

# Drug policy evaluations; approach, methods and opportunities

**Webinar DPNSEE - Trimbos-institute  
February 10 2021**

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# Trimbos-institute, international

- **Dutch expertise centre of mental health and addiction**
- **Department Drug Policy and Monitoring**
- **International activities**
  - **Support Dutch government in international policy**
  - **Expert meetings and policy support**
  - **Facilitate international study visits**
  - **Implementation of EU drugs programmes (e.g. SO-PREP)**
  - **Individual requests from other governments or agencies.**

# Trimbos policy evaluations

- **Hungary(2006)**
- **Slovenia (2010)**
- **Luxemburg (2009, 2014, 2019)**
- **Croatia (2012, 2017/18)**
- **Cyprus (2020)**
  
- **Netherlands (2009), with other agency**
- **Central Asian countries (Kazachstan, Kirgizië, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan; 2017)**
- **Belgium, consortium member (2019-21)**
- **EMCDDA, consortium member (2019)**
- **EU drugs strategy 2013-2020, consortium member (2020)**
  
- **Programmering: UNODC Baltisch region (2009), UNODC Romenia (2009), UNODC Russia (2010), UNODC Centraal Azie (2012), Global Fund EECA regional HIV programme (2016)**

# 1. National drug policy

- **Within international agreements**
  - **UN drug conventions**
  - **European Drug Strategy; outline with priority areas**
- **Individual Member States**
  - **National drug policies are national responsibility**
  - **Ideally laid out in national plans or strategies:**

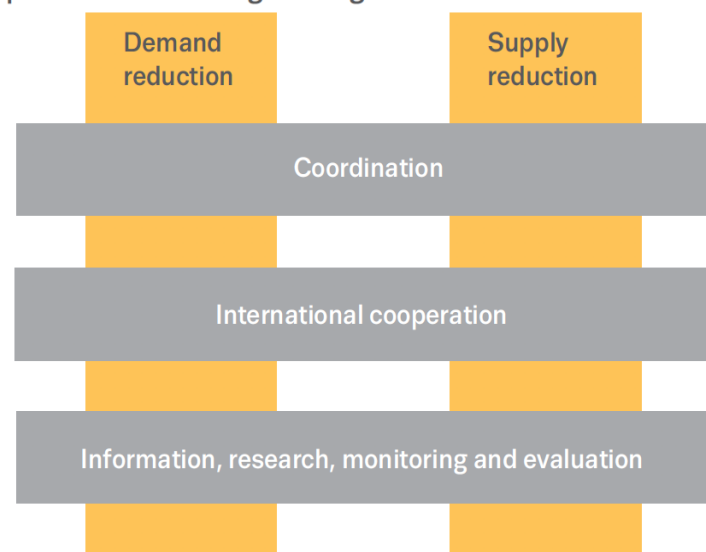
***National strategy is a compass, road map and management instrument***

# National Drug Strategies; recommended outline

## Pillar model of drug strategies (EMCDDA 2017)

- 2 pillars
  - Demand side: prevention, treatment and harm reduction
  - Supply: drug control and law enforcement justitiele aanpak
- 3 horizontal actions

The pillar model of drug strategies



# 2. Evaluation of national drug policy

- **Critical assessment of:**
  - **Activities**
  - **results**
  
- **Recommendations for follow-up steps:**
  - **Additional effort needed?**
  - **Cornerstones for a new drug strategy**

# Methods

- **Mixed methods: Quantitative and qualitative methods**
- **Triangulation crucial:**
  - desk research, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups
  - other sources (e.g. civil society, people in services)
  
- **Combination of:**
  - **Proces evaluation (*progress on track?*)**
  - **Elements of an impact evaluation (*did it bring what was expected?*)**
  - **Leading to strategic recommendations**



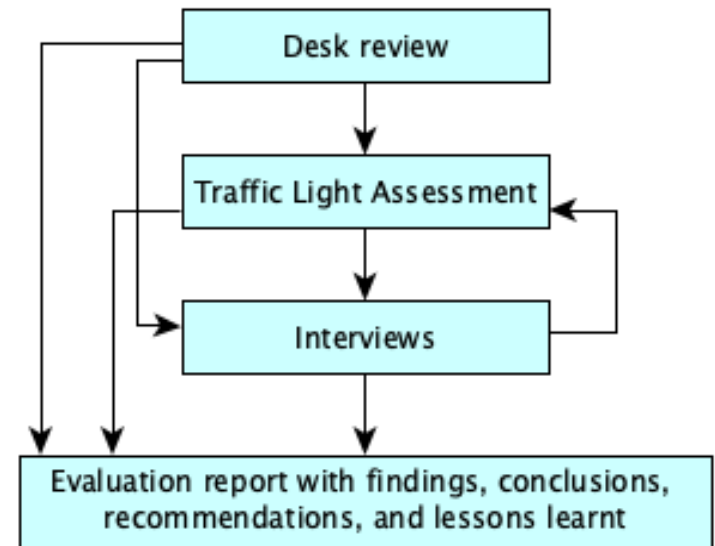
# Outline of evaluation

## Evaluation criteria:

- relevance
- effectivity
- efficiency
- coherence
- added value
- sustainability
- partnerships
- 'impact'

## Key documents

- National Drug Strategy + Action Plan



## Important sequence:

Findings ->

Conclusions -> Recommendations

# Evaluation is a window of Opportunity

- **Evaluation is excellent opportunity:**
  - **Check the progress against planning**
  - **Provides transparency and accountability**
  - **Discussion moment for strategic directions**
  - **Allign with new drug developments and trends (e.g. online markets, synthetic opioids)**
  - **Allign with new policy developments (e.g. UNGASS 2016, Alternatives to Incarceration)**
  - **Involvement of various stakeholders (civil society!)**
  - **Review by independant experts who aren't part of the national political context**
  - **Can be conducted in limited time and at low costs**
  - **Facilitate international collaboration**
  - **...**

# 3. Conclusions

- **National strategy is essential instrument in drug policy: compass, roadmap and management instrument,**
- **Evaluation is essential instrument to support the process of steering, guiding and management,**
- **Evaluation is critical moment for the policy cycle: check progress and results, learn from international developments, listen to other voices, involve civil society.**

**Thank you for your attention**

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