

# EMCDDA Director pays official visit to Montenegro

EMCDDA Director Alexis Goosdeel is paying his first official visit to Montenegro this week where he will meet high-level dignitaries working in the drugs field. Over two days (17–18 July), an EMCDDA delegation will meet:

- Montenegrin Minister of Health, Dr Kenan Hrapović;
- Head of the EU Delegation in Montenegro, Ambassador Aivo Orav; and
- representatives of the Prime Minister's office, the Ministry of the Interior, the National Statistical Office and the Institute for Public Health.

After 10 years of technical cooperation with Montenegro – in the framework of EU-funded projects (IPA instrument of pre-accession) – the aim of the visit is to strengthen the agency's links to the country in view of its possible accession to the EU.

In 2018, the EMCDDA undertook an assessment of the National Drugs Observatory (NDO) and the National Early Warning System (NEWS), making a series of recommendations and identifying possible activities to be developed in future. Taking place one year after the assessment, this visit provides an opportunity to exchange views on the state of cooperation between Montenegro and the agency and to consider progress made to date (e.g. NDO, NEWS, national information system).

Close attention will also be paid to needs analysis and planning in the context of

Pre-Accession Assistance provided by the EMCDDA IPA-7 project, which kicked off earlier this month. In this framework, the visit will explore the current state of data collection on the drug situation in Montenegro and the possibilities for increased cooperation and capacity building.

Reflecting the EMCDDA's twin objective of working for a healthier and more secure Europe, the visit will involve contributions from both public health and law enforcement officials, focusing on the Montenegrin drug market, drug seizures and the monitoring of new psychoactive substances.

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence. This applies to all mentions of Kosovo in this document.