

Civil society involvement in the new EU Drug Strategy process

Iga Jeziorska

Chair of the Working group on the EU drug policy, Civil Society Forum on Drugs
Youth Organisations for Drug Action

Civil Society Forum on Drugs

Expert group to the European Commission

Green Paper on the Role of Civil Society in Drugs Policy in the European Union (EU Green Paper Reference)

45 European civil society organisations

A broad platform for a structured dialogue between the Commission and the European civil society

Governed by the Core Group and including 4 working groups

CSFD
involvement
in the EU
drug policy

Evaluation of the EU Drug Strategy
2013-2020

Cooperation with the European
Commission

Cooperation with the German and
Portuguese Presidencies, and the HDG

CSFD recommendations on the EU Drug Strategy

General remarks

- Cross-cutting themes
- Clear structure – coherence
- Linkage to international and UN documents
- More emphasis on PWUD involvement
- Language and stigma

Crime prevention – need for broader approach

- Targeted community development programmes - impact of drugs and the drug trade on disadvantaged communities
- Proposals for greater integration of drug strategies with local and regional economic development strategies
- Identification of viable and sustainable forms of economic activity and employment

CSFD recommendations on the EU Drug Strategy

Balanced approach

- Urgency and importance of prioritising demand reduction
- Support for service providers - improved coverage and quality of services, financial resources
- Demand reduction services as essential services (COVID-19 lessons)

Prevention - promotion of evidence-based and effective prevention

- Focus on youth, families and vulnerable populations
- European drug prevention quality standards
- Active promotion of safer use models

CSFD recommendations on the EU Drug Strategy

Treatment – need for integrated approach

- Acknowledgement of severe interruptions in treatment systems

Harm reduction – separate from demand reduction

- Addressing the underfunding of harm reduction services
- Including specific needs of young people
- Addressing measures related to recreational use of drugs
- Highlighting the need for new innovative approaches

CSFD recommendations on the EU Drug Strategy

Drugs in prisons - continuity of care

- Acknowledging prisons as pathogenic settings inappropriate for treating people with drug-related problems
- Including the reference to the principle of equivalency
- More emphasis on the challenging task of strengthening the transition from prison settings to the community

International instruments – place and coherence

- Promoting evidence-based, balanced drug policies respectful of human rights in third countries
- Stronger emphasis on the protection of human rights
- Linkages and commitments regarding the SGD

Civil Society involvement in policymaking

Important role of civil society in drug policy measures on local, national and international levels

Shift from government to governance, but also democratic erosion

Political pressure, restrictions and structural underfunding of CSOs

Need for strong commitment towards meaningful civil society and community involvement

Principles of meaningful civil society involvement in drug policy