

Subjecting the new psychoactive substance methyl 1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-[phenyl(propanoyl)amino]piperidine-4-carboxylate (carfentanil) to control measures

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PURPOSE: to subject the new psychoactive substance methyl 1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-[phenyl(propanoyl)amino]piperidine-4-carboxylate (carfentanil) 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: the risk assessment report on **carfentanil** drawn up by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) was submitted to the Commission and to the Council on 14 November 2017. It concluded that this psychoactive substance - detected for the first time in December 2012 and seized eight hundred times by seven Member States - is a **synthetic opioid** whose structure is similar to that of fentanyl, a controlled substance widely used in medicine as an adjunct to general anaesthesia during surgery and for pain management.

The substance, presumably produced in China and Hong Kong, is usually sold in powder form in small and wholesale amounts, as a drug in its own right, but also as a so-called research chemical, pharmaceutical intermediate or as a so-called legal replacement to illicit opioids.

Carfentanil is authorised as a veterinary medicine in the United States for the immobilisation of large animals. It is possible that carfentanil may have limited use in veterinary medicine in the Union.

Seven Member States have reported 60 deaths which occurred between November 2016 and June 2017. In addition, two Member States have reported three cases of acute non-fatal intoxication associated with carfentanil.

The available evidence and information on the **health and social risks** that the substance poses, given also its similarities with fentanyl, provides sufficient grounds for subjecting carfentanil to control measures across the Union.

CONTENT: the draft Council Decision aims at **subjecting the new psychoactive substance carfentanil to the control measures** and criminal penalties provided for under their legislation, in compliance with their obligations under the 1961 United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs as amended by the 1972 Protocol.

For more details, see the summary of the Commission's initial legislative proposal dated 18.12.2017.