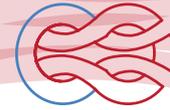


NEWSLETTER



DRUG POLICY
NETWORK SEE

JANUARY - MARCH 2017



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The first board meeting of DPNSEE IN 2017

The first meeting of the Board of the Drug Policy Network South East Europe was held on 20 and 21 March 2017 in the DPNSEE Office and the Library of the House of Human Rights in Belgrade, Serbia. It was an opportunity for the new start of the Board after the changes in the composition made at the last General Assembly held in November 2016. All the Board members participated, and Staff including two volunteers joined for some parts of the meeting. The Board adopted the Drug Policy Network South East Europe Annual financial statement, the minutes from the recent General Assembly and the Board meeting and the Report for period December 2016 - March 2017 proposed by the Staff. Board also discussed the Operational plan for 2017 and forthcoming events and activities. Among discussed topics were the fundraising strategy, membership fees payments, reimbursement procedures, capacity building (training), volunteers' work on resource pool and glossary, website, Expert committee and DPNSEE Strategy 2016 - 2019.



Glossary and Resource center



At the beginning of the year Drug Policy Network South East Europe opened two volunteer positions within the project "Strengthening the capacity of non-governmental organizations and promotion policy towards drugs in Southeast Europe, which is based on public health and human rights", funded by the European Commission. This year's volunteer program will recruit volunteers on two positions, engaged on activities on the project: assembling the Glossary of terms and initiating and developing the Resource center. The Staff is now team of 5!

A Glossary of terms related to the drugs issue will be produced in English and local languages to help those addressing issue of drugs in a proper way. It will be published electronically.

The Glossary will be an alphabetical list of terms used in a domain of drug policy, with the associated definitions for those terms. Definitions will be accompanied with explanations of concepts and terms related to the field of drugs and relevant related matters such terms related to biology, chemistry, policy or human rights. The glossary should serve firstly to member organisations in a way that will help in process of harmonization of opinions and attitudes. Secondly, this material will be of help to a wider range of groups of people including policy makers, stakeholders, activists, the media, police, judiciary and others.

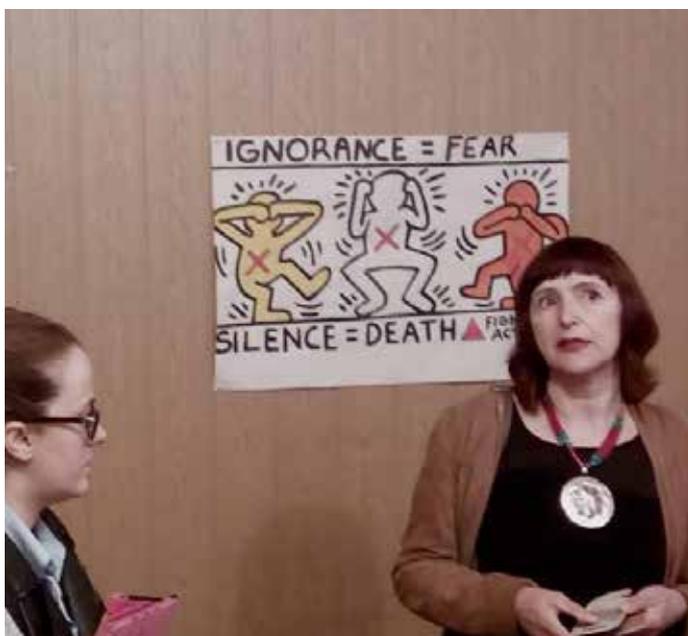
The DPNSEE resource centre will have role to serve the community of SEE civil society organisations. It aims to improve their work by facilitating and contributing to the sharing of information, resources and experiences between the NGOs, their partners and local organisations, additionally providing useful training, practical information and services. It also aims to strengthen relationships and enhance dialogue between NGOs and other actors.

Amendments to the Law on Psychoactive Controlled Substances

The Working Group of the Ministry of Health of Serbia proposed changes to the Law on Psychoactive Controlled Substances. This law has long been announced, as part of the obligations that Serbia has in the process of accession to the European Union, specifically covered by Chapter 24 of the negotiations. The draft is disappointing and restricting instead of proposing active and modern solutions. The public debate was badly prepared and led, with not proper timely information and draft being publicly shared after the debate started.

DPNSEE and its member organisations, together with a few other interested civil society organisations, communicated, met and prepared a comprehensive set of comments that were sent to the Ministry. We also held a press conference and were guests on three TV stations and national radio, and the news about the proposals we made was also in other electronic and social media. The cooperation with partner organisations was very fruitful, and can be a good basis for future partnerships and actions.

Country Visit to Croatia



Representatives of the Drug Policy Network in South East Europe (DPNSEE) visited Croatia from 22 to 24 March 2017. This activity is part of a series of country visits within the framework of the project "Strengthening NGO capacity and promoting public Health and human rights oriented Drug Policy in South East Europe" as described within the work plan for 2017 and it was undertaken by NGO "Diogenis Drug Policy Dialogue" – the lead organization of the project – in close cooperation with DPNSEE. The delegation – consisting of Mr. N. Đurasović, Deputy Treasurer and DPNSEE Board member, Mr. M. Milošević, DPNSEE Executive director and Mrs. S. Galinaki, Diogenis Advocacy Officer – visited local authorities, institutions and NGOs working in the field of drugs based in the capital Zagreb and the cities of Split and Rijeka.

The visit was part of the efforts for the enlargement of the Network as an essential prerequisite for making it a strong and reliable partner. The main aims of the visit were to: (a) present DPNSEE to the Croatian society, (b) build strong relationships, enhance contacts and improve drug policy dialogue with the relevant authorities, state institutions, policy makers and NGOs, (c) explore opportunities for partnerships and collaboration and (d) discuss possible applications of local civil society organizations for membership in DPNSEE. More specifically, the delegation came in contact, discussed and exchange important information and experiences with: representatives from the Office of Combating Drugs Abuse of the Republic of Croatia, Mr. Ranko Ostojić - recent vice Prime minister and Minister of Interior, currently Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Domestic Policy and National Security, representatives from the NGOs 'LET' - based in Zagreb, 'HELP' – based in Split, 'TERRA', 'VIDA', and 'OASA' – based in Rijeka and representatives from the Educational Institute for Public Health of the Split - Dalmatia county.

The most important observation the delegation gained was that the governmental institutions operate in a very effective way, using an interdisciplinary approach. There is a well-organized and structured system in place, which covers the entire range of needs related to drug use. The system is decentralized, so that each of the 21 counties (županije) has its own tasks and responsibilities. Further on, local authorities and institutions take their own part and that is usually very well coordinated at county level. Moreover, the strong and ongoing cooperation between the competent state agencies and local Civil Society organizations significantly contributes in the overall implementation of the Croatian drug policy in a consistent way.

DIOGENIS

GREECE

The 60th CND and its importance for the current Drug Policy in Greece

NGO "Diogenis – Drug Policy Dialogue" organized, on March 28, 2017, at the "Antonis Tritsis" Amphitheater, of the Cultural Center of the City of Athens, an informative meeting on the conclusions of the 60th session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic drugs (CND) and their importance for the current drug policy in Greece.

The program included a presentation of the deliberations at the CND which was held from 13-17 March 2017 in Vienna and a round table discussion with representatives of the National Drug Policy Coordination office, the organizations OKANA and KETHEA and the Greek platform of NGOs on psychoactive substances.

At the meeting it was pointed out that the 60th CND was a session of good and constructive discussions guided by the results of the UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on drugs as described in the outcome document "Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem". The session confirmed the importance of the UNGASS outcome and urged the member states to intensify their efforts for the implementation of its proposals. Significant is the proposed shift in the policy from repression and punishment to health and respect for human rights. There is openness to dialogue about alternatives to imprisonment and decriminalisation of drug users. Member states are urged to make use of the flexibility of the international drug control system and the search for innovative methods of treatment and harm reduction.

At the round table discussion dissatisfaction was expressed about the discrepancy between policy provisions and practical implementation in Greek drug policy. There is no political commitment and coordination and the existing drug law is not implemented by the government. Main issues that were indicated for further work in the coming period were:

Better alignment of the work of the responsible institutions for harm reduction, treatment and rehabilitation, implementation of the law with regard to harm reduction services in the prisons, re-opening of the supervised consumption rooms and the regulation of cannabis.

This meeting was a good opportunity for all actors in the field of drugs to discuss openly about problematic issues in policy and practice and to exchange ideas about cooperation and common action.

CENTER FOR LIFE

GREECE

Conference for protecting the rights of HIV positive detainees

Highlighting problems, proposals for solutions and the need for protecting the rights of HIV positive detainees, at the conference of the Centre of Life

The Centre of Life organized a conference titled “Detention centers and HIV: Prevention, Therapy, Support” aiming to inform about the defense of the human rights of the HIV positive detainees. The Secretary General of Crime Policy of the Greek Ministry of Justice, Mr. Eftichis Fitrikis, opened the conference with a salute and highlighted that “this conference is part of an overall problem that concerns all the aspects of human rights and is related to health in combination with detention conditions”. Main part of the conference was the presentation of the research of the Centre of Life “HIV positive detainees and access to Social Rights”, the results of which are based on the interference of the Organization from March 2016 until December 2016, with the Detainee Hospital of Korydallos, the women’s department of the Korydallos prison, the detention facilities of directorate of Attiki and Thessaloniki Aliens and the Diavata prison.

According to the research of the Centre of Life, it is suggested:

- Accession of the Detainee Hospital of Korydallos to the National Healthcare System, ensuring a separate fund from the budget for the antiretroviral treatment, as well as the employment of specialized and sufficient health professionals.
- Introduction of therapeutic rehabilitation and substitution programs.
- Improvement of the infrastructure, conformation of the yards and creation of recreation and sports areas.
- Compliance with a dietary plan that will correspond to the special dietary needs of the HIV positive detainees, according to their religious beliefs as well.
- The issuing of the Ministerial Decision for the details concerning the regular update of the personnel of the detention centers, as well as the information of the detainees on issues of counseling hygiene and receiving preventive measures for dealing with HIV or other infectious diseases.
- Systematic evaluation, from competent bodies, of the applied measures and practices as well as collaboration of the bodies, state and non-state, at a local, national and international level.

POSITIVE VOICE

GREECE

CHECKPOINT
κέντρα πρόληψης και εξέτασης

Θετική Φωνή
άνδρωσι+HIV

ΠΡΟΜΗΘΕΑΣ
ΣΥΛΛΟΓΟΣ ΑΣΘΕΝΩΝ ΗΠΑΤΟΣ

ΜΗ ΜΟΙΡΑΖΕΣΑΙ ΤΑ ΣΥΝΕΡΓΑ ΧΡΗΣΗΣ
Χρησιμοποίησε τα δικά σου σύνεργα για μία μόνο φορά

"Η ΧΡΗΣΗ ΨΥΧΟΔΡΑΣΤΙΚΩΝ ΟΥΣΙΩΝ ΜΠΟΡΕΙ ΝΑ ΠΡΟΚΑΛΕΣΕΙ ΣΟΒΑΡΕΣ ΣΩΜΑΤΙΚΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΨΥΧΟΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΕΣ ΒΛΑΒΕΣ"

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Αλ. Σβώλου 15, Θεσσαλονίκη - τηλ.: 231 028 2284

ΘΕΤΙΚΗ ΦΩΝΗ
Αθήνα - τηλ.: 210 86 27 572
Θεσσαλονίκη - τηλ.: 231 552 5020

ΠΡΟΜΗΘΕΑΣ
Λ. Αλεξάνδρας 213B, Αμπελόκηποι - τηλ.: 211 0122102

Harm reduction and street work

We created for the first time ever in Greece a TV spot against the stigma and discrimination PWUD suffer. We chose a highly recognizable TV person (tattoo artist) aiming not to preach to the converted, but to the majority of the population. The spot is available on YouTube and hopefully soon enough on the television. The central character says at the end "Stigma and marginalization can kill equally with any substance"

We continue the distribution of sterile injecting equipment in our streetwork and outreach activities, and for that reason we created two new informative pamphlets with all the harm reduction structures in Athens (telephones and address) and additional information about the blood borne infections and also the importance of not to share usage paraphernalia. Along with that we translated a poster from English to Greek that contains warnings about the recreational use of white powders.

PROMETHEUS

GREECE

“I Deserve to Know”

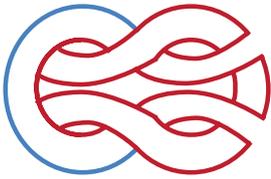


Hellenic Liver Patient Association “Prometheus”, after taking into consideration the urgent need of people who live with liver diseases for unobstructed access to diagnostic testing, has planned and is currently implementing a nationwide project entitled “I Deserve to Know”. The purpose of this action is the continuous provision of liver elastography screening (Fibroscan) to beneficiaries that have been diagnosed with liver diseases across Greece through collaboration with hepatology clinics and doctors of public hospitals. Under the context of this project, since the beginning of 2017, the certified personnel of “Prometheus” visited 6 structures of Greek Organization Against Drugs “OKANA” in the cities of Athens, Thessaloniki, Veroia and 1 of Network for Dependent People “KETHEA” in Athens, providing this significant screening to People Who Inject Drugs (PWID) who have been diagnosed with hepatitis C and/or other liver diseases.

“C-afora” (Concerns You)



Hellenic Liver Patient Association “Prometheus”, is currently implementing a panhellenic program entitled “C -afora” aiming to raise awareness, to inform and to promote prevention on Hepatitis C to PWID, in collaboration with rehabilitation or substitution structures regarding psychoactive substances. Analytically, the purpose of the program is to inform the target population for viral hepatitis C, for safe use practices of psychoactive substances and to elucidate myths that accompany the disease, to promote the importance of health care and treatment and to tackle social stigma. Since the beginning of 2017, representatives of “Prometheus” visited 2 structures of Network for Dependent People “KETHEA” in Athens and 1 structure of “Self-help Promoting Program” in Chania city under the context of this continuous program.



DRUG POLICY NETWORK SEE

4Life, Podgorica, Montenegro

Aksion Plus, Tirana, Albania

Aliat, Bucharest, Romania

ARAS, Bucharest, Romania

Cazas, Podgorica, Montenegro

Centre for Life, Athens, Greece

Diogenis, Athens, Greece

HOPS, Skopje, FYRO Macedonia

Juventas, Podgorica, Montenegro

Labyrinth, Kosovo

Margina, Tuzla, Bosnia Herzegovina

Positive Voice, Athens, Greece

Prevent, Novi Sad, Serbia

Proi, Sarajevo, Bosnia Herzegovina

Re Generacija, Belgrade, Serbia

RHRN, Bucharest, Romania

SEEAN, Ljubljana Slovenia

Viktorija, Banja Luka, Bosnia Herzegovina

Romanian Harm Reduction Network (RHRN),
Romania

Prometheus, Greece

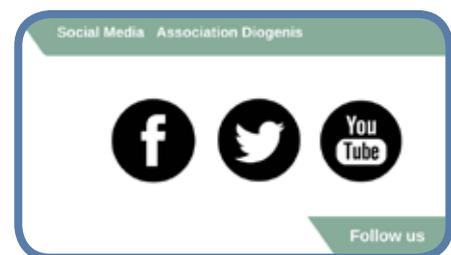
The newsletter is aiming to inform and keep updated organisations, institutions and individuals on drug policy developments along with news in the website and social media of the network. Our plan is to actively involve member organisations to report about their activities and about developments in their countries.

The Newsletter is prepared and published by the Diogenis, Drug Policy Dialogue.

Members of the drug policy network feed into the Newsletter following on topics related to criminal justice, social and Health programmes, human rights and events of interest.

Reactions can be sent to: Diogenis Association, Fokionos 8, 10 563 Athens, Greece

E-mail: info@diogenis.info



FUNDED BY:

