



“Humane and sustainable drug policies”

Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe

***Lisbon Addictions 2019
Session:...***

Denis HUBER

denis.huber@coe.int - <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/pompidou/home>

Lisbon, 23 October 2019



Birth of the Pompidou Group

The **Pompidou Group** is the **Council of Europe co-operation platform in the field of drug abuse and illicit trafficking**

Beginnings: the 1970's

- Created in 1971
- Initiative of French President Georges Pompidou
- Comprised: France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, United Kingdom

Evolution: the 1980's

- Integration into the Council of Europe
- **Promotion of a balanced, multidisciplinary approach covering prevention, treatment, risk reduction.**
- Grew to 11 countries

**The author of this presentation certifies having no conflict of interest*



The Pompidou Group today

- **39 member states including 3 non-European states**
- Contributes towards supporting governments deliver **cost effective and humane responses** to drug problems

Multidisciplinary focus:

- Prevention
- Public health
- Human rights
- Law Enforcement

While also continuing...

The fight against drug trafficking and organized crime





A new emphasis on human rights

Awareness to address particular policy needs culminated in several outcomes:

- 1. Adoption of policy paper on government interaction with civil society (2015)***
- 2. Introduction and strengthening of gender dimension into drug policy (2015-2018)***
- 3. Human rights into drug policy, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (2017)***





1. Adoption of policy paper on government interaction with civil society (2015):

- Harness local knowledge and independent expertise
 - ⇒ A source of innovative ideas
- Underscores the complementary relationship with representative democracy
- CSOs can overcome sectorial barriers much easier than the public administrations
- Opportunities for engagement
 - ⇒ e.g. agenda setting, drafting, decision, implementation, and monitoring and reformulation



2. Introduction and strengthening of gender dimension into drug policy (2015-2018):

→ Gender dimension of non-medical use of prescription drugs

Women constitute a special risk group



→ Women, drugs and violence

- Prevention regarding Drug-facilitated Sexual Assault (DFSA)
- Sexual violence against women caused by rape drugs
- 2015 review: Women who used drugs were subjected to more violence than those who did not use drugs
- Education as prevention tool and mechanism
- Special attention to early prevention through education of young boys and girls

3. Human rights into drug policy: development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (2017)

- Member states are committed to taking “full account of human rights when elaborating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating drug policies”
- Adoption and implementation of comprehensive and balanced national drug policies
 - ➔ Reduction stigma and discrimination of drug users (SDG 1 and 10)
 - ➔ Viable alternatives to marginalized communities (e.g. those involved in illicit trafficking) (SDG 1 and 10)
 - ➔ Gender aspects as transversal issue (SDG 5):
 - Gender equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex
 - ➔ Improve prevention, especially for vulnerable groups (SDG 3)
 - Harm reduction strategies
 - ➔ Condemn any cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in all circumstances (Goal 16)





Criminal justice and prison programme

About the programme...

- **Relevance to human rights:** right to health, principle of proportionality, principle of equivalence
- Started in 2012 and covers **Eastern European countries** (member and non-member States)
- **Needs-based approach** - request by country or monitoring recommendations, e.g. European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT)

Our approach

- **Overall aim:** improve public health and reduce drug dependence, drug harm and drug-related crime in prison → improve drug treatment services in prison

Achieved through...

- Improving skills of health professionals and social workers
- Developing policies and programmes for social reintegration
- Establishing regular interaction between partners to multiply capacities and exchange good practices





Thematic priorities of programme

- Good governance
 - Human Rights emphasis on all policies
 - Evaluation metrics including costs and unintended consequences
- Policy development beyond 2019
 - Working towards SDGs 2030
 - Address needs of 'at risk groups' and early intervention
- Challenges on the horizon
 - New Psychoactive substances
 - Refugees and Migrants,
 - Artificial intelligence and cybercrime





Pompidou Group's agenda

- ***Latest events:***

→ September, Reykjavik (Iceland), Seminar: **“Drug Prevention Approaches that Make a Difference”**

→ October, Athens (Greece), Seminar:
“Responding to Drug-related Challenges for Refugees, Migrants and IDPS”



- ***Forthcoming events:***

→ October, Mexico City (Mexico), Conference: **“International cooperation in aligning drug policies with Sustainable Development Goals”**



CONCLUSION

On the horizon: the statutory revision process

- ***What is it?***

A process to review the Group's mandate, operation and working methods, in order to more adequately reflect today's drug policy evolution and the challenges faced at national and international level

- ***Example of issues currently discussed:***

→ **Clarification about an extended mandate** encompassing questions related to other addictions and addictive behaviors that are related also licit substance and behavior induced dependencies such gambling and gaming

→ **Identifying objectives that are complementary to the work of other organizations** and allowing for cooperation and synergies with partners thus avoiding competition and duplication of work