



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

TAXATION AND CUSTOMS UNION DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
Security, safety, Trade Facilitation, Rules of origin & International cooperation
Protection of citizens and enforcement of IPR

INFORMATION NOTE

European Commission adopts Delegated Act to control precursors of Crystal Meth

From September 21st, 2016 onward, anyone importing or exporting, possessing or using chloroephedrine or chloropseudoephedrine will be required to hold a licence.

Those two substances have been abused to produce methamphetamine (most commonly known by its street name “Crystal Meth”), a highly addictive drug which has been increasingly used in Europe during the last years, in particular in the Czech Republic and Germany. Since 2014, more than 3 tonnes of chloroephedrine and chloropseudoephedrine have been seized in EU Member States (enough to produce methamphetamine with a market value of close to €200 million). Prior to this legislation, it had been difficult to prosecute persons dealing with these substances because the mere possession was not subject to specific requirements. Therefore, the police or customs could only act if they could provide clear evidence for its use to produce drugs.

The negative social impact and the threat to public health of Crystal Meth are significant, and the Commission has been acting consistently for years, in close collaboration with the Member States, to fight against the production of this drug.

One important tool for this purpose is the EU legislation on drug precursors, which aims at controlling and restricting the use of chemical substances than can be used in the production process of drugs. Most of the substances used as precursors for Crystal Meth are already controlled under the system put in place by the EU legislation on drug precursors. However, criminals dealing with drugs are always trying to find alternative substances for the production of drugs.

The use of the two closely related substances chloroephedrine and chloropseudoephedrine as precursors of Crystal Meth appears to be a new trend in the production of this drug, as most clearly evidenced by a spectacular seizure in Leipzig, Germany in 2014. There are strong indications that the substances were used to feed drug laboratories in the Czech Republic, which sent the drug back to Germany, in particular Saxony and Bavaria.

With the adoption of this Delegated Act, which adds these two substances to the list of chemicals strictly controlled under the EU legislation on drug precursors, the Commission acted quickly to tackle this new trend in drug production. From now on, only vetted and licensed economic operators will be allowed to trade and possess chloroephedrine and chloropseudoephedrine, for specific authorised uses.