

# • European Conference on Drug-Related Violence

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Advancing the Evidence Base: Data sources and Analysis II

Some Experiences from the Former Scientific Committee of the EMCDDA  
and Personal Research

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Editorial |  **Free Access**

## **Better data, better policy and better lives: a call for improved drug monitoring and concerted responses**

Catherine Comiskey , Anne Line Bretteville-Jensen, Henri Bergeron, Gerhard Bühringer, Paul Dargan, Marina Davoli, Fabrizio Faggiano, Gabriele Fischer, Fernando Rodríguez de Fonseca, Henk Garretsen, Matthew Hickman, Dirk J. Korf, Krzysztof Krajewski, Letizia Paoli, Rainer Spanagel ... [See fewer authors](#) 

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*The Scientific Committee of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction call for a strengthening of global monitoring and evidence synthesis and a renewed vigour in collaborative efforts to **expand training, research and the quality and comparability of data across Europe and beyond.***

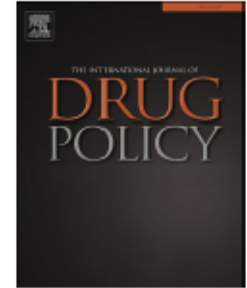


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## International Journal of Drug Policy

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### Viewpoint

## The importance of co-produced, multi-method, independent scientific evidence in times of alternative truths and global policy debates

Catherine Comiskey<sup>\*</sup>, Henri Bergeron, Thomas Clausen, Charlotte Colman, Laura Ferrer-Wreder, Gabriele Fischer, Margarida Gaspar de Matos, Jo-Hanna Ivers, Marie Jauffret-Roustide, Marieke Liem, Tomi Lintonen, Kim Moeller, Ilkka Ojanperä, Fernando Rodríguez de Fonseca, Marta Torrens Mèlich



# Challenges



- Firstly, high-quality monitoring rests on a rigorous and a shared methodological framework
- Country-based data differs in quality and typically comes with a time lag.
- The scientific evidence is not stronger than the data it is built on and often recommendations are expected sooner than confirmative evidence exist.
- There is a risk that recommendations from the new EUDA may be caught between demands for quick wins and demands for increased solid assessment and recommendations, often from an evidence base with shortcomings.
- One example may be in the area of risk assessments.

# Challenges

Secondly, the new agency will be tasked with finding a balance between communicating the inherent limitations to the evidence base, next to providing meaningful recommendations for politicians and policy makers.

This challenge will be even more risky in an era faced with the development of 'alternative truths', where the validity of scientific evidence is increasingly questioned.

In line with this, one of the risks faced by the EUDA is the declining status of science in political and public debates.

Looking ahead, the new scientific committee at the EUDA should actively work to build and maintain the public's trust in science.

**Increase the evidence literacy of the various audience groups – policymakers, civil society including people who use drugs, their families and communities, researchers and, in the process, work to improve their own communication practices.**



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# Opportunities...



As the new EUDA emerges it will be in an era of post pandemic and post truth. The aim will be to appropriately infuse scientific evidence within the knowledge cycle. While acknowledging there is often only partial evidence, the agency will be charged with addressing deeply complex and timely social issues in a diversity of ways. The agency's new mandate will open new opportunities to accomplish this.

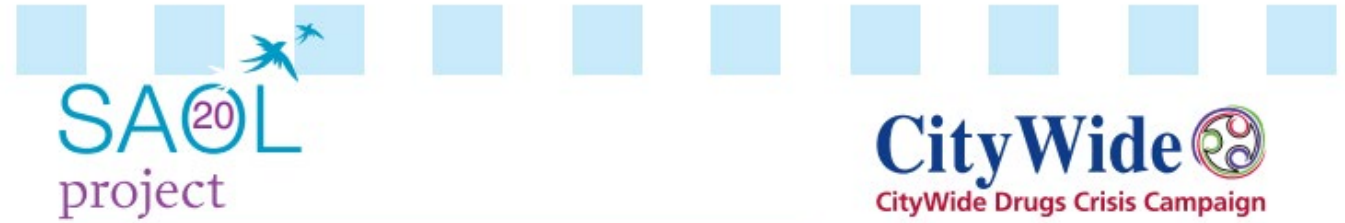
One of the most important of which is working with qualified civil society members in an active and balanced way. This new relationship will provide a reciprocal bridge in which scientific advances can have an impact and the needs of people who use drugs, their families and communities are addressed.

**Opportunities will now exist for co-production approaches and new innovative methods to cojoin the rigours of scientific enquiry with the values, experiences, knowledge and needs of civil society.**

Opportunity for advancement in implementation practices, science literacy and meaningful impacts beyond citation metrics will emerge.

# Personal Research Example: Developing and evaluating a co-produced anti-stigma training program

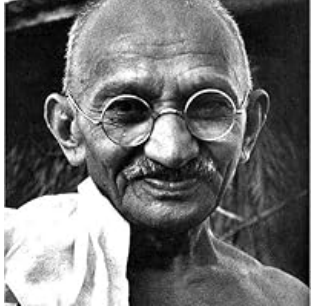
<https://stopthestigma.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/CityWide-Anti-Stigma-Training-Report-Final.pdf>



## An Evaluation of the Co-Design of a CityWide Pilot Anti-Stigma Training Programme

2021

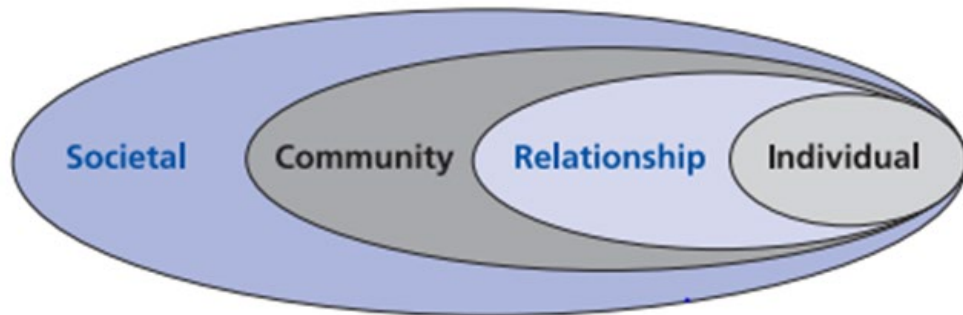
# A potential way forward? Philosophies and frameworks underpinning data collection and analysis



“Poverty is the worst form of violence.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

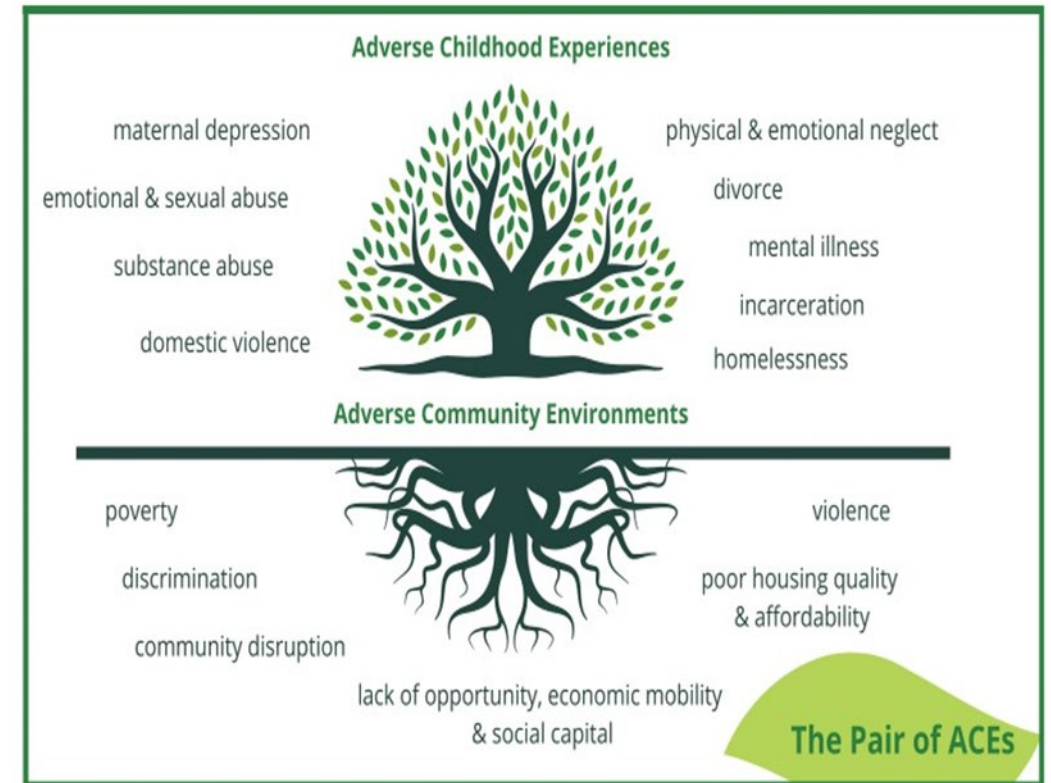
FIGURE 1.3  
Ecological model for understanding violence



(Krug et al, 2002)

## The Pair of Aces (adapted from Ellis et al, 2022)

- Adverse community environments, such as lack of affordable and safe housing, community violence, racism and discrimination, and limited access to social and economic mobility, create a vicious cycle that undermines the resilience of the tree (community).



# Personal Research Example:



CIGIREACHT AN GHARDA SÍOCHÁNA  
GARDA SÍOCHÁNA INSPECTORATE

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## New criminal justice research partnership for Ireland launches

**17th January 2024**

On 17 January 2024, the Criminal justice Open Research Dialogue (CORD) Partnership launched in Maynooth. Sixty people attended the day-long event, entitled *Co-creating our principles and exploring the criminal justice sector's open research needs*.

IPRT is delighted to be part of the Partnership which aims to embed a culture of interdisciplinary open research in criminal justice in Ireland.

Print

Marder, I., McCormack, P., Finnegan-Kessie, T., Schweppe, J. Black, L., Brennan, F., Kenny, T., Kurz, K., Le Prince, E., Quinn, M., Weiner, R., Daly, Y., McCashin, D., Wozniak, K., Barry, C., Brandon, A., Carey, S., Cleary, M., Cleere, G., Coughlan, M., Comiskey, C., Cusack, A., Ducque, K., Flanagan, N., Garrihy, J., Guiney, C., Hall, H., Haynes, A., Healy, D., Hughes, D., Humphreys, F., Kelly, E., Kenny, D., Lacey, N., McCarthy, A., McCormack, N., Michael, L., Morrison, J., O’Connell, C., O’Connell, L., O’Shea, J., Prendergast, K., Rice, O., Ryan, P., Scott, S., Toland, M., Vaugh, T., Walsh, F. and Winright, T. (2024, under review). **“Embedding a culture of interdisciplinary open research in criminal justice: a new partnership for Ireland. Irish Probation Journal**



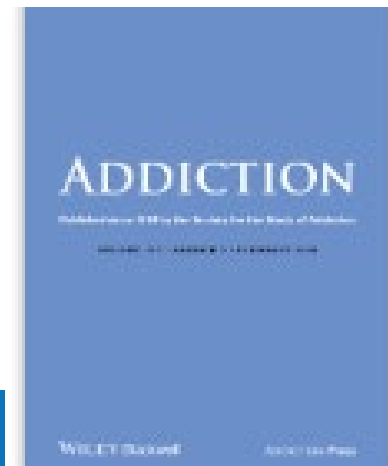
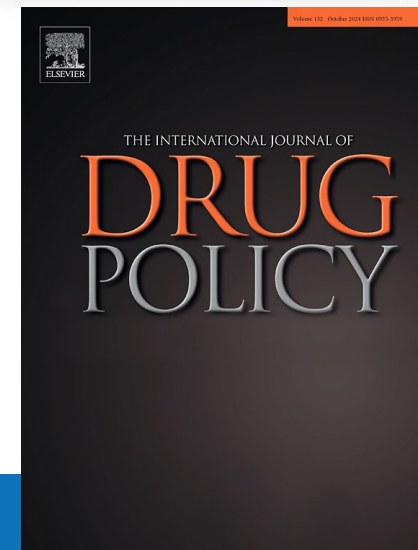
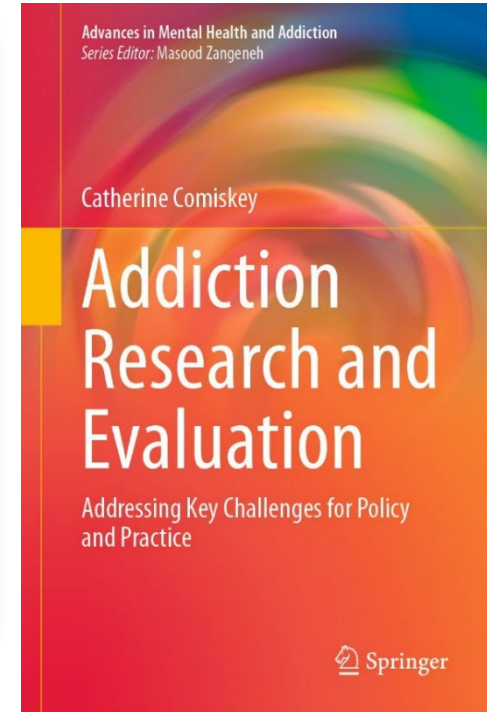
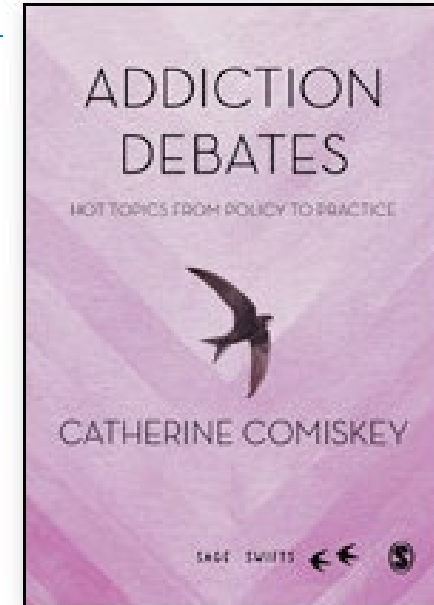
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