

Project coordinator

University of Florence
Department of Health ScienceAOU Careggi
O.U. of Forensic Toxicology

University of Florence Forensic Toxicology Research Unit Operative Unit of Forensic Toxicology Italy

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Activities

In this structure, a team of professionals deal with all issues concerning Forensic Toxicology, making it a national excellence in this wide scientific field. In particular, analytical tests are performed on biological matrices such as urine, blood, hair to ascertain the presence/absence of drugs for a great variety of purposes. Analyses are carried out on demand of Local Medical Commissions from various provinces in Tuscany, or even from private business and citizens privately, concerning all driver license issues, such as releasing, renewing and driving under influence of drugs. We analyse biological samples for workplace drug-testing programs from workers with hazardous jobs for themselves or others. Moreover, we are the reference unit for local judiciaries in analytical investigation on seized material and every kind of biological specimens, even post-mortem. Others toxicological analyses are performed on samples from various units in AOU Careggi and other hospitals in Florence and in Tuscany. Since our application fields are very wide, a large scientific and legal knowledge is absolutely necessary together with continuous updating of the analytical procedures and instrumentations. Currently in our structure we have various instruments with state-of-the-art technology: in addition to a remarkable number of the most recent gas chromatographs, we also have two gas chromatographs coupled to mass spectrometers and a high performance liquid chromatograph interfaced with a tandem mass spectrometer.

Current research projects

- Chemical and toxicological study on seized material with forensic aims as provided by current legislation on drugs of abuse (art. 75 DPR 309/90);
- Study on social, ethical and epidemiological implications of personal consumption of drugs of abuse;
- Study on detection of γ -hydroxybutyric acid (GHB) in hair and discrimination between endogenous and exogenous GHB concentrations;
- In vivo detection of New Psychoactive Substances and their metabolites;
- Applicant organization of I-SEE project for strengthening information exchange between Italy and South East Europe neighbouring countries on New Psychoactive Substances, supported by the European Commission

Co-beneficiary partner



Croatia

The School of Medicine in Split, Croatia, was established as an independent faculty on 27th March 1997. It is one of the components of the University of Split which has approximately 24 thousand students. It is situated on the Southern coast of the Split peninsula overlooking the Adriatic Sea and the islands of Brač, Šolta and Hvar.

The School of Medicine in Split has four teaching programs: Medicine, Dental Medicine, Pharmacy (in collaboration with the Faculty of Chemical Technology) and Medical Studies in English. The Medicine program annually enrolls 90 students, Dental Medicine and Pharmacy enrol 30 each, and Medical Studies in English 50. The School of Medicine building complex is located in the vicinity of the University Campus and it consists of a basic medical sciences building (laboratories), a building for teaching and administration and a hotel for guest lecturers with a restaurant for teachers and students. Clinical classes are held at the University Hospital which is situated at two nearby locations – Firule and Križine. Public health classes are held at the Public Health Institute of Split and Dalmatia County while Dental Medicine classes are held at the Dental Medicine Polyclinic for the County of Dalmatia.

The school's mission is to link education, research and clinical care.

Scientific research and international collaboration are well developed. The School supports student exchange too. The Graduate school includes scientific and specialist postgraduate studies and it is also open to foreign students. The Croatian Centre for Global Health and the Croatian Cochrane Centre are an integral part of the School of Medicine. The electronic edition of the Croatian Medical Journal is also based at the School of Medicine.

The current Dean of the School is Professor Dragan Ljutić, MD, PhD.

Co-beneficiary partner



The National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ) is the central Slovenian institution for public health practice, research and education. Its academic staff work on various tasks covering the areas of epidemiology of communicable and non-communicable diseases, health promotion, health protection, health system research and national coordination of preventive programmes in primary health care. It also functions as the central statistical authority in health and as an EMCDDA REITOX National Focal Point. Although public health practice is not in the exclusive domain of a single type of organisation or profession, in Slovenia as in many other countries, the majority of important public health functions and services are provided by NIJZ.

The main function of NIJZ is to provide research in the field of health, protect and increase the level of health of the population by raising the awareness of population and carrying out other preventive measures. NIJZ's main activities are funded by the Ministry of Health and include national health statistics and research in the field of public health including health care systems; activities to identify health threats and design measures for their control; designing and providing health promotion programmes and preparing a scientific background for health-friendly policies, programmes and measures for disease prevention.

NIJZ is a public institute. Following legislation changes brought about by the Slovenian Health Services Act in 2013, the previous institution (also named the National Institute of Public Health) underwent organisational restructuring. From 2014 onward, NIJZ is organised as one central unit with nine regional offices.

NIJZ employs over 400 staff members.

NIJZ has successfully coordinated and participated in various international projects. NIJZ has also taken on the role of lead partner in three prominent EU-funded Joint Actions: EPAAC – European Partnership for Action Against Cancer, PARENT – Cross-border Patients' Registries Initiative and CANCON – Development of a European Guide on Quality Improvement in Comprehensive Cancer Control.

Co-beneficiary partner



Ministry of Interior – Police Slovenia

The Police is the service body within the Ministry of the Interior. Two organizational units from the General police directorate, i. e. the National Forensic Laboratory and the Criminal Police Directorate - Organized Crime Unit- Illicit Drugs Section will support the activities of I-SEE-project.

On the national level, police tasks are performed by the General Police Directorate, which monitors, analyses and evaluates the security conditions, establishes the situation in the field of the execution of police tasks, guides, directs and co-ordinates the work of police directorates, ensures professional and technical assistance, supervises their work, takes care of improving the organisation of the system and methods of work, takes care of the lawful implementation of regulations in the field of police work and implements measures to ensure the effective functioning of the police. The tasks of the General Police Directorate are performed by internal organisational units such as Criminal Police Directorate and others. Inside the Criminal Police Directorate is located Organised Crime Section where is one of the squad Illicit Drug Division.

Illicit Drug Division manages, coordinates, monitors, analyses and evaluates situations in the area of drug related criminal offences. In cooperation with judicial and other State bodies and foreign competent authorities, it ensures effective and lawful implementation of tasks in the fight against drug related crime and crime related to new psychoactive substances. Illicit Drug Division cooperates with police forces from other countries and with international organisations in the field of police work. In the framework of the European and national EWS, is Illicit Drug Division national correspondent and it reports to EMCDDA, UNODC and Europol.

The National Forensic Laboratory (NFL) is an independent organisational unit of the General Police Directorate. The NFL guarantees reliability of its examinations by means of the quality assurance system along the ISO/IEC 17025 standard for testing and calibration laboratories. In the frame of I-SEE project the Chemistry department will perform chemical characterizations of new psychoactive substances collected by NGO (non-governmental organizations) by its routine methods. In general the Chemistry department performs examinations of different material traces (drugs, arsons, explosives, paints etc.). In the framework of the European "Early warning system on new psychoactive substances" it identifies and informs Slovenian stakeholders and reports to EMCDDA, UNDOC and to European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI).

Co-beneficiary partner



Association DrogArt - Slovenia

The Association DrogArt is a non-profit, non-governmental organization which works in the field of drug and alcohol related harm reduction among young people. Since 1999 we encourage innovative youth projects and the use of new media in the harm reduction work with young people. We endeavour to actively include young people in our projects and activities, so that we plan, evaluate and learn together.

DrogArt info point in Ljubljana offers visitors a variety of information from different fields of interest of young people, including drug and alcohol harm reduction information and tools. In the info point we also anonymously collect samples for drug checking from users and provide brief harm reduction consultation. DrogArt counselling service offers anonymous personal, telephonic and internet counselling to young people that encounter problems related to alcohol or drug use, to their parents and friends. DrogArt outreach workers are present at clubs and larger electronic and other music events in Slovenia. Trained peer workers offer basic first aid to users that encounter problems connected with drug and/or alcohol use, distribute harm reduction materials, fruit and refreshing drinks to partygoers and offer them advice on how to party with less risk.

Besides the personal approach that is established with users through field work, we carry out different research projects that help us follow the changes in drug and alcohol use among young people (last year a research about NPS use was carried out). This gives us a good foundation for fast and appropriate actions. Findings and conclusions from four different research projects on synthetic drugs and alcohol are available in numerous books, manuals and other publications.