and DEA has websites for demand reduction and awareness raising.

At present, the main efforts of the DEA are on the offline trade of drugs because often people die because of drugs addiction or overdoses. The online trade has a rather small market share, compared with the offline and efforts need to be prioritised. However, it has been noticed that if there is crime that it is not addressed properly, it tends to rise.

This intervention was followed by that of Sylvain Cavier from the French Ministry of Interior who gave a presentation of the French approach of the online drugs trafficking.

The speaker pointed out to the important role social networks play in the sales of drugs online. He also explained that the Darknet is problematic in terms of investigation because it is difficult to know who hides behind it. Two types of consignments are most frequent: small quantities of drugs (most vendors behind an online deal have a small supply at hand) and larger volumes which are meant to be received by individuals engaging in further transactions. The vendors who receive the bigger quantities usually use platforms such as Whatsapp or Viber, which encrypt communications and therefore tracking them down is very difficult. Many products (including drugs) transit through France because the handling offices of parcel delivery of Fedex operate outside Paris.

The speaker explained that in France, the main problem with new psychoactive substances (NPS) is that of legislation: the period between the discovery of a new substance and its classification can be as long as 6 to 8 months. Therefore, by the time a new substance is classified, the vendors are slightly changing the chemical composition so that a new substance, which is not illegal, is created. Therefore, the French legislation is slowly moving towards a classification that is increasingly based on families of active ingredients, like for example, synthetic cannabinoids (including seven families).

The French response strategies to the online trade of illegal drugs include: dismantling of criminal groups focusing on disrupting the benefits for the traffickers; dismantling of criminal organisations by targeting their peripheral activities; developing the collection, analysis and sharing of information from multiple sources; enhancing police cooperation in accompanying foreign services in their operations against drug trafficking. Noteworthy is the fact that often websites are hosted in other countries with softer legislation.

This intervention was followed by that of Magali Martinez, Project Manager at the TREND Unit of the French Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, who presented the types of online shops

selling new psychoactive substances as they come out from the implementation of the I-TREND EU-funded project.

The project covers the Czech Republic, France, the Netherlands, Poland and the UK. It developed an Internet tool called "shop finder". This is a web crawler which browses the Internet on the basis of key new psychoactive substances' (NPS) names to find web shops that sell these substances. When the web shops are found, their popularity ranking on the internet is analysed and there is an attempt to get information on the domain owner.

The purpose of the tool is to improve the snapshot methodology previously developed by the Rednet Project and the EMCDDA. It allows researchers to monitor the web surface offers with a semi-automate census which by comparison with previous exercises reduce the time needed (one to two days versus one to two weeks). The software builds a database on the web shops found and tracks them over time. Ultimately it provides a timeline observation of the offer on the surface web, a better understanding on how the surface market works and a tool that evolves in case of legislative changes.

In May 2014 there were 30 web shops in the Czech Republic, 96 in France, 22 in The Netherlands, 86 in Poland and 244 in the UK. Except for the Czech Republic where all the web shops were unique, and France with the highest number of duplicates, the others countries had around 15% of duplicate web shops. They are a tricky and illegal way for improving the rank of one web shop in the results lists given by search engines. The new UK legislation covering NPS is very strong and many shops are expected to close because of that. The UK recently criminalised the sale of all substances that have a psychoactive effect, with some exceptions (i.e. alcohol). The police are trying to enforce the new legislation quickly but there are worries that products which are now available on the surface web will move to the Dark net. The legislation would be reviewed within 3 months from enforcement.

There is also a grey area regarding the websites, as, one the one hand, some shops fight for their visibility and on the other hands they use the opposite strategy: they use deep web practices impeding the automate census, they might have a back store with restricted access, or they display false but legal activities. Consequently, it is important to articulate different kind of approaches, such as an ethnographic and a quantitative approach, in order to have a full and comprehensive picture of the online market. For instance, the new UK legislation covering NPS is very strict and many shops are expected to close because of that. The UK recently criminalised the sale of all substances that have a psychoactive effect, with some exceptions (i.e. alcohol). The police are trying to enforce the new legislation quickly but there are worries that products which are now available on the surface web will move to the Dark net. The legislation would be reviewed within 3 months from enforcement.

Within the project, different kinds of web shops selling NPS could be detected:

- "RC[2] shops" are serious-looking, display NPS by their chemical names and offer them mainly in powder form
- "Commercial/branded/smart shops" promote NPS with seductive layouts and packaging or sell them under trade names and in familiar forms like herbs or tablets
- "Herbal shops/head shops" sell primarily plant-related substances and trade products
- "Other" shops offer general wellness, food complement, sexual enhancers but they are not trying to imitate pharmacies

[2] RC = research chemicals

In the Czech Republic and in France, Herbal shops and RC shops are the most common. In The Netherlands, 63% of web shops are RC shops, while 26% are commercial/branded shops and 11% are herbal shops. In Poland and in the UK, RC shops are the most common (82% and 76%, respectively), with commercial/branded shops at 17% and 19% respectively. It is difficult to explain these markets patterns, but one hypothesis could be that the structure of the online supply sticks to the national prevalence (i.e. France and the Czech Republic have the highest rate of cannabis live prevalence). For three countries out of five, servers hosting shops have often an IP address located in the same country than the one studied (Netherlands, Poland and Czech Republic). This means that, considering the geographical location of the servers, the online offer is half international, half domestic. The UK market is targeted by web shops based mainly in the US while France is mostly dependent on web shops based on the Netherlands. The cross-borders links between European countries, such as the drug tourism may contribute to determine the geographical location of web shops.

The software can take the census of web shops on a regular basis and consequently provide useful indications on the drug market. It is intended to be open-sourced and is available upon request to the French Observatory for Drugs and Addictions or the focal point of the Czech Republic. For the future, it could be interesting that more countries use the software in a uniform way and that more than the current 15-20 NPS names are included as done for the I-TREND project. Also, there is a goal to complete the meaning of collected data by partnerships with other EU projects and to extend the monitoring in time and language for a better mapping. In the future the project will also look for funds to help the implementation of the software in other European countries.

The subsequent discussion showed that in Italy similar software is linked to the national alert system. Some participants pointed out that it could be useful to list all existing resources and tools to avoid duplication. The question was also raised as to whether, as new web shops are found, the police should be informed about them and whether they should be fed into the EU alert system. It was pointed out that it is important that a common approach is taken in the EU as much as possible. Some participants considered that digital research conducted with the support of the European Commission should not be considered as direct support for law enforcement services. Most institutions involved have a monitoring but not a law enforcement mission; they consequently have to be clear and trustable in their communication by being well distinct from police investigation. However, their deliverables can still put at the disposal of law enforcement to inspire the development of their own tools.

The last presentation in the second session was given by Matej Kosir from the Utirp Institute, member of the Civil Society Forum on Drugs and it focused on using the internet for awareness raising and prevention.

The speaker pointed out that a good intervention strategy is that which addresses both the drug supply and drug demand side. In recent years the development of the quality of prevention has been significant, as many programmes and publications have been released. In addition, internet-based awareness raising and prevention (especially universal interventions) are very popular. However, most of these developments have been ineffective, as they have no quality standards or principles integrated. In September 2015 the Council of Ministers of the EU adopted a political document defining minimum quality standards for demand reduction. A list of good practices for prevention interventions has been published by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) online.

Some of the good practices include mass-media campaigns associated with other interventions. These proved effective in reducing licit drugs. On the other hand, standalone mass media campaigns were

considered ineffective. Internet-based interventions targeting specifically recreational drug users were found to have generally positive results in reducing drugs use in the mid-term in universal drug prevention programmes.

The online interventions have advantages such as the fact that there is no need for professionals to deliver the programme; they are less restrictive in their availability as they overcome physical, socio-economical and geographical constraints; they may engage large numbers of individuals at the same time. In addition, the capacity of professionals is increased by reducing the time that they must dedicate to individual users and once the programme is developed the implementation costs are reduced and it is easier to update the material. There is also a high degree of implementation fidelity as consistent and complete delivery of materials can be guaranteed. In addition, the Internet can increase self-disclosure and reduce stigmatisation about drug use by enhancing perceptions of privacy and anonymity.

With regards to challenges for online prevention, there is a limited access to home/public computers in certain areas; the internet content can be restricted by firewalls that ban specific drug terms.

The speaker concluded that when it comes to awareness raising and prevention, there is a great potential of the Internet. Nevertheless, these interventions should only be provided in the context of rigorous, well-designed and well-powered evaluation studies. It is necessary to invest in quality awareness raising and prevention and disinvest from internet-based interventions for which there is little or no evidence of effectiveness.

Some participants noted that is important to use new methods for prevention and awareness raising but it is also necessary to invest in harm reduction.

The European Commission pointed out that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) chose prevention as the theme of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking marked every year on 26 June.

Some participants pointed out that the Internet could be a good instrument for prevention exercises and reducing the risk of harm. However, they also warned caution because the Internet is a tool which is difficult to control. Experts say that there are two categories of youth: those who are seeking novelty and those who are not. The former category would be tempted by any new product a prevention campaign would try to warn against.

Some participants emphasised again how parents are an important target group for prevention and awareness raising campaigns. It was pointed out that many parents, teachers and even local police do not know drugs can be purchased online, they do not know how new psychoactive substances look like.

In the open discussion that followed the presentation, several ideas and suggestions for future action have been put forward.

A representative of the ASOP EU Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacy noted that the problems online pharmacies are confronted with are similar with the ones related to the illegal trade of drugs but he felt that the two groups do not talk to each other much and this could be changed in the future. He also requested more discussions at EU level, including between the different relevant services of the Commission.

The Commission explained that in the Horizontal Drugs Group of the Council there is an ongoing reflection on the topic of the misuse of prescribed medicines. This is a long term project in which all the relevant Commission services are involved.

Some participants pointed out that a manual is in the works for the prevention of sale of firearms and pointed out that there may be scope to look at all actions that target illegal activities online for exchange of experience but also for more coordination. Some participants pointed out that monitoring of the internet and Dark net could be centralised and all countries could be using the information obtained. However, the question on what kind of data can be collected online differs from country to country, according to the legislation.

In some countries the business of selling fake medicines is very lucrative. It was pointed that that the Council of Europe adopted a Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health ("Medicrime Convention"). The "Medicrime Convention" is the first international criminal law instrument to oblige States Parties to criminalise: the manufacturing of counterfeit medical products; supplying, offering to supply and trafficking in counterfeit medical products; the falsification of documents; and the unauthorised manufacturing or supplying of medicinal products and the placing on the market of medical devices which do not comply with conformity requirements.

The session concluded with the following main takeaways:

- Good intervention strategies are those that address both the supply and the demand reduction
- It is important to have multi-disciplinary teams working on the online trade of drugs, with real and virtual investigators, cybercrime and IT experts
- It is important to prioritise responses, funding and manpower
- The problem can be tackled at different levels: digital (by tracking down IP addresses for example); at the shipment phase (by tracking down parcels); and at the payment and financial phase (by following the transaction)
- Practical tools developed for web monitoring, like the software developed in the framework of the I-Trend project, should be disseminated in other countries too
- The scheduling of NPS is different in different parts of the EU and of the world, which may encourage the cross-border trade from places where certain substances are legal
- Explore the scope for coordinating between different areas where sales happen online (e.g. drugs, firearms) in order to have a common approach for tackling the matter
- Standards for developing effective online campaigns have been developed recently and they should be used to create effective prevention and awareness raising campaigns
- Parents are a target group often ignored but very important for awareness raising and prevention related to the online sale of drugs

4. Possible ways further on future common action

The third session of the meeting focused on possible ways further for future common action at national, EU and international levels.

The first presentation of the session was given by Jane Mounteney from the EMCDDA and it focused on the future of internet drug markets and especially on research and monitoring needs.

The speaker pointed out that in the context of the rapid expansion of e-commerce and m-commerce, it would be surprising if the sale of drugs online would not grow. The drivers of change and growth of online markets are technology, globalisation and market innovation. Also, digital literacy is increasing expanding the number of potential users of the online markets. The Dark net markets come with security issues, encryption, digital currencies and anonymous browsing. Marketing innovations, such as the deep web search engine GRAMS, can be observed.

The speaker explained that the latest trends observed in the internet drug markets include: a decrease in the number of retailers on the surface web selling to Australia from July to December 2015. The crackdown of research chemical producers in China and the preparation for a blanket ban of research chemicals in the UK has driven surface web retailers of new psychoactive substances to RCs and Dark net markets. Legislating on NPS may have a "balloon effect", which may lead to the NPS online market becoming less visible and more difficult to monitor. Online pharmacies will become an important player in the Internet Drug Markets. From all the active internet pharmacies 94.3% are not legitimate. The social media can also play an important role, especially for youngsters for first contacts and discussion and potentially also as a source of supply.

There is also a question whether there is a temporary slowdown in the overall activity on Dark net marketplaces. In fact, it was noted that consumers are moving to private arrangements with retailers in order to avoid risks.

The percentage of the total drug trade represented by cryptomarket trade is as yet too limited to affect the profits of the larger organised criminal groups. If cryptomarket turnover were to increase substantially, then organised crime could be expected to annex the marketplaces.

The speaker put forward several questions to be considered for future research:

- What is the market size (surface and Dark Net markets)?
- What trends can be observed? Product, price, purity etc.
- Do online markets challenge established ones - where do they have a competitive advantage?
- Supply chain - how do online markets interact with offline ones?
- What are the net harms/benefits of dark net markets?
- Do individuals who sell on dark net markets fit the same profile as street dealers?
- Do people purchase more when they buy online and what effect does that have on use?

Monitoring the online markets can help to: identify new trends and developments (i.e. evaluating the market impact of take downs and scams; or evaluating the impact of legislative changes on the online market). In this context, it is possible to monitor the Surface web (online shops, portals, pharmacies, forums), as well as Dark net markets.

The speaker identified some gaps and issues that need to be taken into consideration for the future: lack of information on the role of online pharmacies and medicines; lack of information on the role of social media and apps in the demand for and supply of illicit substances; consumer-level research focusing on sources of drug supply, reasons for choices, experiences needed; testing drugs sold online – linked with sampling strategy is needed. She also pointed out that data triangulation will be very important.

The second speaker in the session was Sebastian Gerlach, Director of Corporate Affairs at Microsoft who highlighted some of the actions Microsoft is taking in the fight against the online trade of drugs.

Microsoft is a member of the Centre for Safe Internet Pharmacies (CSIP) whose mission is to promote and encourage safe online pharmacies through education, enforcement, and information sharing.

Members of the CSIP include online advertising service providers, social media companies, payment system operators, payment processors, domain name services providers and shipping companies. They provide a neutral forum for sharing information about efforts to illegitimate Internet pharmacies; aid law enforcement efforts; educate consumers; and are a role model and resource to other private sector organizations, and are good faith participants in discussions around safe online pharmacy practices.

The speaker showed that in the US, around 100,000 people die each year from counterfeit drugs; 97% of all Internet pharmacies do not comply with US laws and safety standards; and 91% of rogue online pharmacies appear to have affiliations with illicit online drug outlets. In addition, 5 million Americans have purchased drugs outside the US for reasons of cost-saving. Consumers, and even doctors and pharmacists, are not aware of the severity of the problem.

In the US the law requires Internet pharmacy websites to display information identifying the business, pharmacist, and physician associated with the website; it bars online prescribing directed from a website selling medication; no controlled substance distribution can happen by means of the Internet without a valid prescription.

In 2014 9.6 million fake and illicit drugs were seized and over 1600 sites were blocked by CSIP members.

One of the most effective ways to curb online behaviour such as drugs/fake medicines sales is to follow the money and track down those who benefit from paid advertising.

CSIP teams up with regulators to get information about illicit online pharmacies to help notify users. In Bing Public Service Announcements appear for over 300 pharma-related key words.

Content takedown happens when this is required by the authorities.

Microsoft informed that currently there is a new marketing campaign which involves the ASOP EU Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacy with CSIP and EU regulators about the prevalence of illegal pharmacies. Research on synthetic drugs and problems that arise from this new market is also ongoing.

The following speaker in the third session was Stefan Haas from the German Federal Criminal Police Office, who talked about possible future actions to be envisaged against the online trade of drugs.

The speaker showed that it was as early as the year 2000 when media in Germany was already reporting about the purchase of drugs online. Mr Haas also mentioned that currently there is an ongoing debate about criminal structures, which focuses on the reach-out of organized crime groups to or within the cyberspace. Therefore the issue of online drug-trade is not technically very new but overall responses – not only those of law enforcement – have not yet been very fast.

The speaker explained the German approach to dealing with drug trade via the internet, especially in terms where police actions approach online marketplaces. He also explained that usually joint combined operations are used when aiming at one of those websites. In detail, this would typically mean an investigation group that consists of cybercrime-analysts and police professionals from the traditional branches (e.g. drugs, firearms, etc.). In addition, it is necessary (due to the legal and organisational frameworks of German Law Enforcement Agencies) to coordinate actions between

different police authorities; usually there is a lead on federal level with a core team, while state police forces join on in with their teams. The main idea is to combine law enforcement´s expert knowledge while driving the full force of authorities' joint actions. This methodology can also be applied in cases of international operational police cooperation.

An overview of some of the most relevant challenges for law enforcement in dealing with the online trade of illegal drugs was given. The current legal situation limits the technical surveillance of the suspects. In addition, for example, IP addresses are only kept for 6 weeks by service providers. Also, often judges do not have a good understanding of the dark net and the way it functions, which raises further issues in the investigations. Networking within police forces across the EU helps but often there are also issues related to the different legal frameworks in force. Sometimes evidence from another country cannot be used due to the different legal system. The exchange of data at national and transnational level is also sometimes difficult logistically because of the use of different non-interoperable platforms for data collection. Cooperation with non-police actors is difficult because the police cannot usually share data, whereas companies, for example, can do so more easily, as long as clients agree to their terms and conditions.

In general, there is much room for improvement: more training and equipment are necessary; communication between law enforcement and IT experts, as well as the scientific community is not always easy since there is still a lack of understanding of one another's aims and needs. Fighting the online-trade of drugs simply the same way it is in the "real world", cannot rely only on the police; crime prevention needs to address a broader range of stakeholders including parents, teachers and local police officers that are in contact with young people – those mostly affected by the new ways drugs spread out.

The same way criminals are always on the look-out for new ways to bring their drugs to the consumer, law enforcement needs to find creative and fast responses.

Some of the actions for disrupting markets and identifying targets include: undercover agents establishing inside contacts; blocking ToR-IP addresses from accessing shipment tracking sites; tracking of shipments in cooperation with postal services.

The last contribution to the third session of the meeting came from Tony Verachtert from the Belgian Federal Police, on behalf of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe.

The speaker informed that the Pompidou Group set up a working group on drugs and cybercrime that met several times. At the last meeting in 2015 several conclusions and recommendations were made, which the speaker briefly shared with the group. These included:

- The surface web and the social media played an important role in the online drug market and in informing the public on drug markets. NPS activity has increased on Darknet.
- The monitoring of cryptomarkets is recommended.
- Open source of information and the social media are major sources of useful information for detection and investigative purposes.
- Knowledge sharing on national and international level to improve understanding and international cooperation is very important.
- There is a need for a new mind set with regard to the takedown of cryptomarkets.

- Raising awareness will be achieved through annual meetings of the Pompidou group. The monitoring reports will continue to refer to a glossary of specific terms, while a more detailed glossary is recommended.
- Training is not necessary only for law enforcement but also for customs, border guards, prosecutors and judges dealing with investigation, prosecution of online drug cases.
- A lot of tools for monitoring the cryptomarkets exist already, a good overview would be necessary
- Improve cooperation with the online industry for prevention measures as well as with the offline industry such as the mail and Express mail community
- Quality research evidence is still limited and new initiatives need to be supported.

5. Recommendations for possible future action

World café-type of discussions were organised to discuss ways forward in combatting the online trade of drugs. Four groups discussed the following four questions:

a) What monitoring tools are needed to get a thorough picture of the internet drug markets in the EU and the wider international community?

The main points that came out of the group discussions on this topic were:

- Monitoring tools exist already but it would be good to have a general overview of all these tools, how they work and who provides them
- A lot of monitoring is already happening but more coordination is necessary at national and international level, while considering that different countries have different legal systems
- Monitoring is fundamental but it needs to be prioritised, we need to know what the problem to monitor is; data collection needs to be prioritised
- Automated tools for data usage are necessary for police forces
- Data obtained from monitoring needs to be stored in such a way that it can be used in prosecution
- It is necessary to monitor the involvement of organised crime groups in online trade of drugs
- Use of open source intelligence and social media is important
- Reflect on the role of the EU early warning system in the monitoring activities, a system which is very important as it provides a lot of information about the sale and purchase of illegal drugs
- Reflection is needed on how to get good quality and useful data about the online trade of drugs because the quantity of data available is massive but its shape is not always useful for law enforcement or policy makers
- Defining a common terminology would be useful to get a common understanding of the objective of the monitoring

b) What are the priority issues for research regarding the functioning and impact of the internet drug market (including social media, forums) which will allow the formulation of the appropriate drug demand and reduction responses?

The following points for possible further research were identified in the group discussions:

- It is necessary to understand what the market size of the surface and darknet is
- What is the profile of the individual consumer that buys online?
- Observe trends in terms of product, price, purity etc.

- Look at whether online markets challenge established ones – and if so where they have a competitive advantage
- How do online markets interact with offline ones regarding the supply chain?
- What are the net harms/benefits of dark net markets?
- Profiles of individuals who sell on dark net markets vs profiles of street dealers
- Differences in quantities purchased online vs offline and possible effects on use
- How do criminal networks operate? Who are the key players?
- What is the role of social media and apps in the demand for and supply of illicit substances
- Where does the money from online trade of illegal drugs go? Are there any links to organised criminal groups?
- Research should look at the whole supply chain including counterfeit pharmaceuticals, firearms and other illegal products sold online
- Law enforcement would need practical research that develops tools that would help them in their investigations
- Online prevention and harm reduction strategies are necessary
- A point of caution was also made: data gathered from the online environment are very dynamic. Therefore, it is necessary to be aware that it will turn obsolete very fast.
- What is the motivation of the people who create the marketplaces – is it really only about making money? Why do they choose this form of criminality rather than the one offline?

c) How could prevention strategies be effective in the online environment? Should such prevention strategies be split according to target groups or according to dark net/surface web?

The main points that came out of the group discussions on this topic were:

- To have effective online prevention strategies one should use coordinated prevention strategies, combined with other strategies: e.g. strategies to reduce harm
- It is vital to split and diversify the information for the target groups of the prevention strategies
- Make sure parents are one of the target groups of the prevention strategies
- Prevention and awareness raising need to be combined with law enforcement and judicial intervention
- Prevention should address harmful drug users who are often also suppliers
- Explore whether law enforcement could place prevention messages in the deep web, although this would create some legal and reputation difficulties
- Look at prevention activities that are organised for other crime areas and see whether there is any transferrable knowledge
- A toolbox with counter-narratives to drug use could be developed tailored by target group
- Make drug users aware that the law does apply as a deterrent factor
- Evaluate prevention and awareness raising campaigns

d) What is the role and responsibilities of stakeholders (industry, public authorities and civil society) in reducing drug demand and drug supply related to online markets? How should they work together towards these goals?

The main points that came out of the group discussions on this topic were:

- All actors have a very specific role to play
- Improve cooperation between industry, public authorities, law enforcement and civil society
- The pharmaceutical industry and postal services should also be included in discussions
- It is important that the industry and public authorities communicate with one another
- It may be necessary to raise the industry's awareness of the problem
- Training activities are necessary not only for the police but also for customs officers, prosecutors, judges
- There are legal barriers to cross-border cooperation (e.g. evidence collected in one country cannot always be used in another country because of different legal orders)
- The exchange of data at national and transnational level is often made difficult logistically by different authorities using different systems to collect data, which are not easily transferrable
- Law enforcement pointed out that companies provide their clients with data related to possible inquiry by police into their online presence, which makes investigations more difficult
- Cooperation with mail services is important
- Knowledge sharing and network creation is important to improve cooperation at international level
- Collaboration between all actors can work through legal frameworks and/or codes of conduct and for that it is necessary to look at fields where such cooperation already works and find best practices
- It would be useful if companies would provide statistics on the number of reports on drug-related issues that they receive from users

6. Final conclusions

Floriana Sipala, Head of Unit Anti-drugs unit in the Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission closed the meeting. She thanked all present for their active participation in the meeting.

She explained that the feedback from the meeting would feed into the new EU Action Plan on Drugs, into the Commission's funding priorities and cooperation with third countries and it will provide further input for the EU Policy Cycle.