

The Reitox network: frequently asked questions

EMCDDA, Lisbon, October 2019

Summary

This information brochure has been produced by the EMCDDA to provide answers to the most commonly asked questions on the Reitox network of national focal points and more broadly on national drugs observatories. Compiled over several years, it is a reference tool for both EU Member States and countries further afield on the network, its members, its role and development.

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Table of contents

1. What is Reitox?
2. Who are the members of the Reitox network?
3. What is the Reitox network's main mission?
4. What are the Reitox network's main strategic objectives?
5. What is a national focal point and is there a difference with a national drugs observatory?
6. What are the functions of Reitox national focal points at European level?
7. What are the functions of Reitox national focal points at national level?
8. How is Reitox managed?
9. How should a national focal point be structured?
10. What types of information should Reitox members provide to the EMCDDA and when?
11. How many staff members should work in a national focal point and what qualifications do they need?
12. How are Reitox national focal points financed?
13. What is a 'Reitox Academy'?
14. Who can benefit from Reitox national focal points' expertise at national level and how?
15. What is the added value in joining the Reitox network for non-EU countries?
16. How can my country join the Reitox network or cooperate with it?
17. Where can I find the contact details of Reitox members?

Main subject:

[partners and cooperation](#)

Brazil: EIB provides EUR 100m to boost climate action investments in Minas Gerais

- The EU bank and *Banco de Desenvolvimento de Minas Gerais* will provide this financing for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects
- EIB funds will cover up to 75% of climate investments
- Employment: 700 jobs are expected to be created during the implementation of the project

The European Investment Bank (EIB) will provide EUR 100m to *Banco de Desenvolvimento de Minas Gerais* (BDMG) to support climate action projects in this Brazilian state. Private companies and also municipalities will be able to benefit from the advantageous financing conditions of the EU bank, both in terms of long tenors and interest rates, to implement projects promoting renewable energy generation and energy efficiency technologies. The agreement was signed today by the Bank's Vice-President Emma Navarro and BDMG's President Sergio Gusmão Suchodolski at the EIB's headquarters in Luxembourg.

EIB funds will be allocated to renewable energy projects, such as small-scale solar photovoltaic plants and run-of-the-river hydropower plants, thus contributing to reducing CO₂ emissions in the country. These investments will increase the country's renewable and clean energy production capacity while securing energy supply.

Part of the EIB financing will also be dedicated to supporting energy efficiency projects, especially in public buildings, street lighting, and industrial facilities. Small businesses wishing to improve their environmental footprint are also eligible to receive EIB funds.

The EU bank is providing this finance, which will cover up to 75% of the final project investment cost, in the framework of the 2014-2020 lending mandate for Latin America. This agreement is therefore covered by the EU guarantee. By supporting this project, the EIB is contributing to achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy while fighting climate change.

The different schemes under this programme will be carried out over the next four years, up to 2023, and their implementation is expected to provide jobs for around 700 people.

At the signature event that took place in Luxembourg, **EIB Vice-President Emma Navarro, responsible for EIB operations in Latin America and for the Bank's climate action**, said: "*Today's agreement demonstrates the EIB's commitment to tackling climate change and its willingness to continue leading the*

mobilisation of the finance needed for the transition to a low carbon economy worldwide. This operation is a perfect example of our priorities in Latin America: promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth by boosting investments that help to reduce CO₂ emissions. We are happy to join forces with Banco de Desenvolvimento de Minas Gerais to achieve these goals and to contribute to the development of clean energy sources in Brazil”.

For **Sergio Gusmão Suchodolski, President of BDMG**, this partnership with the EIB place the state of Minas Gerais on the global map of major investments in sustainability: *“This operation is a strategic opportunity for the diversification of the energy mix in our region. Undoubtedly, having a partner like the EIB, one of the largest multilateral institutions in the world, will strengthen BDMG’s role in the growing market for clean and renewable energy. In this context, it is our commitment to promote new business on a sustainable basis, in line with the credit profile available worldwide”.*

The EIB, a key player in supporting climate projects in Latin America

The EIB is one of the world’s largest multilateral providers of finance for climate action projects. The Bank’s goal is to be a leader in mobilising the finance needed to keep global warming to under 2°C and limit temperature rises to 1.5°C to meet the Paris Agreement objectives. At September’s Climate Action Summit in New York, the EIB Group announced that it intends to expand its climate action, gradually increasing the financing that the EIB dedicates to climate and environmental objectives to 50% of its activity by 2025 and mobilising up to EUR 1tn by 2030 to support investments helping to achieve these goals. It also announced its intention to align all EIB Group activities with the Paris Agreement.

The EU is the main development partner of the Latin America region, its number one investor and its second-largest trading partner. As the EU bank, the EIB supports the EU’s relationship with Latin America by financing projects that contribute to the EU’s external policy objectives: the development of economic, environmental and social infrastructure; private sector development; and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In Latin America, the EIB has become a major promoter of renewable energy and energy efficiency, having signed projects worth over EUR 880m in the region between 2013 and 2018. Climate change mitigation and adaptation is the EIB’s main priority in the region, where projects supported by the EU bank focus on the environment, and especially on boosting renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable public transport schemes. Climate change adaptation-related projects involve upgrading existing infrastructure to be more resilient in the face of more volatile and unpredictable weather patterns, preparing it for direct and indirect impacts. In 2018, the EIB stepped up its contribution to sustainable development and climate action in Latin America, providing EUR 640m to finance 15 operations: that is the highest number of EIB operations structured in one year in the region.

The EIB is the world’s largest issuer of green bonds and was the first to make an issue on this market.

[Eurojust supports action against tax fraud in Hungary](#)

21 October 2019

✘ **Authorities in Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, with the active assistance of Eurojust and Europol, have taken action against an elaborate tax fraud scam by a Hungarian-led, international organised criminal group (OCG). During two action days, seven people were arrested, including the leader of the criminal group, who was apprehended in the United States of America in a speedy procedure. Overall, 193 premises were searched and 37 people were brought in for hearings regarding their alleged participation in the setting up of shell companies, which provided false invoices to avoid VAT payments to the Hungarian fiscal authorities. The scam, which also involved money laundering, led to a loss of approximately EUR 3 million to Hungary. In addition, approximately EUR 2.3 million in cash and goods have been seized, including real estate, two luxury cars and bitcoin.**

The main suspect set up companies that provided fictitious invoices to other enterprises, without in reality delivering any goods or services. The enterprises that received the bills deducted these from their VAT payments in Hungary, leading to the net fiscal loss. The fraud took place between January 2015 and September of this year. To conceal the gains from the tax authorities, the suspect is alleged to have set up several companies managed by foreign nationals. The companies issuing fake invoices were on paper also directed by managers of foreign origin.

Eurojust set up a coordination centre to support the action days, and assisted in providing European Investigation Orders (EIOs) to facilitate the Hungarian investigation. In September of this year, a coordination meeting was held at Eurojust, which was attended by the Hungarian, Slovak and UK authorities, and with on-call coordination between the countries involved, to ensure a smooth exchange of information and efficient preparation for the action days.

National authorities involved:

- *Hungary:* The Hungarian investigation was supervised by the Chief Public Prosecution Office of Komárom-Esztergom County and conducted by the National Tax and Customs Administration, Central-Transdanubian Criminal Directorate.
- *United States of America:* The arrest of the alleged ringleader was made by the Federal Bureau of Investigation-led Task Force consisting of the Los Angeles Police Department and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office. The US Department of Justice's Office of International Affairs and the US Attorney's Office for the Central District of California are handling

the extradition of the alleged leader.

- *Slovakia*: The Regional Prosecutor's Office Nitra.
- *Poland*: The Regional Prosecution Office Częstochowa.

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[EIOPA launches call for research proposals](#)

The ongoing policy and regulatory debates related to the European financial system have been increasingly focused on beyond banking topics including insurance and pension sectors. Many questions which need to be addressed require both appropriate theoretical foundations as well as deep empirical analysis. In this respect, the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) is launching a call for research proposals aiming at addressing open questions related to the following topics with a special emphasis on the policy angles.

- Investment allocations of insurers and pension funds;
- Liquidity stress testing in the insurance sector;
- Early warning systems in insurance;
- Systemic relevance of insurance sector and its interlinkages with financial and real sectors;
- Economic valuation of insurers' liabilities; best estimate and risk margin.

Both theoretical and empirical research proposals are welcomed. All interested researchers with a solid academic background currently working for academic institutions or public authorities are invited to participate. Be advised, however, that each research team must consist of at least one expert from the EIOPA staff (not needed for the submitted proposal). Authors are expected to present well-focused, high quality projects covering the topics mentioned above. Only a limited number of the proposals will be selected as research projects will have to be developed in cooperation with the EIOPA staff. The selection will be based on quality of the proposal and EIOPAs' interest in the topics. The outcome will be announced to the authors of the submitted proposals by 28 February 2020.

Proposals must be submitted to the following e-mail address:
research@eiopa.europa.eu by **15 December 2019** at the latest. Please do not
hesitate to contact us for any further information.