

DPNSEE Board Meeting in Ohrid



**Visit to Serbia
Good visit at the right time**



Press conference, EU info centre



**Visit to Kosovo
A promising visit to challenging area**

News from the organizations of the Network

Association Prevent

_ First prevention fair successfully held in Serbia

Diogenis - Drug Policy Dialogue

_ Meeting with the Mayor of Aghios Dimitrios (Athens)

_ Presentation of new edition by "Diogenis" and "Sakkoulas" Publications

_ DIOGENIS AT THE 4th NATIONAL MEETING ON "AIDS & HEPATITIS"

Aksion Plus

_ Draft proposal to decriminalise drug possession for personal use in Albania

DPNSEE Board Meeting in Ohrid

The third Board Meeting of Drug Policy Network South East Europe dedicated to strategic planning took place in the Scout Centre Daljan in Ohrid, FYROM from 24 to 26 of August 2016.

A specific introduction to the Board meeting was the meeting of the partners of the project "Strengthening NGO capacity and promoting public health and human rights oriented drug policy in South East Europe". The partners reported on actions in 2016 and planned future activities of the project, including actions to be taken late this year and possible actions to include in the project plan for 2017.

You can read the full article at the follow link:

<http://www.dpnsee.org/the-3rd-board-meeting-of-drug-policy-network-south-east-europe/>

Press conference, EU info centre



On the occasion of the project "Strengthening NGO capacity and promoting public health and promoting human right oriented drug policy in South East Europe" DPNSEE held a press conference in the EU info centre in Belgrade, Serbia on 1. September

The speakers on the press conference were:

- Mr. Thanasis Apostolou, chairman of the board of the Network for policy towards drugs South-Eastern Europe. He welcomed the guests and presented the project "Strengthening NGO capacity and promoting public health and promoting human right oriented drug policy in South East Europe ", but also the objectives of the project and the network itself.

- Mr. Nebojša Đurasović, president of NGO Prevent from Novi Sad who spoke about the participation of this organizations in the project, but also did a small review of the International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD), that is a global event which takes place on 31 August of each year and aims to raise awareness about overdose, as well as to influence the reduction of stigma related to death due to an overdose of psychoactive substances.

- Mr. Milutin Milosevic, Executive Director of the Network for policy towards drugs Southeast Europe, Talked about the strategic plans for the future of networks, as one of the important actors in the region when it comes to drugs policy and its reform in the direction of respect for human rights and public health.

Visit to Kosovo



Representatives of the Drug policy network South East Europe visited Kosovo from 29 to 30 August 2016. The delegation included Thanasis Apostolou, Chairman of the Board, Milutin Milošević, Executive Director and Julijana Daskalov, Financial officer.

Purpose of the visit was to inform a broader public about developments in drug policy in the European Union and worldwide. The overall objective of these public meetings is to involve civil society in the decision making process about drug policy. Besides, that aim was to present DPNSEE to the Kosovo society and build strong relationships with the authorities, institutions and services.

You can read the full article at the follow link:

<http://www.dpnsee.org/a-promising-visit-to-challenging-area/>

Visit to Serbia

Delegation of the Drug Policy Network South East Europe visited Serbia from 31 August to 2 September 2016. It was one of the visits in the region in an attempt to understand the situation and meet with a variety of stakeholders in drug policy in the country.

During the first day of the visit the delegation spent in the northern province of Vojvodina, meeting with the Secretary for Health and the Clinic for Addiction in the Clinical Centre of Vojvodina. Visit to Prevent, DPNSEE member organisation was both an opportunity to meet good friends and learn about their committed work, including shelter for sexual workers. The most interesting part of the whole visit was welcome in the Kovilj monastery and later their therapeutic community "The Land of Living" where we had the opportunity to hear true stories of people who fight with their addiction supported by their peers.

You can read more at the follow link:

<http://www.dpnsee.org/visit-to-serbia/>



Potential for cooperation on justice and home affairs



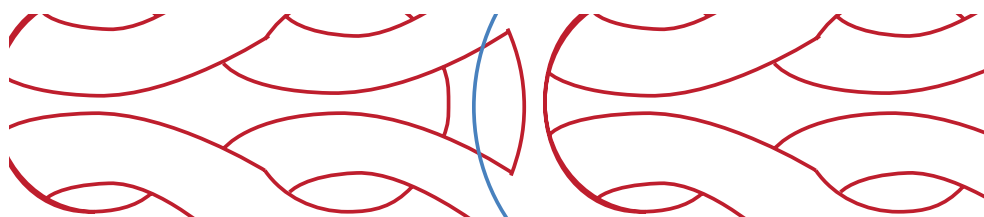
Regional Cooperation Council



DPNSEE Board member Denis Dedajić and Executive Director Milutin Milošević visited the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), the successor of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, who focuses on promotion and enhancement of regional cooperation in South East Europe. The main tasks of the RCC are to represent the region, assist the SEECP, monitor regional activities, exert leadership in regional cooperation, provide a regional perspective in donor assistance - notably the EU's Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) programme - and support increased involvement of civil society in regional activities.

You can read more at the following link:

<http://www.dpnsee.org/the-dpnsee-visited-regional-cooperation-council-rcc/>



PREVENT

SERVIA

First prevention fair successfully held in Serbia

Preventijada 2016 – first prevention fair was held in Novi Sad on September 29th. This fair was organized by Association Prevent.

Preventijada gathered over 20 organizations and institution who offered visitors interesting activities, educational materials and opportunity for volunteering, educational trainings and workshops.

This event gathered organizations which are dealing with drug issues, prevention of blood-borne infections, promotion of healthy life style and institutions and companies which work in a field of prevention.

“We are very satisfied with first Preventijada. There were a lot of participants and visitor and activities were very interesting and suitable for all ages. I hope so that Preventijada will become traditional event in Novi Sad”, said president of the Association Prevent, Nebojša Đurasović.



DIOGENIS – Drug Policy Dialogue

GREECE

Meeting with the Mayor of Aghios Dimitrios (Athens)



Diogenis" has started a round of meetings with local authorities in Athens, aiming to raise awareness in drug policy issues.

First stop was at the Municipality of Aghios Dimitrios, meeting the Mayor, Ms. Maria Androutsou and the Vice-Mayor Ms. Eleni Katzeli (Dept. of Social Services).

The discussion was in a friendly and sincere level, both sides expressed their will to start a dialogue with the local community on drugs, aiming to the maximum participation of the citizens. They also highlighted the problems that both Municipalities and NGOs face in their struggle to give better responses to the needs of the users and of society, as i.e. the lack of National Strategy on Drugs.

The meeting ended with the will of both sides of a closer cooperation on drug policy issues, giving a new aspect on the relation between the Municipality of Aghios Dimitrios and "Diogenis".

Presentation of new edition by "Diogenis" and "Sakkoulas" Publications



The NGO “Diogenis – Drug Policy Dialogue” organized the presentation of the book “Sentencing of Drug Offenders: Legislators’ Policy and the Practice of the Courts in South Eastern Europe”. The book is edited by Mr. Thanasis Apostolou (Director of ‘Diogenis’) and published by “Sakkoulas Publications”. The event was held on September 27th, 2016 in the Europe Direct hall of the Municipality of Athens.

In the panel discussion chaired by Mrs M. Malliori, Professor of Psychiatry, University of Athens, participated:

- Nancy Antonopoulos, PhD Criminology AUTH
(Author of the research for Greece, published in the book)
- Evangelos Zacharias, Appeals Prosecutor, Chief Prosecutor of Piraeus
- Evangelos Kafetzopoulos, neurologist – psychiatrist, President OKANA
- Chris Vettas, director of KETHEA “PROMETHEUS”, Northern Greece

The publication contains the findings of the investigation which was carried out by “Diogenis”, in collaboration with researchers linked to research institutes and legal university faculties in the countries surveyed: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYROM, Greece, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia.

The event was supported by the Europe Direct office of the Municipality of Athens.

UDIOGENIS AT THE 4th NATIONAL MEETING ON “AIDS & HEPATITIS”



The National Meeting on “AIDS & Hepatitis” was held with great success for the 4th consecutive year. The scientific meeting took place from September 29th to October 1st in Athens, Greece. The aim was to provide a comprehensive approach to HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis regarding our country, by putting special emphasis on the real challenges that health professionals, patients, public health authorities and the general public are facing. During the conference, distinguished scientists and professionals working in this field presented the most important developments in epidemiology, diagnosis, holistic prevention and treatment of those diseases.

‘DIOGENIS’ Drug Policy Dialogue, for 2nd consecutive year, was represented by the director of the organization, Mr. Apostolou Thanasis, who participated at a round table entitled “Addicts in Greece, 2016” and spoke about the “UNGASS 2016” (UN Special Session of the General Assembly on Drugs) that took place on April 2016 in New York. Aim, expectations, successes and setbacks of this Special Session, as well as the importance of this Session’s outcome and the future implications on national, European and international level were presented in detail.

You can see the presentation here:

<http://www.diogenis.info/cms/files/2016/10/UNGASS-2016-presentation-english.pdf>

AKSION PLUS

ALBANIA

Draft proposal to decriminalise drug possession for personal use in Albania

The Minister of Interior of Albania presented a draft proposal to consider the consumption and possession of small quantities of drugs for personal use an administrative offense and not a criminal act. The proposal argues that the state police seizes for 70% of the cases small quantities of narcotic drugs. This practice requires from the police a lot of human resources and expertise in order to determine what consists a “daily dose” for a consumer and generates numerous court hearings with employment of a high number of experts resulting into unnecessary court expenditures without tangible results. It is expected that the proposal will cause a vivid discussion in the Albanian parliament. The outcome of the deliberations in the parliament are uncertain. It is however good that this debate takes place.

Letters to the P.M. and the Ministers of Health & Justice.



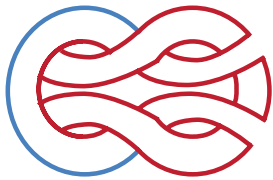
Letters to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Justice was sent in July, by the six NGOs – members of the “NGO Platform on psychoactive substances”, calling for the necessary and immediate initiatives to be taken, aimed at implementing a coordinated policy geared to public health and human rights.

The Greek “Platform of NGOs for psychoactive substances” consists of the following organizations: “DIOGENIS – Drug Policy Dialogue”, “POSITIVE VOICE”, “CENTRE FOR LIFE” in support of people living with HIV / AIDS, «PROMITHEAS – Liver Patient Association of Greece”, “GREEK DRUG USERS UNION” and “PRAKSIS”.

Among other, they request the establishment of (a National Strategy on Drugs) the Inter-Ministerial Commission on Drugs chaired by the Prime Minister, as required by the law 4931/2013. The Commission has to approve the Drug Strategy which has been submitted by the national coordinator in 2014. The letters refer also to anchor Harm reduction in the law and decriminalize possession of drugs for personal use.

You can see the press release at the following link:

<http://www.diogenis.info/cms/files/2016/10/Press-Release-Epistoles-ENG.pdf>



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

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

