

Preface

Although overshadowed by the criminal law, administrative measures already play a significant part in policies on drug trafficking and organised crime, drug related offences and problems met by individual drug users. These regulatory measures offer a second line of approach to drug problems. Criminal law alone is only a partial answer to these. We, therefore, need to pool our knowledge and understanding of complementary legal measures.

The participants in this study are legal scholars from the majority of the Member States of the European Union. The originating agency is the London-based Institute for the Study of Drug Dependence (ISDD) which is well known for its serious work on European and national drug strategies. Thanks should go to the European Commission which has funded the study in response to a proposal presented by ISDD to the Commission in 1996, leading to the work being carried out mainly in 1997 and this publication in late 1998. We all hope that by supporting expert and objective research, a sharing of knowledge can emerge which will add value to European policy-making in the battle against drugs.

Readers must form their own judgement on the proposal that administrative measures should be developed further, particularly at European and municipal levels, and also on the special recommendations presented. From my own perspective, as a Member of the European Parliament, some of the legal measures described in this study deserve close and sympathetic consideration, whilst some others rather concern me. However, taken as a whole, the book provides a clear map and a balanced introduction to these issues. In any event, the study serves to deepen and bring fresh knowledge to the debate on European drug strategies and policies.



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