

- European Conference on Drug-Related Violence
- This presentation was delivered at the European Conference on Drug-Related Violence on 26-27 November 2024 in Brussels. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.



EuroNPUD

# **Intimating Violence: How Prohibitionist Drug Policies Fuel Violence Toward People who Use Drugs and their Communities.**

Lynn Jefferys, European Network of People who Use Drugs



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**CURRENT LANGUAGE**

**CURRENT LANDSCAPES**



European Network of People Who Use Drugs  
EuroNPUD Project Executive

Mat Southwell, EuroNPUD Project Executive  
+447969269395

[mat.southwell@euronpud.net](mailto:mat.southwell@euronpud.net)

John Melhus, EuroNPUD Advocacy Team  
+47 948 62 338

[john.melhus@euronpud.net](mailto:john.melhus@euronpud.net)  
[www.euronpud.net](http://www.euronpud.net)

February 14, 2023

## Statement from the European Network of People who use drugs: Time for a new European approach on drug policy say people who use drugs

EuroNPUD was shocked to see the outdated and off-policy statements of EU Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson and Annelies Verbeke during a visit to Antwerp docks blaming people who use drugs for acts of violence committed by organised crime, and committing the European Commission to achieving an 'addiction-free' society. It is extremely unfortunate that EU Home Affairs Commissioner, Ylva Johansson is not only using such stigmatizing language but also promoting the failed and outdated vision of a drug-free world.

It is deeply concerning to hear such closed thinking from European leaders when across Europe we are seeing an increasingly pragmatic and reflective approach to drug policy reform, including initiatives on medicinal cannabis, the legal regulation of cannabis for adult use, psychedelic drugs and healing, and enhanced harm reduction such as drug consumption rooms, drug checking and heroin assisted treatment.

Commissioner Johansson's statements are also contrary to the EU's very own Drug Strategy 2021-2025, which "reiterates the strong call for EU action to reduce stigma against people who use drugs, and promotes increased and balanced investment in a broad range of demand and harm reduction services, discarding the failed paradigm of drug-free world."

All UN agencies signed up to the UN Common Position on Drugs which "reiterates the strong call for the United Nations system to supporting Member States in developing and implementing truly balanced, comprehensive, integrated, evidence-based, human rights-based, development-oriented and just responses to the world drug problem." The Common Position supports the decriminalisation of possession for personal use, as Portugal and many other EU countries have done. To create an environment for harm reduction and drug treatment. As Michelle Bachelet, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, has stated, "Importantly, some countries have decriminalised various forms of drug use to ensure treatment and services without any fear and intimidation and to remove stigma."

Legal regulation is being successfully implemented in different settings with cannabis, and is commensurate with the harm reduction approach. Legalisation is also being implemented in a number of countries, with many experts as the most appropriate response to reduce the violence associated with illegal economies such as drug trafficking. Decriminalisation remains the major call for drug law reform as a sensible choice to reduce the human rights violations and racial injustice that are central to drug control and create the space for



# Time for a new European approach on drug policy say people who use drugs

Statement from EuroNPUD



 **UNODC**  
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

**UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM  
COMMON POSITION**  
SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL  
POLICY THROUGH EFFECTIVE  
INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION





*“People who use drugs are the people most likely to experience 'drug related intimidation'. However, the research tends to emphasise the impact of the illegal drugs market on people who are not identified as users in communities. They also focus their reports on drug related debts and collection of debts. Much of these issues arise from the unregulated market”*

Received: 29 July 2019 | Revised: 5 February 2020 | Accepted: 9 February 2020  
DOI: 10.1111/jcap.12267

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

WILEY

**Journeying with fear: Young people's experiences of cannabis use, crime and violence before treatment entry**

Catherine Comiskey<sup>1</sup> | Philip James<sup>2</sup> | Bobby Smyth<sup>3</sup>


DRUG USER PEACE INITIATIVE  
VIOLATIONS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS  
OF PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS

drug war  
peace

INPUD  
International Network of People who Use Drugs

UNODC  
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

CONTRIBUTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME TO  
THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
ON THE WORLD DRUG PROBLEM TO BE HELD IN 2016





Bern, Switzerland (1986) - Fixerstübli



Copenhagen, Denmark - H17 Fixing Room



Canada - Insite



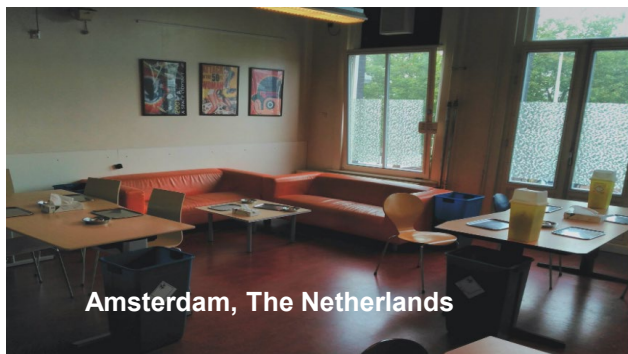
Athens, Greece - OKANA



Berlin, Germany - FixPunkt



Brussels, Belgium



Amsterdam, The Netherlands

CURRENT TOOLS:  
DRUG  
CONSUMPTION  
ROOMS



International Journal of Drug Policy

Volume 131, September 2024, 104330



Research Paper

# The impact of an unsanctioned compassion club on non-fatal overdose

Jeremy Kalicum <sup>a,b</sup>, Eris Nyx <sup>a,b</sup>, Mary Clare Kennedy <sup>c,d</sup>, Thomas Kerr <sup>b,c</sup>  

CURRENT TOOLS:  
COMPASSION  
CLUBS



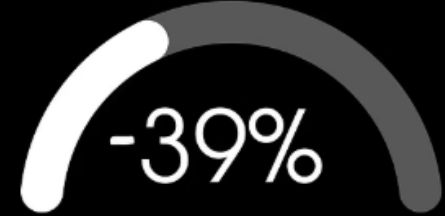
POLICE

48% decrease in negative police interactions per three month period, since gaining access.



HOSPITALIZATIONS

50% decrease in hospitalizations per three month period, since gaining access.



VIOLENCE

39% decrease in drug-related violence per three month period, since gaining access.

The background is a grayscale illustration of a diverse group of people at a protest. Many are holding up signs. Some signs read "PROHIBITION HARMS WOMEN", "We ♥ PROTECT US", "END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN WHO USE DRUGS", and "WOMEN WHO USE DRUGS". There are also symbols like a female symbol and a heart. The overall theme is social justice and women's rights.

## Recommendations

1. Engagement of people who use drugs
2. Effective violence prevention measures in the form of health, human rights, harm reduction and access to safety
3. Regulation & decriminalisation
4. Community-Led Monitoring

# PROHIBITION BREEDS VIOLENCE

Evawud #16days

25/11- 10/12



WHRIN

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

Ensure access to and strengthen treatment and care services.

### Priority areas to address

6.1. Ensure voluntary access to treatment and care services that work in close coordination and collaboration with other health and social support services.

6.2. Promote pathways to recovery and ensure access to treatment and care services based on individual needs.

6.3.

6.4.

6.5.

6.6.

### The following priorities have been identified

6.1. Ensure voluntary and non-discriminatory access to a broad range of effective evidence-based services, including professional counselling, psychosocial, behavioural and medication-assisted treatment, including person-centred integration and recovery support programmes. These services need to be well coordinated and need to work hand in hand with other health, employment and youth services to provide a holistic approach to care.

These services may differ from those experienced by men-only service options should be considered. As should services that take care of young children and that offer other specialist care, such as close working relationships with children and with services for victims of violence.

GENDER EXPANSIVE SERVICES

EU D  
2021



# PROHIBITION BREEDS VIOLENCE

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25/11- 10/12



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THANK YOU,  
PLEASE GET IN  
TOUCH

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