

## Launch of UK Drug Policy Commission

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Today sees the launch of a new organisation, the UK Drug Policy Commission (UKDPC), with the publication of a report commissioned from US and UK drug policy analysts.

Key findings of the report by Professor Peter Reuter and Dr Alex Stevens include:

- the UK has the highest level of dependent drug use in and the second highest level of drug-related deaths in Europe.
- prevalence rates of dependent of problematic drug use in the UK are virtually double those found across Europe.
- thr UK has the second highest rate of drug-related death in Europe, at about 34 per million population aged 16 or over.
- the annual socio-economic cost of drug-related crime in England and Wales alone has been estimated at over 13 billion.

The reports conclusions are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the UKDPC. Chair of the UKDPC, Dame Ruth Runciman, said today:

The UK Drug Policy Commission is an independent organisation that will provide objective analysis of issues of drug policy in the United Kingdom. The Commission does not start from the position that all UK drug policy has failed, but rather that we do no know enough about which elements of policy work, why they work and where they work well.

The debate on drugs is often sensationalised and polarised. Our mission is to improve political, media and public understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of this countrys policies for tackling drug misuse.

Source: [www.ukdpc.org.uk](http://www.ukdpc.org.uk)

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