

Subjecting the new psychoactive substance N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)piperidin-4-yl]oxolane-2-carboxamide (tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl; THF-F) to control measures

2017/0342(NLE) - 18/12/2017

PURPOSE: to subject the new psychoactive substance N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)piperidin-4yl]oxolane-2-carboxamide (tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl; THF-F) to control measures.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Implementing Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the Council adopts the act after consulting the European Parliament but without being obliged to follow the opinion of the European Parliament.

BACKGROUND: on 15 September 2017, following the request made by the Commission and seven Member States and pursuant to [Council Decision 2005/387/JHA](#) on the information exchange, risk-assessment and control of new psychoactive substances, the Council requested an assessment of the risks caused by the use, manufacture and trafficking of the new psychoactive substance **tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl (THF-F)**, the involvement of organised crime and the possible consequences of control measures introduced on this substance.

A **risk assessment report** on the new psychoactive substance was drawn up by the Scientific Committee of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), and was subsequently submitted to the Commission on 14 November 2017.

The main results of the risk assessment are the following:

- tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl is a **synthetic opioid** and is structurally related to fentanyl, a controlled substance widely used in medicine as an adjunct to general anaesthesia during surgery and for pain management. It is sold online in small and wholesale amounts, under the guise of a 'research chemical' or as 'legal' replacement to illicit opioids;
- tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl has been available in the European Union since at least September 2016 and has been seized in one Member State. **14 deaths** have been reported by one Member State where exposure to tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl was confirmed. In at least **12 deaths** tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl was the cause of death or is likely to have contributed to the death.

This substance has **no recognised human or veterinary medical use** in the Union nor, it appears, elsewhere. There is no information on the involvement of organised crime.

The risk assessment report reveals that many of the questions related to tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl could be answered through further research. However, the available evidence and information on the **health and social risks** that the substance poses, given also its similarities with fentanyl and furanylfentanyl, provides sufficient ground for subjecting tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl to control measures across the Union.

CONTENT: the purpose of this proposal for a Council Implementing Decision is to call upon the Member States to **subject the new psychoactive substance tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl (THF-F) to control measures** across the Union and criminal penalties as provided under their legislation by virtue of their obligations under the 1971 United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs.

Currently, five Member States control tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl under national drug control legislation and five Member States control it under other legislation.

Subjecting this substance to control measures across the Union would help avoid the emergence of obstacles in cross-border law enforcement and judicial cooperation, and would help protect from the risks that its availability and use can pose.

The United Kingdom shall not take part in the adoption of this Decision.