

Hungary turns to drug consumption country

by UPI

BUDAPEST, Hungary -- After years of being mostly a transit point for drug traffickers, Hungary has become a major market for illegal drugs, a top police official said Thursday. Gyorgy Zsombok, deputy head of the Hungarian national bureau of investigation, or NNI, said Hungary has turned into a major country on the Balkan drug route and also has registered an increasing number of drug addicts, the national news agency MTI reported. Zsombok warned that Hungary, with a growing drug market, is likely to witness a power struggle and street wars among gangs of drug smugglers and dealers. He explained that ready-to-use heroin is being imported to Hungary and shipped on to Western Europe, while synthetic drugs are being smuggled from central European countries to the southeast of the continent for refinement into heroin. About 98 percent of the drugs on sale in the streets of Hungary come from abroad, he said. More than 11 percent of Hungarian adults have used drugs, while that percentage rises to 20-25 percent for young people. Quoting the latest statistics, Zsombok said out of Hungary's 10 million population, about 200,000 young people are occasional drug users and 25,000 are regular drug abusers.

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