

PRESS RELEASE

Athens, 17/11/2016

THE "GREEK NGO PLATFORM ON PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES" MEETS THE MINISTER OF HEALTH

Meeting with the Minister of Health, Mr. Ksanthos, took place on Monday 14/11/2016, with representatives of the Greek NGO Platform on Psychoactive Substances. The meeting took place at the request of partner organizations, which are based on multi and interdisciplinary experience in the implementation of interventions in the field of psychoactive substances and drug policy, presented the priorities and requests to the Minister.

The issues raised in the discussion were:

- National Strategy and National Action Plan on Drugs
- Promoting national comprehensive and coordinated policy on Harm Reduction
- Elimination of the waiting list in substitution units – OKANA
- strengthening the exchange / distribution of needle programs, syringes and other paraphernalia for use of psychoactive substances
- reopening of supervised station "ULYSSES"
- Implementation naloxone programs aimed at reducing deaths from overdose
- Inclusive, equal and direct access for people who use psychoactive substances to health services, care, treatment and harm reduction, including access within prisons and hospitals
- Respect the right of people who use psychoactive substances in their choice of treatment
- Provide adequate and qualitative psychosocial support with a view to a holistic approach and management of the phenomenon of the use of psychoactive substances
- Support people who use psychoactive substances and living with HIV and / or HCV
- Active participation of civil society in the formation of drug policy

Mr. Xanthos, listened to the representatives of the Platform with great interest, formed a positive climate of constructive discussion and conciliation, stating that, undoubtedly, these proposals are in line with the objectives of the Ministry of Health and are part of the action plan in the coming period. It also pledged to implement the necessary cooperation with the competent bodies and civil society and on the necessary institutional changes that will contribute to the creation, development and implementation of the proposed actions and interventions.

The "NGO Platform on Psychoactive Substances" awaits with interest the political leadership initiatives and is always open to a meaningful and productive dialogue by submitting its scientific knowledge and experience, with a point of view to implementing a coordinated and effective drug policy –oriented at public health and human rights.