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**Personal information on the author**

First Name Gregor

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Position Scientific Analyst

Organisation European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

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**Most important career path**

Since 1996 at the EMCDDA ([www.emcdda.europa.eu](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu)) in Lisbon, developing EDDRA, the *Evaluation Instruments Bank and of the Prevention and Evaluation Resource Kit PERK on the EMCDDA website*.

Projects on drug prevention in workplaces, prevention in recreational settings and on on-site pill testing interventions. Conceptual development of response indicators about selective prevention and indicated prevention.

Development of common European indicators on the implementation of prevention policies in member states.

Development of methodologies for monitoring universal, selective and indicated prevention in Europe, as well as environmental strategies.

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**Co-authors**

First Name Deborah

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**Title of presentation**

Polydrug use: similarities and differences in Europe. Implications for prevention policies

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**Description of the contribution:****Poly-drug use: similarities and differences in Europe**

Problems associated with illegal drug use are rarely restricted to a single psychoactive substance. The drugs market is expanding with a wider range of drugs available and this consumer market is driven by easy communication within and between social networks. In many European countries there is now a critical mass of young people (potential polydrug users) who gather regularly in dense numbers in music clubs and other recreational nightlife settings.

Data will be presented from analysis of over 70 000 adolescents in 22 European countries and from young adults in recent general population surveys in nine EU Member States. Adolescent cannabis users, are in general, more likely to use both legal and illegal drugs than their peers in the general adolescent population but there are important country differences. For example, cannabis use is more 'normal' (less associated with use of other illegal drugs) in high cannabis prevalence countries and more 'deviant' (associated with other illegal drug use) in low prevalence countries.

Young adults who are frequent or heavy alcohol users, in general, are 2 to 6 times more likely to use cannabis than those in the general population and 2 to 9 times more likely to use cocaine. But illegal drugs are more strongly associated with alcohol in countries where the prevalence of frequent or heavy drinking is generally low.

The presentation will address the question of what these country differences mean for prevention interventions.