

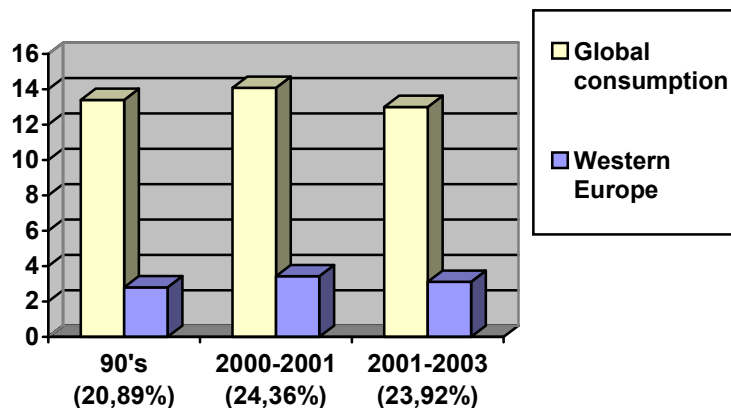
COCAINE CONSUMPTION TRENDS IN WESTERN EUROPE ¹

According to the document *World Drug Report 2004*, recently published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, some 13 million people around the world are affected by cocaine consumption. Close to 25% of the global consumers are to be found in Europe (3.34 million), of which 90% are in Western Europe.

Statistics show clearly a growing tendency in the European market for Cocaine. This can be seen clearly in the growing number of consumers as well as the increase in seizures of this drug.

1. In Europe, the UNODC's Drug Abuse Index showed a strong rise of cocaine use over the last decade. There seems to be indication of stabilization in the last two years, however this is a world trend and could be a result of the increase of seizures of the drug.

COCAINE CONSUMPTION IN MILLIONS OF PEOPLE



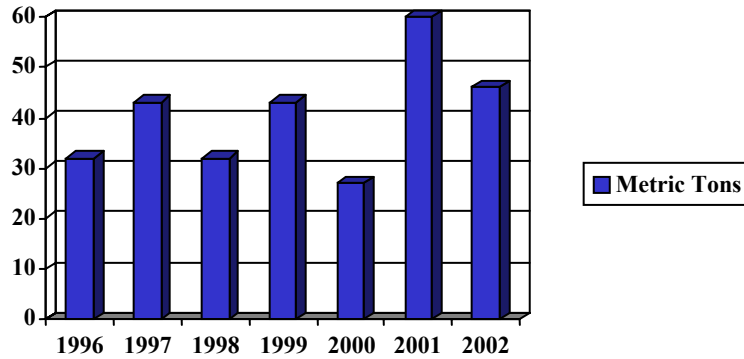
A very worrying phenomenon is the emergence of crack-cocaine consumption in Europe, which is far more dangerous. In the last few years, 16 countries reported information on trends in abuse of crack-cocaine in 2002, two thirds of these are located in Western Europe, seven countries reported an increase in crack-cocaine consumption, other seven reported no greater change and only two a decline. Crack-cocaine is still concentrated in a few areas in Europe, but there is a risk that it could spread across the continent.

2. Seizures are a direct indicator that allows evaluating to what extent the illicit traffic of a certain substance has increased, especially if it is compared to other indicators. A greater volume of seizures shows the efficiency of the law enforcement authorities but at the same time it can indicate a greater availability of the drug – greater quantities in circulation in a determined

¹ In the Reports of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, West Europe is considered the present European Union – without taking into account the adherent countries – and also including Cyprus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Malta, Monaco, Norway, Switzerland, and Turkey.

geographical zone- and equally greater consumption. A tendency towards increase is clearly seen in Europe.

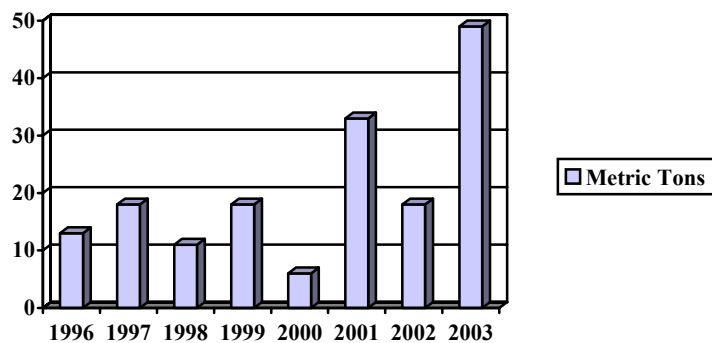
SEIZURES OF COCAINE IN WEST EUROPE (Metric Tons)



1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
32	43	32	43	27	60	46

Spain is considered one of the greatest points of entrance for cocaine for the Western Europe market. Due to this, the confiscation of cocaine in Spain, apart from representing a high percentage of the total, could also show the trend in the rest of the continent.

SEIZURES OF COCAINE IN SPAIN (Metric Tons)



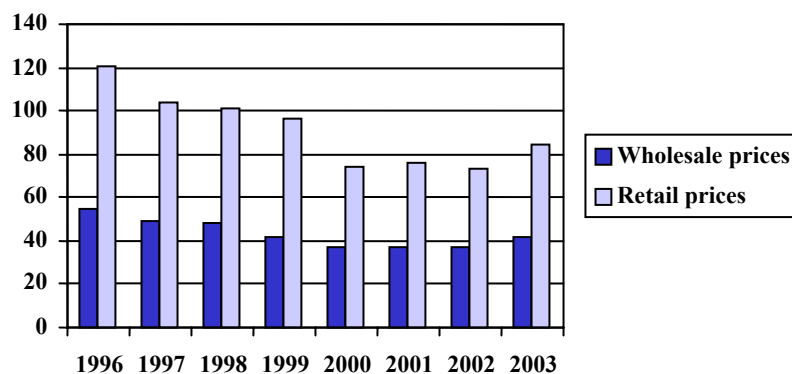
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
13	18	11	18	6	33	18	49

The large increase of seizures in Spain in 2003 (49 tons), indicates there will be a significant increase in the overall amount of seizures of cocaine in Europe for this year.

It is important to underline the work done by Spanish National Police and the Civil Guard in close co-operation with the Colombian National Police, as well as the work done in the intelligence field by the United Kingdom's authorities which have contributed to neutralize criminal organizations.

3. The cocaine prices in Europe are also an important indicator to measure the availability of the drug. The law enforcement authorities in West Europe have already identified a declining trend in the cocaine prices, in wholesale as also in retail. This could be interpreted as an important increase in the availability of the drug and at the same time, leads to a major consumption of the drug.

COCAINE RETAIL AND WHOLESALE PRICES



IN WESTERN EUROPE (Per gram U\$ dollars)

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Wholesale prices (U\$)	48	42	37	37	37	42
Retail prices (U\$)	101.4	96.3	74.4	77	73	84

The slight increase of cocaine prices in the last year could be due to the increase of seizures of the drug.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The greater availability and consumption of cocaine in Europe gives rise to the necessity of strengthening the co-operation between European and Andean countries, with the aim to find viable alternatives to reduce the supply and demand of the substance.

2. The European responsibility, shared with the Andean countries, could translate into a major co-operation and technical assistance for countries like Colombia in areas such as alternative development, the opening of markets for its products, interdiction, the control of chemical precursors, the application of the law and a decisive contribution to the project of *Forester Families* of the Government of President Uribe.
3. Additionally, the necessity to strengthen the exchange of information between law enforcement agencies of both regions should be considered.
4. It is important that the European Union include in its Agenda, in a permanent manner, the control of chemical precursors in order to avoid by all means that these fall in the hands of drug traffickers.
5. It is equally peremptory to cut the relations between criminal organizations of East Europe, with other criminal organizations from West Europe and America, which are in great part responsible for international trafficking.
6. Terrorism financed by drug trafficking money, as in the case of Colombia with the FARC, will be diminished in accordance to the extent in which there is co-ordinate labor in order to abate the production and the consumption of drugs.
7. The association of drugs and terrorism has translated into an increase of illicit crops, yet these also increase when there are new consumers as in the case of Europe, as presented in the United Nations report.